State of Arkansas Department of Human Services
710-21-0021 Child Nutrition Programs System (USDA)
Attachment B
Written Questions

Instructions

This Response Template must be used for submission of written questions. All questions should provide the requested information. Those that do not, may not be answered by DHS. The Vendor may add as many lines as needed. DHS would strongly prefer the Vendor to ask multi-part questions as individual questions on seperate lines.

Instructions: Complete all cells of each question asked in the Table below. Clearly identify the referenced section or text.

Question ID	RFP Reference (page number, section number, paragraph)	Specific RFP Language	Question	Answers
Example	*Page 7, section 1.15, C*	J. Vendors may submit multiple bid	*May vendors submit more than one bid?*	yes See section 1.15, J
1	Bid Solicitation Document, Page 3, 1.8.A.2.d	Technical Proposal response to the Information for Evaluation section included in the Technical Proposal Packet.	Please confirm the "Information for Evaluation" is page 6 of the file titled 710210021_ResponsePacket or provide the Technical Proposal Packet.	Confirmed.
2	Bid Solicitation Document, Page 4, 1.8.C.1.d	If OP requests additional copies of the proposal, the copies must be delivered within twenty-four (24) hours of request.	Will additional requested copies be delivered electronically?	If requested, electronic submission of a digital copy of the proposal will meet this requirement.
3	Bid Solicitation Document, Page 5, 1.12.A	Contractor must sign all Agreement and Compliance Pages relevant to each section of the Bid Solicitation Document. The Agreement and Compliance Pages are included in the Technical Proposal Packet.	Please confirm the "Agreement and Compliance Pages" are pages 3, 4, and 5 of the file titled 710210021_ResponsePacket or provide the Technical Proposal Packet.	Confirmed.
4	Bid Solicitation Document, Page 5, 1.13.A	Contractor must complete, sign and submit the Proposed Subcontractors Form included in the Technical Proposal Packet to indicate contractor's intent to utilize, or to not utilize, subcontractors	Please provide a reference to the "Proposed Subcontractors Form" for completion.	See updated Technical Response Packet.
5	Bid Solicitation Document, Page 13, 2.4.C.2	Ongoing compliance with all State and Federal regulations, including without limitation, 7 CFR parts 200, 210, 215, 220,225, 226, and 235	Can the DHS DCCECE kindly define "ongoing compliance"?	Ongoing compliance refers to a requirement for the vendor's proposed solution to maintain compliance with any current and future State and Federal regulation or formal interpretation of a regulation that that may impact the general functionality and specific compliance features of the future system.

6	Bid Solicitation Document, Page 13, 2.4.C.2	Ongoing compliance with all State and Federal regulations, including without limitation, 7 CFR parts 200, 210, 215, 220,225, 226, and 235	Is ongoing compliance expected to be included in the Cost_Proposal_Template B. System Maintenance & Operation Costs or is it acceptable to provide individual enhancement pricing if/when there is a change in State and/or Federal regulations?	The Respondent shall propose: 1.) a number of development work hours included in their pricing for M&O and 2.) a Blended Hourly Rate for this enhancement work. See the revised Cost Proposal Template.
7	Bid Solicitation Document, Page 14, 2.5.A.3	Leveraging information from the future system to facilitate expansion of each program in low-income and rural areas	Can DHS DCCECE provide an example of how a software solution can facilitate expansion to specific areas?	The future system may, for example, provide a map of all locations providing service to indicate areas of the state that are well served or underserved.
8	Bid Solicitation Document, Page 14, 2.5.B.5	Commodities	Can DHS DCCECE provide an example of how Commodities relates to the 5 programs listed in 2.4.A?	Commodites are provided to the NSLP, SFSP and CACFP Programs. If a facility chooses commodities this will need to be tracked.
9	Bid Solicitation Document, Page 14, 2.5.D.1	Compliance of each Functional Area in each program with current federal and state requirements for FNS Nutrition programs;	Will DHS DCCECE provide a list of system functional requirements for contractors to comply with the federal and state requirements?	No, these will be determined by the Federal and State regulations. Awarded Contractor will be provided access to all of DHS DCCECE written procedures.
10	Bid Solicitation Document, Page 14, 2.6.B.1. a-e	a. USDA CACFP Eligibility System; b. USDA National Disqualified List; c. USDA Financial System (for Emergency Disaster Payments); d. US Bureau of Labor Statics; and e. US Census Bureau.	Will DHS DCCECE provide examples for each system of the data expected to be exchanged? Similar to Attachment J of the State Interfaces for 2.6.B.2	Currently, information is entered and retrieved manually from these sources. Respondents are encouraged to propose any automation possible around these sources.
11	Bid Solicitation Document, Page 15, 2.6.C	Data Migration and Conversion. The legacy system database contains approximately 105GB of historical data for the FNS Nutrition programs in Arkansas. The Prospective Contractor shall convert and migrate data specified by DHS DCCECE into the future system.	Can DHS DCCECE provide additional information on the conversion and migration of data such as: - Schema for tables - Data structure of database - Which of the 5 programs listed in 2.4.A to be included, and - How many years of program data	The Awarded Contractor will be provided with Table and Data structure of the current system. Data migration will include at minimum all five (5) identified programs for the last five (5) years from the current to the future system.
12	Bid Solicitation Document, Page 15, 2.7.A.2	The National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, and Special Milk Program	What is the application period for SSO? How many participants are expected in SSO?	Presently, DCCECE does not operate the Seamless Summer Option program. SSO is managed by the Department of Education.

13	Bid Solicitation Document, Page 16, 2.7.A.3.D.2	A dedicated on-site Project Manager for the duration for the project implementation. In the current COVID-19 environment, the on-site requirement may be negotiated to ensure the safety of all parties. The Project Manager must have sufficient prior experience to address the specifics of this project.	Will DHS DCCECE be open to off-site Project Management if Contractor submits experience in completing similar projects with an off-site Project Manager?	The State prefers that the Awarded Contractor's staff work on-site for this project. However, dependent on Covid-19 conditions and DHS discretion, the frequency of on-site meetings and the specific staff in attendance may be limited.
14	Bid Solicitation Document, Page 16, 2.7.A.3.D.4	A detailed training plan, initial, and ongoing training for institution, sponsor, and site staff on the future system. Training plans must be flexible enough to accommodate both in-person and remote trainings.	Is a training plan to accommodate in-person and remote Train-the-Trainer sessions for DCCECE staff who then train institution, sponsor, and site staff acceptable?	It is the State's expectation that the Awarded Contractor will conduct the majoity of initial training of DHS, Institution, Sponsor, and Site staff, including without limitation Train-the-Trainer sessions for DHS staff. However, dependent on Covid-19 conditions and DHS discretion, these initial trainings may be held virtually.
15	Bid Solicitation Document, Page 20, 3.2.A	After Technical Scoring Round 2 when pricing is opened for scoring, cost will be scored by the State. When pricing is opened for scoring, the maximum amount of cost points will be given to the Contractor with the lowest grand total as shown on the Official Bid Price Sheet. (See Grand Total Score for maximum points possible for cost score.)	Is "the lowest grand total as shown on the Official Bid Price Sheet" referenced in 3.2.A the same as Total Cost Proposal as calcuated in the file Cost_Proposal_Template cell L16?	Yes. The phrase "lowest grand total" in 3.2.A of the RFP refers to cell L16, "Total Cost Proposal," in the original Cost Proposal Template. In the revised Cost Proposal Template posted along with this document, the "Total Cost Proposal" cell is now L24.
16	Bid Solicitation Document, Page 21, 4.1.C	Payment will be made only after the Contractor has successfully satisfied the agency as to the reliability and effectiveness of the goods or services purchased as a whole.	Payment milestones for completing services in relation to the Design, Development, Configuration & Implementation Costs of a project are industry standard. Are payment milestones incorporated into the Contractor's proposed project plan acceptable?	Proposing Vendors are welcome to propose payment milestones. However, the number, timing, and amounts associated with the payment milestones will be finalized during negotiations with the Apparent Awardee.
17	Bid Solicitation Document, Page 22, 4.3.C	The Contractor agrees to the Performance Based Contracting standards as presented in Attachment C, DHS Standard Terms and Conditions as presented in Attachment D, a pro forma contract as presented in Attachment E, the Business Associate Agreement as presented in Attachment F, and the Organizational or Personal Conflict of Interest policy as presented in Attachment G.	Are Attachments C, D, E, F, and G expected to be completed in the Contractor's response or is acknowledgement in Attachment 710210021_ResponsePacket page 5 of 6 sufficient for the RFP response?	Vendor acknowledgement in the Response Packet is sufficient.
18	Attachment E - Pro Forma Contract	Document	Is Attachment E expected to be completed or is it included as a sample to be acknowledged in Attachment 710210021_ResponsePacket page 5 of 6?	Vendor acknowledgement in the Response Packet is sufficient.
19	Attachment F - Business Associate Agreement	Document	Can DCCECE explain how Attachment F relating to PHI (Protected Health Information) is applicable to RFP 710-21-0021 for CNP?	DHS withdraws Attachment F "Business Associate Agreement" from this posting.

20	Attachment I - DHS Information Technology Requirements, General System Behavior, Audit_&_Compliance (C32)	Any technology vendor, application or solution must have the ability to capture electronic signatures on all documents, forms, letters, and correspondences.	Is user name and timestamp considered an electronic signature? If no, can DCCECE provide examples of documents, forms, letters, and correspondences where electronic signature is required?	There are multiple events that require an "official" signature. This can be a special field that records a name and timestamp, which includes language saying something like "by entering your name below and clicking submit, you are signing/certifying that the content of your form/submission is true and correct."
21	Attachment I - DHS Information Technology Requirements, General System Behavior, Interoperability-Interfaces (C35)	Any technology vendor, application or solution shall develop/integrate services using standardized Web Services formats.	Can DHS DCCECE provide an example of this requirement to illustrate why it is mandatory?	This requirement/standard is designed to help move the agency toward real time, web-based interfaces wherever possible to help with data quality, timely access to information for systems of record/reference and reduce amount of work required to support traditional file based interfaces. An example would be application 1 accessing a restful API to retrieve information from application 2.
22	Attachment I - DHS Information Technology Requirements, General System Behavior, Interoperability-Interfaces (C36)	Any technology vendor, application or solution shall provide the ability to publish services and related data to be used by different types and classes of service consumers.	Can DHS DCCECE provide an example of this requirement to illustrate why it is mandatory?	DHS has implemented an enterprise service bus (ESB) framework using the IBM App Connect platform and as applications are rationalized and modernized, the replacements/upgrades should leverage the ESB for simple access to exposed data/services. Point of view is that aplications are either producers/consumers/both via the ESB. This requirement/standard works in conjunction with real time web-based interfaces requirement/standard above. An example might be that application 1 is the system of record for eligibility information for a program. Application 1 would publish (produce) that this information is available on the ESB making it available for consumption by other applications without point-to-point interfaces.
23	Attachment I - DHS Information Technology Requirements, General System Behavior, Interoperability-Interfaces (C39)	Any technology vendor, application or solution shall have message and data formats that will be based on logical representations of business objects rather than native application data structures.	Can DHS DCCECE provide an example of this requirement to illustrate why it is mandatory?	DHS has found that constructs and abstractions that more closely align to their real world counterparts allow the application to handle complexity more efficiently by hiding unnecessary details from the users. Abstraction is one of they key concepts of object-oriented programming languages. DHS has found that most software does this natively and has little problem meeting this requirment/standard. An example would be using a class or variable to represent a real word object or process, function, etc.

24	Attachment I - DHS Information Technology Requirements, General System Behavior, Interoperability-Interfaces (C40)	Any technology vendor, application or solution shall avoid point-to-point integrations. Application integration, both internal and external, will go through the DHS Enterprice Service Bus/Data Integration Hub.	Can DHS DCCECE provide an example of this requirement to illustrate why it is mandatory?	See answer to Question #22.
25	Attachment I - DHS Information Technology Requirements, General System Behavior, Interoperability-Interfaces (C45)	Any technology vendor, application or solution shall have the capability to integrate with Master Data Management (MDM) technology for Enterprise Master Client Index (EMCI) implemented as part of the "State Hub" in a centralized or registry style implementation.	Can DHS DCCECE provide an example of this requirement to illustrate why it is mandatory?	The EMCI is a database of clients known to DHS across programs, which provides for a 360 degree view of those clients to DHS. The current EMCI is based on Informatica's MDM solution. An example would be that when the program application is trying to onboard a new client, the application should query the EMCI to see if this client exists and is already known to DHS. If yes, use existing client ID, if not create new client or allow for merge process if exists but some entity resolution needs to take place.
26	Attachment I - DHS Information Technology Requirements, General System Behavior, Interoperability-Interfaces (C46)	Any technology vendor, application or solution shall be responsive and will automatically be sized for an optimum view to the display dimensions of PC, Tablet or Mobile phone.	Is it acceptable for the application or solution to be viewed on PC, Tablet or Mobile phone?	The application must be responsive to PC, Tablet, and Mobile phone.
27	Attachment I - DHS Information Technology Requirements, General System Behavior, Solution Administration (C68)	Any technology vendor, application or solution wil allow System administrators to create and manage user roles.	Is the ability to create users and manage user roles acceptable?	Yes.
28	Attachment I - DHS Information Technology Requirements, General System Behavior, Solution Administration (C78)	Any technology vendor, application or solution shall be designed such that the user interface is automatically sized for an optimum view to the display dimensions of PC, tablet or mobile phone (e.g. a mobile phone user sees all information within their screen and does not need to scroll excessively to see content as the screen they are viewing was designed for a PC) - also know in the industry as "Responsive Design".	Is it acceptable for the application or solution to be viewed on PC, Tablet or Mobile phone?	See answer to Question #26.

29	Attachment I - DHS Information Technology Requirements, Technology Platform Requirements, Data Integ,Quality, ETL (C82)	Any technology vendor, application or solution Extract Transform and Load (ETL) components will provide process flow and user interface capabilities to enable business users to perform data-quality-related tasks and fulfill stewardship functions, including: a. Packaged processes, including steps used to perform common quality tasks (providing values for incomplete data, resolving conflicts of duplicate records, specifying custom rules for merging records, profiling, auditing, for example) b. User interface in which quality processes and issues are exposed to business users, stewards and others c. Functionality to manage the data quality issue resolution process through the stewardship workflow (status tracking, escalation and monitoring of the issue resolution process) d. Ability to customize the user interface and workflow of the resolution process e. Ability to execute data quality resolution steps in the context of a process orchestrated by Business Process Management (BPM) tools (packaged integration or other ability to work with popular BPM suites, for example)	Can DHS DCCECE provide an example of each of the requirements a-e to illustrate why it is mandatory?	This requirement/standard is designed to allow more ad-hoc reporting by users. An example would be that user can use the provided documentation and a BI tool to create/run reports without needing the support of technology/development resources.
30	Cost_Proposal_Template	Design, Development, Configuration & Implementation Costs	Is this cost for DDI expected to be for an Off-The-Shelf (OTS) system which has been developed by the Contractor and then individually customized by other states for administration of the 5 programs listed in 2.4.A?	Yes.
31	Cost_Proposal_Template	Design, Development, Configuration & Implementation Costs	If yes to question 30, is it acceptable for a Contractor to complete DCCECE customizations to the OTS system at an agreed upon hourly rate using Time and Materials pricing?	No. The solicitation has been revised to include a cost line for a proposed set Implementation DDI Hours at a Blended Hourly Rate. See the revised Cost Proposal Template.
32	Cost_Proposal_Template	Design, Development, Configuration & Implementation Costs	If no to question 30, what are the system functional requirements for a Contractor to prepare a response for DDI?	See answer to Question #30.

33	Attachment 710210021_ResponsePacket, E.2.A STAFF QUALIFICATIONS/VENDOR EXPERIENCE	Provide staff resumes/CVs and describe qualifications and experience of key staff (specifically the Project Manager listed in section 2.7D) who will be involved in this project, including their experience in the field of Child Nutrition Programs in particular, if any. A list of relevant client references must be provided, to include client names, addresses, phone numbers, dates of service and type(s) of service(s) provided. [No more 2 pages per proposed staff member]	Is there a maximum page limit for Vendor Experience or Client References?	A limit of two (2) pages per proposed key staff member has been defined in the RFP. No limit on the number of proposed key staff members has been defined. Similarly, each client reference summary should not exceed two (2) pages, but no limit to the number of client references has been defined.
34	Attachment 710210021_ResponsePacket, E.3.B	DHS may in the next three years decide to replace the existing administrative system for Commodity Distribution, TEFAP and CSFP. How can your solution incorporate these programs?	Is the "adminstrative system for Commodity Distribution, TEFAP and CSFP" referencing USDA Foods Program 7 CFR Part 250?	Yes.