

**STATE OF WASHINGTON**

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES**

**PO Box 45811, Olympia WA 98504-5811**

DATE: August 22, 2023

TO: RFP # 2334-832 Bidders

FROM: Caleb Clark, Solicitation Coordinator

DSHS Central Contracts and Legal Services

SUBJECT: Amendment No. 01 – Bidder’s Q & A

DSHS amends the RFP # 2334-832 procurement document to include:

* Bidder’s Questions and Answers

**Bidder’s Questions and Answers**

**RFP# 2334-832**

**Question #1:** Are costs for paid media spend included in the $500,000 budget?

**A:** Yes, the $500,000 budget includes all paid media and other costs.

**Question #2:** For the Seattle location qualification, does the firm need to have a Seattle address or just be in the Seattle area?

**A:** [Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 5187](https://lawfilesext.leg.wa.gov/biennium/2023-24/Pdf/Bills/Session%20Laws/Senate/5187-S.SL.pdf#page=1) provides specific language for how the department can conduct this work. Specifically, the bill states that the funding is “provided solely for the department to contract with an organization located in Seattle.” Therefore, the successful bidder must demonstrate that it is has an address in Seattle.

**Question #3:** Can you describe the types of fraud, or situations, you’re working to prevent? And do you have information about the types of individuals perpetuating the fraud?

**A:** Washington has seen a significant increase in various types of fraud. Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 5187 specifically mentions serving communities significantly impacted by or at risk for benefits trafficking, skimming and other fraudulent activities. Card Skimming occurs when devices are legally installed on ATMS point-of-sale terminals or fuel pumps that capture data or record cardholder’s Personal Identification Number. Criminals use this data to create fake debit or credit cards then steal from victims’ accounts. Trafficking food stamp benefits means exchanging (buying, selling, stealing, or trading) food stamp benefits, including the EBT card or EBT card Personal Identification Number for cash or for anything other than eligible food.

**Question #4:** What is driving the timeline for this contract performance period?

**A:** The Washington State legislature appropriated the funding to be used during state fiscal year 2024, which ends on June 30, 2024. All funding and services rendered through this contract must end by that date.

**Question #5:** Will DSHS build a campaign landing page to host agency created materials and other EBT Fraud Prevention resources?

**A:** DSHS is willing to work with the contractor to support the sharing and promotion of materials, including potentially creating a landing page on the website.

**Question #6:** Are you open to extending the timeline for more in-depth work?

**A:** Because of current budget conditions, DSHS is unable to consider extending the timeline for this project. If budget conditions change, then DSHS may be open for that discussion.

**Question #7:**  Is there an existing place to direct people to (e.g. a website that gives people information about fraud prevention), to link people to?

**A:** Yes. DSHS does provide its clients limited information and links for assistance online. An example of this can be viewed by clicking on this link: [Economic Services Administration | DSHS (wa.gov)](https://www.dshs.wa.gov/esa/)

**Question #8:** Can this outreach be paired with outreach around applying for and accessing EBT benefits?

**A:** Nothing prevents this from occurring, but DSHS expects the successful bidder to help the Department determine whether this marketing coordination will be successful in reaching specific communities in a culturally appropriate manner.

**Question #9:** Outside of what’s included on DSHS websites, what messaging is DSHS currently using to educate communities on EBT fraud prevention and how to protect themselves from skimming and trafficking?

**A:** DSHS is developing a communication plan that includes tools to educate the community about card skimming and trafficking. Beginning August 23, 2023, DSHS may replace food benefits that were stolen October 1, 2022 or later. A communication plan has been developed and includes messaging via:

* Letter to clients who previously reported stolen benefits
* Social media
* DSHS phone line hold messaging
* DSHS webpages
* Washington Connection message banner

**Question #10:** Do you have a breakdown of how you'd like the media broken out? Are some languages most common and you'd like more media in those languages?

**A:** While DSHS does have limited knowledge regarding the prevalence of some languages in the State, DSHS does not have a media breakdown, and will need the successful bidder to help with this.

**Question #11:** Are there relationships already established within the specific communities being focused on or will the selected organization need to start from scratch to figure out who within these communities could provide information needed for targeted outreach?

**A:** Through the ORIA program, DSHS does have pre-established relationships and is willing to leverage this relationship to some extent for this project. However, DSHS is seeking a vendor with existing relationships of their own who can be a more proactive partner during the outreach campaign.

**Question #12:** Translation services? The assumption is that the budget will need to cover all costs relating to the project if we need to pay folks to assist?

**A:** Yes.

**Question #13:** In WEBS it shows this is a selective solicitation but it is unclear if we can bid on it. The attachments are showing in WEBS and I received an email about this, however, our profile doesn't show we are prequalified by DSHS, can we bid on this opportunity?

**A:**  Since this isn’t a Teir 2 solicitation, there shouldn’t be any system generated pre-qualifications generated by WEBS. The scope of work and minimum qualifications is found in the solicitation document that is attached in WEBS. Those two items are the criteria you should use to determine whether you can bid on this RFP.

**Question #14:** Under Section A. 3, it lists “Provide at minimum one (1) full time project manager with the qualifications necessary to ensure the outreach campaigns success”, could you provide some clarification around that bullet? Are you looking for a project manager where this is their only project or just some whose full time role is project manager with the firm?

**A:** The Bidder must commit one person to be directly responsible for managing the campaign. This “Project Manager” must be available to DSHS and provide full-time oversight of the campaign.

**Question #15:** I noticed that the opportunity requires organizations to be located in Seattle, and just wanted to confirm if we would meet this requirement if our primary staff for this project is located in the metro Seattle area (Port Orchard), even though our headquarters are not in Seattle. Just to clarify, we are a fully remote organization with staff across the country.

**A:** See answer to question #2.

**Question #16:** Could you please clarify the anticipated number of awards?

**A:** One.

**Question #17: 3.** Would individuals who reside in Washington that conduct business as sole proprietors qualify as subcontractors?

**A:** Yes.DSHS defines a Subcontract as follows: “Subcontract means any separate agreement or contract between the Contractor and an individual or entity (“Subcontractor”) to perform all or a portion of the duties and obligations that the Contractor is obligated to perform pursuant to the Contract”.

**Question #18:** We’d like to provide a visual example of our proposed plan and sample outreach plan. How could we submit a visual presentation of our plan in the application format?

**A:** See section D.3 (pg. 16) of the solicitation announcement for instructions related to attaching additional pages to the Bidder Response Form.

**Question #19:** At the top of page 5, item F under Bidder Minimum Qualification it notes the business must be located in Seattle, Washington. In WEBS, it is listed for more than simply King County though, and there is nothing in the work that would seem to make this a requirement, especially if the organization has media contacts and would be willing to travel, if needed. Is this a true requirement for bidding or is this a preference?

**A:** See answer to question #2.

**Question #20:** We are a remotely operated company with a key senior leader residing in and operating from Seattle metro. Our subcontractors are often individuals in Seattle who run their business as sole proprietors. We’ll be hiring local community leaders, including those who identify themselves as Seattle or Washington Small, Veteran-owned, and MWBE, as a strategy to deploy effective outreach messaging. Just to confirm, would our Seattle-based subcontractors and a Seattle-based senior team member leading the program satisfy the location requirement for this opportunity?

**A:** See answer to question #2.

**Question #21:** In the Minimum Bidder Qualifications, it states that the Bidder must have at least 5 years’ experience in developing and implementing statewide outreach, education, and media campaigns. Must that experience be for the bidding organization, or can it be of the key team personnel proposed and planned to execute the work for this RFP?

**A:** The five-year experience minimum qualification is for the organization itself.

**Question #22:** Please clarify if “Chinese” is referring to Traditional Chinese or Simplified Chinese? Or both?

**A:** The Chinese language used for this program can be either traditional, simplified, or both. DSHS will rely on the expertise of the successful bidder to determine which is best to communicate with the community.

**Question #23:**  Is there any existing glossary for each targeted language?

**A:** Currently, there is no existing glossary for each targeted language.

**All other terms and conditions in this Solicitation remain the same.**