**STATE OF MAINE REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

**RFP AMENDMENT # 1 AND**

**RFP INFORMATIONAL MEETING AND**

**SUBMITTED QUESTIONS & ANSWERS SUMMARY**

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| **RFP NUMBER AND TITLE:** | RFP 202410183 Youth Peer Support Statewide Network |
| **RFP ISSUED BY:** | Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Child and Family Services |
| **INFORMATIONAL MEETING LOCATION and DATE/TIME:** | ZOOM Meeting, November 1, 2024, 1:00 p.m., local time |
| **SUBMITTED QUESTIONS DUE DATE:** | November 5, 2024, no later than 11:59 p.m., local time |
| **AMENDMENT AND QUESTION & ANSWER SUMMARY ISSUED:** | November 15, 2024 |
| **PROPOSAL DUE DATE:** | November 26, 2024, no later than 11:59 p.m., local time |
| **PROPOSALS DUE TO:** | proposals@maine.gov  |
| **Unless specifically addressed below, all other provisions and clauses of the RFP remain unchanged.** |
| **DESCRIPTION OF CHANGES IN RFP:**1. Part II, A.1.b.i. is revised.
2. Part II, A.1.d. is revised.
3. Part II, A.1.f. is revised.
4. Part II, B.2.b.v. is revised.
5. Part II, B.3. is revised.
6. Part II, C.1.a. is revised.
7. Part II, C.2.b. is revised.
8. Part II, C.2.c. is revised.
9. Part II, C.2.e. is revised.
10. Part II, C.2.f. is removed in its entirety.
11. Part II, D.1.d. is revised.
12. Part II, D.2. is revised.
13. Part II, E.1.a.ii. is revised.
14. Part II, L.1.a. is removed in its entirety.
15. Part II, L.1.b. is revised.
16. Part II, L.1.e.ii. is revised.
17. Part II, L.1.e.iii. is removed in its entirety.
18. Part II, L.1.e.vi. is removed in its entirety.
19. Part II, L.1. adds language.
20. Part II, M. Performance Measure g. is revised
21. **APPENDIX F** Response to Proposed Services Template is revised to incorporate the revised language.
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| **REVISED LANGUAGE IN RFP:**1. *Part II, A.1.b.i. is amended to read:*
	* 1. Provide a venue(s) in each Region for Peer Support Drop-In Activities occurring outside of the Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. operating hours.
2. *Part II, A.1.d. is amended to read:*
3. Ensure one-on-on (1:1) Youth Peer Support is provided Statewide, including in most rural areas of the State.
4. *Part II, A.1.f. is amended to read:*
5. Ensure staff providing YPSSN supports and activities are located in the Region being served.
6. *Part II, B.2.b.v. is amended to read:*
	* + - 1. Documentation for each Youth contact;
7. *Part II, B.3. is amended to read:*
8. Develop and implement, within thirty (30) calendar days of the start of the initial period of performance, Department-approved policies and procedures to:
	1. Determine supports offered and accepted by each Youth;
	2. Determine how supports are being offered and tracked; and
	3. Ensure Youth participating in YPSSN services are connected to requested services within ten (10) calendar days once the Youth agree to participate.
9. *Part II, C.1.a. is amended to read:*
	1. Provide one hundred five (105) Drop-in Opportunity hours in each Region, annually.
10. *Part II, C.2.b. is amended to read:*
11. Focusing on areas identified by the Youth in the Maine Evaluation Tool as well as those the Youth want to work on.
12. *Part II, C.2.c. is amended to read:*
13. Providing information and resources requested by the Youth.
14. *Part II, C.2.e. is amended to read:*
15. Supporting Youth in settings identified by the Youth as being areas and settings where they would like support.
16. *Part II, D.1.d. is amended to read:*
17. Other educational opportunities.
18. *Part II, D.2. is amended to read:*
19. Organize and facilitate at minimum, four hundred forty (440) hours of annual Statewide workshops, including Social/Educational Events, Drop-in Opportunities, and meetings for Youth in areas of interest which may include but is not limited:
	1. Youth involvement in Youth Advisory Boards;
	2. How to engage Youth in YPSSN programming;
	3. Working with YPSSN staff to involve Youth in decision-making; and
	4. How to foster leadership development among Youth*.*
20. *Part II, E.1.a.ii. is amended to read:*
21. Work on needs assessments and collaboration with the YPSSN to facilitate advocacy-based projects and provide educational opportunities for Youth receiving YPSSN support;
22. *Part II, L.1.b. is amended to read:*
23. Working closely with the Center for Excellence to ensure all YPSSN staff are appropriately trained and certified within one year of employment, and maintain certification, in the Peer Connect training and all portions of the associated learning collaborative:
	* 1. Ensure YPSSN staff are enrolled or participating in the Peer Connect training within thirty (30) days of providing Peer support services and complete the entire forty (40) hours of core training.
		2. Ensure YPSSN supervisors are enrolled in the Peer Connect Supervisor training within sixty (60) days of supervising Youth Peer Support specialists and complete the entire twenty (20) hours of training.
		3. Ensure YPSSN staff become Maine Peer Connect-certified within the first (1st) year of providing Peer support services.
		4. Ensure YPSSN staff annually complete required Peer Connect Learning Collaborative components, to maintain Maine certification.
24. *Part II, L.1.d.ii. is amended to read:*
25. Instruction on creating a contact note;
26. *Part II, L.1. adds:*
	1. Review the overview of the Department’s [Children’s Behavioral Health Programs and Services](https://www1.maine.gov/dhhs/obh/support-services/childrens-behavioral-health/programs-services).
27. *Part II, M. Performance Measure g. is amended to read:*

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| ***g.*** | Eighty percent (80%) of one-on-one (1:1) Youth Peer Support participants receiving support from the YPSSN will report satisfaction with the support received. | Quarterly | Youth Satisfaction Survey |

1. ***APPENDIX F*** *Response to Proposed Services template is replaced in its entirety.*

**The revised response to proposed services template may be obtained in a Word (.docx) format by double clicking on the document icon below.** |

**Provided below are questions asked at the Informational Meeting and the Department’s answers.**

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| **1** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, J.1. Page 16 | Can the 40 hours a week position be split between staff? |
| **Answer** |
| It is at the Bidder’s discretion. |

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| **2** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, A.1.b. Page 11 | Is the one location per Region required to be a standalone or designated office/location or can it be moved from the Regions location to location? |
| **Answer** |
| The one location per Region is required to be a standalone/designated office/location. |

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| **3** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, C.1.a. Page 12 | Reads “Within ninety (90) calendar days of the start of the initial period of performance, provide one hundred five (105) annual drop-in hours in each Region.”Is this accurate? |
| **Answer** |
| No, refer to the amended language at the beginning of this document and within the revised **Appendix F**. |

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| **4** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, C.2.i. Page 12 | What are the implications/repercussions of the awarded Agency if Youth are not willing to provide a survey? |
| **Answer** |
| The Department expects Bidders to propose a plan to ensures Youth participate in responding to the Maine Peer Evaluation Tool. In the event high numbers of Youth refuse to respond to the Maine Peer Evaluation Tool, the Department will work with the awarded Bidder to determine a new approach. |

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| **5** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, B.2.a. Page 11 | Does the initial contact from referral needs to be completed within five (5) business days or is this an attempt to contact within five (5) business days?  |
| **Answer** |
| The Department expects Youth will receive an initial attempt to contact within five (5) business days of the referral from Youth or community providers. |

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| **6** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, M. Table 1, d. Page 18 | States, 45% of youth response to the Youth Satisfaction survey.1. Is there any research that the Department has to back up the 45%?
2. Who will be given the survey, Youth in drop in spaces, Youth in 1:1 peer support?
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| **Answer** |
| 1. No, the forty-five percent (45%) performance measure is a Department expectation.
2. The Youth Satisfaction Survey is expected to be given to Youth receiving 1:1 Peer Support.
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| **7** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, M. Table 1, g. Page 18 | Supportive documentation references Maine Peer Evaluation Tool Results, should this be Youth Satisfaction Survey Results? |
| **Answer** |
| Yes. |

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| **8** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, E.1.a.ii. Page 13 | What is the required needs assessment? |
| **Answer** |
| Refer to the amended language at the beginning of this document. This needs assessment is an assessment of community needs completed by the Regional Youth Advisory groups. The Youth will determine how they want to complete this. |

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| **9** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, L.1.a. Page 17 | Will the Department provide the content of the curriculum? |
| **Answer** |
| This requirement has been removed in its entirety, refer to amended language at the beginning of this document. |

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| **10** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, L.1.e.ii. Page 17 | Can the Department provide clarity on the training requirement for instructions on creating a progress note? |
| **Answer** |
| “Progress” has been revised to “contact”, refer to amended language at the beginning of this document. |

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| **11** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, L.1.e.vi. Page 17 | Is motivational training required for each Youth Peer Support Specialist? |
| **Answer** |
| This requirement has been removed in its entirety, refer to amended language at the beginning of this document. |

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| **12** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, L.1.e.iii. Page 17 | Is this the correct link to the CBHS training? |
| **Answer** |
| This requirement has been removed in its entirety, refer to amended language at the beginning of this document. |

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| **13** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Exhibit 1, Page 8 | 1. Are Youth Peer Support services currently within each region?
2. If so, who are the providers of each Region?
3. If not, which regions currently have this service and who is the provider(s)?
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| **Answer** |
| 1. Yes.
2. Maine Behavioral Health currently provides the Statewide services.
3. N/A
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| **14** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Exhibit 1, Page 8 | Is the estimated unduplicated count of youth served based on actuals from the current contract, or are these numbers higher and/or lower than what is currently being delivered? |
| **Answer** |
| The estimated unduplicated count of youth served is higher than what is currently being delivered. |

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| **15** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Exhibit 1, Page 8 | Are the estimated minimum hours of service based on actuals from the current contract, or are these numbers higher and/or lower than what is currently being delivered? |
| **Answer** |
| The estimated minimum hours of services are higher than what is currently being delivered. |

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| **16** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Exhibit 1, Page 8 | In calendar year 2023, how many unduplicated youths were served in each region? |
| **Answer** |
| From 10/1/2023 to 9/30/2024 there were 248 unduplicated Youth served in 1:1 Peer Support and 169 unduplicated Youth served in groups and events Statewide. The Department does not have this data by region.  |

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| **17** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, A.1.a.Page 11 | Are the office hours of 8am-5pm Monday through Friday referring to general office hours, or do those hours need to be drop-in hours? For example, could you hold office of hours of 8am-5pm and have drop-in hours be 9am-11am and 2pm-5pm – as an example? |
| **Answer** |
| General office hours must be 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., excluding [State holidays](https://www.maine.gov/bhr/state-employees/holiday-schedule) and administrative closings, while Drop-in Opportunities may vary. |

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| **18** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, A.1.b.Page 11 | Is there a preference as to the location of the office location (Peer Support Center) in each region? |
| **Answer** |
| It is at the Bidder’s discretion. |

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| **19** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, A.1.b.i.Page 11 | The RFP reads, “Provide a venue(s) in each Region for Peer Support Activities occurring outside of the Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. operating hours.” Can this be the same location as the regional Peer Support Center location? |
| **Answer** |
| It is at the Bidder’s discretion |

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| **20** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, A.1.b.i. Page 11 | The RFP reads, “Provide a venue(s) in each Region for Peer Support Activities …” Can the venue be a public space, or a space that does not belong to the awarded agency? |
| **Answer** |
| It is at the Bidder’s discretion. |

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|  **21** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, A.1.d. Page 11 | Is the expectation that one-on-one Youth Peer Support be provided only within the Peer Support Center or is the expectation that the YouthPeer Support Specialist travel to other communities to reach youth in need of services? |
| **Answer** |
| The Department expects Youth Peer Support to be provided in a manner that best meets the Youth’s needs. |

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| **22** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| N/A | In calendar year 2023, how many unduplicated youths were provided with one-on-one peer support services in each region?  |
| **Answer** |
| Refer to the answer to question 16 of this document. |

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| **23** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| N/A | In calendar year 2023, how many unduplicated youths attended peer recovery groups in each region? |
| **Answer** |
| Peer Recovery Groups are not a requirement of the YPSSN. |

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| **24** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, A.1.f. Page 11 | The RFP reads, “Ensure staff providing YPSSN supports and activities are located in the specific communities being served.” With the requirement of only one center/office in each region, is the expectation that staff are hired from communities across the region and based out of their homes? |
| **Answer** |
| The Department expects staff will be hired from communities across the Regions. It is at the Bidder’s discretion to determine the staff work location(s). |

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| **25** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, B.2.a. Page 11 | The RFP reads, “Ensuring Youth receive initial contact within five (5) business days of the referral from Youth or community providers.” Is phone contact an approved mode of contact? |
| **Answer** |
| Yes. |

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| **26** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, B.2.b.viii.Page 12 | Is a youth’s parental consent required? |
| **Answer** |
| Yes, parental consent is required for any Youth under the age of 18. |

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| **27** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| N/A | Who is responsible for coordinating transportation for youth to the Peer Support Center (for drop-in/groups/peer support activities)?  |
| **Answer** |
| The Department expects the awarded Bidder to coordinate transportation for Youth. |

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| **28** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| N/A | Who is responsible for assuming transportation costs for youth as they pertain to accessing the peer support activities offered at the Peer Support Center?  |
| **Answer** |
| Costs related to providing transportation to Youth participating in YPSSN activities must be included in the Bidder’s Cost form. |

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| **29** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, B.3.a. Page 12 | What are the levels of service? How are levels of service determined?  |
| **Answer** |
| Refer to amended language at the beginning of this document. |

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| **30** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, B.3 b. Page 12 | The RFP reads, “Connecting Youth to YPSSN services within ten (10) calendar days of the request.” Does connecting refer to the youth attending a peer support activity and/or being offered the opportunity to attend a peer support activity? |
| **Answer** |
| Yes. |

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| **31** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, C.2.a. Page 12 | The RFP reads, “Providing Statewide one-on-one (1:1) Youth Peer Support to a minimum of fifty (50) eligible Youth per Region annually.” Can this service be provided virtually?  |
| **Answer** |
| The Department expects 1:1 to be provided face to face as often as possible. When face to face is not possible, providing a virtual 1:1 is acceptable. |

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| **32** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, C.2.i. Page 12  | 1. Is there a cost for the Maine Peer Evaluation Tool?
2. How will applicants access this document (i.e. is it online, provided in paper form, etc.? Can a copy of this tool be provided to applicants?
 |
| **Answer** |
| 1. No.
2. Refer to Appendix H of the RFP.
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| **33** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, D.1.Page 13  | 1. Is the preference for workshops to be in-person or virtual?
2. If in person, who is responsible for coordinating transportation for each attendee?
3. Who is responsible for transportation costs for each attendee?
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| **Answer** |
| 1. It is at the Bidder’s discretion.
2. Refer to the answer to question 27 of this document.
3. Refer to the answer to question 28 of this document
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| **34** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, E.Page 13  | Are the regional and statewide Peer Youth Advisory Boards permitted to meet virtually if they so desire?  |
| **Answer** |
| It is at the Bidder’s discretion. |

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| **35** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, H.1.Page 14  | Can the website consist of a page attached to the applicant’s existing organization website? |
| **Answer** |
| No, the Department expects the YPSSN website to be a standalone website. |

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| **36** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, H.3. Page 14 | The RFP states, “Provide accommodations to Youth and others who request interpreter services.” Is the applicant responsible for interpreter costs? |
| **Answer** |
| Yes. |

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| **37** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, J.1. Page 16 | The RFP states, “Ensure the YPSSN program is staffed with full-time, (forty (40) hours a week), Youth Peer Support staff and supervisors (including Youth and young Adults) who have Lived Experience.” Can the full-time positions be split between multiple staff (i.e. instead of one full-time staff member two part-time staff members at 20 hours a week, etc.)? |
| **Answer** |
| It is at the Bidder’s discretion. |

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| **38** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, J.1. Page 16 | The RFP states, “Ensure the YPSSN program is staffed with full-time, (forty (40) hours a week), Youth Peer Support staff and supervisors (including Youth and young Adults) who have Lived Experience.” 1. Supervisors is plural – is there a supervisor to supervisee ratio that is recommended?
2. How many supervisors are there in the program (held by the current provider)?
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| **Answer** |
| 1. No.
2. The Department declines to answer, Bidders should propose a reasonable supervisor to Youth Peer Support staff ration.
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| **39** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, J.1.Page 16  | Can any YPSSN program staff work across programs within the agency? |
| **Answer** |
| It is at the Bidder’s discretion to propose a staffing plan which meet the needs of the YPSSN programming. |

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| **40** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, J.2.d. Page 16 | 1. Is there certification costs for Peer Connect that the agency needs to absorb (for both the Peer Connect and Peer Connect for Supervisors)?
2. Are there any additional costs pertaining to the Peer Connect training that the agency needs to absorb (i.e. training materials, etc.)?
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| **Answer** |
| 1. No.
2. No.
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| **41** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, J.2.d. Page 16 | 1. Are Peer Connect and Peer Connect for Supervisors Trainings offered virtually or in-person?
2. If in person, where are they held?
3. How many hours of training are required a year to maintain certification, and are those hours in-person or virtual?
 |
| **Answer** |
| 1. Currently, these trainings are offered virtually.
2. If the Department offers future in-person trainings, the location will be determined at that time.
3. The Peer Connect Youth Peer Support Core training is 40 yours and the Youth Peer Support Supervisor core training is 20 hours, both currently being offered virtually.
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| **42** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, J.2.d. Page 16 | How many hours is the initial Peer Connect training? |
| **Answer** |
| Refer to answer in question 41 of this document. |

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| **43** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, J.2.d. Page 16 | 1. Are trainings required throughout the year to maintain Peer Connect certification?
2. If so, how many hours of training are required, are they provided by the Department, and are those hours in-person or virtual?
 |
| **Answer** |
| 1. Yes.
2. Currently, the Peer Connect Maine Certification trainings are provided virtually by the Department, and include:
* Youth Peer Support Specialists:
* 40-hour core Peer Connect Training
* 4-Youth Peer Co-Reflection session annually (1 per quarter)
* 2-Youth Peer Provider Professional Development sessions annually
* Youth Peer Support Specialist Supervisors:
* 20-hour core Peer Connect Supervisor Training
* 4-Youth Peer Leadership Co-Reflection sessions annually (1 per quarter)
* 2-Youth Peer Leadership Professional Development session annually
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| **44** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part IV, Section III, Page 25 (required attachments grid) | Are job descriptions required only for the Youth Peer Support staff and supervisors or also for positions of oversight (i.e. Program Director, Executive Director, etc.)? |
| **Answer** |
| Job descriptions are required for all project staff, including the project lead(s), refer to Appendix F Response Submission Template. |

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| **45** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Appendix C Page 32 | Is there a page limit to Appendix C? |
| **Answer** |
| No. |

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| **46** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Appendix C Page 32 | Are tables allowed in Appendix C? |
| **Answer** |
| It is at the Bidder’s discretion. |

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| **47** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Appendix C Page 32 | Are there formatting requirements/restrictions in Appendix C? |
| **Answer** |
| No, however Bidders must include any forms provided in the submission package or reproduce those forms as closely as possible.  |

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| **48** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Appendix C Page 32 | Should Appendix C be single or double-spaced? |
| **Answer** |
| It is at the Bidder’s discretion. |

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| **49** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Appendix F Page 36 | Is there a page limit to Appendix F? |
| **Answer** |
| No. |

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| **50** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Appendix F Page 36 | Are tables allowed in Appendix F? |
| **Answer** |
| It is at the Bidder’s discretion. |

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| **51** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Appendix F Page 36 | Are there formatting requirements/restrictions in Appendix F? |
| **Answer** |
| No, however Bidders must include any forms provided in the submission package or reproduce those forms as closely as possible.  |

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| **52** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Appendix F Page 36 | Should Appendix F be single or double-spaced? |
| **Answer** |
| It is at the Bidder’s discretion. |

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| **53** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Exhibit 1. Page 8 | 1. Does the Department intend to incorporate the totals in this table for 1:1, drop-in, groups, community activity into the contracts of the awarded bidder? Therefore, making these required totals for contract compliance.
2. If the Department will not put these in the contract, what will be required?
3. The 1:1 requirement is doubled from what the current YPSSN contract requires, can the Department provide any rational for doubling the quantity of 1:1?
4. Has the Department allocated additional funding to support organizations to meet these additional, doubled, requirements?
5. Can these totals be pro-rated in year 1 for the 90-start-up period?
 |
| **Answer** |
| 1. The totals in Exhibit 1 are estimates. Bidders are encouraged to propose an annual estimated unduplicated count of Youth to be served and the minimum hours of services for providing YPSSN services in each Region.
2. The Department will negotiate the terms of the contract with the awarded Bidder.
3. The Department declines to answer
4. The Department declines to answer.
5. The Department will negotiate the terms of the contract with the awarded Bidder.
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| **54** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, A.1.b.Page 11 | Item B states there need to be one location per region with activities occurring outside of 8am-5pm (Monday through Friday), which is under item A.1 – which states the bidder needs to have an administrative office open during M-F 8am-5pm 1. Is the Department requiring that the awarded bidder has a location in each region that is both an administrative office open 8am-5pm M-F as well as a location that has activities outside of those hours?
2. Or does the awarded bidder need to have only one administrative office open M-F 8am-5pm and can have regional locations that offer activities outside those hours?
3. Can the regional locations move locations as activities are planned? Essentially, allowing the bidder to identify spaces that fit the needs of the activities instead of securing one static location?
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| **Answer** |
| 1. No.
2. Correct.
3. Yes, Drop-in Activities may move locations, refer to the amended language at the beginning of this document.
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| **55** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, A.1.d.Page 11 | The item states: Ensure one-on-on (1:1) Youth Peer Support is provided Statewide, including in most remote areas of the State. 1. Does it meet the Department’s expectations for 1:1 in the most remote areas to be solely virtual? As a staffing plan that includes the most remote areas would result in dozens of youth peer staff. Is the Department looking to fund that level of staffing to reach those remote areas?
2. Can the Department define “remote areas”?
3. What criteria will the Department use to determine if an awarded bidder has met this requirement?
 |
| **Answer** |
| 1. Refer to the answer to question 31 of this document.
2. Refer to the amended language at the beginning of the document. Generally, rural areas in Maine include a geographical area or place of less than 10,000 individuals.
3. Understanding providing services in rural areas of the State is challenging, the Department expects the awarded Bidder to make every effort to provide YPSSN services to Youth in rural areas.
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| **56** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, A.1.f.Page 11 | The item states: Ensure staff providing YPSSN supports and activities are located in the specific communities being served. Since this is a statewide initiative, this is vague and challenging, it seems to suggest bidders need to hire staff who live in the communities where the awarded bidder provides YPSSN services – which are, at their core, activities that are statewide and move locations/communities based on the nature of the activity and interests of the youth providing feedback – therefore, this would essentially require us to have staff move homes. * 1. What does the Department intend by this requirement?
	2. Is the Department expecting the awarded bidder to hire staff in any community where the YPSSN ends up having activities?
1. How will the Department determine if the awarded bidder has successfully met this requirement?
2. What criteria will the Department use to determine this?
 |
| **Answer** |
| * 1. The Department expects staff to be located in the Region being served, refer to the amended language at the beginning of this document.
	2. No, refer to the amended language at the beginning of this document.
	3. The Department declines to answer.
	4. The Department declines to answer.
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| **57** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, B.2.a.Page 11 | Does the Department mean “attempted” initial contact within five (5) business days? Is this a typo/error? |
| **Answer** |
| Refer to the answer to question 5 of this document. |

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| **58** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, B.2.b.v.Page 12 | Can the Department clarify what data is included to meet the requirement of “Plan for individualized documentation of services for each youth contact? 1. Is this a treatment plan equivalent?
2. What is to be documented?
3. Is this to document what activities they are planning to and/or have participated in?
4. Will the Department require access to or ever request youth’s individual documentation of services?
 |
| **Answer** |
| 1. There is no treatment plans required under this RFP, refer to the amended language at the beginning of this document.
2. Any contact with Youth, refer to the amended language at the beginning of this document.
3. Yes.
4. The Department may request access to or ask for a Youth’s individual documentation of services.
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| **59** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, B.3.b.Page 12 | The item states: Connecting Youth to YPSSN services within ten (10) calendar days of the request. * 1. Does this mean “attempt to connect” or “provide information and support to connect” youth to YPSSN services? As we cannot force or “make” a youth join the services they are planning to attend.
1. Can the Department clarify what criteria they would use to assess whether a bidder has successfully met this requirement?
 |
| **Answer** |
| * 1. Refer to the amended language at the beginning of this document.
	2. The Department declines to answer.
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| **60** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, C.1.a.Page 12 | The item states: Within ninety (90) calendar days of the start of the initial period of performance, provide one hundred five (105) annual drop-in hours in each Region.1. This states that all drop-in hours must be completed in the first 90 days. Is this an error? If it is an error, what is the Department asking here?
2. Can these hours be prorated for year 1, given the expressed 90 day start up period?
 |
| **Answer** |
| 1. Refer to the amended language at the beginning of this document.
2. No, refer to the amended language at the beginning of this document.
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| **61** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, C.2.i.Page 12 | The item states: Administering the Department-approved Maine Peer Evaluation Tool to Youth receiving one-on-one (1:1) Youth Peer Support:* + - * 1. Within the baseline (first couple) visits of the Youth’s intake;
				2. Every three (3) months of the Youth’s participation; and
				3. When the Youth is discharged.
1. If youth refuse to complete the 50+ question evaluation tool at any point, will the awarded bidder be required discharge the youth from 1:1 peer support?
2. If they are to be discharged and they still refuse to complete the evaluation tool at discharge, will the awarded bidder be penalized for this?
3. What evidence, research, or best practices have been used to determine that the number of questions (50+) in the Maine Peer Evaluation Tool are appropriate for this type of service and for this age group?
4. What evidence, research or best practices can the Department site that the frequency of surveys, including the satisfaction survey (every 3 months) and Maine Peer Evaluation Tool (at baseline, every three months, at discharge), are appropriate for this age group or people in general?
5. Will the awarded bidder be penalized if a youth declines one of the 3-month surveys/evaluation tool requests made by YPSSN staff or if they decline at discharge?

Typically, youth/young adults self-discharge from peer support, which means they are no longer wanting to engage and, therefore, often do not want to complete a survey/evaluation tool. 1. Will the awarded bidder be penalized for this?
2. If so, in what ways will they be penalized?
3. Will all the other surveys related to this person still be counted?
 |
| **Answer** |
| 1. No.
2. N/A.
3. The Department declines to answer.
4. The Department declines to answer.
5. Refer to the answer to question 4 of this document.
6. Refer to the answer to question 4 of this document.
7. N/A.
8. It depends, this will be determined on a case-by-case basis.
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| **62** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, D.1.c.Page 13 | 1. Can the Department define “cultural exposure”?
2. Can you provide examples of activities that you are referring to here?
 |
| **Answer** |
| 1. The experience of being in different cultural environments and learning about other cultures.
2. The Department expects the awarded Bidder to develop activities based on feedback from the Youth Satisfaction Survey, Maine Peer Evaluation Tool and feedback from Youth.
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| **63** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, D.1.d.Page 13 | 1. Can the Department define “other educational foundations”?
2. Can you provide examples of activities you are referring to here?
 |
| **Answer** |
| 1. Refer to the amended language at the beginning of this document.
2. The Department expects the awarded Bidder to develop educational activities based on feedback from the Youth Satisfaction Survey, Maine Peer Evaluation Tool and feedback from youth.
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| **64** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, D.2.Page 13 | It states: Organize and facilitate 756 hours of annual statewide workshops, including social/educational events, drop-in opportunities, and meetings for youth….” 1. Can the Department clarify where total of 756 hours comes from? What is to be included in that total specifically?
2. Does it include the 440 hours of Drop-in, Groups, and community activities listed in Exhibit A?
3. If so, are the remaining hours other workshops or something else?
4. Does “meetings for youth” include the advisory meetings and, therefore, can be added to this total?
 |
| **Answer** |
| 1. Refer to the amended language at the beginning of this document.
2. Refer to the amended language at the beginning of this document.
3. N/A
4. Yes.
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| **65** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, E.1.a.iv.Page 13 | It states: “Provide educational opportunities”1. What is the Department’s definition of educational opportunities?
2. Can the Department provide examples of potential activities that meet this requirement?
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| **Answer** |
| 1. Any opportunity for Youth to learn.
2. Educational opportunities will be determined by the Regional Peer Youth Advisory Boards.
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| **66** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, E.1.a.ii.Page 13 | Can the Department define “needs assessment” and any practices that would align with your intentions for this requirement? |
| **Answer** |
| Refer to the answer in question 8 of this document. |

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| **67** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, H.1.Page 14 | Is this a standalone website or can it be a page of an organization’s website? |
| **Answer** |
| Refer to the answer in question 35 of this document. |

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| **68** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, J.2.a.Page 16 | Item states that the YPSSN Project Lead must have a bachelor’s degree. There are multiple past/present Directors of “Peer Support” who do not have bachelor’s degrees as well as multiple Department employed peer support experts without these degrees. It is common that the expertise and training needed to oversee and manage peer support can be gained outside of academic institutions (given the lack of access, many experience related to being low-income, poverty, criminal justice involvement, personal mental health challenges, etc.). 1. Can the Department explain why this is a requirement for the YPSSN Project Lead?
2. What is the intention of this requirement, given its not required even in the Department’s current internal hiring practices for peer support contract and training oversight?
 |
| **Answer** |
| 1. The Department has determined these requirements are reasonable and appropriate for the YPSSN Project Lead.
2. The Department declines to answer.
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| **69** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, L.1.a.Page 17 | Will the Department provide the curriculum for the two-day youth specific training? Or is the awarded bidder expected to create this? |
| **Answer** |
| Refer to the answer to question 9 of this document. |

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| **70** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, L.1.e.iii. Page 17 | There is no training on the website linked called “CBHS – A system overview”. Can the Department clarify what trainings on this webpage are required to be completed by the youth? |
| **Answer** |
| Refer to the answer to question 12 of this document. |

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| **71** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, L.1.e.ii. Page17 | * 1. Can the Department define “progress note”?
	2. Will the Department have access to youth’s progress notes?
	3. If so, will the Department at any time read individual Youth’s progress notes?
	4. If so, under what circumstances?
	5. Can the Department provide an example of a progress note that is aligned with the Peer Connect training?
 |
| **Answer** |
| * 1. Refer to the answer to question 10 of this document.
	2. Refer to the answer to question 58.d. of this document.
	3. Yes, the Department may request to review a Youth’s file.
	4. Request for file reviews is the Department’s discretion.
	5. N/A.
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| **72** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| N/A | Since many activities in this RFP – individualized service plans, progress notes, and activities listed under Section C.2. are often seen in case management – will the Department allow bidders to hire case managers as part of this project? |
| **Answer** |
| No, refer to the amended language at the beginning of this document. |

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| **73** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, M. Table 1, d.Page 18 | Performance Measure d. – 45% of youth respond to youth satisfaction survey1. Can the Department provide any research, best practices, or other credible sources that were used to identify 45% response rate for youth as a reasonable expectation of bidders? Does this align with best practices and national or academic norms for this age group?
2. Who must be provided the satisfaction survey, only 1:1?
3. If it includes drop-in and other community activities where youth may have a less strong connection with the network, can you provide any sources/research that would suggest this 45% is realistic?
 |
| **Answer** |
| 1. Refer to the answer in question 6 of this document.
2. Youth receiving 1:1 Youth Peer Support
3. N/A
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| **74** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, M. Table 1, g.Page 18 | The data source listed is “Maine Peer Evaluation Tool Results” – is this an error? Is it actually the Satisfaction Survey? |
| **Answer** |
| Refer to the answer to question 7 of this document. |

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| **75** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, M. Table 1, c., e., f.Page 18 | 1. Can e. and f. count towards the 3 domains as described in c.?
2. Can the Department provide a rational as to why the awarded bidder must have each of the individual domains showing progress (e and f) as well as the over 3 domains? It seems redundant, so any clarity about why these are separated would be helpful to understand the Department’s intent for the success of this project
3. Youth experience a variety of impactful experiences at school, home, community, friend groups, etc. at any given time that will impact their scoring with “point-in-time” surveys like the Maine Peer Evaluation Tool. For example, if a youth has a major conflict with family, they will show a decrease in scoring if the tool is delivered that day – How does the Department take this into account given these performance measures?
 |
| **Answer** |
| 1. Yes.
2. Although the performance measures are related, they are distinctly different.
3. The Department will work with the awarded Bidder regarding these considerations.
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| **76** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, N. Table 2, b. and d. Page 19 | These reports have historically been reported on a quarterly basis. These both now say monthly expense reports and monthly program reports – 1. Has there been a change in practices for the Department on these types of reports generally or is this specific to the YPSSN?
2. Can the Department provide a rational for the increased administrative labor this will cause program leadership and finance departments?
 |
| **Answer** |
| 1. The Department has the discretion to determine reporting timelines for any individual contract/service agreement.
2. The Department declines to answer.
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| **77** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part III, E.3. File 4 Page 22 | The Department provides the cost proposal in an excel format. Can you confirm that you would prefer that bidders convert the file to a PDF for submission? |
| **Answer** |
| Cost forms may be provided in either an Excel or PDF format. |

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| **78** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| N/A | The RFP makes reference on multiple occasions to the System of Care Core Values and Principles, which need to be incorporated into all aspects of work within the YPSSN. The System of Care Core Values and Principles refer to Family-driven and youth-guided. 1. What role does the Department anticipate for family members of youth in this service?
2. Does the Department believe that family members should “drive” the care/services of youth in the YPSSN?
 |
| **Answer** |
| 1. One of the principles of System of Care is to build meaningful partnerships with family and Youth.
2. No.
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| **79** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| N/A | 1. How is this contract work evaluated by the state?
2. Does the department permit funding to be allocated towards the evaluation, including but not limited to the impacts of specified group programming and statewide/regional advocacy efforts?
 |
| **Answer** |
| 1. As this is outside of the scope of this RFP, the Department declines to answer.
2. No, evaluation is outside the scope of this RFP.
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| **80** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Definitions of Terms,Pages 4-6 | Youth and Young Adult are used throughout the RFP but "young adult" is not defined. Is there a minimum age restriction for Peer Support Specialists or any other age-specific restrictions or relevant distinctions between these terms? |
| **Answer** |
| The term Youth which includes “young adults” are defined as individual(s) between the ages of fourteen (14) and twenty-six (26). |

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| **81** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, B.2. & 3.Page 11 and 12 | 1. How does the Department see "different levels of service" within peer support programming?

The service agreement language also reads as distinct from typical peer support programs. 1. Would the Department consider a membership model instead which better reflects the research base and is more likely to engage the target population(s)?
 |
| **Answer** |
| 1. Refer to the amended language at the beginning of this document.
2. The Department will consider all proposals submitted in response to this RFP.
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| **82** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, L.1.e. Page 17 | Peer support providers are not case managers in nature, but the training requirement examples listed involve typical case manager learning such as Motivational Interviewing and/or writing case notes. Would the Department welcome an alternative and robust training menu for staff which better aligns with the research and requirements related to peer support models? |
| **Answer** |
| Refer to the amended language at the beginning of this document. The Department will consider all proposals submitted in response to this RFP. |

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| **83** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, D.2 Page 13 | Please clarify the target audience for the workshops/trainings. Are those 756 hours of training supposed to be for youth exclusively or does this list and those hours include trainings for staff/providers/state officials interfacing with youth communities? |
| **Answer** |
| Refer to the answer in question 64 of this document. |

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| **84** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part IV, Section II, 2. Page 23 | 1. If a consultant or subcontractor may be beneficial to programming but is not identifiable by the time of submission, will the Department welcome the addition of subcontractors/consultants post-award if beneficial to programming?
2. Could a letter of support from prospective partners be offered in lieu of the subcontractor form or in general support of a bidder’s application?
 |
| **Answer** |
| 1. Yes.
2. No, Bidders are not to provide additional attachments beyond those specified in the RFP for the purpose of extending their response. Additional materials not requested will not be considered part of the proposal and will not be evaluated.
 |