

Response to Written Inquiries

April 24, 2009

Redesign and Implementation of Improved Cost Allocation Plan

1. Should the vendor proposals include proposals for and the price of cost allocation software and/or RMTS software?

Software acquisition to meet needs identified in the work performed by the successful provider will not be acquired by way of this procurement. The successful provider should be prepared to work with the Department's staff to assist in assessing and implementing an array of methods for providing solutions to address identified needs. Any cost allocation software pricing information provided in proposals should be considered informational only and should not be included in the cost or scope of proposed activity in response to this solicitation.

2. On p. 6, under Proposer Qualifications and Experience, what is meant by "demonstrated volume of merchants"?

Section 1.5.C. of the RFP requests that proposers demonstrate their qualifications by providing information regarding their qualifications to and experience in providing the services proposed. The phrase "demonstrated volume of merchants" is meant as possible example of the type of information that may be appropriate in some circumstances to quantitatively describe the offerer's capacity. Proposers should provide any such appropriate qualitative information regarding their work history and should not be limited by the examples provided in this section.

3. Is the financial proposal to be part of one main proposal, or is it to be submitted separately?

The Financial Proposal and the Technical Proposal are component parts of the whole but the financial proposal should be submitted in separate packaging so as to facilitate evaluation of the parts in isolation of each other. Once evaluated, a combined total score will be assigned to each complete offer received.

4. The timetables in the RFP do not allow for federal review and approval. Can DSS address how federal approval will impact the scheduling as this timetable cannot be anticipated?

Section 2.2 indicates that "Work under this agreement is expected to commence on July 1, 2009 and the Cost Allocation Plan must be developed, fully implemented, functioning without errors, and staff trained on its usage by June 30 2010. The proposer shall provide a timeline indicating deliverables and milestones to successfully complete

the project by this date” Section 2.3.2. incorporates submission, successful negotiation and approval of the plan as a required contract deliverable. Proposers are encouraged to offer work plans that dedicate sufficient resources such that complete and timely submissions can be made. The Department will withhold ten percent (10%) of the total contract amount pending successful negotiation and approval of the plan by the DHHS-DCA. The Department recognizes that through no fault of the Department or the selected service provider the review and approval process may exceed the timeline defined in the RFP and that release of the retained payment may occur after June 30, 2010.

5. The proposal requests a one year timeline for implementation but also requests ongoing technical assistance. Can vendors propose assistance beyond the 1 year time frame?

Vendors may propose to offer technical assistance extending beyond the one year timeframe specified in the RFP document, however, it is the intent of the Department to incur all costs with the exception of retained fees within the one year term of the contract to be awarded.

6. Will any software licenses for future use of software be part of this agreement or a separate agreement?

The Department is not authorized to purchase software, software licenses or software services as a result of this solicitation. These items will not be incorporated in any final contracted scope of work resulting from this solicitation.

7. The proposal outline on page 19 (2.5.1) is not consistent with the sections outlined in 1.5 starting on page 6. Which format is to be followed?

The entire proposal should be formatted as prescribed in section 1.5 on page 6 of the RFP document. Section D. of the proposal is to be titled Proposed Solution/Technical Response and should be formatted as described on pages 19 and 20 (section 2.5.1 and 2.5.2) of the RFP.

8. On p. 23 there is a request for customer service and a toll-free number. Can you please explain the relevancy to this proposal?

Proposers should clearly articulate how services will be provided so that the Department is not put in the position of inferring or generating assumptions regarding the proposer’s business model. Any proposer wishing to offer the availability of its staff to assist in the provision of ongoing technical assistance by way of toll free telephone service should state so clearly and should describe the proposed scope of the activity offered.

9. On pg. 24 there is a request for resumes for account manager and designated customer service representatives. Can you please explain the relevancy to this proposal?

Any proposer offering a single point of contact for the provision of technical assistance or assistance with administrative contract matters should demonstrate the qualifications of the designated individuals to serve in that capacity. The term “account manager” is conceptually synonymous with the term “project manager” in this case.

10. Page 17, Part II, 2.1, mentions ad hoc reporting/standard reporting? Is this only if there is a move to a new CAP and/or RMS system? Would vendor be responsible for new reporting needs in current systems like ISIS?

The Department is seeking new reporting tools and/ or improvements to currently used reporting tools regardless as to whether the current plan and systems are simply revised or completely replaced. We seek to enhance our reporting capabilities in order to better inform management decision making by gaining an ability to identify trends, gaps or matters of concern related to cost allocation planning or processes. Data Reports from the ISIS system may be generated then imported into more commonly used software applications or data may be managed in a number of other systems.

11. Goals and Objectives on Page 3 do not match the Goals and Objectives on Page 17-18. Which one should be followed for purposes of developing our response?

The general information presented on page 3 of the RFP in the section entitled Part I.- Administrative and General Information, Section 1.1.2-Goals and Objectives is meant to provide a broad description of the desired project outcome. The objectives listed in that section are precisely the same as those listed on pages 17 and 18 of the proposal in the section labeled Part II-Scope of Work, Section 2.1-Scope of Work/Services. However, the scope of work prescribed in this section provides a more detailed narrative of the desired project outcomes. The two sections are not conflicting, but rather are complementary. Proposers should address the more detailed and specific requirements detailed in Part II-Scope of Work/Services.

12. On page 21, it asks for two references within the past 24 months for projects of a similar size and scope. On page 24, the 2nd bullet point from the top asks for three current references. Which requirement should be followed?

Page 21, Section 2.5.2.d requests two (2) references for similar projects that have been *completed* in the last 24 months. Page 24, Section 2.6.2 requests three (3) references demonstrating that similar or larger projects are *currently underway and ongoing*. Proposers should demonstrate that they meet both requirements.

13. Does DSS plan to operate the CAP on their own with support from the vendor, or will the vendor be responsible for operating the CAP on behalf of DSS?

DSS is not soliciting proposals offers to operate the CAP on behalf of the Department under this solicitation.

14. Part I, Sections 1.1, Part II, Section 2.1, Part II, Section 2.3 Deliverables Item 1, Does the State want to continue to use the cost allocation module within the Integrated Statewide Information System (ISIS). If ISIS' cost allocation module continues to be used, what organization will be responsible for making any improvements recommended to the allocation methodologies resulting from the contractor's work under this contract? Does DSS want a software product to use for preparing quarterly cost allocation reports for the Department?

The state of Louisiana is planning to migrate from its current ISIS to a new SAP based enterprise system which is currently under development and expected to be fully implemented by June 2010. The Department is seeking an assessment and recommendation from the successful proposer as to whether it should rely on the State's integrated system or acquire a new product to address the Department's needs. Software recommendations may result from work performed as a result of this solicitation but software products will not be purchased by way of this solicitation.

15. Part I, Section 1.1.2.A.2., RFP page 3, stated that the Department is undergoing significant restructuring. Provide a brief description of the LDSS restructuring? What does it entail? When are these changes expected to be completed?

The project will include consolidation of like functions from among program management agencies into a single administrative agency thereby allowing program specific agencies to focus on service delivery. The Department is in the early stages of business process re-engineering that is expected to continue over the next several years. Initially DSS is seeking to provide services more efficiently and effectively by leveraging advances in technology to improve access to information and interagency data sharing. It has been determined that reducing the administrative burden of coordinating activities across agency and programmatic boundaries can best be approached by first providing a common front end access to the agency's many "stove-piped" systems to allow collaboration to occur more easily and to better serve their common clients.

16. Part I, Section 1.1.2.A.3., RFP page 3, mentions an aggressive and comprehensive technology and business system improvement process. When will this Enterprise Technology Modernization and SACWIS Compliance Project be completed? Is that project covered by an approved APD?

The SACWIS project APD annual update was conditionally approved in 2008. The Department is currently updating the SACWIS project APD to incorporate citizen and

service provider portals and an enterprise framework to achieve compliance as well as modernization of legacy systems for operation of programs such as Food Stamps, Child Welfare and Child Support Enforcement programs. The ADP update is expected to be completed by July 2009 and full project implementation is anticipated by June 2012.

17. Part II, Section 2.1, RFP page 17, indirect cost rate(s) for prospective grants:

- a. Can the cost allocation module within ISIS be adapted and/or used in calculating an indirect cost rate for prospective grants received?

Yes.

- b. Is it LDSS desire to have the indirect cost rate in place for use on prospective grants in place effective as of July 1, 2010?

Yes.

- c. How does LDSS currently budget indirect costs on prospective grants and contracts?

DSS is currently budgeting indirect costs to major grants through its federally approved PACAP.

- d. Has LDSS experienced any problems or resistance to the use of an unapproved indirect cost rate(s) for budgeting on prospective grants and contracts?

No.

18. Part II, Section 2.1, RFP page 17, Could you provide additional information on the Alternative Emergency Salary Cost Documentation Plan? Is this to support FEMA and any other disaster related claims?

The Department is seeking assistance with the development of a methodology to be used for allocating costs for its ongoing routine responsibilities when quarterly reports are affected during the post disaster reporting periods. During such times use of the approved RMS components of the current plan are suspended because routine business practices are so disrupted as to invalidate the statistics. This request is not intended to address FEMA or other disaster related costs claiming processes.

19. Part II, Section 2.1, RFP page 17, Project Objective 1, What is the effective date of the current approved Plan? Are there any outstanding Plan amendments to the current approved Plan? If yes, what is the intent of the changes?

The effective date of the current plan is December 31, 2006. There are 2 pending amendments to the current Plan: 1) Matching the time period of the statistics to the time period of the costs, and 2) Incorporating a narrative description of Effort Reporting Procedures for employees not covered by RMS.

20. Part II, Section 2.2., page 18, is the effective date of this revised plan as of July 1, 2010? If so, is LDSS planning on submitting any revisions to its public assistance cost allocation plan amendments prior to the July 1, 2010 effective date? What type of changes/revisions are envisioned?

The effective date of the revised plan is anticipated as July 1, 2010. In addition to revisions recommended resulting from this solicitation, DSS plans to submit revisions that will result from: 1) the consolidation of Management and Finance support functions from among program agencies into a single administrative agency, and 2) the work currently underway to update the SACWIS project APD incorporating technology modernization to improve interagency access to information and data sharing.

21. Part II, Section 2.3 Deliverables, Item 4, page 19, what type of report format is preferred for the customized reporting tools to assist management to identify trends, gaps or issues?

The Department is willing to consider all options regarding report formats and does not express a preference at this time. However, it is important to note that the Department's information systems modernization project will be web-based.

22. Part II, Section 2.4 Location, page 4, will work space be available at 627 N. 4th Street for contractor staff during the project?

The Department will provide on-site work space to the selected provider.