**STATE OF MAINE**

**Department of Health and Human Services**

*Office for Family Independence*



**RFP# 202501012**

**Employment Verification Services**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **RFP Coordinator** | **NAME:** | Stacy Martin  |
| **TITLE:** | Procurement Manager |
| **EMAIL:** | Stacy.martin@maine.gov  |
| *All communication regarding the RFP must be made through the RFP Coordinator.* |
| **Submitted Questions Due Date** | February 10, 2025, no later than 11:59 p.m., local time |
| *All questions must be received by the RFP Coordinator by the date and time listed above.*  |
| **Proposal Submission Deadline** | **DATE:** | February 26, 2025, no later than 11:59 p.m., local time. |
| **TO:** | Proposals@maine.gov |
| *Proposals must be received electronically by the Office of State Procurement Services by the date and time listed above.* |

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PUBLIC NOTICE

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**State of Maine**

**Department of Health and Human Services**

**RFP# 202501012**

**Employment Verification Services**

The State of Maine is seeking proposals for Employment Verification Services.

A copy of the RFP and all related documents can be obtained at: <https://www.maine.gov/dafs/bbm/procurementservices/vendors/rfps>

Proposals must be submitted to the Office of State Procurement Services, via e-mail, at: Proposals@maine.gov. Proposal submissions must be received no later than 11:59 p.m., local time, on February 26, 2025. Proposals will be opened the following business day.

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**RFP TERMS/ACRONYMS with DEFINITIONS**

The following terms and acronyms, as referenced in the RFP, have the meanings indicated below:

| **Term/Acronym** | **Definition** |
| --- | --- |
| **Confidentiality** | Preserving authorized restrictions on information access and disclosure, including means for protecting confidential or sensitive information. A loss of Confidentiality is the unauthorized disclosure of information. |
| **Data Classification**  | The process of risk assessment of data. See **Appendix G** (Technical Assessment Form) for the Data Classification process (see also “PII Confidentiality Impact Level”).  |
| **Department** | Maine’s Department of Health and Human Services |
| [**MaineIT**](https://www.maine.gov/oit/) | Maine’s Office of Information Technology |
| **Personally Identifiable Information (PII)** | Data maintained by an agency that could potentially identify a specific individual and needs to be protected in accordance with state and/or federal law, including:* any information that can be used to distinguish or trace an individual‘s identity, such as name, social security number, date and place of birth, mother‘s maiden name, or biometric records; and
* any other information that is linked or linkable to an individual, such as medical, educational, financial, and employment information.
 |
| **PII Confidentiality Impact Level**  | Includes low, moderate, or high levels and indicates the potential harm that could result to the subject individuals and/or the organization if PII were inappropriately accessed, used, or disclosed. (NIST SP 800-122). See **Appendix G** (Technical Assessment Form). PII is evaluated to determine its Confidentiality impact levels, so that appropriate safeguards can be applied to the PII.  |
| **Recovery Point Objective (RPO)** | The point-in-time to which an application must be restored subsequent to a disaster or disruption. |
| **Recovery Time Objective (RTO)**  | The duration-of-time within which an application must be restored subsequent to a disaster or disruption. |
| **RFP** | Request for Proposals |
| **State** | State of Maine |
| **State Data** | Any information originating with the State, regardless of form or medium of disclosure (e.g., verbal, observed, hard copy, or electronic) or source of information. State Data includes any information: * Concerning the State’s information technology infrastructure, systems and software and procedures; and
* Originating with the State in the course of using and configuring the services provided under the contract.

State Data includes any sensitive information held by the State that may be protected from disclosure pursuant to a federal or State statutory or regulatory scheme intended to protect that information, or pursuant to an order, resolution or determination of a court or administrative board or other administrative body.  |

**State of Maine**

**Department of Health and Human Services**

*Office for Family Independence*

**RFP# 202501012**

**Employment Verification Services**

**PART I INTRODUCTION**

1. **Purpose and Background**

The Department of Health and Human Services (Department) is seeking Employment Verification Services as defined in this Request for Proposals (RFP) document. This document provides instructions for submitting proposals, the procedure and criteria by which the awarded Bidder will be selected, and the contractual terms which will govern the relationship between the State of Maine (State) and the awarded Bidder.

The Department is dedicated to promoting health, safety, resiliency, and opportunity to all Maine Residents. The Department’s Office for Family Independence (OFI) is responsible for determining eligibility for a number of programs, such as MaineCare, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and Food Supplement (SNAP).

As part of the MaineCare, TANF, and SNAP eligibility determination process, a verification of an individual’s income and employment history is required. Verifying an individual’s income and employment history allows the Department to determine if an individual is eligible for benefits and if so, the allowable benefit amounts. If employment information is not provided to the Department in a timely manner, it can cause a loss of the individual’s benefits and result in re-processing of the individual’s case once the required employment information is obtained. Work requirements and timely verification of employment are important for recipients of SNAP benefits to maintain eligibility, or for closure of benefits for individuals who are not complying with the work requirements.

Pursuant to [22 MRSA §16-B](https://legislature.maine.gov/statutes/22/title22sec16-B.pdf), the Department shall use commercially available data to conduct an electronic verification of information provided on an application for benefits for public assistance. The electronic verification must, at a minimum, be conducted on all new applications for benefits and must include searches for income, residency and available assets.

The services resulting from this RFP will ensure the Department’s compliance in determining an individual’s eligibility to receive benefits by verifying their income and employment history.

1. **General Provisions**
	1. From the time the RFP is issued until award notification is made, all contact with the State regarding the RFP must be made through the RFP Coordinator. No other person/ State employee is empowered to make binding statements regarding the RFP. Violation of this provision may lead to disqualification from the bidding process, at the State’s discretion.
	2. Issuance of the RFP does not commit the Department to issue an award or to pay expenses incurred by a Bidder in the preparation of a response to the RFP. This includes attendance at personal interviews or other meetings and software or system demonstrations, where applicable.
	3. All proposals must adhere to the instructions and format requirements outlined in the RFP and all written supplements and amendments (such as the Summary of Questions and Answers), issued by the Department. Proposals are to follow the format and respond to all questions and instructions specified below in the “Proposal Submission Requirements” section of the RFP.
	4. Bidders will take careful note that in evaluating a proposal submitted in response to the RFP, the Department will consider materials provided in the proposal, information obtained through interviews/presentations (if any), and internal Departmental information of previous contract history with the Bidder (if any). The Department also reserves the right to consider other reliable references and publicly available information in evaluating a Bidder’s experience and capabilities.
	5. The proposal must be signed by a person authorized to legally bind the Bidder and must contain a statement that the proposal and the pricing contained therein will remain valid and binding for a period of 180 days from the date and time of the bid opening.
	6. The RFP and the awarded Bidder’s proposal, including all appendices or attachments, will be the basis for the final contract, as determined by the Department.
	7. Following announcement of an award decision, all submissions in response to this RFP will be public records, available for public inspection pursuant to the State of Maine Freedom of Access Act (FOAA) ([1 M.R.S. § 401](http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/statutes/1/title1sec401.html) et seq.). State contracts and information related to contracts, including bid submissions, are generally public records per FOAA.
	8. In the event that a Bidder believes any information that it submits in response to this RFP is confidential, it must mark that information accordingly, and include citation to legal authority in support of the Bidder’s claim of confidentiality.  In the event that the Department receives a FOAA request that includes submissions marked as confidential, the Department shall evaluate the information and any legal authority from the Bidder to determine whether the information is an exception to FOAA’s definition of public record.  If the Department determines to release information that a Bidder has marked confidential, it shall provide advance notice to the Bidder to allow for them to seek legal relief.
	9. The Department, at its sole discretion, reserves the right to recognize and waive minor informalities and irregularities found in proposals received in response to the RFP.
	10. All applicable laws, whether or not herein contained, are included by this reference. It is the Bidder’s responsibility to determine the applicability and requirements of any such laws and to abide by them.
2. **Eligibility to Submit a Bid**

All interested parties who have a web-based Employment Verification Solution, interfacing with eligibility and enrollment systems to provide data, which has been implemented within the last five (5) years and is currently in operation in at least one (1) state, municipality, or local government agency in the Continental United States, are invited to submit a bid.

1. **Contract Term**

The Department is seeking cost-efficient proposals to provide services, as defined in this RFP, for the anticipated contract period defined in the table below. The dates below are estimated and may be adjusted, as necessary, in order to comply with all procedural requirements associated with the RFP and the contracting process. The actual contract start date will be established by a completed and approved contract.

Contract Renewal: Following the initial term of the contract, the Department may opt to renew the contract for three (3) renewal periods, as shown in the table below, and subject to continued availability of funding and satisfactory performance.

The term of the anticipated contract, resulting from the RFP, is defined as follows:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Period** | **Start Date** | **End Date** |
| Initial Period of Performance | 7/1/2025 | 9/30/2026 |
| Renewal Period #1 | 10/1/2026 | 9/30/2028 |
| Renewal Period #2 | 10/1/2028 | 9/30/2030 |
| Renewal Period #3 | 10/1/2030 | 9/30/2032 |

1. **Number of Awards**

The Department anticipates making one (1) award as a result of this RFP process.

**PART II SCOPE OF SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED**

**Specific instructions for the Bidder to provide a narrative response to the Scope of Services may be found in Part IV, Section III, Proposed Services.**

1. **Employment Verification Services**
	* + 1. Provide and host a web-based solution which is available 24/7/365, except for scheduled downtime, which allows the Department to:
				1. Conduct and view results of ad-hoc Employment Verification requests by inputting basic demographic information.

Ensure the solution provides immediate results with a response time of no more than five (5) seconds, presuming Ethernet-connectivity of the device to the Internet.

1. Establish and maintain a comprehensive network of employers, equal to or greater than fifty percent (50%) that report employment data, including but not limited to:
	* + - 1. Employee name;
				2. Employee social security number;
				3. Hire date;
				4. Termination date;
				5. Pay frequency;
				6. Hourly rate;
				7. Number of hours worked;
				8. Gross pay;
				9. Date of pay;
				10. Employer name; and
				11. Employer identification number (EIN).
2. **Maintenance and Technical Support**
	* + 1. Provide live technical support to the Department by:
				1. Providing a dedicated support email address and phone number that allows the Department to report problems with the solution and/or its data.
				2. Ensuring all reported issues are tracked within an issue resolution software, which is accessible to the Department.
				3. Ensuring timely and satisfactory resolution to reported technical issues in coordination with the Department.
3. Provide project management support ensuring key personnel are available:
	* + - 1. To answer Department questions and/or concerns, via phone and email, during regular business hours of 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. EST; and
				2. For in-person consultations upon Department request, with reasonable notice.
			1. Provide training and support to Department users, upon request, via an approved virtual platform.
4. **Technology Requirements**
5. Ensure all work delivered by the assigned project team is conducted within the Continental United States.
6. Comply with the entire suite of MaineIT Policies, ensuring special attention is paid to:
7. [General Architecture Principles](https://www.maine.gov/oit/sites/maine.gov.oit/files/inline-files/GeneralArchitecturePrinciples.pdf);
8. [System and Services Acquisition Policy and Procedures (SA-1)](https://www.maine.gov/oit/sites/maine.gov.oit/files/inline-files/system-services-acquisition-policy.pdf);
9. [Application Deployment Certification Policy](https://www.maine.gov/oit/sites/maine.gov.oit/files/inline-files/application-deployment-certification_0.pdf);
10. [Digital Accessibility and Usability Policy](https://www.maine.gov/oit/sites/maine.gov.oit/files/inline-files/digital-accessibility-policy.pdf);
11. [Remote Hosting Policy](https://www.maine.gov/oit/sites/maine.gov.oit/files/inline-files/remote-hosting-policy.pdf);
12. [Data Exchange Policy](https://www.maine.gov/oit/sites/maine.gov.oit/files/inline-files/data-exchange-policy.pdf);
13. [Information Security Policy](https://www.maine.gov/oit/sites/maine.gov.oit/files/inline-files/information-security-policy.pdf);
14. [Access Control Policy](https://www.maine.gov/oit/sites/maine.gov.oit/files/inline-files/access-control-policy.pdf);
15. [Access Control Procedures for Users](https://www.maine.gov/oit/sites/maine.gov.oit/files/inline-files/access-control-procedures-for-users.pdf);
16. [Risk Assessment Policy](https://www.maine.gov/oit/sites/maine.gov.oit/files/inline-files/risk-assessment-policy-procedure.pdf);
17. [Vulnerability Scanning Procedure](https://www.maine.gov/oit/sites/maine.gov.oit/files/inline-files/vulnerablity-scanning-procedure.pdf);
18. [Security Assessment and Authorization Policy](https://www.maine.gov/oit/sites/maine.gov.oit/files/inline-files/SecurityAssessmentAuthorizationPolicy.pdf);
19. [System and Information Integrity Policy](https://www.maine.gov/oit/sites/maine.gov.oit/files/inline-files/system-information-integrity-policy.pdf);
20. [Configuration Management Policy](https://www.maine.gov/oit/sites/maine.gov.oit/files/inline-files/configuration-management-policy.pdf); and
21. [Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery Policy](https://www.maine.gov/oit/sites/maine.gov.oit/files/inline-files/BusinessContinuityDisasterRecoveryPolicy.pdf).
22. Ensure the proposed solution achieves the [NIST 800-53 Rev 5](https://csrc.nist.gov/publications/detail/sp/800-53/rev-5/final) for the remaining security and privacy control families to a security baseline appropriate to the impact level of the data as determined by the Department, including:
23. Physical and Environmental Protection;
24. Awareness and Training;
25. Planning;
26. Audit and Accountability;
27. Assessment, Authorization, and Monitoring;
28. Personnel Security;
29. PII Processing and Transparency;
30. Contingency Planning;
31. Identification and Authentication;
32. Incident Response;
33. System and Communications Protection;
34. Maintenance;
35. Media Protection; and
36. Supply Chain Risk Management to a security baseline appropriate to the impact level of the data as determined by the Department.
37. Store all data within the Continental United States.
38. Ensure the capability to restore data completely to its status at the time of the last backup, with a minimum required Recovery Point Objective of twenty-four (24) hours (i.e., maximum data loss cannot exceed twenty-four (24) hours).
39. Ensure a Recovery Time Objective of twenty-four (24) hours (i.e., maximum time to recover the system cannot exceed twenty-four (24) hours).
40. Limit the number of planned outages (system availability) during the business week to one (1) time per month. Downtime for routine maintenance must be pre-approved by the Department in writing.
41. Maintain an availability metric of ninety-nine-point five percent (99.5%) of uptime in a calendar month, as measured by the number of actual hours available as a percentage of total hours.
42. Provide the Department with raw data in a format specified by the Department, upon the request of the Department, and at no additional charge. This includes providing all Department-requested data at or before the end of the agreement in a format specified by the Department (currently XML).
43. Reports
	1. Track and record all data/information necessary to complete the required reports listed in **Table 1**:

|  |
| --- |
| **Table 1 – Required Reports** |
| **Name of Report**  | **Description**  |
| **a.** | System Availability Report | Details the specific times the system is “up” and available for use. Includes scheduled downtime and the percentage of scheduled uptime where the system was unavailable.  |
| **b.** | Usage Report | Identifies the number of individuals for whom the Department received an accurate response during a billing month. Includes a reconciliation with monthly invoices.  |

# Submit all the required reports to the Department in accordance with the timelines established in **Table 2**:

|  |
| --- |
| **Table 2 – Required Reports Timelines** |
| **Name of Report**  | **Period Captured by Report**  | **Due Date**  |
| **a.** | System Availability Report | Monthly | Due with monthly invoice |
| **b.** | Usage Report | Monthly | Due with monthly invoice |

**PART III KEY RFP EVENTS**

1. **Questions**
	1. **General Instructions:** It is the responsibility of all Bidders and other interested parties to examine the entire RFP and to seek clarification, in writing, if they do not understand any information or instructions.
		1. Bidders and other interested parties should use **Appendix J** (Submitted Questions Form) for submission of questions. If used, the form is to be submitted as a WORD document.
		2. Questions must be submitted, by e-mail, and received by the RFP Coordinator identified on the cover page of the RFP as soon as possible but no later than the date and time specified on the RFP cover page.
		3. The RFP Number and Title must be included in the subject line of the e-mail containing the submitted questions. The Department assumes no liability for assuring accurate/complete/on time e-mail transmission and receipt.
	2. **Question & Answer Summary:** Responses to all questions will be compiled in writing and posted on the following website no later than seven (7) calendar days prior to the proposal due date: [Office of State Procurement Services RFP Page](https://www.maine.gov/dafs/bbm/procurementservices/vendors/rfps). It is the responsibility of all interested parties to go to this website to obtain a copy of the Question & Answer Summary. Only those answers issued in writing on this website will be considered binding.
2. **Amendments**

All amendments released in regard to the RFP will also be posted on the following website: [Office of State Procurement Services RFP Page](https://www.maine.gov/dafs/bbm/procurementservices/vendors/rfps). It is the responsibility of all interested parties to go to this website to obtain amendments. Only those amendments posted on this website are considered binding.

1. **Proposal Submission**
	1. **Proposals Due:** Proposals must be received no later than 11:59 p.m. local time, on the date listed on the cover page of the RFP.
		1. Any e-mails containing original proposal submissions or any additional or revised proposal files, received after the 11:59 p.m. deadline, will be rejected without exception.
	2. **Delivery Instructions:** E-mail proposal submissions must be submitted to the Office of State Procurement Services at Proposals@maine.gov.
		1. Only proposal submissions received by e-mail will be considered. The Department assumes no liability for assuring accurate/complete e-mail transmission and receipt.
			1. Proposal submission e-mails that are successfully received by the proposals@maine.gov inbox will receive an automatic reply stating as such.
		2. E-mails containing links to file sharing sites or online file repositories will not be accepted as submissions. Only e-mail proposal submissions that have the actual requested files attached will be accepted.
		3. Encrypted e-mails received which require opening attachments and logging into a proprietary system will not be accepted as submissions. Bidders should work with their Information Technology team to ensure that the proposal submission will not be encrypted due to any security settings.
		4. File size limits are 25MB per e-mail. Bidders may submit files separately across multiple e-mails, as necessary, due to file size concerns. All e-mails and files must be received by the due date and time listed above.
	3. **Submission Format:**
		1. Bidders are to insert the following into the subject line of their e-mail proposal submission: **“RFP# 202501012 Proposal Submission – [Bidder’s Name]”**
		2. Bidder’s proposal submissions are to be broken down into multiple files, with each file named as it is titled in bold below, and include:
* **File 1 [Bidder’s Name] – Preliminary Information:**

*PDF format preferred*

**Appendix A** (Proposal Cover Page)

**Appendix B** (Responsible Bidder Certification)

**Appendix C** (Eligibility to Submit a Bid)

All required eligibility documentation stated in PART IV, Section I, should be included in one (1) PDF file.

* **File 2 [Bidder’s Name] – Organization Qualifications and Experience:**

*PDF format preferred*

**Appendix D** (Organization Qualifications and Experience Form)

**Appendix E** (Subcontractor Form), if applicable

**Appendix F** (Litigation Form)

All required information and attachments stated in PART IV, Section II, should be included in one (1) PDF file.

* **File 3 [Bidder’s Name] – Proposed Services:**

*PDF format preferred*

**Appendix G** (Technical Assessment Form)

**Appendix H** (Response to Proposed Services)

All required information and attachments stated in PART IV, Section III, should be included in one (1) PDF file.

* **File 4 [Bidder’s Name] – Cost Proposal:**

*Excel format preferred*

**Appendix I** (Cost Proposal and Budget Narrative)

All required information and attachments stated in PART IV, Section IV.

**PART IV PROPOSAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

This section contains instructions for Bidders to use in preparing their proposals. The Department seeks detailed yet succinct responses that demonstrate the Bidder’s qualifications, experience, and ability to perform the requirements specified throughout the RFP.

Bidder proposals must follow the outline used below, including the numbering, section, and sub-section headings. Failure to use the outline specified in PART IV, or failure to respond to all questions and instructions throughout the RFP, may result in the proposal being disqualified as non-responsive or receiving a reduced score. The Department, and its evaluation team, has sole discretion to determine whether a variance from the RFP specifications will result either in disqualification or reduction in scoring of a proposal. Rephrasing of the content provided in the RFP will, at best, be considered minimally responsive.

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. Bidders must include any forms provided in the submission package or reproduce those forms as closely as possible. All information must be presented in the same order and format as described in the RFP.

**Proposal Format and Contents**

**Section I Preliminary Information** (File #1)

* 1. **Proposal Cover Page**

Bidders must complete **Appendix A** (Proposal Cover Page). It is critical that the cover page show the specific information requested, including Bidder address(es) and other details listed. The Proposal Cover Page must be dated and signed by a person authorized to enter into contracts on behalf of the Bidder.

* 1. **Responsible Bidder Certification**

Bidders must complete **Appendix B** (Responsible Bidder Certification). The Responsible Bidder Certification must be dated and signed by a person authorized to enter into contracts on behalf of the Bidder.

* 1. **Eligibility Requirements**

Bidders must provide documentation to demonstrate meeting eligibility requirements stated in PART I, C. of the RFP. This documentation includes:

1. **Appendix C** (Eligibility to Submit a Bid)

**Section II Organization Qualifications and Experience** (File #2)

* 1. **Overview of the Organization**

Bidders must complete **Appendix D** (Qualifications and Experience Form) describing their qualifications and skills to provide the requested services in the RFP. Bidders must include three (3) examples of projects within the last five (5) years, which demonstrate their experience and expertise in performing these services, as well as highlighting the Bidder’s stated qualifications and skills.

* 1. **Subcontractor**

If subcontractors are to be used, including consultants, Bidders must complete **Appendix E** (Subcontractor Form) providing a list that specifies the name, address, phone number, contact person, and a brief description of the subcontractors’ organizational capacity and qualifications.

* 1. **Litigation**

Bidders must complete **Appendix F** (Litigation Form) providing a list of all current litigation in which the Bidder is named and a list of all closed cases that have closed within the past five (5) years in which the Bidder paid the claimant either as part of a settlement or by decree.  For each, list the entity bringing suit, the complaint, the accusation, amount, and outcome. If no litigation has occurred, write “none” on **Appendix F** (Litigation Form).

* 1. **Financial Viability**

Bidders must provide the three (3) most recent years of Financial Statements audited or reviewed by a Certified Public Accountant.

* 1. **Certificate of Insurance**

Bidders must provide a valid certificate of insurance on a standard ACORD form (or the equivalent) evidencing the Bidder’s general liability, professional liability and any other relevant liability insurance policies that might be associated with the proposed services.

|  |
| --- |
| **Required Attachments Related to Organization Qualifications and Experience**  |
| **Attachment #:** | **Attachment Name:** |
| One (1) | Qualifications and Experience Form  |
| Two (2) | Subcontractor Form |
| Three (3) | Litigation |
| Four (4) | Financial Viability  |
| Five (5) | Certificate of Insurance |

Attachments 1 – 5 must be included in numerical order, as part of File 2, as outlined in PART III “Submitting the Proposal” of this RFP. Attachments 1 – 5 will be reviewed and evaluated by the Department’s evaluation team under the Organization Qualifications and Experience section of this RFP.

**Section III Proposed Services** (File #3)

1. Bidders must complete **Appendix G** (Technical Assessment Form) to describe the Bidder’s capability to meet the stated requirements and policies identified in this RFP.
2. Bidder must complete **Appendix H** (Response to Proposed Services) by providing a detailed response to the requirements outlined in this RFP.

|  |
| --- |
| **Required Attachments Related to Proposed Services** |
| **Attachment #:** | **Attachment Name:** |
| Six (6) | Job Descriptions |
| Seven (7) | Staffing Plan |
| Eight (8) | Implementation - Work Plan |

Attachments 6 – 8 must be included in numerical order, as part of File 3, as outlined in PART III “Submitting the Proposal” of this RFP. Attachments 6 – 8 will be reviewed and evaluated by the Department’s evaluation team under the Proposed Services section of this RFP.

**Section IV Cost Proposal and Budget Narrative** (File #4)

* 1. **General Instructions**
		1. Bidders must submit a cost proposal that covers the period starting 7/1/2025 and ending on 9/30/2032.
		2. The cost proposal must include the costs necessary for the Bidder to fully comply with the contract terms, conditions, and RFP requirements.
		3. No costs related to the preparation of the proposal for the RFP, or to the negotiation of the contract with the Department, may be included in the proposal. Only costs to be incurred after the contract effective date that are specifically related to the implementation or operation of contracted services may be included.
	2. **Cost Proposal Form Instructions**

Bidders must fill out **Appendix I** (Cost Proposal and Budget Narrative), following the instructions detailed here and in the form. Failure to provide the requested information, and to follow the required cost proposal format provided, may result in disqualification or reduction in scoring of the cost proposal, at the discretion of the Department.

**PART V PROPOSAL EVALUATION AND SELECTION**

Evaluation of the submitted proposals will be accomplished as follows:

1. **Evaluation Process – General Information**
	1. An evaluation team, composed of qualified reviewers, will judge the merits of the proposals received in accordance with the criteria defined in the RFP.
	2. Officials responsible for making decisions on the award selection will ensure that the selection process accords equal opportunity and appropriate consideration to all who are capable of meeting the specifications. The goals of the evaluation process are to ensure fairness and objectivity in review of the proposals and to ensure that the contract is awarded to the Bidder whose proposal provides the best value to the State of Maine.
	3. The Department reserves the right to communicate and/or schedule interviews/presentations with Bidders, if needed, to obtain clarification of information contained in the proposals received. The Department may revise the scores assigned in the initial evaluation to reflect those communications and/or interviews/presentations.
	4. Changes to proposals, including updating or adding information, will not be permitted during any portion of the evaluation process. Therefore, Bidders must submit proposals that present their rates and other requested information as clearly and completely as possible.
2. **Scoring Weights and Process**
	1. **Scoring Weights:** Proposal scores will be based on a 100-point scale and will measure the degree to which each proposal meets the following criteria:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Section I.** | **Preliminary Information**Proposal materials to be evaluated in this section: all elements addressed in Part IV, Section I of the RFP. | **No Points – Eligibility Requirements** |
| **Section II.** | **Organization Qualifications and Experience** Proposal materials to be evaluated in this section: all elements addressed above in Part IV, Section II of the RFP. | **35 points** |
| **Section III.** | **Proposed Services**Proposal materials to be evaluated in this section: all elements addressed above in Part IV, Section III of the RFP. | **40 points** |
| **Section IV.** | **Cost Proposal** Proposal materials to be evaluated in this section:all elements addressed above in Part IV, Section IV of the RFP.1. 70,000 transactions per year (5 points)
2. 80,000 transactions per year (5 points)
3. 90,000 transactions per year (5 points)
4. 100,000 transactions per year (5 points)
5. 110,000 transactions per year (5 points)
 | **25 points** |

* 1. **Scoring Process:** For proposals that demonstrate meeting the eligibility requirements in Section I, the evaluation team will use a consensus approach to evaluate and score Sections II & III above. Members of the evaluation team will not score those sections individually but, instead, will arrive at a consensus as to assignment of points for each of those sections. Section IV, the Cost Proposal, will be scored as described below.
	2. **Scoring the Cost Proposal:** The total cost proposed (per the level of transactions) for conducting all the functions specified in the RFP will be assigned a score according to a mathematical formula.
1. The lowest bid for 70,000 transactions per year will be awarded 5 points;
2. The lowest bid for 80,000 transactions per year will be awarded 5 points;
3. The lowest bid for 90,000 transactions per year will be awarded 5 points;
4. The lowest bid for 100,000 transactions per year will be awarded 5 points.
5. The lowest bid for 110,000 transactions per year will be awarded 5 points.

Proposals with higher bid values for each level of transactions will be awarded proportionately fewer points calculated in comparison with the lowest bid of each level of transactions.

The scoring formula for all five (5) levels of transactions is:

(Lowest submitted cost proposal (per the level of transactions) / Cost of proposal (per the level of transactions) being scored) 5 = pro-rated score

No Best and Final Offers: The State of Maine will not seek or accept a best and final offer (BAFO) from any Bidder in this procurement process.  All Bidders are expected to provide their best value pricing with the submission of their proposal.

* 1. **Negotiations:** The Department reserves the right to negotiate with the awarded Bidder to finalize a contract. Such negotiations may not significantly vary the content, nature or requirements of the proposal or the Department’s Request for Proposal to an extent that may affect the price of goods or services requested. The Department reserves the right to terminate contract negotiations with an awarded Bidder who submits a proposed contract significantly different from the proposal they submitted in response to the advertised RFP. In the event that an acceptable contract cannot be negotiated with the highest ranked Bidder, the Department may withdraw its award and negotiate with the next-highest ranked Bidder, and so on, until an acceptable contract has been finalized. Alternatively, the Department may cancel the RFP, at its sole discretion.
1. **Selection and Award**
	1. The final decision regarding the award of the contract will be made by representatives of the Department subject to approval by the State Procurement Review Committee.
	2. Notification of conditional award selection or non-selection will be made in writing by the Department.
	3. Issuance of the RFP in no way constitutes a commitment by the State of Maine to award a contract, to pay costs incurred in the preparation of a response to the RFP, or to pay costs incurred in procuring or contracting for services, supplies, physical space, personnel or any other costs incurred by the Bidder.
	4. The Department reserves the right to reject any and all proposals or to make multiple awards.
2. **Appeal of Contract Awards**

Any person aggrieved by the award decision that results from the RFP may appeal the decision to the Director of the Bureau of General Services in the manner prescribed in [5 M.R.S.A. § 1825-E](http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/statutes/5/title5sec1825-E.html) and [18-554 Code of Maine Rules Chapter 120](https://www.maine.gov/dafs/bbm/procurementservices/policies-procedures/chapter-120).  The appeal must be in writing and filed with the Director of the Bureau of General Services, 9 State House Station, Augusta, Maine, 04333-0009 within 15 calendar days of receipt of notification of conditional contract award.

**PART VI CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION AND CONDITIONS**

1. **Contract Document**
	1. The awarded Bidder will be required to execute an [IT Service Contract (IT-SC) with Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure Agreement (ND)](https://www.maine.gov/dafs/bbm/procurementservices/forms), including appropriate riders as determined by the issuing department. Bidders shall carefully review the IT-SC.

*All exceptions will be negotiated between the awarded Bidder(s) and the State. The State will not accept any proposed exceptions as part of this RFP process. The State is not obligated to accept, negotiate, or compromise of any proposed exceptions.*

The complete set of standard State of Maine Service Contract documents, along with other forms and contract documents commonly used by the State, may be found on the [Office of State Procurement Services Forms](https://www.maine.gov/dafs/bbm/procurementservices/forms) page.

Forms and contract documents commonly used by the Department can be found on the Department’s [Division of Contract Management website](https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/about/financial-management/contract-management).

* 1. Allocation of funds is final upon successful negotiation and execution of the contract, subject to the review and approval of the State Procurement Review Committee. Contracts are not considered fully executed and valid until approved by the State Procurement Review Committee and funds are encumbered. No contract will be approved based on an RFP which has an effective date less than fourteen (14) calendar days after award notification to Bidders. (Referenced in the regulations of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, [Chapter 110, § 3(B)(i)](https://www.maine.gov/dafs/bbm/procurementservices/policies-procedures/chapter-110).)

This provision means that a contract cannot be effective until at least 14 calendar days after award notification.

* 1. The State recognizes that the actual contract effective date depends upon completion of the RFP process, date of formal award notification, length of contract negotiation, and preparation and approval by the State Procurement Review Committee. Any appeals to the Department’s award decision(s) may further postpone the actual contract effective date, depending upon the outcome. The contract effective date listed in the RFP may need to be adjusted, if necessary, to comply with mandated requirements.
	2. In providing services and performing under the contract, the awarded Bidder must act as an independent contractor and not as an agent of the State of Maine.
1. **Standard State Contract Provisions**
	1. Contract Administration

Following the award, a Contract Administrator from the Department will be appointed to assist with the development and administration of the contract and to act as administrator during the entire contract period. Department staff will be available after the award to consult with the awarded Bidder in the finalization of the contract.

* 1. Payments and Other Provisions

The State anticipates paying the Contractor on the basis of net 30 payment terms, upon the receipt of an accurate and acceptable invoice. An invoice will be considered accurate and acceptable if it contains a reference to the State of Maine contract number, contains correct pricing information relative to the contract, and provides any required supporting documents, as applicable, and any other specific and agreed-upon requirements listed within the contract that results from the RFP.

**PART VII LIST OF RFP APPENDICES AND RELATED DOCUMENTS**

**Appendix A** – Proposal Cover Page

**Appendix B** – Responsible Bidder Certification

**Appendix C** – Eligibility to Submit a Bid

**Appendix D** – Qualifications and Experience Form

**Appendix E** – Subcontractor Form

**Appendix F** – Litigation Form

**Appendix G** – Technical Assessment Form

**Appendix H** – Response to Proposed Services

**Appendix I** – Cost Proposal and Budget Narrative

**Appendix J** – Submitted Questions Form

**APPENDIX A**

**State of Maine**

**Department of Health and Human Services**

*Office for Family Independence*

**PROPOSAL COVER PAGE**

**RFP# 202501012**

**Employment Verification Services**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Bidder’s Organization Name:** |  |
| **Vendor Customer Code** (for current State of Maine vendors)**:** | VC |
| **Chief Executive - Name/Title:** |  |
| **Tel:** |  | **E-mail:** |  |
| **Headquarters Street Address:** |  |
| **Headquarters City/State/Zip:** |  |
| ***(Provide information requested below if different from above)*** |
| **Lead Point of Contact for Proposal - Name/Title:** |  |
| **Tel:** |  | **E-mail:** |  |
| **Street Address:** |  |
| **City/State/Zip:** |  |

* This proposal and the pricing structure contained herein will remain firm for a period of 180 days from the date and time of the bid opening.
* No personnel currently employed by the Department or any other State agency participated, either directly or indirectly, in any activities relating to the preparation of the Bidder’s proposal.
* No attempt has been made, or will be made, by the Bidder to induce any other person or firm to submit or not to submit a proposal.
* The above-named organization is the legal entity entering into the resulting contract with the Department if they are awarded the contract.
* The undersigned is authorized to enter contractual obligations on behalf of the above-named organization.

*To the best of my knowledge, all information provided in the enclosed proposal, both programmatic and financial, is complete and accurate at the time of submission.*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name (Print):** | **Title:** |
| **Authorized Signature:** | **Date:** |

**APPENDIX B**

**State of Maine**

**Department of Health and Human Services**

*Office for Family Independence*

**RESPONSIBLE BIDDER CERTIFICATION**

**RFP# 202501012**

**Employment Verification Services**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Bidder’s Organization Name:** |  |

*By signing this document, I certify to the best of my knowledge and belief that the aforementioned organization, its principals and any subcontractors named in this proposal:*

1. *Are not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, and declared ineligible or voluntarily excluded from bidding or working on contracts issued by any governmental agency.*
2. *Have not within three years of submitting the proposal for this contract been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against them for:*
	1. *Fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a federal, state, or local government transaction or contract.*
	2. *Violating Federal or State antitrust statutes or committing embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, or receiving stolen property.*
3. *Are not presently indicted for or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity (Federal, State or Local) with commission of any of the offenses enumerated in paragraph (b) of this certification.*
4. *Have not within a three (3) year period preceding this proposal had one or more federal, state, or local government transactions terminated for cause or default*.
5. *Have not entered into a prior understanding, agreement, or connection with any corporation, firm, or person submitting a response for the same materials, supplies, equipment, or services and this proposal is in all respects fair and without collusion or fraud. The above-mentioned entities understand and agree that collusive bidding is a violation of state and federal law and can result in fines, prison sentences, and civil damage awards.*
6. *Is not a foreign adversary business entity (*[*https://www.maine.gov/oit/prohibited-technologies*](https://www.maine.gov/oit/prohibited-technologies)*).*
7. *Is not on the list of prohibited companies (*[*https://www.maine.gov/oit/prohibited-technologies*](https://www.maine.gov/oit/prohibited-technologies)*) or does not obtain or purchase any information or communications technology or services included on the list of prohibited information and communications technology and services* [*https://www.maine.gov/oit/prohibited-technologies*](https://www.maine.gov/oit/prohibited-technologies) *(Title 5 §2030-B).*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name (Print):** | **Title:** |
| **Authorized Signature:** | **Date:** |

**APPENDIX C**

**State of Maine**

**Department of Health and Human Services**

*Office for Family Independence*

## ELIGIBILITY TO SUBMIT A BID

**RFP# 202501012**

**Employment Verification Services**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Bidder’s Organization Name:** |  |
| **Eligibility Certification** |
| All interested parties who have a web-based Employment Verification solution, interfacing with eligibility and enrollment systems to provide data, which has been implemented within the last five (5) years and is currently in operation in at least one (1) state, municipality, or local government agency in the Continental United States, are invited to submit a bid. |
| 1. Is the proposed solution a web-based Employment Verification solution, interfacing with eligibility and enrollment systems to provide data?

Provide a detailed description of how the solutions meets this requirement: | [ ]  Yes or [ ]  No |
|  |
| 1. Has the proposed solution been implemented within the past five (5) years?

Provide a detailed description of how the solutions meets this requirement: | [ ]  Yes or [ ]  No |
|  |
| 1. Has the proposed solution been operational in at least one (1) state, municipality, or local government agency in the Continental United States?

Provide a detailed description of how the solutions meets this requirement: | [ ]  Yes or [ ]  No |
|  |
| Provide a list of state, municipality, or local government agencies, including contact information (email and phone number) of each agency, the number of years the solution has been fully implemented and in operation with the entity, and the length of time it took to fully implement the system with the entity. |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Agency Name** | **Contact Email and** **Phone Number** | **Years fully implemented/in operation** | **Length of time to implement** |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

**APPENDIX D**

**State of Maine**

**Department of Health and Human Services**

*Office for Family Independence*

## QUALIFICATIONS and EXPERIENCE FORM

**RFP# 202501012**

**Employment Verification Services**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Bidder’s Organization Name:** |  |

|  |
| --- |
| **Present a brief statement of qualifications and describe the history of the Bidder’s organization, especially regarding skills pertinent to the specific work required by the RFP and any special or unique characteristics of the organization which would make it especially qualified to perform the required work activities. You may expand this form and use additional pages to provide this information.** |
|  |

|  |
| --- |
| **Provide a description of three (3) projects that occurred within the past five (5) years which reflect experience and expertise needed in performing the functions described in Part II – Scope of Services to be Provided of the RFP. Contract history with the State of Maine, whether positive or negative, may be considered in evaluating proposals even if not provided by the Bidder.** |

|  |
| --- |
| **Project One** |
| **Business Reference Name:** |  |
| **Reference Contact Person:** |  |
| **Telephone:** |  |
| **E-Mail:** |  |
| **Description of Project** |
| **Project Start Date** |  | **Project End Date** |  |
|  |

|  |
| --- |
| **Project Two** |
| **Business Reference Name:** |  |
| **Reference Contact Person:** |  |
| **Telephone:** |  |
| **E-Mail:** |  |
| **Description of Project** |
| **Project Start Date** |  | **Project End Date** |  |
|  |

|  |
| --- |
| **Project Three** |
| **Business Reference Name:** |  |
| **Reference Contact Person:** |  |
| **Telephone:** |  |
| **E-Mail:** |  |
| **Description of Project** |
| **Project Start Date** |  | **Project End Date** |  |
|  |

**APPENDIX E**

**State of Maine**

**Department of Health and Human Services**

*Office for Family Independence*

## SUBCONTRACTOR FORM

**RFP# 202501012**

**Employment Verification Services**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Bidder’s Organization Name:** |  |

|  |
| --- |
| **If subcontractors, including consultants, are to be used, provide each individual subcontractor’s business or consultant’s name, contact person, address, phone number, and a brief description of the subcontractor’s organizational or consultant’s capacity and qualifications. Bidders may add additional Subcontractors/Consultants as needed.** |

|  |
| --- |
| **Subcontractor/Consultant** |
| **Subcontractor Business or Consultant’s Name:** |  |
| **Contact Person:** |  |
| **Address:** |  |
| **Phone Number:** |  |
| **E-Mail:** |  |
| **Subcontractor/consultant organizational capacity and qualifications** |
|  |

|  |
| --- |
| **Subcontractor/Consultant** |
| **Subcontractor Business or Consultant’s Name:** |  |
| **Contact Person:** |  |
| **Address:** |  |
| **Phone Number:** |  |
| **E-Mail:** |  |
| **Subcontractor/consultant organizational capacity and qualifications** |
|  |

**APPENDIX F**

**State of Maine**

**Department of Health and Human Services**

*Office for Family Independence*

## LITIGATION FORM

**RFP# 202501012**

**Employment Verification Services**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Bidder’s Organization Name:** |  |

|  |
| --- |
| **Provide a list of all current litigation in which the Bidder is named and a list of all closed cases that have closed within the past five (5) years in which the Bidder paid the claimant either as part of a settlement or by decree. For each, list the entity bringing suit, the complaint, the accusation, amount, and outcome. If no litigation has occurred, write “none.”**  |

|  |
| --- |
|  |
| **Case #** |  |
| **Entity Filing Suit:** |  |
| **Complaint/Accusation:** |  |
| **Amount:** |  |
| **Outcome** |  |
|  |
| **Case #** |  |
| **Entity Filing Suit:** |  |
| **Complaint/Accusation:** |  |
| **Amount:** |  |
| **Outcome** |  |
|  |
| **Case #** |  |
| **Entity Filing Suit:** |  |
| **Complaint/Accusation:** |  |
| **Amount:** |  |
| **Outcome** |  |

**APPENDIX G**

**State of Maine**

**Department of Health and Human Services**

*Office for Family Independence*

**TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT FORM**

**RFP# 202501012**

**Employment Verification Services**

**Bidder must complete the Technical Assessment Form. The Technical Assessment Form may be obtained in an Excel (.xlsx) format by double clicking on the document icon below.**



**APPENDIX H**

**State of Maine**

**Department of Health and Human Services**

*Office for Family Independence*

## RESPONSE TO PROPOSED SERVICES

**RFP# 202501012**

**Employment Verification Services**

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

****

**APPENDIX I**

**State of Maine**

**Department of Health and Human Services**

*Office for Family Independence*

**COST PROPOSAL AND BUDGET NARRATIVE**

**RFP# 202501012**

**Employment Verification Services**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Bidder’s Organization Name:** |  |
| **Total cost for 70,000 transactions per year** | **$** |
| **Total cost for 80,000 transactions per year** | **$** |
| **Total cost for 90,000 transactions per year** | **$** |
| **Total cost for 100,000 transactions per year** | **$** |
| **Total cost for 110,000 transactions per year** | **$** |

Bidders must submit a cost proposal that includes the cost necessary for the Bidder to fully comply with the contract terms, conditions, and RFP requirements. The proposed cost per the level of transactions per year must be presented as a fixed amount.

The cost for each level of transactions per year will be used to score the cost proposal as defined in Part V, B.3. of the RFP.

**APPENDIX J**

**State of Maine**

**Department of Health and Human Services**

*Office for Family Independence*

**SUBMITTED QUESTIONS FORM**

**RFP# 202501012**

**Employment Verification Services**

This form should be used by Bidders when submitting written questions to the RFP Coordinator as defined in Part III of the RFP.

If a question is not related to any section of the RFP, enter “N/A” under the RFP Section & Page Number. Add additional rows as necessary.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Organization Name:** |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
|  |  |
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