

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTER
OS/CSC-22-001-S**

QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES #4

Question 116: Section 2.3.4 - Can you please provide more detail on DHS' telephony solution to include the Name, Cloud vs. On Prem, all the capabilities provided by the solution to include: ACD, call recording, call monitoring, automated callback, workforce management/optimization, intelligent routing, multi-channel routing, knowledge management, etc.

Response: An amendment will be issued to state that the Contractor will need to provide the CRM, IVRS and ACD. Offerors will need to propose what kind of technology solution will be used.

Question 117: Section 2.3.10-A.1.c Provide uninterrupted services in the event that any telephone line(s) stop(s) working; in such event the entire CSC shall continue to function.- Please confirm that we are to use DHS telephony system that is provided and hosted by DHS. Please also confirm the contractor is not responsible for the DR site or redundancy solution.

Response: An amendment will be issued to state that the Contractor will need to provide the CRM, IVRS and ACD. The Contractor is responsible for disaster recovery per Section 3.5.

Question 118: Section 2.3.10-A.1.c - Provide uninterrupted services in the event that any telephone line(s) stop(s) working; in such event the entire CSC shall continue to function. - Please confirm it is your intent for the contractor to provide administrative services for your telephony solution.

Response: An amendment will be issued to state that the Contractor will need to provide the CRM, IVRS and ACD.

Question 119: Section 2.3.4 - DHS will provide access to the Contractor to the Department's ACD system, which has the capability to distribute incoming calls to CSRs - Please confirm bidders are not to include the cost for telephony licenses in cost proposal as these solutions are furnished by DHS.

Response: An amendment will be issued to state that the Contractor will need to provide the CRM, IVRS and ACD. Therefore, pricing for this technology needs to be included.

Question 120: Section 2.3.1-A - Implement and manage a CSC to handle inbound and outbound calls for the Department, which incorporates the Department's IVRS and CRM. - Please confirm DHS expects the awarded contractor to perform the design, development and implementation tasks for your new CRM.

Response: An amendment will be issued to state that the Contractor will need to provide the CRM, IVRS and ACD.

Question 121: Section 2.3.11-H - Establish the CSC infrastructure/system on a server used for the centralized database, which shall include storage (Example RAID-5), provisions for controller redundancy, and mean times between failures of the processors and the disk subsystem. At a minimum, the centralized database shall be able to continue operations if any single storage component fails. - Please clarify what is meant by CSC infrastructure/system? It is our understanding from Section 2.2.3-C of the RFP that DHS will provide the CRM and telephony systems for the contractor to use. Are you expecting the contractor to provide the infrastructure for the systems as well as host these systems?

Response: An amendment will be issued to state that the Contractor will need to provide the CRM, IVRS and ACD.

Question 122: Section 2.4 - It is our understanding from the RFP, that DHS is furnishing the systems to be used by the CSC. Please confirm the contractor is responsible for managing these activities for the CSC system DHS provides.

Response: An amendment will be issued to state that the Contractor will need to provide the CRM, IVRS and ACD.

Question 123: Section 2.3.1 - Implement and manage a CSC to handle inbound and outbound calls for the Department, which incorporates the Department's IVRS and CRM. - Please confirm bidders are not to include the cost of CRM licenses in their respective proposals.

Response: An amendment will be issued to state that the Contractor will need to provide the CRM, IVRS and ACD. Offerors will need to include the cost of CRM licenses in the Financial Proposal.

Question 124: What is the future platform for the IVRS and the ACD that will be in place for use by the new service provider?

Response: An amendment will be issued to state that the Contractor will need to provide the CRM, IVRS and ACD.

Question 125: Can the new service provider utilize their own IVRS and ACD?

Response: Yes.

Question 126: Do you anticipate the vendor of the IVRS and/or ACD changing during the contract term?

Response: No.

Question 127: Will the new IVRS/ACD record calls?

Response: Yes. Per the requirements of the RFP, the technology solution will need to record calls.

Question 128: Will the vendor be utilizing DHS call recording system to listen and review recorded interactions?

Response: No. An amendment will be issued to state that the Contractor will need to provide the CRM, IVRS and ACD.

Question 129: Is there a work-force-management module included in the IVRS system available for vendors to utilize? If yes, is this provided by DHS to the service provider?

Response: An amendment will be issued to state that the Contractor will need to provide the CRM, IVRS and ACD. The Offeror will need to propose a workforce management system.

Question 130: Please confirm if a physical facility is required in the state of MD?

Response: Yes.

Question 131: Section 3.10.2 Can DHS provide the Salesforce Cloud (Service Cloud, Health Cloud, etc), organization edition (unlimited, enterprise, etc), user licenses, and quantities for each user license?

Response: An amendment will be issued to state that the Contractor will need to provide the CRM, IVRS and ACD. The Offeror will need to propose this information.

Question 132: Section 3.10.2 - Please confirm if Salesforce will be the CRM tool once the new contract is live?

Response: An amendment will be issued to state that the Contractor will need to provide the CRM, IVRS and ACD. The Offeror will need to propose this service.

Question 133: Would the State share the tentative or estimated dates for the following key milestones? Notice of award date, Contract start.

Response: The notice of award will hopefully be in the last quarter of 2023, and the Contract Start date February 1, 2023 which will be the beginning of the Transition In.

Question 134: How will the state make the CRM and IVRS/ACD available to the for required status reports and dashboards? If access is via API, do they currently exist? If yes, can they be provided in a bidders/procurement library for review?

Response: An amendment will be issued to state that the Contractor will need to provide the CRM, IVRS and ACD. The Contractor will be responsible for integrating with DHS systems.

Question 135: Is the State's telephony solution on-prem or cloud based?

Response: An amendment will be issued to state that the Contractor will need to provide the CRM, IVRS and ACD.

Question 136: Please confirm that the State's IVRS/ACD is a full contact center telephony platform, and the Contractor does not need to provide any telephony platform for the CSR's.

Response: An amendment will be issued to state that the Contractor will need to provide the CRM, IVRS and ACD.

Question 137: Section 2.2 - As the IVRS and CRM is being supplied by the State, please confirm the State will be responsible for supplying all the required technology and functionality described. Please confirm that the State is providing configuration, technical support, and ongoing management for all State provided IT platforms. Are there other tools, platforms, or hardware in addition to what the State is providing for the CSC?

Response: An amendment will be issued to state that the Contractor will need to provide the CRM, IVRS and ACD.

Question 138: Section 2.2 - The RFP language on page 2, paragraph 2 states there are three (3) major Administrations. However, page 3, paragraph 4 states the Contractor implements requirements for four (4) Administrations. The chart in Figure 1 and the documentation provided in Appendix 3 – Administrations Program Overview also includes four (4) Administrations. Please confirm whether bidders should factor in 3 or 4 Administrations.

Response: The DHS Administrations are: SSA, FIA, CSA and OTHS. However, very few inquiries will involve OTHS directly.

Question 139: Section 2.3.11.I - As the State is providing core technology for delivering the CSC, including the CRM and associated database, what is the State's expectation of the Contractor in providing a "CSC System"? If the State does not expect the Contractor to provide a CSC System, we ask the State delete or revise this Contractors requirement.

Response: The Offeror will need to propose the technology solution for this Contract.

Question 140: Section 2.3.13.A - As DHS is providing the IVR/ACD platforms, will the Department also provide a call recording solution? If not, please detail how the Contractor-provided call recording solution will integrate with the DHS provided systems.

Response: The Contractor will need to provide the CRM, IVRS and ACD. The Contractor will be responsible for call recording.

Question 141: Section 4.16.3 requires the Executive Summary include a statement signed by an authorized representative. However, the electronic signature is in a PDF format. Please confirm Offerors may submit an electronically signed Executive Summary in PDF format.

Response: The Executive Summary does not need to be signed.

Question 142: Section 4.28.C - Solicitation documents do not contain an Attachment F-1. Please provide Attachment F-1.

Response: Per Attachment F, the Living Wage Affidavit can be found at the following link: <https://procurement.maryland.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/12/2018/04/AttachmentF-LivingWageAffidavit.pdf> .

Question 143: Section 2.3.16.B - This requirement refers Offerors to RFP Section 5.3.2 for information about being authorized to resell the services of another entity. However, the document has a cross-reference error. Please confirm that 2.3.16 is referring Offerors to Section 5.3.2.P.3?

Response: This reference has been removed from Section 2.3.17.B. Please see Amendment 3.

Question 144: Section 2.3.2 - Please provide the following details on the IVRS system(s) being used: What is the base product and version? What access levels will be granted to the Contractor?

Response: Offerors will need to propose an IVRS system for the new Contract. The Department wishes not to disclose information about the current IVRS.

Question 145: Section 2.3.3 - Please provide the following details on the CRM system(s) being used: What is the base product and version? What access levels will be granted to the Contractor?

Response: The Department wishes not to disclose information about the current solution. Offerors will need to propose the CRM system for this new Contract.

Question 146: Section 2.3.4 - Please provide the following details on the ACD system(s) being used: What is the base product and version? What access levels will be granted to the Contractor?

Response: The Department wishes not to disclose information about the current solution. Offerors will need to propose the ACD system for this new Contract.

Question 147: Section 5.3.1 - Can Offerors number the pages by major section (i.e., A-1, B-1)?

Response: Yes.

Question 148: Section 5.3.1 - Can Bidders exclude signed forms, attachments, tables of contents, tabs, etc. from the sequential numbering requirement?

Response: Yes.

Question 149: Section 5.3.1 - Our proposal includes long and complex documentation such as financial reports in PDF format with *restricted editing*. The documents have existing page numbering, and some pages are not numbered. Will the State allow these documents to remain numbered as-is?

Response: Yes.

Question 150: Attachment M, Section 17 - Please confirm this project does not require a performance bond.

Response: There is no Performance Bond.

Question 151: Does the State desire the transition-in period to begin on 02/01/2024? Does the State desire the CSC go-live date be on 08/01/2024?

Response: The State desires the Transition In to begin on 2/1/2024.

Question 152: Section 2.1 Summary Statement and 2.2.3 Other State Responsibilities - What level of responsibility does the contractor have for managing the CRM?

Response: The Contractor will need to implement and manage the CRM system for this Contract.

Question 153: The table listing required forms in Section 7 of the RFP lists Attachment K Mercury Affidavit as a required form; however, that page of the RFP says this was determined to not be applicable to this contract. Please clarify whether or not if submission is required; if it is, please provide a copy of the form.

Response: The Mercury Affidavit does not apply.

Question 154: The MBE subcontracting goal was revised to 25% in Addendum 1. Is the VSBE subcontracting goal still 1%?

Response: Yes.

Question 155: Are the 3 reference letters from customers to be submitted directly to the state or to be submitted back to the offeror for inclusion in the proposal document? Are there any letterhead, signature, or additional specifications for these letters other than the 3 requirements outlined in the RFP?

Response: The reference letters should be submitted back to the Offeror and included in the Proposal. There are no additional instructions for these letters than what is listed in the RFP.

Question 156: What is the latest date we should expect answers to questions to be released?

Response: Questions will be responded to on a rolling basis. The State hopes to answer all questions by 9/15/2023. If all questions are not answered, the State will provide at least one week so that the Offerors can incorporate all responses into their Proposals.

Question 157: What % of the volume should vendors dedicate to Tier II contacts?

Response: This information is unavailable as this is a new requirement for this Contract.

Question 158: The current contract has been with the existing vendor since 2015. Can the State provide an assessment of the current vendor's performance.

Response: This information is not relevant since the Scope of Work and requirements have changed for this RFP.

Question 159: Do Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business qualify for the VSBE requirement?

Response: Per Section 4.27.1.B., B. A certified Veteran-Owned Small Business Enterprises (VSBE) must be verified by the State Department of Veterans Affairs or US Department of Veteran's Affairs [Vets First Verification Program](#) (VetBiz) and registered as a VSBE on the State's eProcurement platform, eMaryland Marketplace Advantage (eMMA). The listing of VSBEs is available through the "Vendor Search" on eMMA.

Question 160: Can a MBE support both the 25% MBE goal and 1% VSBE goal? If the same small business the requirement 26% or 25%?

Response: If the company is dually certified, then they can fulfill both goals.

Question 161: What DHS programs drive the most calls?

Response: Please refer to Appendix 4. In recent years, it appears to be FIA.

Question 162: What are the primary call drivers and the volumes associated to them?

Response: Please refer to Appendix 3.

Question 163: What population receives SNAP/TANF benefits? Medical?

Response: SNAP and TANF help low-income households.

Question 164: How many days/weeks is the new hire training?

Response: The current length is 10 to 14 days, but the Offeror needs to propose this service.

Question 165: Can DHS confirm how many Tier II agents are currently on staff?

Response: This information is unavailable as this is a new requirement for this Contract.

Question 166: What is the total square feet of the current service center.

Response: This information is not relevant since the Scope of Work and requirements have changed for this RFP.

Question 167: Please confirm if 100% of all inbound/outbound/fax/email contact types and CSR's handling the functions can work remotely?

Response: The Department will not permit 100% remote call center services.

Question 168: Does DHS have a current knowledge base that selected vendors staff will utilize to look up FAQ's, responses, or processes related to customers questions?

Response: Yes. This information will be provided to the successful Offeror.

Question 169: Section 2.3.1-A - Implement and manage a CSC to handle inbound and outbound calls for the Department, which incorporates the Department's IVRS and CRM. - Please advise if the implementation of the CRM requires data conversion. Will the data come from multiple sources? Please define where the source data will come from? What is the name of the CRM running today?

Response: An amendment will be issued to state that the Contractor will need to provide the CRM, IVRS and ACD. Implementation will require data conversion unless the new solution is compatible with the current. The data will be from multiple sources from the previous web application. The Department wishes not to disclose information about the current solution.

Question 170: Section 2.6.8. - Is the current service provider meeting all of the SLAs?

Response: This question is not relevant since the SLAs under this RFP are different.

Question 171: Section 2.6.8.- If the current service provider is not meeting some SLAs, could you please tell us which ones?

Response: See response above.

Question 172: Section 2.6.8. What has been the average credit amount received by HSA related to service level?

Response: This question is not relevant since the SLAs have changed and are different.

Question 173: Section 5. Attachment B - Financial Proposal - Customer Call Center Where should bidders enter in the transition-price? Currently there is no cell unlocked on row 14 of Attachment B.

Response: Please see Amendment #3.

Question 174: Section 2.3.4 Automated Call Distribution (ACD) System What system/technology does DHS use for the ACD that will be provided to the contractor?

Response: The Offeror will need to propose the ACD system.

Question 175:How many FTEs (Agents) are currently supporting CSC now, across all channels?

Response: This information is not relevant since the Scope of Work and requirements have changed for this RFP.

Question 176: Till when will the current incumbent ICF provide support? What is the ramp down plan for ICF?

Response: The current Contract is set to end on 7/31/2024. There is a six-month transition-in period planned beginning 2/1/2024.

Question 177: Section 5.3.2.1 - Please confirm that client references must be for goods/services the Offeror provided, not subcontractor.

Response: Confirmed.

Question 178: RFP Section 7 suggests Offerors to submit Attachment I NDA (Contractors) and reiterated in the pre-solicitation call. Please confirm that Proposal submission should not contain Attachments I-2 and I-3.

Response: If you choose to submit your Non-Disclosure Agreement with the Proposal, please include I-2 and I-3.

Question 179: Section 2.3.2 – IVRS: Since this is the State’s system, is the State going to provide these services or are they going to train the contractor on them?

Response: The Contractor will now be providing the IVRS system and will be responsible for training.

Question 180: Section 2.3.4: Is the State going to provide training on their ACD system?

Response: The Contractor will now be providing the ACD system and will be responsible for training.

Question 181: Please clarify if there any page count limitation for the RFP response document.

Response: There is no page count limitation.

Question 182: Will DHS please clarify what the Offeror should enter on the Contract No. field of Attachment F. Maryland Living Wage Affidavit of Agreement for Service Contracts? Should we enter the solicitation number (OS/CSC-22-001-S) in this field?

Response: Yes.

Question 183: SBE/MBE/VSBE Certification - Will DHS please confirm if the Offeror should submit Appendix 2. - Bidder/Offeror Information Sheet for each proposed subcontractor?

Response: The Offeror should submit Appendix 2 only for the Offeror, not the subcontractors.

Question 184: Will DHS please provide guidance on what the Offeror should enter in the Project/Contract Number field of Attachment D. Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) Forms? Should we enter the solicitation number (OS/CSC-22-001-S) in this field?

Response: Yes.

Question 185: Will DHS please provide guidance on what should the Offeror should enter in the Project/Contract Number field of Attachment D. Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) Forms? Should we enter the solicitation number (OS/CSC-22-001-S) in this field?

Response: Yes.

Question 186: Section 2.6.8: Is this applicable since the State is providing the systems?

Response: Since the Contractor will need to provide the technology solution, this Section is applicable.

Question 187: Section 5.3.2 – Submittal Requirements. Can the state specify what they mean by TAB? Shall offerors submit an otherwise blank page that states, for example TAB A, or can the TAB simply be part of a new page heading?

Response: The Tab can be part of the page heading.

Question 188: Section 2.2 - Once the new Department's CRM is installed, how many system windows will need to be open on an agent's desktop? In other words will the Department's new CRM sit on top of the legacy systems?

Response: This question is no longer relevant since the Offeror will propose the CRM system.

Question 189: What is the minimum simultaneous inbound call capacity?

Response: The Offeror should propose the optimal capacity according to the technology solution offered.

Question 190: Does this solicitation support a contractor's proposal of a unified communications solution for DHS? E.g., Microsoft Teams

Response: The Offeror should propose what kind of technology solution the Contractor will be using.

Question 191: Section 2.3.11-A - Please clarify this requirement, we have not identified any requirements in the RFP that requires bidders to bring a system that would require data transmission to State systems. If there is a requirement for bidders to bring a

system that houses data that must be transmitted to DHS systems, please amend the RFP to define these requirements.

Response: The Offeror will be responsible for housing the data for their technology solution.

Question 192: Section 2.3.11-D - Develop and maintain a web-based correspondence workflow process to facilitate electronic correspondence between Customers and DHS in compliance with the Federal Guidelines for Web Accessibility. - Is this a process that is in place today or will it be new functionality?

Response: It is a process that is in place today and the Offeror needs to propose how to meet this requirement in the future.

Question 193: Section 2.3.11-G - Electronic transmission of data through the software product designated by the State - Please identify the number of electronic transmission files that must be managed by the contractor along with the frequency of those data transmissions.

Response: The Offeror's technology solution will need to integrate with DHS systems. This information will be given to the Contractor during the Transition-In.

Question 194: Section 2.3.11-G - Please identify the software product to be used for electronic data transmissions.

Response: Please see Amendment 4.

Question 195: Section 2.3.13-A - Can you please describe all the relevant capabilities of your call monitoring system. Does your system provide online configurable monitoring forms? If so, does your system provide aggregated scoring capabilities for the online monitoring forms and aggregated reporting capabilities?

Response: The Offeror should propose what kind of technology solution the Contractor will be using.

Question 196: Section 2.6.9 - Based upon RFP section 2.3.4, the ACD and IVRS is provided by DHS. Is it your intent for bidders to propose a business intelligence tool? If so, please confirm DHS will permit the contractor's solution to integrate with the required DHS systems.

Response: This question is no longer applicable since the Offeror will need to propose the ACD and IVRS. Offerors need to propose a technology solution that includes a Dashboard, business intelligence and visualization capabilities.

Question 197: Section 2.3.5-5 - Respond to written inquiries by telephone, facsimile, postal mail, or electronic mail, whichever is more efficient and satisfies the inquirer and in accordance with the Administrations Desk Reference Guides - Are you requiring bidders to include a document management system / document repository in their proposals?

Response: The Department is not requiring this service, but the Offeror can propose this service.

Question 198: Section 2.3.9-B - Real-Time Dashboard - Does this Dashboard exist today or does it need to be developed and implemented?

Response: Since the Offeror needs to propose a technology solution, real-time Dashboard functionality needs to be developed and implemented.

Question 199: Section 2.2.3 - Provide the current DHS toll-free number for access to the IVRS. - Please confirm bidders are not to include the cost of DID lines and usage costs in cost proposal as these assets are provided by DHS.

Response: The Offeror needs to include these costs in their Proposal Price.

Question 200: Section 2,3.10-A.1.c - Provide uninterrupted services in the event that any telephone line(s) stop(s) working; in such event the entire CSC shall continue to function. - RFP section 2.3.4 indicates DHS will provide the Contractor access to your telephony system. Please define where this system will be hosted.

Response: This question is not relevant since the Contractor will provide the technology solution for this Contract.

Question 201: Section 2.3.11-D - Develop and maintain a web-based correspondence workflow process to facilitate electronic correspondence between Customers and DHS in compliance with the Federal Guidelines for Web Accessibility. - Please confirm customers have the ability to send web-based correspondence after authentication from

your myMDTHINK web portal. If not, are you requesting bidders to develop this functionality as an enhancement to your existing web portal?

Response: Currently, the DHS website has the ability to fill a form or submit a case. The Offerors, depending on the proposed technology solution, can either develop or integrate with the myMDTHINK web portal.