



**ADMINISTRATIVE
OFFICE OF THE COURTS**

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
INTERNAL AFFAIRS
JUDICIAL COLLEGE OF MARYLAND
OPERATIONS
PROGRAMS

**Questions/Responses No. 1 to the
Request for Proposals (RFP) K16-0078-40
District Court Self-Help Centers and the Maryland Courts Self-Help Centers**

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The following questions for the above referenced RFP were received by e-mail and are answered and posted for all prospective Offerors. The statements and interpretations contained in the following responses to questions are not binding on the Judiciary unless the RFP is expressly amended. Nothing in the Judiciary's response to these questions is to be construed as agreement to or acceptance by the Judiciary of any statement or interpretation on the part of the Offeror asking the question.

1. Question: Regarding the Contract Duration on page 6 verses page 26?
Response: Contract Duration, RFP Section 1 page 6 governs. Page 26 is an example of the contract to be adapted and completed with award.
2. Question: Requesting confirmation on section 1.23 Minority Business Enterprises. Is the MBE Subcontractor participation goal of 0 % has been established for this solicitation?
Response: Yes, the MBE Subcontractor participation goal of 0 % has been established for this solicitation.
3. Question: Seeking clarification on section 3.4.5.2 the Transition Period?
Response: As indicated in the RFP, Offeror shall describe if a transition period is necessary, what the potential transition period planning timeline will be, the roles and responsibilities of the contractor, incumbent and Judiciary, and performance requirements for all parties during the planning period. **Centers must be fully operational on July 1, 2016.**
4. Question: Will there be some sort of overlapping during the transition period with the current vendor?
Response: Yes, there is a possibility of overlapping if a transition period is needed.

5. Question: Can you expand on the selection process? How is the “most advantageous offer” determined?
Response: See RFP Section 4, “Evaluation Criteria and Selection Procedure.” The Contract shall be awarded to the offeror that is most advantageous to the Judiciary. Technical factors shall receive greater weight than price factors.
6. Question: What type of reference are you looking for?
Response: Simple contact information of references as requested; letters of reference, recommendation and or referrals are acceptable. References may include partners, clients or other parties who have done business with the Offeror. Contractor must demonstrate the ability to manage a project of this magnitude.
7. Question: Can we bid on the different functional areas?
Response: Yes. Contractors may bid on one or both projects. There are two functional areas:
 - (1) District Court Self-Help Centers. Locations in Glen Burnie, Upper Marlboro and Salisbury.
 - (2) Maryland Courts Self-Help Center. Call center in Annapolis, utilizes remote services including phone and live chat.
8. Question: Are there any subcontractor on current project?
Response: No
9. Question: What are the services levels, call chats and handle time / data?
Response: We serve between 400 and 500 Walk-ins per month at each location. Phone volume is currently approximately 3,000 calls per month and chat volume ranges from 500 to 600 per month.
10. Question: Do you do call backs?
Response: Not at this time.
11. Question: Are vendors responsible for outreach?
Response: Outreach is a collaborative effort between the vendor and the AOC.
12. Question: Will proposals from partnering organizations be accepted?
Response: AOC will contract with the prime only. Subcontracting is acceptable. You can locate information on subcontracting under section 3.4 Technical Proposal 3.4.5.5 Subcontractors.

Additional clarification is being requested concerning the following Self Help Center questions below:

13. Question: Whether the AOC will provide the following technical expertise to produce, maintain and implement the webinars and classes to include but not limited to: website designers/developers, IT consultants, marketing, and media consultants. If not, will AOC amend the original RFP to include a request for a pricing quote for these areas of expertise?

Response: AOC will provide website developers and IT consultants to support webinars and classes.

14. Question: Whether the AOC will provide class rooms for training the participants.

Response: Vendor must collaborate with the local courts. AOC will help facilitate collaboration.

15. Question: Whether the AOC will provide AOC personnel to train the contractor on all existing equipment, software, online chatting services, webinars and the general operations of the center within the courthouse during the transition period.

Response: AOC will provide access to training materials for chat and phone and will provide upkeep and maintenance of all equipment and software.

16. Question: Considering the significance of the aforementioned questions, will ACO consider extending the due date to submit the response to the RFP?

Response: No. Time is of the essence to ensure program continuity. Program must be fully operational on July 1, 2016.

17. Question: Under section 2.3.2 Staff provided by the Contractor shall include attorneys as well as paralegal and/or administrative support and shall work on-site at the Center.

- If one Contractor is awarded both Functional Areas, is the Judiciary willing to allow the vendor to transfer calls and chats from MCSHCC to DCSHC employees when staff at the DCSHC sites are available and not otherwise assisting visitors?

Response: Yes, although there may be technology limitations related to transferring calls. Contractor must capture all data.

18. Question: Under section 2.3.3 Contractor shall provide the following services via email, over the telephone, video conference and chat:

“Work with pro bono lawyers and vendor(s) who provide pro bono services through the MCSHCC.”

- Is the Judiciary asking vendors to propose how pro bono attorneys will be used at the MCSHCC?
Response: No. The Judiciary released a NOFA on April 11, 2016 seeking grantee(s) to recruit, train, schedule and supervise pro bono attorneys to supplement services provided by staff lawyers at the Maryland Courts Self-Help Center. Pro bono attorneys will complement the work of paid staff attorneys managed by the Contractor. The Judiciary expects Contractor and Grantee(s) to collaborate to provide seamless service to the public.
- If the Judiciary is proposing that pro bono attorneys be used in conjunction with the MCSCC, is the Judiciary willing to waive the on-site requirement found in 2.3.2?
Response: Contractor staff must work primarily on-site at the Center in Annapolis.
- Is the Judiciary expecting the contractor to provide malpractice insurance to the pro bono attorney volunteers?
Response: Contractor will not be responsible for pro bono attorneys.
- Given that the MCSHCC provides services to everyone regardless of income, has the Judiciary determined how it will connect pro bono attorneys to those visitors of limited means? If so, how does the
Response: See NOFA.

19. Question: Under section Attachment E – Price Proposal Form – page 45

- Are the staffing levels detailed in Attachment E forms, the intended staffing for each of the 4 locations specified in 2.8 “Locations” for all contract years?
Response: Not necessarily. Contractor should propose the level of staffing needed to meet the current need, and anticipate the numbers of litigants seeking services will increase as time passes. The price proposal form must remain unchanged, since it is for evaluation purposed only and does not represent a basis for billing. Hourly rates quoted must be actual fully loaded rates.
- If not, how should the vendor complete this form? Should the vendor indicate what number of each position it is proposing at each site and calculate accordingly?
Response: See above.

20. Question: Under section 3.4.5.3 References Provide three (3) current customer references where the customer is similar in size to this project."

- Responses during yesterday's meeting seems to suggest that references from individual clients would satisfy the references requirement. In reviewing the language of the RFP, it states that the references should be from a customer "where the customer is similar in size to this project." Does this mean that the customer should be similar in size to the Judiciary? Similar in size to the numbers served via the MCSHCC and DCSHCs?

Response: See response to Question 6 above. Contractor must demonstrate the ability to manage a project of this magnitude.

21. Question: It would be beneficial to understand how many clients are being serviced and how many are unable to receive services due to the staffing/call volume relationship

- Current staffing levels?

Response: Offeror is to submit and propose staffing plan.

- Does the current technology allow for virtual (remote) employees?

Response: No.

- Do you currently have call monitoring software?

Response: Yes. It may only be used with approval of the AOC and may depend on legal and ethical considerations.

- Do you currently have call recording capabilities?

Response: See above.

- Do you have any data on how many calls require an attorney to provide legal advice compared to calls that could be handled by a paralegal (can't find the right form, requests for pro bono information for referrals etc.)

Response: We do not have this data.

- Do you have details on the other interaction channels (chat/email/text)?

Response: Attorneys provide advice/information via chat and email. We do not yet provide assistance via text.

- If call volumes are heavy does your current telephony permit messages and called back to customers at a time convenient to the customer?

Response: Not at this time.

22. Question: Is it allowable for an offeror to contact Judiciary personnel for the limited purpose of inquiring whether their contact information may be listed for the references that are required in section 3.4.5.3?

Response: Yes, I will allow Offerors to contact Judiciary personnel for the limited purpose of inquiring whether their contact information may be listed for the references that are required in section 3.4.5.3. However; the request for references must be in the form of an email only and mandatory that the Procurement Officer is included on every email correspondence between you and your referral/references.

Issued by: April Molley
Procurement Officer
April 14, 2016