

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

No. 2435-860

**ESA Medical, Psychological, and
Psychiatric Consultative Services**

DSHS Administration:

**Economic Services
Administration (ESA)**

Project Title:	ESA Medical, Psychological, and Psychiatric Consultative Services
Estimated Contract Period:	Date of Execution Through End Date of Contract. Amendments extending the period of performance, if any, shall be at the sole discretion of DSHS.
Submit Application to:	<p>Bryan Tso (Programs 1 and 3) Rocio Loera (Program 2) Uyen Kashani (Programs 4 – 7)</p> <p>Bryan Tso, Social & Health Program Consultant Department of Social and Health Services Economic Services Administration Community Services Division Bryan.Tso@dshs.wa.gov +1 (360) 725-7627</p> <p>Rocio Loera, TANF & WorkFirst Programs & Policy Manager Department of Social and Health Services Economic Services Administration Community Services Division Rocio.Loera@dshs.wa.gov +1 (360) 480-5477</p> <p>Uyen Kashani, Professional Relations Specialist Department of Social and Health Services Economic Services Administration Division of Disability Determination Services Uyen.Kashani@ssa.gov +1 (360) 584-6630</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CSD Aged, Blind or Disabled (ABD) Program Medical Evidence Reviews 2. CSD Disability Eligibility Review 3. CSD Mental Incapacity Evaluations 4. DDDS Consultative Examinations 5. DDDS General Medical and Psychological Consultative Services 6. DDDS Specialized Medical Consultative Services 7. DDDS Specialized Psychological Consultative Services 	

Request for Qualifications and Amendments will be posted on:

DSHS Procurement Website: <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/ffa/procurements-and-contracting>

WEBS Website: <https://pr-webs-vendor.des.wa.gov/>

Applicable WEBS Commodity Codes: 952-43, _____

Auxiliary Aids and Limited English Proficient (LEP) Services:

DSHS will provide access to this Request for Qualifications document to individuals with disabilities and Limited English Proficient individuals. Please contact the Coordinator to request auxiliary aids and services.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section A. Summary of Project and Requirements..... 4

Section B. Definitions 6

Section C. Procurement Process..... 8

Section D. Review of Applications 15

Section E. Debriefing and Protest Procedure 17

Section F. Application Contents 19

Section G. Contract Procedures..... 21

Exhibits:

Application Checklist..... Exhibit A

Acknowledgment of Professional Qualifications Exhibit B

Statement of Agreement Exhibit C

Contractor Intake Exhibit D

Applicant Certification and Assurances. Exhibit E

Sample Contract..... Exhibit F

SECTION A SUMMARY OF PROJECT AND REQUIREMENTS
--

1. Purpose

The Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), Division of Disability Determination Services (DDDS) is issuing this Request for Qualifications (RFQ). The purpose of this RFQ is to expand the list of qualified physicians and psychologists to provide medical or psychological consultation services to DDDS adjudicator staff and others who make disability determinations on behalf of the Social Security Administration.

2. Background

The DDDS adjudicates claims for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), and the DSHS Non-Grant Medical Assistance (NGMA) programs. As part of the adjudicative process for determining medical eligibility, the DDDS reviews medical records. Medical or psychological consultation and expertise may be needed to document the specific impairments and to determine severity as required by Social Security disability regulations.

3. Project Scope

This RFQ seeks responses from both medical and mental specialties to perform consultation services in our Federal Way, Spokane, and Tumwater offices. Consultation services include the evaluation of physical or mental impairment severity from medical records and other reports, utilizing Social Security regulations and rules of law. Applicant will function as a member of the adjudicative team and assist staff in determining eligibility for disability benefits.

A Sample Contract is attached to this RFQ as Exhibit F.

4. Qualification Requirements

For the Applicant's Response to this RFQ to be considered, the Applicant must meet each of the following qualifications:

- a. Not be currently revoked or suspended by any state licensing authority;
- b. Not be currently excluded, suspended or otherwise barred from participation in Medicare and Medicaid programs or any other federal or federally assisted programs;
- c. Have a current license by the appropriate Washington Department of Health Examining Board or Medical Commission and operate under any stipulations ordered, if applicable (exception: medical specialties can be licensed in any state);
- d. Not have a current or pending Federal SSA Contract;
- e. Be licensed to do business in the State of Washington;

- f. Be available to work within the DDDS system availability hours (Monday – Sunday, 3:00 AM – 11:00 PM PST) and provide consultation and questions during core business hours (Monday – Friday, 6:00 AM – 6:30 PM PST);
- g. Participate in mandatory quarterly Medical Consultant (MC) meetings, held on established meeting dates the months of February, May, August, and November, unless DDDS, in its sole discretion, excuses attendance in advance. Excused requests must be submitted in writing;
- h. Have experience and demonstrate a capacity working with medical records and be proficient in the use of computers; and
- i. For Medical Specialties:
 - (1) Have graduated from an accredited medical school receiving a degree as a Medical Doctor (MD) or a Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (DO); and
 - (2) Have received at least two (2) years of post-medical graduate school training or experience in the appropriate medical specialty.
- j. For Mental Specialties:
 - (1) Have graduated from an accredited school of psychology receiving a degree as a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), a Doctor of Psychology (PsyD), or a Doctor of Education (EDD);
 - (2) Have received the appropriate post-graduate school training and experience in the appropriate psychology specialty; and
 - (3) Have two (2) years of clinical experience as a psychologist in health service, at least one (1) year of which is post-Master's Degree.

Applicants failing to demonstrate in their responses that they meet these qualifications will be considered non-responsive and will therefore be disqualified from further consideration.

5. Period of Contract Performance

DSHS intends to award multiple Contracts to provide the Services described in this RFQ. The term Contract will be from the date of execution through the end date of the Contract. Amendments extending the period of performance, if any, shall be at the sole discretion of DSHS. Additional services that are appropriate to the scope of this RFQ, as determined by DSHS, may be added to the Contract in a mutually agreeable amendment.

SECTION B DEFINITIONS

Additional definitions for Contract-specific terms are found in the Sample Contract set forth as Exhibit F to this RFQ and shall apply to those terms as they are used in this RFQ. The following terms have the meanings set forth below:

Agency or DSHS – The Washington State Department of Social and Health Services.

Amendment – A unilateral change to the RFQ that is issued by DSHS at its sole discretion and posted on WEBS.

Apparent Successful Applicant (ASA) – An Applicant submitting a Response to this RFQ that is evaluated, identified, and announced by DSHS as providing the best value to the Agency. Upon execution of a Contract, the ASA is referred to as the Successful Applicant or the Contractor.

Apparent Unsuccessful Applicant (ASA) – An Applicant not selected as having submitted a successful Application, based on the final determination of DSHS management, taking into consideration the Applicant's qualifications and the needs of DSHS.

Applicant – An individual, organization, or other business entity submitting an Application in response to this RFQ.

Application – All material prepared and assembled by an Applicant, and which the Applicant submits in response to this RFQ. The terms Application and Response are intended to mean the same thing.

Complaint – A process that may be followed by an Applicant prior to the deadline for response submission to alert DSHS of certain types of asserted deficiencies in the RFQ.

Contract – A written agreement entered into between a Successful Applicant and DSHS as a result of this RFQ.

Contractor – An individual, organization, or other business entity whose Application has been accepted by DSHS and is awarded a fully executed, written Contract.

Debriefing – A short meeting an Applicant may request with the RFQ Coordinator following the announcement of the Apparent Successful Applicant for the purpose of receiving information regarding the review and evaluation of that Applicant's Response based on qualification requirements and prior contract performance (if applicable).

Division of Disability Determination Services or DDDS – A division of the Economic Services Administration of the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services that is issuing this RFQ.

Economic Services Administration or ESA – An administration of the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services.

Impairment – a condition that significantly limits the individual's physical or mental abilities.

Procurement – The broad process of identifying goods and services for purchase or acquisition, of effecting the purchase or acquisition, and of managing the purchase or acquisition. This RFQ is a part of an overall Procurement process. Despite the broader meaning attributed to “procurement”, for purposes of this RFQ, the terms, RFQ and Procurement are interchangeable.

Procurement Document – This RFQ document, including all Exhibits and all amendments that are issued by the RFQ Coordinator.

Project – The undertaking or work for which contracted Services are being requested pursuant to this RFQ.

Protest – A process that may be followed by an Applicant after the announcement of the apparent Successful Applicant to alert DSHS to certain types of alleged errors in the evaluation of the RFQ.

RCW – The Revised Code of Washington. All references to RCW chapters or sections shall include any successor, amended, or replacement statute.

Responsive Applicant – An individual, organization, or other business entity who has submitted a Response that fully conforms in all material respects to the RFQ and all its requirements, in both form and substance.

RFQ – The request for qualifications set forth in this RFQ document.

RFQ Coordinator – An individual or designee who is employed by DSHS and who is responsible for conducting this RFQ.

Scope of Work – The Project or work scope set forth in this RFQ document that identifies DSHS’ contractual needs and requirements.

Services – Labor, work, analysis, or similar activities provided by a contractor to accomplish a specific scope of work.

Solicitation – A formal process providing an equal and open opportunity for applicants culminating in a selection based upon predetermined criteria. This RFQ is a Solicitation.

SSA – the Social Security Administration, a federal agency.

Statement of Work – The detailed description of services to be performed by the Contractor and outlined in the Contract.

Submit – to deliver to the RFQ Coordinator any of the documents described in this RFQ document and in the manner specified in this RFQ

WEBS – Washington’s Electronic Business Solution, the Applicant notification system found at <https://pr-webs-vendor.des.wa.gov/> and maintained by the Washington State Department of Enterprise Services.

<p align="center">SECTION C EXPLANATION OF PROCUREMENT PROCESS</p>
--

1. Procurement Schedule

The Procurement Schedule set forth below outlines the tentative schedule for important events relating to this RFQ. Except as modified in an Amendment issued by the RFQ Coordinator, the dates and times listed through the application submission date are mandatory deadlines. The remaining dates are estimates and may change without the posting of an Amendment. Failure to meet the Application deadline will result in Applicant's disqualification.

Item	Action	Due Date
1.	DSHS posts RFQ.	.
2.	Prospective Applicant should register as a Vendor on WEBS using one of the commodities codes on the cover page of this RFQ as soon as possible to receive notifications.	As soon as possible
3.	Pre-Bid Conference for DDDS Specialty #5, #6, and #7 at 1PM Pacific Time, approximately every six months on the second Tuesday of the month starting November 11, 2025. <u>Microsoft Teams Meeting Link for Pre-Bid Conference</u>	11/11/2025 04/14/2026 10/13/2026 04/13/2027 10/12/2027 Ongoing per schedule.
4.	Applicant may submit written questions and comments until 11:59 PM Pacific Time. (NOTE: This date must be five (5) business days prior to application submission)	
5.	DSHS will issue responses.	
6.	Applicant may submit written complaints by 11:59 PM Pacific Time. (NOTE: This date must be five (5) business days prior to application submission)	
7.	DSHS notifies Apparent Successful Applicant within forty-five (45) business days after receipt of the properly completed Application.	
8.	DSHS notifies Apparent Unsuccessful Applicant within forty-five (45) business days after receipt of the properly completed Application.	
9.	DSHS announces the Apparent Successful Applicant(s) on WEBS.	
10.	Applicant may request Debriefing within three (3) business days from the date of the letter and/or by the date and time specified in the letter.	.

Item	Action	Due Date
11.	DSHS holds Debriefing conferences within five (5) business days after receipt of the Debriefing request, if requested	
12.	Applicant who participated in a debriefing conference may submit Protest(s) by 5:00 PM Pacific Time. (NOTE: This date must be within five (5) business days after the debriefing conference)	
13.	DSHS considers and responds to any Protest(s) within five (5) business days after receipt of the Protest request, if requested, unless more time is required to review the Protest and make a determination.	
14.	Contract Execution/Start Date.	

2. Posting of Procurement Documents

DSHS shall post this document, and all amendments and announcements relating to this RFQ, on WEBS. WEBS can be accessed at: <https://pr-webs-vendor.des.wa.gov/>. In order to inform the largest number of potential Applicants about this opportunity, DSHS shall also post documents relating to this RFQ on the Procurements page of the DSHS website, found at: <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/ffa/procurements-and-contracting>

All Applicants must register as a vendor on WEBS, using an appropriate commodities code listed on the front page of this RFQ, and download this RFQ from WEBS. This should be done as soon as possible in order for Applicant to receive notifications automatically generated on WEBS, but no later than the date set forth in Section C.1., Procurement Schedule for Announcement of the Apparent Successful Applicant(s).

3. Amendment, Cancellation/Rejection of Applications, Reissuance of RFQ

DSHS may amend or add to, retract from or cancel this RFQ at any time, in whole or in part, and without penalty. DSHS may reject all Applications and cancel or reissue this RFQ. All amendments and notifications of cancellation shall be posted on WEBS. In the event of a conflict between amendments or between an amendment and this RFQ document, the document issued latest shall control.

4. Communications regarding RFQ

Upon the posting of this RFQ, all communications concerning this RFQ must be directed to the appropriate RFQ Coordinator listed on the cover page of this RFQ document. With the exception of the Application, which shall be submitted as provided in Section D, Review of Applications, communications with the RFQ Coordinator should be sent via email. DSHS may disqualify any Applicant who communicates with anyone in DSHS other than the RFQ Coordinator regarding this RFQ.

DSHS considers all oral communications unofficial and non-binding on DSHS. Applicants should rely only on written statements issued by the RFQ Coordinator. Email shall be considered an official method of communication unless otherwise specified in this document.

5. Pre-Bid Conference

Applicants are invited to attend a Pre-Bid Conference, which shall be ongoing and held virtually every six months (or April and October) on the second Tuesday of the month, at the date and time set forth below, during the duration of this RFQ. The Pre-Bid Conference is an opportunity for Applicants to learn more about the conditions under which a Contract will be performed and to discuss the inclusion plan, especially when subcontracting opportunity may be a part of the Contract. At the Pre-Bid Conference, Applicants will have an opportunity to ask questions and to hear presentations from knowledgeable DSHS personnel. DSHS shall summarize the information shared at the Pre-Bid Conference and post that summary on the DSHS procurement web page and on WEBS as an Amendment to this RFQ. Applicants may only rely upon information that is included in this Amendment in preparing their Applications.

[Pre-Bid Conference held the 2nd Tuesday of April and October at 1PM PST]

Tuesday, November 11, 2025

Tuesday, April 13, 2027

Tuesday, April 14, 2026

Tuesday, October 12, 2027

Tuesday, October 13, 2026

Ongoing per schedule

[Join the meeting now](#)

Meeting ID: 298 633 452 140 4

Passcode: Jt7KY3Jk

Dial in by phone

[+1 564-999-2000,,390049386#](#) United States, Olympia

[\(833\) 322-1218,,390049386#](#) United States (Toll-free)

[Find a local number](#)

Phone conference ID: 390 049 386#

For organizers: [Meeting options](#) | [Reset dial-in PIN](#)

6. Questions and Answers

Applicants may submit questions concerning this RFQ to the RFQ Coordinator by the date and time set forth in the Procurement Schedule outlined in Section C.1. for

submission of questions. Questions should be sent via email and should include the number and title of this RFQ in the subject line.

7. Request for Change in Procurement Requirements

If Applicant believes that this RFQ contains requirements which would unreasonably prohibit or restrict Applicant's participation, or believes that different requirements would provide better value to the State, Applicant shall submit a written explanation of the issue together with proposed alternative requirements to the RFQ Coordinator no later than the deadline for Applicant questions as stated in the Procurement Schedule outlined in Section C.1. The RFQ Coordinator shall not be required to consider requests for changes after this date. If any changes are made to the RFQ requirements, an Amendment setting forth those changes will be posted on WEBS.

8. Complaints

In the event an Applicant believes that this RFQ either: (a) unnecessarily restricts competition; (b) contains an unfair or flawed evaluation or scoring process; or (c) contains inadequate or insufficient information to permit preparation of a Response, the Applicant shall submit a written complaint to the RFQ Coordinator. The RFQ Coordinator will forward the complaint to the DSHS Chief of Central Contracts and Legal Services for review. The complaint shall include a proposed remedy and shall be submitted no later than five (5) business days prior to the date when Applications are due. DSHS shall post its response to the complaint on WEBS and on the DSHS procurement web page.

Should an Applicant's complaint identify a change that would be in the best interest of DSHS to make, DSHS may issue an Amendment modifying this RFQ. The DSHS decision regarding a complaint is final and no further administrative appeal is available. If no complaint is filed, an Applicant cannot later file a protest based on any of the above complaint criteria.

9. Minority & Women's Business Enterprises (MWBE) and Veteran-Owned Business Enterprises

In accordance with the legislative findings and policies set forth in RCW 39.19, 43.60A.200, 39.26.240 and 39.26.245, the State of Washington encourages participation by Veteran-owned, Minority-Owned, and Women-Owned businesses either self-identified or certified by, respectively, the Department of Veterans Affairs or the Office of Minority and Women's Business Enterprises (OMWBE). While the State does not give gender or race-based preferential treatment, it does seek equitable representation from Washington Small Businesses as well as the veteran, minority, and women-owned business communities.

According to Chapter 39.26.010 RCW, to qualify as a Washington Small Business, Applicant must meet three (3) requirements:

- a. Location: Applicant's principal office/place of business must be located in and identified as being in the State of Washington. A principal office or principal place of business is a firm's headquarters where business decisions are made and the location for the firm's books and records as well as the firm's senior management personnel.

- b. Size: Applicant must be owned and operated independently from all other businesses and have either: (a) fifty (50) or fewer employees or (b) gross revenue or less than seven million dollars (\$7,000,000) annually as reported on Applicant's federal income tax return or its return filed with the Washington State Department of Revenue over the previous three consecutive years.
- c. WEBS Certification: Applicant must have certified its Washington Small Business status in Washington's Electronic Business Solution ([WEBS](#)).

According to Chapter 43.60A.190 RCW, to qualify as a Certified Washington Veteran-Owned Business, Applicant must meet four (4) requirements:

- a. 51% Ownership. Applicant must be at least fifty-one percent (51%) owned and controlled by:
 - (1) A veteran is defined as every person who at the time he or she seeks certification has received a discharge with an honorable characterization or received a discharge for medical reasons with an honorable record, where applicable, and who has served in at least one of the capacities listed in RCW 41.04.007;
 - (2) A person who is in receipt of disability compensation or pension from the Department of Veteran's Affairs; or
 - (3) An active or reserve member in any branch of the armed forces of the United States, including the national guard, coast guard, and armed forces reserves.
- b. Washington Incorporation/Location. Applicant must be either an entity that is incorporated in the State of Washington as a Washington domestic corporation or, if not incorporated, an entity whose principal place of business is located within the State of Washington.
- c. WEBS Certification. Applicant must have certified its Veteran-Owned Business status in Washington's Electronic Business Solution ([WEBS](#)).
- d. WDVA Certification. Applicant must have certification documentation to the Washington Department of Veteran's Affairs (WDVA) and be certified by WSVA and listed as such on WDVA's website ([WDVA](#) – Veteran-Owned Businesses).

DSHS encourages Washington Small, Veteran-owned, and MWBE Applicant participation both directly in Response to this RFQ and as subcontractors to a Prime Applicant.

Applicants may contact the Office of Minority and Women's Business Enterprises (OMWBE) at <http://omwbe.wa.gov/> and/or the Department of Veterans Affairs at <http://www.dva.wa.gov/program/veteran-owned-business-certification> in order to obtain information on certified firms for potential subcontracting arrangements or for information on how to become certified. Nothing in this section is intended to prevent or discourage participation from non-MWBE firms or non-Veteran-owned businesses.

10. Auxiliary Aids and Limited English Proficient (LEP) Services:

DSHS will provide access to this RFQ document to individuals with disabilities and Limited English Proficient individuals. Please contact the RFQ Coordinator to request auxiliary aids and services.

If an individual believes that the Department has discriminated against them based on a protected status, please contact the DSHS Investigations Unit for the Nondiscrimination Policy Brochure and complaint process. The brochure can be found at <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/sites/default/files/publications/documents/Non-discrim%2022-171.pdf>

11. Cost to Prepare Response

DSHS will not be liable for any costs incurred by the Applicant in preparing, conducting a site assessment, or submitting an Application to this RFQ.

12. Acceptance of RFQ Terms

In submitting an Application, Applicant must include a signed Applicant Certifications in the form set forth on Exhibit E. Applicant must acknowledge that in submitting an Application, it accepts all terms of this RFQ document, including all of its Exhibits, and that Applicant's Application constitutes a binding offer. Applicants may not alter or redline the RFQ terms or requirements in their Response. Submitting altered or redlined RFQ terms or requirements in the Applicant Application may result in Applicant disqualification.

13. Joint Response

If Applicants submit a joint Response with one or more other persons or entities, these persons or entities must designate a prime Applicant. The prime Applicant will be DSHS's sole point of contact through the Procurement process. If selected as the Apparent Successful Applicant, the prime Applicant shall sign the Contract and any amendments and will be liable and responsible to DSHS for all performance under the Contract.

14. Withdrawal of Responses

After an Application has been submitted, an Applicant may withdraw its Response at any time. A written request to withdraw the Application must be submitted to the RFQ Coordinator. After withdrawing a Response, the Applicant may submit another Application at any time.

15. Ownership of Responses

All materials submitted in response to this RFQ become the property of DSHS and will not be returned. DSHS shall have the right to use any of the ideas presented as part of the process in any manner as it deems appropriate or beneficial, regardless of whether it is contained in a Response that results in selection for a Contract.

16. Proprietary Information/Public Disclosure

Materials submitted in response to this RFQ shall be deemed public records as defined by RCW 42.56. All Responses and accompanying documentation shall become the property of DSHS upon receipt and will not be returned.

If DSHS receives a request to view or copy an Applicant's Application, DSHS will respond according to applicable law and DSHS's policy governing public disclosure. DSHS will not disclose any information marked "Proprietary" in a Response without giving the Applicant ten (10) days' notice to seek relief in superior court per RCW 42.56.540.

Applicants may not include any DSHS client information in their Responses. Doing so will result in disqualification of the Application from further consideration. If you wish to include examples of any forms or processes, use a blank form or ensure that all client information is completely redacted.

17. Ethics, Policies and Law

This RFQ, the review of Responses, and any resulting contract will be made in conformance with applicable Washington State laws and Policies.

Specific restrictions apply to contracting with current or former state employees pursuant to RCW 42.52. Applicants should familiarize themselves with the requirements prior to submitting an Application. Applicants must include, a list identifying any current or former state employees who are employed by, or subcontracted with Applicant. The list must include the name of the employee or subcontractor, the individual's employment history with the State of Washington, and a statement of the individual's involvement with the response to, or their proposed role in providing the services under a contract resulting from this RFQ.

18. Announcement of Successful Applicant(s)

DSHS shall notify Apparent Successful Applicants with forty-five (45) business days after receipt of the properly completed Application. Notifications will be in writing and will include the Contract for the Applicant's signature.

DSHS shall announce Apparent Successful Applicant(s) on WEBS. All announcements of Apparent Successful Applicants are subject of a Contract satisfactory to DSHS.

DSHS shall notify Apparent Unsuccessful Applicants by letter within forty-five (45) business days after receipt of the properly completed Application.

Apparent Unsuccessful Applicant(s) may request a Debriefing conference with the RFQ Coordinator to discuss information regarding the review of their Application and may, under certain circumstances, file a formal Protest requesting that DSHS provide an identified remedy if Applicant believes certain types of errors occurred. A more detailed description of these processes is set forth in Section E, Debriefing and Protest Procedure.

SECTION D REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS

1. Submission of Responses

Applicant Applications must be stored in an acceptable electronic format as set forth in Section 2, below. Applications must be emailed directly to the RFQ Coordinator at the email address provided on the cover sheet of this RFQ document. Applications must be received by the RFQ Coordinator in their entirety, unless a posted Amendment to this RFQ is made. Applicant's completed version of each of the Exhibits to this RFQ shall be included as a separate Exhibit to the Applicant's email(s).

Applicants assume all risks for the timely submission of the Application. Applicants are responsible for allowing sufficient time to ensure timely electronic receipt of their Application by the RFQ Coordinator. DSHS does not assume responsibility for problems with the Applicant's email or network. However, if DSHS email is not working properly, appropriate allowances for other method of Application submission will be made.

DSHS will not accept late Applications, nor grant time extensions for individual Applicants. DSHS will disqualify any Response and withdraw it from consideration if it is received after the Application submission.

2. Acceptable Electronic Formats for Submission of Responses

Application documents must be formatted in Portable Document Format (Adobe Acrobat PDF), unless appropriate allowance for other method document format is made by the RFQ Coordinator. When scanning documents to be submitted in PDF format, scanner resolution should be set to at least 200 dots per inch.

Electronic file formats such as .jpg, .txt, and .tiff will not be accepted.

NOTE: DSHS cannot receive emails that are larger than 30MB. To keep file sizes to a minimum, Applicants are cautioned not to use unnecessary graphics in their Responses. If your Response approaches or exceeds 30MB, you must break it up and send it by more than one email so that no single email exceeds 30MB.

3. Alternative Submission Methods

Applicants wishing to request an alternative method for submitting their Application must contact the RFQ Coordinator at least ten (10) days before the Application submission. No alternative submission method will be accepted unless agreed to by the RFQ Coordinator in writing prior to the Application submission.

4. Application Responsiveness and Administrative Review

All Applications will be reviewed by the RFQ Coordinator to determine compliance with administrative and minimum qualification requirements and instructions specified in this

RFQ. DSHS may reject an Application as non-responsive at any time for any of the following reasons:

- (1) Incomplete Application;
- (2) Submission of an Application that proposes services that deviate from the scope and technical requirements set forth in this document and Exhibit F, Sample Contract, except as permitted in an Amendment to this RFQ;
- (3) Failure to meet the minimum Applicant qualifications or to comply with any requirement set forth in this RFQ document, including Exhibits;
- (4) Submission of incorrect, misleading, or false information; or
- (5) History of prior unsatisfactory contractual performance

The RFQ Coordinator may contact any Applicant for clarification of the Application. If an Application is deemed non-responsive, it shall be removed from further consideration. DSHS shall notify non-responsive Applicant(s) of this determination and the supporting reasons. Applicants whose Applications are found to be non-responsive shall be disqualified from further evaluation and shall be notified in writing.

If an Application meets all administrative and Applicant qualification requirements and submittal instructions, DSHS shall continue with the Procurement process.

5. Errors in Applicant Response

Applicants are responsible for all errors or omissions contained in their Responses. Applicants will not be allowed to alter Application documents after Application submissions.

DSHS reserves the right to contact any Applicant for clarification of Application contents. In those cases where it is unclear, the Applicant may be contacted to clarify specific matters in the submitted Application.

DSHS reserves the right to waive minor administrative irregularities contained in any Applicant Application.

SECTION E

DEBRIEFING AND PROTEST PROCEDURE

1. Debriefing Conferences

No later than 5:00 PM (Pacific Time) on the third (3rd) business day following the posted announcement of Successful Applicant(s) on WEBS, or from the date of the letter, or by the date and time specified in the letter, Applicants may send an email to the RFQ Coordinator requesting a Debriefing Conference. Unless a different date is agreed upon by the RFQ Coordinator, the Debriefing Conference will be held on a date designated in Section C.1., Procurement Schedule, or by the date and time specified in the letter.

Discussion at the Debriefing Conference will be limited to the review of the Applicant's Application based on qualification requirements and prior contract performance (if applicable).

DSHS will not identify other Applicants or allow review of their Applications or application review during the Debriefing Conference, which shall be conducted by telephone and shall last for a maximum period of thirty (30) minutes.

2. Grounds and Filing of Protests

An Applicant who has participated in a Debriefing Conference may file a formal Protest. A Protest may be made on these grounds only:

- a. Bias, discrimination or conflict of interest on the part of the evaluator or in the process; or
- b. Non-compliance with procedures described in the RFQ document

Protests must be emailed to the RFQ Coordinator and must be received no later than 5:00 PM (Pacific Time) on the fifth (5th) business day following the day of the Applicant's Debriefing Conference. The Protest must adhere to the requirements set forth in this Section or it will not be considered. This Protest procedure constitutes the sole administrative remedy available to Applicants from DSHS under this RFQ.

Protests must include the protestor's mailing address and phone number and the name of the individual responsible for filing the Protest. The Protest must state the RFQ number and title, the grounds for the Protest, specific facts to support these grounds, and a description of the relief or corrective action being requested.

Protests not based on one of the grounds set forth in this Section will be rejected. It is not grounds for a protest to question an evaluator's professional judgment on the quality of a Response or DSHS' assessment of its own needs or requirements.

3. DSHS Protest Review Process

The RFQ Coordinator will immediately forward any Protest to the Chief of Central Contracts and Legal Services to assign to a Protest RFQ Coordinator for review. The Protest RFQ Coordinator, an individual who was not involved in the RFQ, will consider the record and all available facts and will endeavor to issue a decision within ten (10)

business days following receipt of the Protest. If additional time is required, the protesting party will be notified of the delay.

In the event a Protest may involve the conduct of or information submitted by another Applicant that also submitted a Response, such Applicant will be given an opportunity to submit its views and any relevant information on the issue(s) raised by the protest to the RFQ Coordinator.

4. Determination of Protests

The Protest RFQ Coordinator shall issue a written determination regarding the Protest. This written determination shall include one or more of the following determinations:

- a. Upholding DSHS' determination of the Apparent Successful Applicant(s) on the basis that there are insufficient facts to establish the alleged error; or
- b. Upholding DSHS' determination of the Apparent Successful Applicant(s) on the basis that there are only technical or harmless errors in DSHS' review process; or
- c. Finding errors and identifying actions which may be taken by DSHS, such as:
 - (1) Correction of errors and reevaluation of all applications;
 - (2) Cancellation and reissuance of the RFQ (in which case all the Applicants will be notified); or
 - (3) Other corrective actions as may be appropriate

There is no further administrative process or remedy available within DSHS to appeal the determination that resulted in a Protest. If the protesting party does not accept DSHS' determination, the protesting party can seek relief from Superior Court in Thurston County, WA.

SECTION F APPLICATION CONTENTS

Applicants must answer all questions and must include all items requested in the order requested for the Application to be considered responsive. Applicants must address every section of this RFQ.

1. Administrative Requirements

Applicants wishing to provide services must:

- a. Review all of the enclosed material;
- b. Submit completed required documents and copies of additional required documentation to the appropriate RFQ Coordinator identified on page 1 of this RFQ; and
- c. Submit the following regarding Prior Contract Performance:

- (1) Full details of all Terminations for Default experienced by the Applicant in the past five (5) years, including the other party's name, address, and telephone number.

"Termination for Default" is defined as notice to Applicant to stop performance due to the Applicant's non-performance or poor performance and the issue was either: (a) not litigated; or (b) litigated and such litigation determined the Applicant to be in default.

- (2) Description of the deficiencies in performance, and describe whether and how the deficiencies were remedied. Applicants must present any other information pertinent to its position on the matter.

DSHS will review the information and may, at its sole discretion, reject the Applicant's Application if the information indicates that completion of a Contract or Statement of Work resulting from this RFQ may be jeopardized by selection of the Applicant.

2. Application Requirements

Applicants must respond to each item in the same order in which they appear.

- a. Complete and submit the following:
 - (1) Exhibit A – Application Checklist
 - (2) Exhibit B – Acknowledgment of Professional Qualifications
 - (3) Exhibit C - Statement of Agreement
 - (4) Exhibit D - Contractor Intake
 - (5) Exhibit E – Applicant Certification and Assurances

- b. Current copy of medical or psychological license;
- c. Current copy of the State of Washington Business License; and
- d. A curriculum vitae (CV)/resume. The CV/resume must detail experience with the required skills listed in Section A.4., Qualification Requirements, of this RFQ.

SECTION G CONTRACT PROCEDURES

1. Background Checks

Individuals who will be performing the Contract will be required to undergo background checks. Individuals who have disqualifying results (showing crimes and/or negative actions) may not be permitted to provide Services under the Contract.

2. Electronic Payment

The State prefers to utilize electronic payment in its transactions. The successful Applicant will be required to register in the Statewide Vendor Payment system, <https://ofm.wa.gov/it-systems/statewide-vendorpayee-services>, prior to submitting a request for payment under their Contract. No payment shall be made until the registration is completed.

3. Contract Award

At the sole discretion of DSHS, DSHS shall designate an individual or team to review Applications.

DSHS may consider past and/or current performance of any DSHS contracts by an Applicant, and any experience of the program or DSHS in working with an Applicant under any past and/or current contract with DSHS.

All Applicants may be subject to an interview.

Applicant awarded a Contract shall be officially notified as an Apparent Successful Applicant.

4. Notification to Applicants

DSHS shall notify Apparent Successful Applicants within forty-five (45) business days after receipt of the properly completed Application. Notifications will be in writing and will include the Contract for the Applicant's signature.

DSHS shall notify Apparent Unsuccessful Applicants by letter within forty-five (45) business days after receipt of the properly completed Application.

5. Contract Execution

Apparently Successful Applicant(s) is expected to sign a Contract with DSHS that is substantially the same as Exhibit F, Sample Contract, included with this RFQ, and enter into any subsequent Contract Amendments that may be required to address specific work or services.

If the Apparently Successful Applicant fails or refuses to sign the Contract or any subsequent Contract Amendment within ten (10) business days of delivery, or by the date and time specified by DSHS, DSHS may elect to cancel the award.