



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES
PO Box 45811, Olympia WA 98504-5811

DATE: April 23, 2024

TO: RFX # 2434-846

FROM: Donna Beatty, Solicitation Coordinator
DSHS Central Contracts and Legal Services

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

DSHS amends the RFX # 2434-846 procurement document to include: Bidder's Questions and Answers.

Bidder's Questions and Answers

Question #1: I am a sole proprietor or small business. If my business has other contracts with DSHS, am I automatically disqualified from being awarded a contract as a Contracted Residential Evaluator?

Answer to Question #1: No, you are not automatically disqualified. The programs will have to take a look at the nature of your contracts with DSHS as well as with other entities, to ensure there are no conflicts of interest.

Question #2: The reimbursement rates are too low for my business to participate in this solicitation. Can the RFQQ be changed to allow the bidders to submit the rates that they would be willing to accept?

Answer to Question #2: The rates given in the attachments to the contracts were established by DDA and AL TSA/RCS executive management in consultation with their respective budget teams and the Management Services Division. They are believed to reflect current, standard market rates and are as high as current budget constraints allow. Therefore, DSHS is not able to accept proposals based on higher rates at this time.

Question #3: I have not heard of a UEI number, which is requested on the Attachment F, the Contractor Intake Form. What is it and do I need to have that number in order to submit a response to this Solicitation?

Answer to Question #3: The UEI, or Unique Entity Number, used to be known as the DUNS number. It is assigned by the Federal government and is used as the primary means of entity identification for Federal awards government-wide. Bidders responding to this Solicitation are not required to have a UEI, but if one has been assigned, it must be disclosed.

Question #4: Does a request for Debriefing Conference need to be made within a certain timeframe?

Answer to Question #4: Yes. A Debriefing Conference must be requested within five business days of the announcement of the Apparently Successful Bidders. Currently, the due date for Debriefing Conference request is June 4, 2024.

Question #5: Will there be an opportunity to negotiate the rates or other contract terms?

Answer to Question #5: No, and yes. The rates are non-negotiable, but some contract terms may be negotiated. Bidders must note the contract terms that they wish to negotiate in their answer to Section 1, Question D, in Attachment D (the Bidder Response Form).

Question #6: Does a current contractor need to submit Attachment F, the Contractor Intake Form?

Answer to Question #6: Yes. It is important that DSHS has the most up-to-date information about its contractors, including addresses and other contact information. We know it will be duplicative of information that is already on file, but requiring all Bidders to submit the form is the best way to ensure our information remains accurate. We appreciate your patience and cooperation!

Question #7: Will all bidders who pass initial review be subject to oral interviews?

Answer to Question #7: The top Bidders will be granted oral interviews.

Question #8: Are there manuals or other written guidelines and procedures on which Evaluators base their evaluations and reports, or must the Contracted Evaluators create their own?

Answer to Question #8: Each program does have written guidelines and procedures that give the requirements for the conducting of evaluations and the composing of written reports. Contracted Evaluators are not expected to create their own procedures, nor should they do so.

Question #9: What kind of leeway does a contractor have with meeting standards?

Answer to Question #9: There are established standards that must be met by both the providers and the Contracted Evaluators. The Evaluators should discuss any unique scenarios with its DSHS contact or Field Manager.

Question #10: How many Contract Evaluators are assigned to evaluate a provider?

Answer to Question #10: It depends on the size of the provider and the client sample size. RCS may assign teams as large as 4-5 Contract Evaluators. DDA typically assigns a single Contract Evaluator.

Question #11: Is out of area travel reimbursed?

Answer to Question#11: No, the published reimbursement rates include travel costs. Bidders are able to specify the geographic areas in which they are willing to offer services in Attachment D, Section 1, Question L.

Question #12: How long do evaluations take? What is the average time spent per evaluation?

Answer to Question #12: RCS evaluations always start on a Monday and may take 4 or 5 consecutive days, especially when they entail larger client sample sizes. DDA on-site evaluations typically take less time and are often finished in a day. This time does not include the time Contracted Evaluators spend writing up the reports, or time spent reviewing information outside of the onsite visit.

Question #13: Are evaluations scheduled or does the evaluator schedule the evaluations?

Answer to Question #13: RCS and DDA generally schedule evaluations according to business needs and Contracted Evaluators' preferences. Evaluations are typically scheduled 2-3 months in advance.

Question #14: Is there any required training?

Answer to Question #14: Yes. New Contracted Evaluators will receive training related to the setting requirements that they will be evaluating and evaluation expectations. New Contracted Evaluators will also shadow a seasoned Contracted Evaluator. Contracted Evaluators may also be required to undertake the training that is required of a Complaint Investigator.

Question #15: If there is required training, is it provided?

Answer to Question #15: Yes. All training is provided by DSHS.

Question #16: Are Evaluators required to use certain equipment?

Answer to Question #16: Yes. DSHS issues laptops and portable scanners/printers for the individuals who will actually be conducting the evaluations to be used solely for the work related to conducting the evaluations and reporting the results to DSHS. Contracted Evaluators will need to provide their own equipment for other business needs.

Question #17: Will evaluators be given advance notice of the format and questions that may be asked in the oral interview/presentation?

Answer to Question #17: The questions will be provided at the time of the interview. No formal presentations will be required and none are expected.

Question #18: How many evaluators do you intend to select?

Answer to Question #18: There are no set number of contracts that will be awarded.

Question #19: Will the RFQ process differ in any way for existing Contracted Evaluators versus new Contracted Evaluators?

Answer to Question #19: Washington law generally requires that all Bidders be treated the same, other than when reasonable accommodations are warranted, and be evaluated under the same criteria. Small and veteran owned businesses may be given additional points up to a set maximum, and qualifying

small businesses must be awarded contracts in some cases. But other than offering reasonable accommodations and the application of the small and veteran-owned business exceptions when appropriate, current contractors must otherwise bear the same burdens as, and be assessed using the same standards as are applied to, other bidders.

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