

**State of Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FOR SERVICES CONTRACT**

SOLICITATION NUMBER	RELEASE DATE
124316 O3	April 03, 2026
OPENING DATE AND TIME	PROCUREMENT CONTACT
May 07, 2026 2:00 p.m. Central Time	Kristin Powell

**PLEASE READ CAREFULLY!
SCOPE OF SERVICE**

The State of Nebraska (State), Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), is issuing this solicitation for a service contract for the purpose of selecting a qualified bidder to provide Nebraska Tobacco Quitline services (Quitline). A more detailed description can be found in Section V. The resulting contract may not be an exclusive contract as the State reserves the right to contract for the same or similar services from other sources now or in the future.

The initial term of the contract will be two (2) years commencing July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2028. The Contract includes the option to renew for three (3) additional two-year periods upon mutual agreement of the Parties. DHHS reserves the right to extend the period of this contract beyond the termination date when mutually agreeable to the Parties.

In the event that a contract with the awarded bidder(s) is cancelled or in the event that DHHS needs additional Vendors to supply the solicited services, this solicitation may be used to procure the solicited services for up to eighteen (18) months from the date the Intent to Award is posted, provided that 1) the solicited goods or services will be provided by a bidder (or a successive owner) who submitted a response pursuant to this solicitation, 2) the bidder's solicitation response was evaluated, and 3) the bidder will honor the bidder's original solicitation response, including the proposed cost, allowing for any price increases that would have otherwise been allowed if the bidder would have received the initial award.

ALL INFORMATION PERTINENT TO THIS SOLICITATION CAN BE FOUND ON THE INTERNET AT:
<https://das.nebraska.gov/materiel/bidopps.html>.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: Pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. § 84-602.04, State contracts in effect as of January 1, 2014, and contracts entered into thereafter, must be posted to a public website. The resulting contract, the Solicitation, and the awarded solicitation response will be posted to a public website managed by DAS, which can be found at <http://statecontracts.nebraska.gov> and https://www.nebraska.gov/das/materiel/purchasing/contract_search/index.php.

In addition, and in furtherance of the State's public records Statute (Neb. Rev. Stat. § 84-712 et seq.), all responses received regarding this Solicitation will be posted to the State Purchasing Bureau public website.

These postings will include the entire solicitation response. Bidder must request that proprietary information be excluded from the posting. The bidder must identify the proprietary information, mark the proprietary information according to state law, and submit the proprietary information in a separate file named conspicuously as "PROPRIETARY INFORMATION". The bidder should submit a detailed written document showing that the release of the proprietary information would give a business advantage to named business competitor(s) and explain how the named business competitor(s) will gain an actual business advantage by disclosure of information. The mere assertion that information is proprietary or that a speculative business advantage might be gained is not sufficient. (See Attorney General Opinion No. 92068, April 27, 1992). **THE BIDDER MAY NOT ASSERT THAT THE ENTIRE SOLICITATION IS PROPRIETARY. COST SHEETS WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED PROPRIETARY AND ARE A PUBLIC RECORD IN THE STATE OF NEBRASKA.** The State will determine, in its sole discretion, if the disclosure of the information designated by the Bidder as proprietary would 1) give advantage to business competitors and 2) serve no public purpose. The Bidder will be notified of the State's decision. Absent a determination by the State that the information may be withheld pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. § 84-712.05, the State will consider all information a public record subject to disclosure.

If the State determines it is required to release withheld proprietary information, the bidder will be informed. It will be the bidder's responsibility to defend the bidder's asserted interest in non-disclosure.

To facilitate such public postings, with the exception of proprietary information, the State of Nebraska reserves a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable right to copy, reproduce, publish, post to a website, or otherwise use any contract, or solicitation response for any purpose, and to authorize others to use the documents. Any individual or entity awarded a contract, or who submits a solicitation response, specifically waives any copyright or other protection the contract, or solicitation response may have; and acknowledges that they have the ability and authority to enter into such waiver. This reservation and waiver are a prerequisite for submitting a solicitation response, and award of a contract. Failure to agree to the reservation and waiver will result in the solicitation response being found non-responsive and rejected.

Any entity awarded a contract or submitting a solicitation response agrees not to sue, file a claim, or make a demand of any kind, and will indemnify and hold harmless the State and its employees, volunteers, agents, and its elected and appointed officials from and against any and all claims, liens, demands, damages, liability, actions, causes of action, losses, judgments, costs, and expenses of every nature,

including investigation costs and expenses, settlement costs, and attorney fees and expenses, sustained or asserted against the State, arising out of, resulting from, or attributable to the posting of the contract or solicitation response, awards, and other documents.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FOR SERVICES CONTRACT		i
GLOSSARY OF TERMS		iv
ACRONYM LIST		ix
I. PROCUREMENT PROCEDURE		1
A. GENERAL INFORMATION		1
B. PROCURING OFFICE AND COMMUNICATION WITH STATE STAFF AND EVALUATORS		1
C. SCHEDULE OF EVENTS		1
D. WRITTEN QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS		3
E. SECRETARY OF STATE/TAX COMMISSIONER REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS (Nonnegotiable)		3
F. ETHICS IN PUBLIC CONTRACTING		3
G. DEVIATIONS FROM THE SOLICITATION		3
H. SUBMISSION OF SOLICITATION RESPONSES		3
I. SOLICITATION PREPARATION COSTS		5
J. FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH SOLICITATION		5
K. SOLICITATION RESPONSE CORRECTIONS		5
L. LATE SOLICITATION RESPONSES		5
M. BID OPENING		5
N. SOLICITATION REQUIREMENTS		5
O. EVALUATION COMMITTEE		5
P. EVALUATION OF SOLICITATION RESPONSES		6
Q. BEST AND FINAL OFFER		6
R. REFERENCE AND CREDIT CHECKS		7
S. AWARD		7
T. LUMP SUM OR "ALL OR NONE" SOLICITATION RESPONSES		7
U. REJECTION OF SOLICITATION RESPONSES		7
V. PRICES & COST CLARIFICATION		7
W. VENDOR DEMONSTRATIONS		7
II. TERMS AND CONDITIONS		9
A. GENERAL		9
B. NOTIFICATION		10
C. BUYER'S REPRESENTATIVE		10
D. GOVERNING LAW (Nonnegotiable)		10
E. BEGINNING OF WORK & SUSPENSION OF SERVICES		10
F. AMENDMENT		10
G. CHANGE ORDERS OR SUBSTITUTIONS		10
H. RECORD OF VENDOR PERFORMANCE		11
I. NOTICE OF POTENTIAL VENDOR BREACH		11
J. BREACH		11
K. NON-WAIVER OF BREACH		11
L. SEVERABILITY		11
M. INDEMNIFICATION		12
N. ATTORNEY'S FEES		12
O. ASSIGNMENT, SALE, OR MERGER		12
P. CONTRACTING WITH OTHER NEBRASKA POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS OF THE STATE OR ANOTHER STATE		13
Q. FORCE MAJEURE		13
R. COMPLIANCE WITH PRESIDENTIAL EXECUTIVE ORDERS 14151 AND 14173		13
S. CONFIDENTIALITY		13

T.	EARLY TERMINATION.....	13
U.	CONTRACT CLOSEOUT.....	14
V.	AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT.....	14
W.	LONG-TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN (Nonnegotiable).....	14
X.	OFFICE OF PUBLIC COUNSEL (Nonnegotiable).....	14
Y.	LOBBYING.....	14
III.	VENDOR DUTIES.....	16
A.	INDEPENDENT VENDOR / OBLIGATIONS.....	16
B.	EMPLOYEE WORK ELIGIBILITY STATUS.....	17
C.	COMPLIANCE WITH CIVIL RIGHTS LAWS AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYMENT / NONDISCRIMINATION (Nonnegotiable).....	17
D.	COOPERATION WITH OTHER VENDORS.....	17
E.	DISCOUNTS.....	17
F.	PRICES.....	18
G.	PERMITS, REGULATIONS, LAWS.....	18
H.	OWNERSHIP OF INFORMATION AND DATA / DELIVERABLES.....	18
I.	INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS.....	18
J.	ANTITRUST.....	21
K.	CONFLICT OF INTEREST.....	21
L.	SITE RULES AND REGULATIONS.....	21
M.	ADVERTISING.....	21
N.	DISASTER RECOVERY/BACK UP PLAN.....	21
O.	DRUG POLICY.....	21
P.	WARRANTY.....	21
Q.	TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE.....	22
R.	BUSINESS ASSOCIATE PROVISIONS.....	22
IV.	PAYMENT.....	24
A.	PROHIBITION AGAINST ADVANCE PAYMENT (Nonnegotiable).....	24
B.	TAXES (Nonnegotiable).....	24
C.	INVOICES.....	24
D.	INSPECTION AND APPROVAL.....	25
E.	PAYMENT (Nonnegotiable).....	25
F.	LATE PAYMENT (Nonnegotiable).....	25
G.	SUBJECT TO FUNDING / FUNDING OUT CLAUSE FOR LOSS OF APPROPRIATIONS (Nonnegotiable) 25	
H.	RIGHT TO AUDIT (First Paragraph is Nonnegotiable).....	25
V.	PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND SCOPE OF WORK.....	26
A.	PROJECT OVERVIEW.....	26
B.	CURRENT PROJECT ENVIRONMENT AND STATISTICS.....	26
C.	MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS.....	27
D.	SCOPE OF WORK.....	27
E.	OPTIONAL SERVICES.....	35
F.	LIST OF EXHIBITS.....	35
VI.	SOLICITATION RESPONSE INSTRUCTIONS.....	36
A.	SOLICITATION RESPONSE SUBMISSION.....	36
	CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT FORM.....	39

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Acceptance Test Procedure: Benchmarks and other performance criteria, developed by the State or other sources of testing standards, for measuring the effectiveness of products or goods and the means used for testing such performance

Addendum: A written correction or alteration to a document during the solicitation process (e.g., Questions and Answers, Revised Schedule of Events, Addendum to Contract Award)

After Receipt of Order (ARO): After Receipt of Order

Agency: All officers of the state, departments, bureaus, boards, commissions, councils, and institutions receiving legislative appropriations

Agent/Representative: A person authorized to act on behalf of another

Amend: To alter or change by adding, subtracting, or substituting

Amendment: A written correction or alteration to a document

Appropriation: Legislative authorization to expend public funds for a specific purpose; money set apart for a specific use

Automated Clearing House (ACH): Electronic network for financial transactions in the United States

Award: All purchases, leases, or contracts which are based on competitive solicitations will be awarded according to the provisions in the solicitation

Best and Final Offer (BAFO): In a competitive solicitation, the final offer submitted which contains Vendor's most favorable terms for price

Bid: See Solicitation Response

Bid Opening: The process of opening correctly submitted solicitation responses at the time and place specified in the written solicitation and in the presence of any bidder who wishes to attend

Bidder: A Vendor who submits a Solicitation Response

Breach: Violation of a contractual obligation by failing to perform or repudiation of one's own promise

Business: Any corporation, partnership, individual, sole proprietorship, joint-stock company, joint venture, or any other private legal entity

Business Day: Any weekday, except State-recognized holidays

Calendar Day: Every day shown on the calendar including Saturdays, Sundays, and State/Federal holidays

Cancellation: To call off or revoke a solicitation, purchase order, or contract without expectation of conducting or performing at a later time

Catalog/Non-Core: A printed or electronic list of products a Vendor may provide at a discounted rate or discount off list price to the State. Initial contract award(s) is not based on Catalog/Non-Core items

Central Processing Unit (CPU): Any computer or computer system that is used by the State to store, process, or retrieve data or perform other functions using Operating Systems and applications software

Change Order: Document that provides amendments to an executed purchase order or contract

Coach: A trained and certified Tobacco Treatment Specialist who provides evidence-based behavioral support for Quitline participants to help them quit using tobacco products. Their duties include creating personalized plans, using methods like the "5 A's (Ask, Advise, Assess, Assist, Arrange)" to guide participants through quitting at their own pace without judgment, and assisting with nicotine replacement therapy

Coaching: Personalized sessions led by a trained professional provide support, strategies, and resources to help people quit using tobacco. Coaching may include motivational interviewing techniques, counseling on nicotine replacement therapy, and connecting participants to other resources

Collusion: An agreement or cooperation between two or more persons or entities to accomplish a fraudulent, deceitful, or unlawful purpose

Commodities: Any equipment, material, supply, or goods; anything movable or tangible that is provided or sold

Commodities Description: Detailed descriptions of the items to be purchased; may include information necessary to obtain the desired quality, type, color, size, shape, or special characteristics necessary to perform the work intended to produce the desired results

Competition: The effort or action of two or more commercial interests to obtain the same business from third parties

Confidential Information: See Proprietary Information

Contract: An agreement between two or more parties creating obligations that are enforceable or otherwise recognizable at law; the writing that sets forth such an agreement

Contract Administration: The management of the contract which includes and is not limited to contract signing, contract amendments and any necessary legal actions

Contract Award: Document that officially awards a contract to a bidder(s) as the result of a competitive solicitation or a vendor(s) in a contract that qualifies for an exception or exemption from the competitive bidding requirements of the State Procurement Act

Contract Management: The management of day-to-day activities at the agency which includes but is not limited to ensuring deliverables are received, specifications are met, handling meetings and making payments to the Vendor

Contract Period: The duration of the contract

Contractor: See Vendor

Cooperative Purchasing: The combining of requirements of two or more political entities to obtain advantages of volume purchases, reduction in administrative expenses or other public benefits

Copyright: A property right in an original work of authorship fixed in any tangible medium of expression, giving the holder the exclusive right to reproduce, adapt and distribute the work

Cost Sheet: A required document that is completed by the vendor in the prescribed format to show the vendor's pricing to provide the commodities or perform the services requested

Counselor: See "coach"

Counseling: See "coaching"

Critical Program Error: Any Program Error, whether or not known to the State, which prohibits or significantly impairs use of the Licensed Software as set forth in the documentation and intended in the contract

Customer Service: The process of ensuring customer satisfaction by providing assistance and advice on those commodities or services provided by a Vendor

Default: The omission or failure to perform a contractual duty

Déjelo-Ya: Spanish language tobacco cessation campaign and hotline (1-855-DÉJELO-YA) in the U.S. meaning "Quit Now."

Deviation: Any proposed change(s) or alteration(s) to either the terms and conditions or deliverables within the scope of the written solicitation or contract

E-cigarettes: E-cigarettes include a diverse group of devices that allow users to inhale an aerosol, which typically contains nicotine, flavorings, and other additives. Most have a battery, a heating element, and a place to hold a liquid. E-cigarettes are sometimes called "e-cigs," "vapes," "e-hookahs," "vape pens," and "electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS)"

ENDS: Electronic Nicotine Delivery System (ENDS) Any device that can be used to deliver aerosolized nicotine to the person inhaling from the device, including, but not limited to, an e-cigarette, e-cigar, e-pipe, vape pen or e-hookah

Evaluation: The process of examining a solicitation response after opening to determine the bidder's responsibility, responsiveness to requirements, and to ascertain other characteristics of the solicitation response that relate to determination of the successful award

Evaluation Committee: Individual(s) identified by the agency that leads the solicitation to evaluate solicitation responses

Extension: Continuance of a contract for a specified duration upon the agreement of the parties beyond the original Contract Period; not to be confused with "Renewal Period"

Free on Board (F.O.B.) Destination: The delivery charges are included in the quoted price and prepaid by the Vendor. Vendor is responsible for all claims associated with damages during delivery of product

Free on Board (F.O.B.) Point of Origin: The delivery charges are not included in the quoted price and are the responsibility of the agency. Agency is responsible for all claims associated with damages during delivery of product

Foreign Corporation: A foreign corporation that was organized and chartered under the laws of another state, government, or country

Goods: See Commodities

Installation Date: The date when the procedures described in "Installation by Vendor" and "Installation by State" as found in the solicitation or contract are completed

Interested Party: A person acting in their personal capacity or an entity entering into a contract or other agreement creating a legal interest therein

Late Solicitation Response: A solicitation response received after the Opening Date and Time

Licensed Software Documentation: The user manuals and any other materials in any form or medium customarily provided by the Vendor to the users of the Licensed Software which will provide the State with sufficient information to operate, diagnose, and maintain the Licensed Software properly, safely, and efficiently

Mandatory: Required, compulsory, or obligatory

May: Discretionary, permitted; used to express possibility

Module (see System): A collection of routines and data structures that perform a specific function of software

Must: See Shall

NAQC: North America Quitline Consortium

National Institute for Governmental Purchasing (NIGP): National Institute of Governmental Purchasing – Source used for assignment of universal commodity codes to goods and services

Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT): Is the most commonly used family of quit smoking medications. NRT provides a small amount of nicotine but none of the dangerous chemicals found in cigarettes. This helps satisfy cravings for nicotine and reduces the urge to use tobacco products. For the purpose of this RFP, NRT references the over-the-counter options: nicotine patch, gum, and lozenge. (<https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/campaign/tips/quit-smoking/quit-smoking-medications/how-quit-smoking-medicines-work/index.html>)

Non-core: See Catalog

Non-Responsive Solicitation Response: Any solicitation response that does not comply with the requirements of the solicitation or cannot be evaluated against the other solicitation responses

Non-negotiable: These clauses are controlled by state law and are not subject to negotiation

Opening Date and Time: Specified date and time for the opening of received, labeled, and sealed formal solicitation responses

Operating System: The control program in a computer that provides the interface to the computer hardware and peripheral devices, and the usage and allocation of memory resources, processor resources, input/output resources, and security resources

Outsourcing: The contracting out of a business process that an organization may have previously performed internally or for which an organization has a new need to an independent organization from which the process is purchased back

Payroll & Financial Center (PFC): Electronic procurement system of record

Performance Bond: An insurance agreement accompanied by a monetary commitment by which a third party (the surety) accepts liability and guarantees that the Vendor fulfills any and all obligations under the contract

Personal Property: See Commodities

Platform: A specific hardware and Operating System combination that is different from other hardware and Operating System combinations to the extent that a different version of the Licensed Software product is required to execute properly in the environment established by such hardware and Operating System combination

Point of Contact (POC): The person designated to receive communications and to communicate

Product: Something that is distributed commercially for use or consumption and that is usually (1) tangible personal property, (2) the result of fabrication or processing, and (3) an item that has passed through a chain of commercial distribution before ultimate use or consumption

Program Error: Code in Licensed Software that produces unintended results or actions or that produces results or actions other than those described in the specifications. A program error includes, without limitation, any Critical Program Error

Program Set: The group of programs and products, including the Licensed Software specified in the solicitation, plus any additional programs and products licensed by the State under the contract for use by the State

Project: The total scheme, program, or method worked out for the accomplishment of an objective, including all documentation, commodities, and services to be provided under the contract

Proposal: See Solicitation Response

Proprietary Information: Trade secrets, academic and scientific research work that is in progress and unpublished or other information that if released would give advantage to business competitors and serve no public purpose. See Neb. Rev. Stat. § 84-712.05(3). In accordance with Attorney General Opinions 92068 and 97033, proof that information is proprietary requires identification of specific named competitor(s) advantaged by release of the information and the demonstrated advantage the named competitor(s) would gain by the release of information

Protest/Grievance:

A complaint about a governmental action or decision related to the solicitation or resultant contract under SPB's Protest Policy.

Quote: See Solicitation Response

Recommended Hardware Configuration: The data processing hardware (including all terminals, auxiliary storage, communication, and other peripheral devices) to the extent used by the State as recommended by the Vendor

Release Date: The date of public release of the solicitation

Renewal Period: Optional contract periods subsequent to the original Contract Period for a specified duration with previously agreed to terms and conditions; not to be confused with "Extension"

Request for Proposal (RFP): See Solicitation

Responsible Bidder: A Vendor who has the capability in all respects to perform fully and lawfully all requirements with integrity and reliability to assure good faith performance

Responsive Bidder: A Vendor who has submitted a solicitation response which conforms to all requirements of the solicitation

Shall: An order/command; mandatory

Should: Expected; suggested, but not necessarily mandatory

Software License: Legal instrument with or without printed material that governs the use or redistribution of licensed software

Solicitation: A formal invitation to receive quotes in the form of a Request for Proposal or Invitation to Bid

Solicitation Bond: An insurance agreement, accompanied by a monetary commitment, by which a third party (the surety) accepts liability and guarantees that the Vendor will not withdraw the solicitation response

Solicitation Conference: A meeting scheduled for the purpose of clarifying a written solicitation and related expectations

Solicitation Response: An offer, quote, bid, or proposal submitted by a Vendor in response to a Solicitation

Specifications: The detailed statement, especially of the measurements, quality, materials, and functional characteristics, or other items to be provided under a contract.

Subcontractor: Individual or entity with whom the Vendor enters a contract to perform a portion of the work awarded to the Vendor

System (see Module): Any collection or aggregation of two (2) or more Modules that is designed to function, or is represented by the Vendor as functioning or being capable of functioning, as an entity

Termination:

Occurs when either Party, under a power created by agreement or law, puts an end to the contract prior to the stated expiration date; all obligations that are still executory on both sides are discharged but any right based on prior breach or performance survives

Third-Party: Any person or entity, including but not limited to fiduciaries, shareholders, owners, officers, managers, employees, legally disinterested persons, and subcontractors or agents, and their employees. It shall not include any entity or person who is an interested party to the contract or agreement

Trade Secret: Information, including but not limited to, a drawing, formula, pattern, compilation, program, device, method, technique, code, or process that (a) derives independent economic value, actual or potential, from not being known to, and not being ascertainable by proper means by, other persons who can obtain economic value from its disclosure or use; and (b) is the subject of efforts that are reasonable under the circumstances to maintain its secrecy (see Neb. Rev. Stat. § 87-502(4))

Trademark: A word, phrase, logo, or other graphic symbol used by a manufacturer or Vendor to distinguish its product from those of others, registered with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office

Upgrade: Any change that improves or alters the basic function of a product of service

Vape/Vaping: A common term used to refer to the act of using an e-cigarette
(<https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/e-cigarettes/>)

Vendor: An individual or entity lawfully conducting business with the State, or licensed to do so, who seeks to provide and contract for goods or services under the terms of a Solicitation and/or Contract

Vendor Performance Report: A report completed by the using agency and submitted to Department of Health and Human Services documenting products or services delivered or performed which exceed or fail to meet the terms of the purchase order, contract, and/or solicitation specifications

Will: See Shall

Work Day: See Business Day

ACRONYM LIST

ACH – Automated Clearing House

AI – Artificial Intelligence

ARO – After Receipt of Order

BAFO – Best and Final Offer

CDC – Center for Disease Control and Prevention

CEU – Continuing Education Units

COI – Certificate of Insurance

CPU – Central Processing Unit

DAS – Department of Administrative Services

DEI – Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

DEIA – Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility

DHHS – Department of Health and Human Services

ENDS – Electronic Nicotine Delivery System

F.O.B. – Free on Board

HIPAA – Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996

ICT – Information and Communication Technology

ITB – Invitation to Bid

MCO – Managed Care Organization

MDS – Minimal Data Set

NAQC – North American Quitline Consortium

NIGP – National Institute for Governmental Purchasing

NRT – Nicotine Replacement Therapy

PA – Participating Addendum

RFP – Request for Proposal

TDD – Telecommunications Device for the Deaf

TTY - Teletypewriter

TFN – Tobacco Free Nebraska

I. PROCUREMENT PROCEDURE

A. GENERAL INFORMATION

This solicitation is designed to solicit responses from qualified bidders who will be responsible for providing Nebraska Tobacco Quitline services at a competitive and reasonable cost.

Solicitation responses shall conform to all instructions, conditions, and requirements included in the solicitation. Prospective bidders are expected to carefully examine all documents, schedules, and requirements in this solicitation, and respond to each requirement in the format prescribed. Solicitation responses may be found non-responsive if they do not conform to the solicitation.

B. PROCURING OFFICE AND COMMUNICATION WITH STATE STAFF AND EVALUATORS

Procurement responsibilities related to this solicitation reside with the Department of Health and Human Services. The point of contact (POC) for the procurement is as follows:

RFP Number: 124316 O3
Name: Kristin Powell, Procurement Contracts Officer
Agency: Department of Health and Human Services
Address: 301 Centennial Mall South
Lincoln, NE 68509
E-Mail: kristin.powell@nebraska.gov

From the date the solicitation is issued until the Intent to Award is issued, communication from the bidder is limited to the POC listed above. After the Intent to Award is issued, the bidder may communicate with individuals the State has designated as responsible for negotiating the contract on behalf of the State. No member of the State Government, employee of the State, or member of the Evaluation Committee is empowered to make binding statements regarding this solicitation. The POC will issue any answers, clarifications, or amendments regarding this solicitation in writing. Only the SPB or awarding agency can award a contract. Bidders shall not have any communication with or attempt to communicate or influence any evaluator involved in this solicitation.

The following exceptions to these restrictions are permitted:

1. Contact made pursuant to pre-existing contracts or obligations;
2. Contact required by the schedule of events or an event scheduled later by the POC; and
3. Contact required for negotiation and execution of the final contract.

The State reserves the right to reject a bidder's solicitation response, withdraw an Intent to Award, or terminate a contract if the State determines there has been a violation of these procurement procedures.

C. SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

The State expects to adhere to the procurement schedule shown below, but all dates are approximate and subject to change.

NOTE: All ShareFile links in the Schedule of Events below, are unique links for each schedule step. Please click the correct link for the upload step you are requesting.

Schedule of Events		
ACTIVITY		DATE/TIME
1.	Release solicitation	April 03, 2026
2.	Last day to submit written questions via email. Questions should be submitted to dhhs.rfpquestions@nebraska.gov Please put solicitation number in the subject line: 124316 O3	April 24, 2026
3.	DHHS responds to written questions through solicitation "Addendum" to be posted to the Internet at: http://das.nebraska.gov/materiel/bidopps.html	April 03 – 29, 2026
4.	<p>Electronic Solicitation Opening – Online Via Webex</p> <p>IT IS THE BIDDER'S RESPONSIBILITY TO UPLOAD ELECTRONIC FILES BY OPENING DATE AND TIME. EXCEPTIONS WILL NOT BE MADE FOR TECHNOLOGY ISSUES.</p> <p>ShareFile Electronic Solicitation Submission Link: https://nebraska.sharefile.com/share/getinfo/r1d99932f215d4633806712e4bd8ddb88</p> <p>Join Webex Meeting: Ways to join:</p> <p>Join the meeting link https://sonvideo.webex.com/sonvideo/j.php?MTID=m3d566fdd38b7a95a52e83715199fd082</p> <p>Join by meeting number Meeting number (access code): 2492 880 3655 Meeting password: Ksdiz6rMR23</p> <p>Tap to join from a mobile device (attendees only) +1-408-418-9388, 24928803655## United States Toll</p> <p>Join by phone +1-408-418-9388 United States Toll Global call-in numbers</p> <p>Join from a video system or application Dial 24928803655@sonvideo.webex.com You can also dial 173.243.2.68 and enter your meeting number.</p>	May 07, 2026 2:00 PM Central Time
5.	Review for conformance to solicitation requirements	May 07 - 11, 2026
6.	Evaluation period	May 11 – 22, 2026
7.	"Vendor Demonstrations" (if required)	May 25, 2026 – June 5, 2026
8.	Post "Intent to Award" to the Internet at: https://das.nebraska.gov/materiel/bidopps.html	May 25, 2026 – June 5, 2026
9.	Contract finalization period	June 2026
10.	Contract award	June 2026
11.	Contract start date	June/July 2026

D. WRITTEN QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Questions regarding the meaning or interpretation of any solicitation provision must be submitted in writing to Department of Health and Human Services and clearly marked "Solicitation Number 124316 O3; Nebraska Tobacco Quitline services Questions". The POC is not obligated to respond to questions that are received late per the Schedule of Events.

Bidders should submit questions for any items upon which assumptions may be made when preparing a response to the solicitation. Any solicitation response containing assumptions may be deemed non-responsive and may be rejected by the DHHS. Solicitation responses will be evaluated without consideration of any known or unknown assumptions of a bidder. The contract will not incorporate any known or unknown assumptions of a bidder.

Questions should be uploaded using the ShareFile link provided in the solicitation Schedule of Events, Section I.C. It is recommended that bidders submit questions using the following format:

RFP Section Reference	RFP Page Number	Question

Written answers will be posted at <https://das.nebraska.gov/materiel/bidopps.html> per the Schedule of Events.

E. SECRETARY OF STATE/TAX COMMISSIONER REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS (Nonnegotiable)

All bidders must be authorized to transact business in the State of Nebraska and comply with all Nebraska Secretary of State Registration requirements. The bidder who is the recipient of an Intent to Award may be required to certify that it has complied and produce a true and exact copy of its current (within ninety (90) calendar days of the intent to award) Certificate or Letter of Good Standing, or in the case of a sole proprietorship, provide written documentation of sole proprietorship and complete the United States Citizenship Attestation Form, available on the Department of Administrative Services website at:

<https://das.nebraska.gov/materiel/docs/pdf/Individual%20or%20Sole%20Proprietor%20United%20States%20Attestation%20Form%20English%20and%20Spanish.pdf> This should be accomplished prior to execution of the contract.

F. ETHICS IN PUBLIC CONTRACTING

The State reserves the right to reject solicitation responses, withdraw an intent to award or award, or terminate a contract if an ethical violation has been committed, which includes, but is not limited to:

1. Offering or giving, directly or indirectly, a bribe, fee, commission, compensation, gift, gratuity, or anything of value to any person or entity in an attempt to influence the bidding process;
2. Utilizing the services of lobbyists, attorneys, political activists, or consultants to influence or subvert the bidding process;
3. Being considered for, presently being, or becoming debarred, suspended, ineligible, or excluded from contracting with any state or federal entity;
4. Submitting a solicitation response on behalf of another Party or entity; and
5. Colluding with any person or entity to influence the bidding process, submit sham solicitation responses, preclude bidding, fix pricing or costs, create an unfair advantage, subvert the solicitation response, or prejudice the State.

The bidder shall include this clause in any subcontract entered into for the exclusive purpose of performing this contract.

Bidder shall have an affirmative duty to report any violations of this clause by the bidder throughout the bidding process and throughout the term of this contract for the awarded bidder and their subcontractors.

G. DEVIATIONS FROM THE SOLICITATION

The requirements contained in the solicitation (Sections II through VI) become a part of the terms and conditions of the contract resulting from this solicitation. Any deviations from the solicitation in Sections II through VI must be clearly defined by the bidder in its solicitation response and, if accepted by the State, will become part of the contract. Any specifically defined deviations must not be in conflict with the basic nature of the solicitation, requirements, or applicable state or federal laws or statutes. "Deviation", for the purposes of this solicitation, means any proposed changes or alterations to either the contractual language or deliverables within the scope of this solicitation. The State discourages deviations and reserves the right to reject proposed deviations.

H. SUBMISSION OF SOLICITATION RESPONSES

The State is only accepting electronic responses submitted in accordance with this solicitation. The State will not accept solicitation responses by mail, email, voice, or telephone, unless otherwise explicitly stated in writing by the State.

Pages may be consecutively numbered for the entire solicitation response or may be numbered consecutively within sections. Figures and tables should be numbered and referenced in the text by that number. They should be placed as close as possible to the referencing text.

The Technical Responses should not contain any reference to dollar amounts. However, information such as data concerning labor hours and categories, materials, subcontracts and so forth, shall be considered in the Technical Response so that the bidder's understanding of the scope of work may be evaluated. The Technical Response shall disclose the bidder's technical requirements in as much detail as possible, including, but not limited to, the information required by the Technical Response instructions.

It is the bidder's responsibility to ensure the solicitation response is received electronically by the date and time indicated in the Schedule of Events. Solicitation Responses must be submitted via ShareFile by the date and time of the opening per the Schedule of Events. No late solicitation responses will be accepted.

It is the responsibility of the bidder to check the website for all information relevant to this solicitation to include addenda and/or amendments issued prior to the opening date. The website can be found here: <https://das.nebraska.gov/materiel/bidopps.html>.

Emphasis should be concentrated on conformance to the solicitation instructions, responsiveness to requirements, completeness, and clarity of content. If the solicitation response is presented in such a fashion that makes evaluation difficult or overly time consuming the State reserves the right to reject the solicitation response as non-conforming.

The ShareFile link for uploading Solicitation Response(s) is provided in the Schedule of Events, Section I.C.

*****UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED, DO NOT SUBMIT DOCUMENTS THAT CAN ONLY BE ACCESSED WITH A PASSWORD*****

1. Bidders must submit responses via ShareFile using the solicitation submission link.

Note: Not all browsers are compatible with ShareFile. Currently Google Chrome, Internet Explorer, Microsoft Edge, Safari, and Firefox are compatible. After the bidder clicks the solicitation response submission link, the bidder will be prompted to enter contact information including an e-mail address. By entering an e-mail address, the bidder should receive a confirmation email confirming the successful upload directly from ShareFile.

ShareFile link for uploading solicitation response(s) provided in the Schedule of Events, Section I.C.

- a. The Solicitation response and Proprietary information should be uploaded as separate and distinct files.
 - i. If duplicated responses are submitted, the State will retain only the most recently submitted response.
 - ii. If it is the bidder's intent to submit multiple responses, the bidder must clearly identify the separate submissions.
 - iii. It is the bidder's responsibility to allow time for electronic uploading. All file uploads must be completed by the Opening date and time per the Schedule of Events. No late responses will be accepted.

b. ELECTRONIC SOLICITATION RESPONSE FILE NAMES

The bidder should clearly identify the uploaded solicitation response files. To assist in identification the bidder should use the following naming convention:

- i. 124316 O3 Company Name
If multiple files are submitted for one solicitation response, add number of files to file names:
124316 O3 Company Name File 1 of 2
124316 O3 Company Name File 2 of 2
- ii. If multiple responses are submitted for the same solicitation, add the response number to the file names:
124316 O3 Company Name Response 1 File 1 of 2

The "Contractual Agreement Form" must be signed manually in ink or by DocuSign and returned by the opening date and time along with the bidder's solicitation response and any other requirements as stated in this solicitation in order for the bidder's solicitation response to be evaluated.

By signing this Contractual Agreement Form, the bidder guarantees compliance with the provisions stated in this solicitation and agrees to the terms and conditions unless otherwise indicated in writing.

I. SOLICITATION PREPARATION COSTS

The State shall not incur any liability for any costs incurred by bidders in replying to this solicitation, including any activity related to bidding on this solicitation.

J. FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH SOLICITATION

Violation of the terms and conditions contained in this solicitation or any resultant contract, at any time before or after the award, shall be grounds for action by the State which may include, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Rejection of a bidder's solicitation response,
2. Withdrawal of the Intent to Award,
3. Withdrawal of the Award,
4. Negative documentation regarding Vendor Performance,
5. Termination of the resulting contract,
6. Legal action; and
7. Suspension or Debarment of the bidder from further bidding with the State for the period of time relative to the seriousness of the violation. Such period to be within the sole discretion of the State.

K. SOLICITATION RESPONSE CORRECTIONS

A bidder may correct a mistake in an electronically submitted solicitation response prior to the time of opening by uploading a revised and completed solicitation response.

1. If a corrected electronic solicitation response is submitted, the file name(s) date/time stamped with latest date/time stamp will be accepted. The corrected solicitation response file name(s) should be identified as:
 - a. Corrected 124316 O3 Company Name Response #1 File 1 of 2,
 - b. Corrected 124316 O3 Company Name Response #2 File 2 of 2, etc.

Changing a solicitation response after opening may be permitted if the change is made to correct a minor error that does not affect price, quantity, quality, delivery, or contractual conditions. In case of a mathematical error in extension of price, unit price shall govern.

L. LATE SOLICITATION RESPONSES

Solicitation Responses received after the time and date of the opening will be considered late responses. Late responses will be considered non-responsive. The State is not responsible for responses that are late or lost regardless of cause or fault.

M. BID OPENING

The opening will consist of opening solicitation responses and announcing the names of bidders. Responses **WILL NOT** be available for viewing by those present at the opening. Responses will be posted to the SPB website once an Intent to Award has been posted to the website. Once responses are opened, they become the property of the State of Nebraska and will not be returned.

N. SOLICITATION REQUIREMENTS

The solicitation responses will first be examined to determine if all requirements listed below have been addressed and whether further evaluation is warranted. Solicitation responses not meeting the requirements may be rejected as non-responsive. The requirements are as follows:

1. Original Contractual Agreement Form signed manually in ink or by DocuSign;
2. Clarity and responsiveness;
3. Completed Corporate Overview;
4. Completed Sections II through IV;
5. Completed Technical Response; and
6. Completed Cost Sheet.

O. EVALUATION COMMITTEE

Solicitation Responses are evaluated by members of an Evaluation Committee(s). The Evaluation Committee(s) will consist of individuals selected at the discretion of the State. Names of the members of the Evaluation Committee(s) will not be published prior to the intent to award.

Any contact, attempted contact, or attempt to influence an evaluator that is involved with this Solicitation may result in the rejection of this response and further administrative actions.

P. EVALUATION OF SOLICITATION RESPONSES

All solicitation responses that are deemed responsive to the solicitation will be evaluated. Each evaluation category will have a maximum point potential. The State will conduct a fair, impartial, and comprehensive evaluation of all responses in accordance with the criteria set forth below. Areas that will be addressed and scored during the evaluation include:

1. Corporate Overview may include, but is not limited to:
 - a. the ability, capacity, and skill of the bidder to deliver and implement the system or project that meets the requirements of the Solicitation;
 - b. the character, integrity, reputation, judgment, experience, and efficiency of the bidder;
 - c. whether the bidder can perform the contract within the specified time frame;
 - d. the bidder's historical or current performance; and
 - e. such other information that may be secured and that has a bearing on the decision to award the contract.
2. Technical Response; and
3. Cost Sheet.

Neb. Rev. Stat. § 73-808 allows the State to consider a variety of factors, including, but not limited to, the quality of performance of previous contracts to be considered when evaluating responses to competitive solicitations in determining a responsible bidder. Information obtained from any Contract Compliance Request or any Contract Non-Compliance Notice (See Terms & Conditions, Section II.H) may be used in evaluating responses to solicitations for goods and services to determine the best value for the State.

Neb. Rev. Stat. § 73-107 allows for a preference for a resident disabled veteran or business located in a designated enterprise zone. When a state contract is to be awarded to the lowest responsible bidder, a resident disabled veteran or a business located in a designated enterprise zone under the Enterprise Zone Act shall be allowed a preference over any other resident or nonresident bidder, if all other factors are equal.

Resident disabled veterans means any person (a) who resides in the State of Nebraska, who served in the United States Armed Forces, including any reserve component or the National Guard, who was discharged or otherwise separated with a characterization of honorable or general (under honorable conditions), and who possesses a disability rating letter issued by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs establishing a service-connected disability or a disability determination from the United States Department of Defense and (b)(i) who owns and controls a business or, in the case of a publicly owned business, more than fifty percent of the stock is owned by one or more persons described in (a) of this paragraph and (ii) the management and daily business operations of the business are controlled by one or more persons described in (a) of this paragraph. Any contract entered into without compliance with this section shall be null and void.

Therefore, if a resident disabled veteran or business located in a designated enterprise zone submits a solicitation response in accordance with Neb. Rev. Stat. § 73-107 and has so indicated on the Contractual Agreement Form under "Vendor must complete the following" requesting priority/preference to be considered in the award of this contract, the following will need to be submitted by the Vendor within ten (10) business days of request:

1. Documentation from the United States Armed Forces confirming service,
2. Documentation of discharge or otherwise separated characterization of honorable or general (under honorable conditions),
3. Disability rating letter issued by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs establishing a service-connected disability or a disability determination from the United States Department of Defense; and
4. Documentation which shows ownership and control of a business or, in the case of a publicly owned business, more than fifty percent of the stock is owned by one or more persons described in subdivision (a) of this subsection; and the management and daily business operations of the business are controlled by one or more persons described in subdivision (a) of this subsection.

Failure to submit the requested documentation within ten (10) business days of notice will disqualify the bidder from consideration of the preference.

Q. BEST AND FINAL OFFER

Each bidder should provide its best offer with their original solicitation response and should not expect the State to request a best and final offer (BAFO).

The State reserves the right to conduct more than one BAFO. If requested by the State, the BAFO must be submitted on the BAFO Cost Sheet and in accordance with the State's instructions. Failure to submit a requested BAFO or failure to submit a BAFO in accordance with the State's instructions may result in rejection of the bidder's entire solicitation response. BAFOs may be scored and ranked by the Evaluation Committee.

R. REFERENCE AND CREDIT CHECKS

The State reserves the right to conduct and consider reference and credit checks. The State reserves the right to use third parties to conduct reference and credit checks. By submitting a solicitation response, the bidder grants to the State the right to contact or arrange a visit in person with any or all of the bidder's clients. Reference and credit checks may be grounds to reject a solicitation response, withdraw an intent to award, or rescind the award of a contract.

S. AWARD

The State reserves the right to evaluate solicitation responses and award contracts in a manner utilizing criteria selected at the State's discretion and in the State's best interest. After evaluation of the solicitation responses, or at any point in the Solicitation process, the State of Nebraska may take one or more of the following actions:

1. Amend the solicitation;
2. Extend the date and time of a solicitation;
3. Waive deviations or errors in the State's solicitation process and in bidder responses that are not material, do not compromise the solicitation process or a bidder's response, and do not improve a Vendor's competitive position;
4. Accept or reject a portion of or all of a solicitation response;
5. Accept or reject all responses;
6. Withdraw the solicitation;
7. Elect to re-release the solicitation;
8. Award single lines or multiple lines to one or more Vendors; or,
9. Award one or more all-inclusive contracts.

The solicitation does not commit the State to award a contract. Once intent to award decision has been determined, it will be posted to the Internet at: <https://das.nebraska.gov/materiel/bidopps.html>

Any protests must be filed by a bidder within ten (10) business days after the intent to award decision is posted to the Internet. Grievance and protest procedure is available on the Internet at: https://das.nebraska.gov/materiel/docs/NE_DAS_Materiel_Purchasing_Agency-SPB_Policy_23_07_Protest_Policy.pdf

T. LUMP SUM OR "ALL OR NONE" SOLICITATION RESPONSES

The State reserves the right to purchase item-by-item, by groups or as a total when the State may benefit by so doing. Bidders may submit a response on an "all or none" or "lump sum" basis but should also submit a response on an item-by-item basis. The term "all or none" means a conditional response which requires the purchase of all items on which responses are offered and bidder declines to accept award on individual items; a "lump sum" response is one in which the bidder offers a lower price than the sum of the individual responses if all items are purchased but agrees to deliver individual items at the prices quoted.

"LUMP SUM" OR "ALL OR NONE" RESPONSES SHOULD BE CLEARLY IDENTIFIED ON THE FIRST PAGE OF THE SOLICITATION AND COST SHEET (IF APPLICABLE)

U. REJECTION OF SOLICITATION RESPONSES

The State reserves the right to reject any or all responses, wholly or in part, in the best interest of the State.

V. PRICES & COST CLARIFICATION

Discount and Price provisions are discussed in Sections III.F. and III.G. The State reserves the right to review all aspects of cost for reasonableness and realism as those terms are defined in (Neb. Rev. Stat. § 73-810 (1) (a) and (b) The State may request clarification of any solicitation where the cost component indicates a significant and unsupported deviation from industry standards or in areas where detailed pricing is required. Under Neb. Rev. Stat. § 73-810 (2), the State may reject a bid if the price is not reasonable or realistic.

W. VENDOR DEMONSTRATIONS

The State may determine that oral interviews/presentations and/or demonstrations are required. Every bidder may not be given an opportunity to interview/present and/or give demonstrations; the State reserves the right, in its discretion, to select only the top scoring bidders to present/give oral interviews. The scores from the oral interviews/presentations and/or demonstrations will be added to the scores from the Corporate Overview, Technical Response, and Cost Sheets. The presentation process will allow the bidders to demonstrate their solicitation response offering, explaining and/or clarifying any unusual or significant elements related to their solicitation

responses. Bidders' key personnel, identified in their solicitation response, may be requested to participate in a structured interview to determine their understanding of the requirements of this solicitation response, their authority and reporting relationships within their firm, and their management style and philosophy. Only representatives of the State and the presenting bidder will be permitted to attend the oral interviews/presentations and/or demonstrations. A written copy or summary of the presentation, and demonstrative information (such as briefing charts, et cetera) may be offered by the bidder, but the State reserves the right to refuse or not consider the offered materials. Bidders shall not be allowed to alter or amend their solicitation responses.

Once the oral interviews/presentations and/or demonstrations have been completed, the State reserves the right to make an award without any further discussion with the bidders regarding the solicitation responses received.

Any cost incidental to the oral interviews/presentations and/or demonstrations shall be borne entirely by the bidder and will not be compensated by the State.

II. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Bidder should read the Terms and Conditions within this section and must initial either “Accept All Terms and Conditions Within Section as Written” or “Exceptions Taken to Terms and Conditions Within Section as Written” in the table below. If exception is not taken to a provision, it is deemed accepted as stated. If the bidder takes any exceptions, they must provide the following within the “Exceptions” field of the table below (Bidder may provide responses in separate attachment if multiple exceptions are taken):

1. The specific clause, including section reference, to which an exception has been taken;
2. An explanation of why the bidder took exception to the clause; and
3. Provide alternative language to the specific clause within the solicitation response.

By signing the solicitation, bidder agrees to be legally bound by all the accepted terms and conditions, and any proposed alternative terms and conditions submitted with the solicitation response. The State reserves the right to negotiate rejected or proposed alternative language. If the State and bidder fail to agree on the final Terms and Conditions, the State reserves the right to reject the solicitation response. The State reserves the right to reject solicitation responses that attempt to substitute the bidder’s commercial contracts and/or documents for this solicitation.

Accept All Terms and Conditions Within Section as Written (Initial)	Exceptions Taken to Terms and Conditions Within Section as Written (Initial)	Exceptions: (Bidder must note the specific clause, including section reference, to which an exception has been taken, an explanation of why the bidder took exception to the clause, and provide alternative language to the specific clause within the solicitation response.)

The bidders should submit with their solicitation response any license, user agreement, service level agreement, or similar documents that the bidder wants incorporated in the Contract. The State will not consider incorporation of any document not submitted with the solicitation response as the document will not have been included in the evaluation process. These documents shall be subject to negotiation and will be incorporated as addendums if agreed to by the Parties.

If a conflict or ambiguity arises after the Addendum to Contract Award has been negotiated and agreed to, the Addendum to Contract Award shall be interpreted as follows:

1. If only one (1) Party has a particular clause, then that clause shall control,
2. If both Parties have a similar clause, but the clauses do not conflict, the clauses shall be read together,
3. If both Parties have a similar clause, but the clauses conflict, the State’s clause shall control.

A. GENERAL

1. The contract resulting from this Solicitation shall incorporate the following documents:
 - a. Solicitation, including any attachments and addenda;
 - b. Questions and Answers;
 - c. Bidders properly submitted solicitation response, including any terms and conditions or agreements submitted by the bidder;
 - d. Addendum to Contract Award (if applicable); and
 - e. Amendments to the Contract. (if applicable)

These documents constitute the entirety of the contract.

Unless otherwise specifically stated in a future contract amendment, in case of any conflict between the incorporated documents, the documents shall govern in the following order of preference with number one (1) receiving preference over all other documents and with each lower numbered document having preference over any higher numbered document: 1) Amendment to the executed Contract with the most recent dated amendment having the highest priority, 2) Executed Contract and any attached Addenda 3) Addendums to the solicitation and any Questions and Answers, 4) the original solicitation document and any Addenda or attachments, and 5) the Vendor’s submitted solicitation response, including any terms and conditions or agreements that are accepted by the State.

Unless otherwise specifically agreed to in writing by the State, the State's standard terms and conditions, as executed by the State, shall always control over any terms and conditions or agreements submitted or included by the Vendor.

Any ambiguity or conflict in the contract discovered after its execution, not otherwise addressed herein, shall be resolved in accordance with the rules of contract interpretation as established in the State of Nebraska.

B. NOTIFICATION

Bidder and State shall identify the contract manager who shall serve as the point of contact for the executed contract. Communications regarding the executed contract shall be in writing and shall be deemed to have been given if delivered personally; electronically, return receipt requested; or mailed, return receipt requested. All notices, requests, or communications shall be deemed effective upon receipt. Either party may change its address for notification purposes by giving notice of the change and setting forth the new address and an effective date.

C. BUYER'S REPRESENTATIVE

The State reserves the right to appoint a Buyer's Representative to manage or assist the Buyer in managing the contract on behalf of the State. The Buyer's Representative will be appointed in writing, and the appointment document will specify the extent of the Buyer's Representative authority and responsibilities. If a Buyer's Representative is appointed, the bidder will be provided a copy of the appointment document and is expected to cooperate accordingly with the Buyer's Representative. The Buyer's Representative has no authority to bind the State to a contract, amendment, addendum, or other change or addition to the contract.

D. GOVERNING LAW (Nonnegotiable)

Notwithstanding any other provision of this contract, or any amendment or addendum(s) entered into contemporaneously or at a later time, the parties understand and agree that, (1) the State of Nebraska is a sovereign state and its authority to contract is therefore subject to limitation by the State's Constitution, statutes, common law, and regulation; (2) this contract will be interpreted and enforced under the laws of the State of Nebraska; (3) any action to enforce the provisions of this agreement must be brought in the State of Nebraska per state law; (4) the person signing this contract on behalf of the State of Nebraska does not have the authority to waive the State's sovereign immunity, statutes, common law, or regulations; (5) the indemnity, limitation of liability, remedy, and other similar provisions of the final contract, if any, are entered into subject to the State's Constitution, statutes, common law, regulations, and sovereign immunity; and, (6) all terms and conditions of the final contract, including but not limited to the clauses concerning third party use, licenses, warranties, limitations of liability, governing law and venue, usage verification, indemnity, liability, remedy or other similar provisions of the final contract are entered into specifically subject to the State's Constitution, statutes, common law, regulations, and sovereign immunity.

The Parties must comply with all applicable local, state, and federal laws, ordinances, rules, orders, and regulations.

E. BEGINNING OF WORK & SUSPENSION OF SERVICES

The bidder shall not commence any billable work until a valid contract has been fully executed by the State and the successful Vendor. The Vendor will be notified in writing when work may begin.

The State may, at any time and without advance notice, require the Vendor to suspend any or all performance or deliverables provided under this Contract. In the event of such suspension, the Contract Manager or POC, or their designee, will issue a written order to stop work. The written order will specify which activities are to be immediately suspended and the reason(s) for the suspension. Upon receipt of such order, the Vendor shall immediately comply with its terms and take all necessary steps to mitigate and eliminate the incurrence of costs allocable to the work affected by the order during the period of suspension. The suspended performance or deliverables may only resume when the State provides the Vendor with written notice that such performance or deliverables may resume, in whole or in part.

F. AMENDMENT

This Contract may be amended in writing, within scope, upon the agreement of both parties.

G. CHANGE ORDERS OR SUBSTITUTIONS

The State and the Vendor, upon the written agreement, may make changes to the contract within the general scope of the solicitation. Changes may involve specifications, the quantity of work, or such other items as the State may find necessary or desirable. Corrections of any deliverable, service, or work required pursuant to the contract shall not be deemed a change. The Vendor may not claim forfeiture of the contract by reasons of such changes.

The Vendor shall prepare a written description of the work required due to the change and an itemized cost sheet for the change. Changes in work and the amount of compensation to be paid to the Vendor shall be determined in accordance with applicable unit prices if any, a pro-rated value, or through negotiations. The State shall not incur a

price increase for changes that should have been included in the Vendor's solicitation response, were foreseeable, or result from difficulties with or failure of the Vendor's solicitation response or performance.

No change shall be implemented by the Vendor until approved by the State, and the Contract is amended to reflect the change and associated costs, if any. If there is a dispute regarding the cost, but both parties agree that immediate implementation is necessary, the change may be implemented, and cost negotiations may continue with both Parties retaining all remedies under the contract and law.

In the event any good or service is discontinued or replaced upon mutual consent during the contract period or prior to delivery, the State reserves the right to amend the contract to include the alternate product at the same price.

*****Vendor will not substitute any item that has been awarded without prior written approval of Department of Health and Human Services*****

H. RECORD OF VENDOR PERFORMANCE

The State may document the vendor's performance, which may include, but is not limited to, the customer service provided by the vendor, the ability of the vendor, the skill of the vendor, and any instance(s) of products or services delivered or performed which fail to meet the terms of the purchase order, contract, and/or specifications. In addition to other remedies and options available to the State, the State may issue one or more notices to the vendor outlining any issues the State has regarding the vendor's performance for a specific contract ("Contract Compliance Request"). The State may also document the Vendor's performance in a report, which may or may not be provided to the vendor ("Contract Non-Compliance Notice"). The Vendor shall respond to any Contract Compliance Request or Contract Non-Compliance Notice in accordance with such notice or request. At the sole discretion of the State, such Contract Compliance Requests and Contract Non-Compliance Notices may be placed in the State's records regarding the vendor and may be considered by the State and held against the vendor in any future contract or award opportunity. The record of vendor performance will be considered in any suspension or debarment action.

I. NOTICE OF POTENTIAL VENDOR BREACH

If Vendor breaches the contract or anticipates breaching the contract, the Vendor shall immediately give written notice to the State. The notice shall explain the breach or potential breach, a proposed cure, and may include a request for a waiver of the breach if so desired. The State may, in its discretion, temporarily or permanently waive the breach. By granting a waiver, the State does not forfeit any rights or remedies to which the State is entitled by law or equity, or pursuant to the provisions of the contract. Failure to give immediate notice, however, may be grounds for denial of any request for a waiver of a breach.

J. BREACH

Either Party may terminate the contract, in whole or in part, if the other Party breaches its duty to perform its obligations under the contract in a timely and proper manner. Termination requires written notice of default and a thirty (30) calendar day (or longer at the non-breaching Party's discretion considering the gravity and nature of the default) cure period. Said notice shall be delivered by email, delivery receipt requested; certified mail, return receipt requested; or in person with proof of delivery. Allowing time to cure a failure or breach of contract does not waive the right to immediately terminate the contract for the same or different contract breach which may occur at a different time.

In case of breach by the Vendor, the State may, without unreasonable delay, make a good faith effort to make a reasonable purchase or contract to purchase goods in substitution of those due from the Vendor. The State may recover from the Vendor as damages the difference between the costs of covering the breach. Notwithstanding any clause to the contrary, the State may also recover the contract price together with any incidental or consequential damages defined in UCC Section 2-715, but less expenses saved in consequence of Vendor's breach. OR In case of default of the Vendor, the State may contract the service from other sources and hold the Vendor responsible for any excess cost occasioned thereby.

The State's failure to make payment shall not be a breach, and the Vendor shall retain all available statutory remedies.

K. NON-WAIVER OF BREACH

The acceptance of late performance with or without objection or reservation by a Party shall not waive any rights of the Party nor constitute a waiver of the requirement of timely performance of any obligations remaining to be performed.

L. SEVERABILITY

If any term or condition of the contract is declared by a court of competent jurisdiction to be illegal or in conflict with any law, the validity of the remaining terms and conditions shall not be affected, and the rights and obligations of the parties shall be construed and enforced as if the contract did not contain the provision held to be invalid or illegal.

M. INDEMNIFICATION

1. GENERAL

The Vendor agrees to defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the State and its employees, volunteers, agents, and its elected and appointed officials (“the indemnified parties”) from and against any and all third party claims, liens, demands, damages, liability, actions, causes of action, losses, judgments, costs, and expenses of every nature, including investigation costs and expenses, settlement costs, and attorney fees and expenses (“the claims”), sustained or asserted against the State for personal injury, death, or property loss or damage, arising out of, resulting from, or attributable to the willful misconduct, negligence, error, or omission of the Vendor, its employees, Subcontractors, consultants, representatives, and agents, resulting from this contract, except to the extent such Vendor liability is attenuated by any action of the State which directly and proximately contributed to the claims.

2. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

The Vendor agrees it will, at its sole cost and expense, defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the indemnified parties from and against any and all claims, to the extent such claims arise out of, result from, or are attributable to, the actual or alleged infringement or misappropriation of any patent, copyright, trade secret, trademark, or confidential information of any third party by the Vendor or its employees, Subcontractors, consultants, representatives, and agents; provided, however, the State gives the Vendor prompt notice in writing of the claim. The Vendor may not settle any infringement claim that will affect the State’s use of the Licensed Software without the State’s prior written consent, which consent may be withheld for any reason.

If a judgment or settlement is obtained or reasonably anticipated against the State’s use of any intellectual property for which the Vendor has indemnified the State, the Vendor shall, at the Vendor’s sole cost and expense, promptly modify the item or items which were determined to be infringing, acquire a license or licenses on the State’s behalf to provide the necessary rights to the State to eliminate the infringement, or provide the State with a non-infringing substitute that provides the State the same functionality. At the State’s election, the actual or anticipated judgment may be treated as a breach of warranty by the Vendor, and the State may receive the remedies provided under this Solicitation.

3. PERSONNEL

The Vendor shall, at its expense, indemnify and hold harmless the indemnified parties from and against any claim with respect to withholding taxes, worker’s compensation, employee benefits, or any other claim, demand, liability, damage, or loss of any nature relating to any of the personnel, including subcontractor’s and their employees, provided by the Vendor.

4. SELF-INSURANCE

The State of Nebraska is self-insured for any loss and purchases excess insurance coverage pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. § 81-8,239.01. If there is a presumed loss under the provisions of this agreement, Vendor may file a claim with the Office of Risk Management pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. §§ 81-8,239.01 to 81-8,306 for review by the State Claims Board. The State retains all rights and immunities under the State Miscellaneous (Neb. Rev. Stat. § 81-8,294), Tort (Neb. Rev. Stat. § 81-8,209), and Contract Claim Acts (Neb. Rev. Stat. § 81-8,302), as outlined in state law and accepts liability under this agreement only to the extent provided by law.

5. The Parties acknowledge that Attorney General for the State of Nebraska is required by statute to represent the legal interests of the State, and that any provision of this indemnity clause is subject to the statutory authority of the Attorney General.

N. ATTORNEY’S FEES

In the event of any litigation, appeal, or other legal action to enforce any provision of the contract, the Parties agree to pay all expenses of such action, as permitted by law and if ordered by the court, including attorney’s fees and costs, if the other Party prevails.

O. ASSIGNMENT, SALE, OR MERGER

Either Party may assign the contract upon mutual written agreement of the other Party. Such agreement shall not be unreasonably withheld.

The Vendor retains the right to enter into a sale, merger, acquisition, internal reorganization, or similar transaction involving Vendor’s business. Vendor agrees to cooperate with the State in executing amendments to the contract to allow for the transaction. If a third party or entity is involved in the transaction, the Vendor will remain responsible for performance of the contract until such time as the person or entity involved in the transaction agrees in writing to be contractually bound by this contract and perform all obligations of the contract.

P. CONTRACTING WITH OTHER NEBRASKA POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS OF THE STATE OR ANOTHER STATE
The Vendor may, but shall not be required to, allow agencies, as defined in Neb. Rev. Stat. § 81-145(2), to use this contract. The terms and conditions, including price, of the contract may not be amended. The State shall not be contractually obligated or liable for any contract entered into pursuant to this clause. A listing of Nebraska political subdivisions may be found at the website of the Nebraska Auditor of Public Accounts.

The Vendor may, but shall not be required to, allow other states, agencies or divisions of other states, or political subdivisions of other states to use this contract. The terms and conditions, including price, of this contract shall apply to any such contract, but may be amended upon mutual consent of the Parties. The State of Nebraska shall not be contractually or otherwise obligated or liable under any contract entered into pursuant to this clause. The State shall be notified if a contract is executed based upon this contract.

Q. FORCE MAJEURE
Neither Party shall be liable for any costs or damages, or for default resulting from its inability to perform any of its obligations under the contract due to a natural or manmade event outside the control and not the fault of the affected Party ("Force Majeure Event") that was not foreseeable at the time the Contract was executed. The Party so affected shall immediately make a written request for relief to the other Party and shall have the burden of proof to justify the request. The other Party may grant the relief requested; relief may not be unreasonably withheld. Labor disputes with the impacted Party's own employees will not be considered a Force Majeure Event.

R. COMPLIANCE WITH PRESIDENTIAL EXECUTIVE ORDERS 14151 AND 14173
Executive Order 14151, issued by President Donald Trump on January 20, 2025, and Executive Order 14173, issued by President Donald Trump on January 21, 2025, prohibit discriminatory "diversity, equity, and inclusion" (DEI) programs and "diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility" (DEIA) mandates, policies, programs, preferences, and activities in the federal government. If the Contract involves federal funds, Contractor shall not use contract funds for any DEI program or for any DEIA mandate, policy, program, or preference. Contractor shall assure its compliance and the compliance of any subcontractors with all requirements of Executive orders 14151 and 14173.

S. CONFIDENTIALITY
All materials and information provided by the Parties or acquired by a Party on behalf of the other Party shall be regarded as confidential information. All materials and information provided or acquired shall be handled in accordance with federal and state law, and ethical standards. Should said confidentiality be breached by a Party, the Party shall notify the other Party immediately of said breach and take immediate corrective action.

It is incumbent upon the Parties to inform their officers and employees of the penalties for improper disclosure imposed by the Privacy Act of 1974, 5 U.S.C. 552a. Specifically, 5 U.S.C. 552a (i)(1), which is made applicable by 5 U.S.C. 552a (m)(1), provides that any officer or employee, who by virtue of his/her employment or official position has possession of or access to agency records which contain individually identifiable information, the disclosure of which is prohibited by the Privacy Act or regulations established thereunder, and who knowing that disclosure of the specific material is prohibited, willfully discloses the material in any manner to any person or agency not entitled to receive it, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and fined not more than \$5,000.

T. EARLY TERMINATION
The contract may be terminated as follows:

1. The State and the Vendor, by mutual written agreement, may terminate the contract, in whole or in part, at any time.
2. The State, in its sole discretion, may terminate the contract, in whole or in part, for any reason upon thirty (30) calendar day's written notice shall be delivered by email, delivery receipt requested; certified mail, return receipt requested; or in person with proof of delivery to the Vendor. Such termination shall not relieve the Vendor of warranty or other service obligations incurred under the terms of the contract. In the event of termination, the Vendor shall be entitled to payment, determined on a pro rata basis, for products or services satisfactorily performed or provided.
3. The State may terminate the contract, in whole or in part, immediately for the following reasons:
 - a. if directed to do so by statute,
 - b. Vendor has made an assignment for the benefit of creditors, has admitted in writing its inability to pay debts as they mature, or has ceased operating in the normal course of business,
 - c. a trustee or receiver of the Vendor or of any substantial part of the Vendor's assets has been appointed by a court,
 - d. fraud, misappropriation, embezzlement, malfeasance, misfeasance, or illegal conduct pertaining to performance under the contract by its Vendor, its employees, officers, directors, or shareholders,
 - e. an involuntary proceeding has been commenced by any Party against the Vendor under any one of the chapters of Title 11 of the United States Code and (i) the proceeding has been pending for at least sixty

- (60) calendar days; or (ii) the Vendor has consented, either expressly or by operation of law, to the entry of an order for relief; or (iii) the Vendor has been decreed or adjudged a debtor,
- f. a voluntary petition has been filed by the Vendor under any of the chapters of Title 11 of the United States Code,
- g. Vendor intentionally discloses confidential information,
- h. Vendor has or announces it will discontinue support of the deliverable; and,
- i. In the event funding is no longer available.

U. CONTRACT CLOSEOUT

Upon termination of the contract for any reason the Vendor shall within thirty (30) days, unless stated otherwise herein:

1. Transfer all completed or partially completed deliverables to the State,
2. Transfer ownership and title to all completed or partially completed deliverables to the State,
3. Return to the State all information and data unless the Vendor is permitted to keep the information or data by contract or rule of law. Vendor may retain one copy of any information or data as required to comply with applicable work product documentation standards or as are automatically retained in the course of Vendor's routine back up procedures,
4. Cooperate with any successor Vendor, person, or entity in the assumption of any or all of the obligations of this contract,
5. Cooperate with any successor Vendor, person, or entity with the transfer of information or data related to this contract,
6. Return or vacate any state owned real or personal property; and,
7. Return all data in a mutually acceptable format and manner.

Nothing in this section should be construed to require the Vendor to surrender intellectual property, real or personal property, or information or data owned by the Vendor for which the State has no legal claim.

V. AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

Vendor shall comply with all applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12131–12134), as amended by the ADA Amendments Act of 2008 (ADA Amendments Act) (Pub.L. 110–325, 122 Stat. 3553 (2008)), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability by public entities.

W. LONG-TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN (Nonnegotiable)

Vendor must comply with the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Act, per Neb. Rev. Stat. § 81-2237 et seq. This section shall survive the termination of this contract.

X. OFFICE OF PUBLIC COUNSEL (Nonnegotiable)

If it provides, under the terms of this contract and on behalf of the State of Nebraska, health and human services to individuals; service delivery; service coordination; or case management, Vendor shall submit to the jurisdiction of the Office of Public Counsel, pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. § 81-8,240 et seq. This section shall survive the termination of this contract.

Y. LOBBYING

1. No federal or state funds paid under this RFP shall be paid for any lobbying costs as set forth herein.
2. Lobbying Prohibited by 31 U.S.C. § 1352 and 45 CFR §§ 93 et seq, and Required Disclosures.
 - a. Contractor certifies that no federal or state appropriated funds shall be paid, by or on behalf of Contractor, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this award for: (a) the awarding of any federal agreement; (b) the making of any federal grant; (c) the entering into of any cooperative agreement; and (d) the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any federal agreement, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.
 - b. If any funds, other than federal appropriated funds, have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence: an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with Contractor, Contractor shall complete and submit Federal Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions.
3. Lobbying Activities Prohibited under Federal Appropriations Bills.

- a. No funds paid under this RFP shall be used, other than for normal and recognized executive-legislative relationships, for publicity or propaganda purposes, for the preparation, distribution, or use of any kit, pamphlet, booklet, publication, electronic communication, radio, television, or video presentation designed to support or defeat the enactment of legislation before the Congress or any State or local legislature or legislative body, except in presentation of the Congress or any State or local legislature itself, or designed to support or defeat any proposed or pending regulation, administrative action, or order issued by the executive branch of any state or local government itself.
 - b. No funds paid under this RFP shall be used to pay the salary or expenses of any grant or contract recipient, or agent acting for such recipient, related to any activity designed to influence the enactment of legislation, appropriations, regulation, administrative action, or Executive order proposed or pending before the Congress or any State government, State legislature or local legislature or legislative body, other than normal and recognized executive legislative relationships or participation by an agency or officer of an State, local or tribal government in policymaking and administrative processes within the executive branch of that government.
 - c. The prohibitions in the two sections immediately above shall include any activity to advocate or promote any proposed, pending, or future federal, state or local tax increase, or any proposed, pending, or future requirement or restriction on any legal consumer product, including its sale of marketing, including but not limited to the advocacy or promotion of gun control.
4. Lobbying Costs Unallowable Under the Cost Principles. In addition to the above, no funds shall be paid for executive lobbying costs as set forth in 45 CFR § 75.450(b). If Contractor is a nonprofit organization or an Institute of Higher Education, other costs of lobbying are also unallowable as set forth in 45 CFR § 75.450(c).

III. VENDOR DUTIES

Bidder should read the Vendor Duties within this section and must initial either “Accept All Terms and Conditions Within Section as Written” or “Exceptions Taken to Vendor Duties Within Section as Written” in the table below. If exception is not taken to a provision, it is deemed accepted as stated. If the bidder takes any exceptions, they must provide the following within the “Exceptions” field of the table below (Bidder may provide responses in separate attachment if multiple exceptions are taken):

1. The specific clause, including section reference, to which an exception has been taken;
2. An explanation of why the bidder took exception to the clause; and
3. Provide alternative language to the specific clause within the solicitation response.

By signing the solicitation, bidder agrees to be legally bound by all the accepted terms and conditions, and any proposed alternative terms and conditions submitted with the solicitation response. The State reserves the right to negotiate rejected or proposed alternative language. If the State and bidder fail to agree on the final Terms and Conditions, the State reserves the right to reject the solicitation response. The State reserves the right to reject solicitation responses that attempt to substitute the bidder’s commercial contracts and/or documents for this solicitation.

Accept All Vendor Duties Within Section as Written (Initial)	Exceptions Taken to Vendor Duties Within Section as Written (Initial)	Exceptions: (Bidder must note the specific clause, including section reference, to which an exception has been taken, an explanation of why the bidder took exception to the clause, and provide alternative language to the specific clause within the solicitation response.)

A. INDEPENDENT VENDOR / OBLIGATIONS

It is agreed that the Vendor is an independent Vendor and that nothing contained herein is intended or should be construed as creating or establishing a relationship of employment, agency, or a partnership.

The Vendor is solely responsible for fulfilling the contract. The Vendor or the Vendor’s representative shall be the sole point of contact regarding all contractual matters.

The Vendor shall secure, at its own expense, all personnel required to perform the services under the contract. The personnel the Vendor uses to fulfill the contract shall have no contractual or other legal relationship with the State; they shall not be considered employees of the State and shall not be entitled to any compensation, rights or benefits from the State, including but not limited to, tenure rights, medical and hospital care, sick and vacation leave, severance pay, or retirement benefits.

By-name personnel commitments made in the bidder’s solicitation response shall not be changed without the prior written approval of the State. Replacement of these personnel, if approved by the State, shall be with personnel of equal or greater ability and qualifications.

All personnel assigned by the Vendor to the contract shall be employees of the Vendor or a subcontractor and shall be fully qualified to perform the work required herein. Personnel employed by the Vendor or a subcontractor to fulfill the terms of the contract shall remain under the sole direction and control of the Vendor or the subcontractor respectively.

With respect to its employees, the Vendor agrees to be solely responsible for the following:

1. Any and all pay, benefits, and employment taxes and/or other payroll withholding,
2. Any and all vehicles used by the Vendor’s employees, including all insurance required by state law,
3. Damages incurred by Vendor’s employees within the scope of their duties under the contract,
4. Maintaining Workers’ Compensation and health insurance that complies with state and federal law and submitting any reports on such insurance to the extent required by governing law,
5. Determining the hours to be worked and the duties to be performed by the Vendor’s employees; and,
6. All claims on behalf of any person arising out of employment or alleged employment (including without limit claims of discrimination alleged against the Vendor, its officers, agents, or subcontractors or subcontractor’s employees).

If the Vendor intends to utilize any subcontractor, the subcontractor's level of effort, tasks, and time allocation should be clearly defined in the solicitation response. The Vendor shall agree that it will not utilize any subcontractors not specifically included in its solicitation response in the performance of the contract without the prior written authorization of the State. If the Vendor subcontracts any of the work, the Vendor agrees to pay any and all subcontractors in accordance with the Vendor's agreement with the respective subcontractor(s).

The State reserves the right to require the Vendor to reassign or remove from the project any Vendor or subcontractor employee.

Vendor shall ensure that the terms and conditions contained in any contract with a subcontractor does not conflict with the terms and conditions of this contract.

The Vendor shall include a similar provision, for the protection of the State, in the contract with any Subcontractor engaged to perform work on this contract.

B. EMPLOYEE WORK ELIGIBILITY STATUS

The Vendor is required and hereby agrees to use a federal immigration verification system to determine the work eligibility status of employees physically performing services within the State of Nebraska. A federal immigration verification system means the electronic verification of the work authorization program authorized by the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996, 8 U.S.C. 1324a, known as the E-Verify Program, or an equivalent federal program designated by the United States Department of Homeland Security or other federal agency authorized to verify the work eligibility status of an employee.

If the Vendor is an individual or sole proprietorship, the following applies:

1. The Vendor must complete the United States Citizenship Attestation Form, available on the Department of Administrative Services website at <https://das.nebraska.gov/materiel/docs/pdf/Individual%20or%20Sole%20Proprietor%20United%20States%20Attestation%20Form%20English%20and%20Spanish.pdf>
2. The completed United States Attestation Form should be submitted with the Solicitation response.
3. If the Vendor indicates on such attestation form that he or she is a qualified alien, the Vendor agrees to provide the US Citizenship and Immigration Services documentation required to verify the Vendor's lawful presence in the United States using the Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) Program.
4. The Vendor understands and agrees that lawful presence in the United States is required, and the Vendor may be disqualified or the contract terminated if such lawful presence cannot be verified as required by Neb. Rev. Stat. § 4-108.

C. COMPLIANCE WITH CIVIL RIGHTS LAWS AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYMENT / NONDISCRIMINATION (Nonnegotiable)

The Vendor shall comply with all applicable local, state, and federal statutes and regulations regarding civil rights laws and equal opportunity employment. The Nebraska Fair Employment Practice Act prohibits Vendors of the State of Nebraska, and their Subcontractors, from discriminating against any employee or applicant for employment, with respect to hire, tenure, terms, conditions, compensation, or privileges of employment because of race, color, religion, sex, disability, marital status, or national origin (Neb. Rev. Stat. §§ 48-1101 to 48-1125). The Vendor guarantees compliance with the Nebraska Fair Employment Practice Act, and breach of this provision shall be regarded as a material breach of contract. The Vendor shall insert a similar provision in all Subcontracts for goods and services to be covered by any contract resulting from this Solicitation.

D. COOPERATION WITH OTHER VENDORS

Vendor may be required to work with or in close proximity to other Vendors or individuals that may be working on same or different projects. The Vendor shall agree to cooperate with such other Vendors or individuals and shall not commit or permit any act which may interfere with the performance of work by any other Vendor or individual. Vendor is not required to compromise Vendor's intellectual property or proprietary information unless expressly required to do so by this contract.

E. DISCOUNTS

Prices quoted shall be inclusive of ALL trade discounts. Cash discount terms of less than thirty (30) days will not be considered as part of the solicitation response. Cash discount periods will be computed from the date of receipt of a properly executed claim voucher or the date of completion of delivery of all items in a satisfactory condition, whichever is later.

F. PRICES

Prices quoted shall be net, including transportation and delivery charges fully prepaid by the bidder, F.O.B. destination named in the Solicitation. No additional charges will be allowed for packing, packages, or partial delivery costs. When an arithmetic error has been made in the extended total, the unit price will govern.

All prices, costs, and terms and conditions submitted in the solicitation response shall remain fixed and valid commencing on the opening date of the solicitation until an award is made or the Solicitation is cancelled.

Prices submitted on the cost sheet, once accepted by DHHS, shall remain fixed for the initial term and applicable renewals available under the contract. Any request for a price increase must be submitted in writing to the Department of Health and Human Services a minimum of 90 days prior to the end of the current contract period. Documentation may be required by DHHS to support the price increase.

DHHS reserves the right to deny any requested price increase. No price increases are to be billed to any State Agencies prior to written amendment of the contract by the parties. DHHS will be given full proportionate benefit from any decreases for the term of the contract.

G. PERMITS, REGULATIONS, LAWS

The contract price shall include the cost of all royalties, licenses, permits, and approvals, whether arising from patents, trademarks, copyrights or otherwise, that are in any way involved in the contract. The Vendor shall obtain and pay for all royalties, licenses, and permits, and approvals necessary for the execution of the contract. The Vendor must guarantee that it has the full legal right to the materials, supplies, equipment, software, and other items used to execute this contract.

H. OWNERSHIP OF INFORMATION AND DATA / DELIVERABLES

The State shall have the unlimited right to publish, duplicate, use, and disclose all information and data developed or obtained by the Vendor on behalf of the State pursuant to this contract.

The State shall own and hold exclusive title to any deliverable developed as a result of this contract. Vendor shall have no ownership interest or title, and shall not patent, license, or copyright, duplicate, transfer, sell, or exchange, the design, specifications, concept, or deliverable.

I. INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

The Vendor shall throughout the term of the contract maintain insurance as specified herein and provide the State a current Certificate of Insurance/Acord Form (COI) verifying the coverage. The Vendor shall not commence work on the contract until the insurance is in place. If Vendor subcontracts any portion of the Contract the Vendor must, throughout the term of the contract, either:

1. Provide equivalent insurance for each subcontractor and provide a COI verifying the coverage for the subcontractor,
2. Require each subcontractor to have equivalent insurance and provide written notice to the State that the Vendor has verified that each subcontractor has the required coverage; or,
3. Provide the State with copies of each subcontractor's Certificate of Insurance evidencing the required coverage.

The Vendor shall not allow any Subcontractor to commence work until the Subcontractor has equivalent insurance. The failure of the State to require a COI, or the failure of the Vendor to provide a COI or require subcontractor insurance shall not limit, relieve, or decrease the liability of the Vendor hereunder.

In the event that any policy written on a claims-made basis terminates or is canceled during the term of the contract or within four (4) years of termination or expiration of the contract, the Vendor shall obtain an extended discovery or reporting period, or a new insurance policy, providing coverage required by this contract for the term of the contract and four (4) years following termination or expiration of the contract.

If by the terms of any insurance a mandatory deductible is required, or if the Vendor elects to increase the mandatory deductible amount, the Vendor shall be responsible for payment of the amount of the deductible in the event of a paid claim.

Notwithstanding any other clause in this Contract, the State may recover up to the liability limits of the insurance policies required herein.

1. WORKERS' COMPENSATION INSURANCE

The Vendor shall take out and maintain during the life of this contract the statutory Workers' Compensation and Employer's Liability Insurance for all of the contactors' employees to be engaged in work on the project

under this contract and, in case any such work is sublet, the Vendor shall require the Subcontractor similarly to provide Worker's Compensation and Employer's Liability Insurance for all of the Subcontractor's employees to be engaged in such work. This policy shall be written to meet the statutory requirements for the state in which the work is to be performed, including Occupational Disease. **The policy shall include a waiver of subrogation in favor of the State. The COI shall contain the mandatory COI subrogation waiver language found hereinafter.** The amounts of such insurance shall not be less than the limits stated hereinafter. For employees working in the State of Nebraska, the policy must be written by an entity authorized by the State of Nebraska Department of Insurance to write Workers' Compensation and Employer's Liability Insurance for Nebraska employees.

2. COMMERCIAL GENERAL LIABILITY INSURANCE AND COMMERCIAL AUTOMOBILE LIABILITY INSURANCE

The Vendor shall take out and maintain during the life of this contract such Commercial General Liability Insurance and Commercial Automobile Liability Insurance as shall protect Vendor and any Subcontractor performing work covered by this contract from claims for damages for bodily injury, including death, as well as from claims for property damage, which may arise from operations under this contract, whether such operation be by the Vendor or by any Subcontractor or by anyone directly or indirectly employed by either of them, and the amounts of such insurance shall not be less than limits stated hereinafter.

The Commercial General Liability Insurance shall be written on an **occurrence basis**, and provide Premises/Operations, Products/Completed Operations, Independent Vendors, Personal Injury, and Contractual Liability coverage. **The policy shall include the State, and others as required by the contract documents, as Additional Insured(s). This policy shall be primary, and any insurance or self-insurance carried by the State shall be considered secondary and non-contributory. The COI shall contain the mandatory COI liability waiver language found hereinafter.** The Commercial Automobile Liability Insurance shall be written to cover all Owned, Non-owned, and Hired vehicles.

REQUIRED INSURANCE COVERAGE	
COMMERCIAL GENERAL LIABILITY	
General Aggregate	\$2,000,000
Products/Completed Operations Aggregate	\$2,000,000
Personal/Advertising Injury	\$1,000,000 per occurrence
Bodily Injury/Property Damage	\$1,000,000 per occurrence
Medical Payments	\$10,000 any one person
Damage to Rented Premises (Fire)	\$300,000 each occurrence
Contractual	Included
XCU Liability (Explosion, Collapse, and Underground Damage)	Included
Independent Vendors	Included
WORKER'S COMPENSATION	
Employers Liability Limits	\$500K/\$500K/\$500K
Statutory Limits- All States	Statutory - State of Nebraska
Voluntary Compensation	Statutory
UMBRELLA/EXCESS LIABILITY	
Over Primary Insurance	\$5,000,000 per occurrence
PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY	
Professional liability (Medical Malpractice)	Limits consistent with Nebraska Medical Malpractice Cap
Qualification Under Nebraska Excess Fund	
All Other Professional Liability (Errors & Omissions)	\$1,000,000 Per Claim / Aggregate
COMMERCIAL CRIME	
Crime/Employee Dishonesty Including 3rd Party Fidelity	\$1,000,000
CYBER LIABILITY	
Breach of Privacy, Security Breach, Denial of Service, Remediation, Fines and Penalties	\$5,000,000
MANDATORY COI SUBROGATION WAIVER LANGUAGE	
"Workers' Compensation policy shall include a waiver of subrogation in favor of the State of Nebraska."	
MANDATORY COI LIABILITY WAIVER LANGUAGE	
"Commercial General Liability & Commercial Automobile Liability policies shall name the State of Nebraska as an Additional Insured and the policies shall be primary and any insurance or self-insurance carried by the State shall be considered secondary and non-contributory as additionally insured."	

3. EVIDENCE OF COVERAGE

The Vendor shall furnish the Contract Manager, via email, with a certificate of insurance coverage complying with the above requirements prior to beginning work at:

RFP Number: 124316 O3

Department of Health and Human Services
 Attn: Kristin Powell, Procurement Contracts Officer
 301 Centennial Mall South
 Lincoln, NE 68509
kristin.powell@nebraska.gov

These certificates or the cover sheet shall reference the solicitation number, and the certificates shall include the name of the company, policy numbers, effective dates, dates of expiration, and amounts and types of coverage afforded. If the State is damaged by the failure of the Vendor to maintain such insurance, then the Vendor shall be responsible for all reasonable costs properly attributable thereto.

Reasonable notice of cancellation of any required insurance policy must be submitted to the contract manager as listed above when issued and a new coverage binder shall be submitted immediately to ensure no break in coverage.

4. DEVIATIONS

The insurance requirements are subject to limited negotiation. Negotiation typically includes, but is not necessarily limited to, the correct type of coverage, necessity for Workers' Compensation, and the type of automobile coverage carried by the Vendor.

J. ANTITRUST

The Vendor hereby assigns to the State any and all claims for overcharges as to goods and/or services provided in connection with this contract resulting from antitrust violations which arise under antitrust laws of the United States and the antitrust laws of the State.

K. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

By submitting a solicitation response, vendor certifies that no relationship exists between the vendor and any person or entity which either is, or gives the appearance of, a conflict of interest related to this solicitation or project.

Vendor further certifies that vendor will not employ any individual known by vendor to have a conflict of interest nor shall vendor take any action or acquire any interest, either directly or indirectly, which will conflict in any manner or degree with the performance of its contractual obligations hereunder or which creates an actual or appearance of conflict of interest.

If there is an actual or perceived conflict of interest, vendor shall provide with its solicitation response a full disclosure of the facts describing such actual or perceived conflict of interest and a proposed mitigation plan for consideration. The State will then consider such disclosure and proposed mitigation plan and either approve or reject as part of the overall solicitation response evaluation.

L. SITE RULES AND REGULATIONS

The Vendor shall use its best efforts to ensure that its employees, agents, and Subcontractors comply with site rules and regulations while on State premises. If the Vendor must perform on-site work outside of the daily operational hours set forth by the State, it must make arrangements with the State to ensure access to the facility and the equipment has been arranged. No additional payment will be made by the State on the basis of lack of access, unless the State fails to provide access as agreed to in writing between the State and the Vendor.

M. ADVERTISING

The Vendor agrees not to refer to the contract award in advertising in such a manner as to state or imply that the company or its goods or services are endorsed or preferred by the State. Any publicity releases pertaining to the project shall not be issued without prior written approval from the State.

N. DISASTER RECOVERY/BACK UP PLAN

The Vendor shall have a disaster recovery and back-up plan, of which a copy should be provided upon request to the State, which includes, but is not limited to equipment, personnel, facilities, and transportation, in order to continue delivery of goods and services as specified under the specifications in the contract in the event of a disaster.

O. DRUG POLICY

Vendor certifies it maintains a drug free workplace environment to ensure worker safety and workplace integrity. Vendor agrees to provide a copy of its drug free workplace policy at any time upon request by the State.

P. WARRANTY

Despite any clause to the contrary, the Vendor represents and warrants that its services hereunder shall be performed by competent personnel and shall be of professional quality consistent with generally accepted industry standards for the performance of such services and shall comply in all respects with the requirements of this Agreement. For any breach of this warranty, the Vendor shall, for a period of ninety (90) days from performance of the service, perform the services again, at no cost to the State, or if Vendor is unable to perform the services as warranted, Vendor shall reimburse the State all fees paid to Vendor for the unsatisfactory services. The rights and remedies of the parties under this warranty are in addition to any other rights and remedies of the parties provided by law or equity, including, without limitation actual damages, and, as applicable and awarded under the law, to a prevailing party, reasonable attorneys' fees and costs.

The Vendor warrants for a period of one (1) year from the date of Acceptance that: (a) the Products perform according to all specific claims that the Vendor made in its response to the solicitation, (b) the Product is suitable for the ordinary purposes for which such Product is used, (c) the Product is suitable for any special purposes identified in the solicitation or for which the State has relied on the Vendor's skill or judgment, (d) the Product is designed and manufactured in a commercially reasonable manner, and (e) the Product is free of defects. Upon breach of the warranty, the Vendor will repair or replace (at no charge to the State) the Product whose nonconformance is discovered and made known to the Vendor. If the repaired and/or replaced Product proves to be inadequate, or fails of its essential purpose, the Vendor will refund the full amount of any payments that have been made. The rights and remedies of the parties under this warranty are in addition to any other rights and remedies of the parties provided by law or equity, including, without limitation actual damages, and, as applicable and awarded under the law, to a prevailing party, reasonable attorneys' fees and costs.

Q. TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE

Time is of the essence with respect to Vendor's performance and deliverables pursuant to this Contract.

R. BUSINESS ASSOCIATE PROVISIONS

1. BUSINESS ASSOCIATE. "Business Associate" shall generally have the same meaning as the term "business associate" at 45 CFR § 160.103, and in reference to the party to the Contract, shall mean Contractor.
2. COVERED ENTITY. "Covered Entity" shall generally have the same meaning as the term "covered entity" at 45 CFR § 160.103, and in reference to the party to the Contract, shall mean DHHS.
3. HIPAA RULES. "HIPAA Rules" shall mean the Privacy, Security, Breach Notification, and Enforcement Rules at 45 CFR Part 160 and Part 164.
4. SECURITY INCIDENT. "Security Incident" shall mean the attempted or successful unauthorized access, use, disclosure, modification, or destruction of information, or interference with system operations in an information system.
5. OTHER TERMS. The following terms shall have the same meaning as those terms in the HIPAA Rules: Breach, Data Aggregation, Designated Record Set, Disclosure, Health Care Operations, Individual, Minimum Necessary, Notice of Privacy Practices, Protected Health Information, Required by Law, Secretary, Subcontractor, Unsecured Protected Health Information, and Use.
6. THE CONTRACTOR shall do the following:
 - a. Not use or disclose Protected Health Information other than as permitted or required by the Contract or as required by law. Contractor may use Protected Health Information for the purposes of managing its internal business processes relating to its functions and performance under the Contract. Use or disclosure must be consistent with DHHS' minimum necessary policies and procedures.
 - b. Implement and maintain appropriate administrative, physical, and technical safeguards to prevent access to, and the unauthorized use and disclosure of Protected Health Information. Comply with Subpart C of 45 CFR Part 164 with respect to electronic Protected Health Information, to prevent use or disclosure of Protected Health Information other than as provided for in the Contract, and assess potential risks and vulnerabilities to the individual health data in its care and custody and develop, implement, and maintain reasonable security measures.
 - c. To the extent Contractor is to carry out one or more of the DHHS' obligations under Subpart E of 45 CFR Part 164, comply with the requirements of Subpart E that apply to DHHS in the performance of such obligations. Contractor may not use or disclosure Protected Health Information in a manner that would violate Subpart E of 45 CFR Part 164 if done by DHHS.
 - d. In accordance with 45 CFR §§ 164.502(e)(1)(ii) and 164.308(b)(2), if applicable, ensure that any agents and subcontractors that create, receive, maintain, or transmit Protected Health Information received from DHHS, or created by or received from Contractor on behalf of DHHS, agree in writing to the same restrictions, conditions, and requirements relating to the confidentiality, care, custody, and minimum use of Protected Health Information that apply to the Contractor with respect to such information.
 - e. Obtain reasonable assurances from the person to whom the information is disclosed that the information will remain confidential and be used or further disclosed only as required by law or for the purposes for which it was disclosed to the person, and that the person shall notify Contractor of any instances of which the person is aware that the confidentiality of the information has been breached.
 - f. Contractor shall maintain and make available within fifteen (15) days in a commonly used electronic format:
 - i. Protected Health Information to DHHS, as necessary to satisfy DHHS' obligations under 45 CFR § 164.524;
 - ii. Any amendment(s) to Protected Health Information, as directed or agreed to by DHHS, pursuant to 45 CFR § 164.526, or take other measures as necessary to satisfy DHHS' obligations under 45 CFR § 164.526;
 - iii. The information required to provide an accounting of disclosures to DHHS, as necessary to satisfy DHHS' obligations under 45 CFR § 164.528.
 - g. Make its internal practices, books, and records relating to the use and disclosure of Protected Health Information received from, or created or received by Contractor on behalf of DHHS available to the Secretary or DHHS for purposes of determining compliance with the HIPAA Rules. Contractor shall provide DHHS with copies of the information it has made available to the Secretary at the same time as it was made available to the Secretary.
 - h. Report to DHHS within fifteen (15) days of when Contractor becomes aware, any unauthorized use or disclosure of Protected Health Information made in violation of the Contract or the HIPAA Rules, including any security incident that may put electronic Protected Health Information at risk. Contractor shall, as instructed by DHHS, take immediate steps to mitigate any harmful effect of such unauthorized disclosure of Protected Health Information pursuant to the conditions of the Contract through the preparation and

completion of a written Corrective Action Plan that is subject to review and approval by DHHS. Contractor shall be responsible for all breach notifications in accordance with HIPAA rules and regulations, and all costs associated with security incident investigations and breach notification procedures.

- i. Business Associate shall indemnify, defend, and hold harmless DHHS for any financial loss as a result of claims brought by third parties and which are caused by the failure of Contractor, its officers, directors, agents, or subcontractors to comply with the terms of the Contract, or for penalties imposed by the HHS Office of Civil Rights for any violations of the HIPAA Rules caused by Contractor, its officers, directors, agents, or subcontractors. Additionally, Contractor shall indemnify DHHS for any time and expenses it may incur from breach notifications that are necessary under the HIPAA Breach Notification Rule, which are caused by a failure of Contractor, its officers, directors, agents, or subcontractors to comply with the terms of the Contract.

7. TERMINATION.

- a. DHHS may immediately terminate the Contract, and any and all associated contracts, if DHHS determines that Contractor has violated a material term of the Contract.
- b. Within thirty (30) days of expiration or termination of the Contract, or as agreed, unless Contractor requests and DHHS authorizes a longer period of time, Contractor shall return, or at the written direction of DHHS, destroy all Protected Health Information received from DHHS (or created or received by Contractor on behalf of DHHS) that Contractor still maintains in any form, and shall retain no copies of such Protected Health Information. Contractor shall provide a written certification to DHHS that all such Protected Health Information has been returned or destroyed (if so instructed), whichever is deemed appropriate. If such return or destruction is determined by DHHS to be infeasible, Contractor shall use such Protected Health Information only for purposes that makes such return or destruction infeasible, and the provisions of the Contract shall survive with respect to such Protected Health Information.
- c. The obligations of the Contractor under this Termination section shall survive the termination of the Contract.

IV. PAYMENT

Bidder should read the Payment clauses within this section and must initial either “Accept All Terms and Conditions Within Section as Written” or “Exceptions Taken to Payment clauses Within Section as Written” in the table below. If exception is not taken to a provision, it is deemed accepted as stated. If the bidder takes any exceptions, they must provide the following within the “Exceptions” field of the table below (Bidder may provide responses in separate attachment if multiple exceptions are taken):

1. The specific clause, including section reference, to which an exception has been taken;
2. An explanation of why the bidder took exception to the clause; and
3. Provide alternative language to the specific clause within the solicitation response.

By signing the solicitation, bidder agrees to be legally bound by all the accepted terms and conditions, and any proposed alternative terms and conditions submitted with the solicitation response. The State reserves the right to negotiate rejected or proposed alternative language. If the State and bidder fail to agree on the final Terms and Conditions, the State reserves the right to reject the solicitation response. The State reserves the right to reject solicitation responses that attempt to substitute the bidder’s commercial contracts and/or documents for this solicitation.

Accept All Payment Clauses Within Section as Written (Initial)	Exceptions Taken to Payment Clauses Within Section as Written (Initial)	Exceptions: (Bidder must note the specific clause, including section reference, to which an exception has been taken, an explanation of why the bidder took exception to the clause, and provide alternative language to the specific clause within the solicitation response.)

A. PROHIBITION AGAINST ADVANCE PAYMENT (Nonnegotiable)

Neb. Rev. Stat. § 81-2403 states “[n]o goods or services shall be deemed to be received by an agency until all such goods or services are completely delivered and finally accepted by the agency” The standard term is to pay after deliverables and that any alteration of that standard term should be carefully considered and used only when absolutely necessary to accommodate certain critical exceptions, i.e. insurance premiums, etc. that must be paid in advance.)

Pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. § 81-2403, “[n]o goods or services shall be deemed to be received by an agency until all such goods or services are completely delivered and finally accepted by the agency.”

B. TAXES (Nonnegotiable)

The State is not required to pay taxes and assumes no such liability as a result of this Solicitation. The Vendor may request a copy of the Nebraska Department of Revenue, Nebraska Resale or Exempt Sale Certificate for Sales Tax Exemption, Form 13 for their records. Any property tax payable on the Vendor’s equipment which may be installed in a state-owned facility is the responsibility of the Vendor.

C. INVOICES

Invoices for payment must be submitted by the Vendor to the agency requesting the services with sufficient detail to support payment. Invoices should be emailed to DHHS.TFN@NEBRASKA.GOV. The terms and conditions included in the Vendor’s invoice shall be deemed to be solely for the convenience of the parties. No terms or conditions of any such invoice shall be binding upon the State, and no action by the State, including without limitation the payment of any such invoice in whole or in part, shall be construed as binding or estopping the State with respect to any such term or condition, unless the invoice term or condition has been previously agreed to by the State as an amendment to the contract. **The State shall have forty-five (45) calendar days to pay after a valid and accurate invoice is received by the State.**

Awarded vendor is prohibited from using any funds paid through this contract for any direct contact with state legislators or their staff for purposes of influencing any legislative policies or funding decisions.

D. INSPECTION AND APPROVAL

Final inspection and approval of all work required under the contract shall be performed by the designated State officials.

E. PAYMENT (Nonnegotiable)

Payment will be made by the responsible agency in compliance with the State of Nebraska Prompt Payment Act (See Neb. Rev. Stat. § 81-2403). The State may require the Vendor to accept payment by electronic means such as ACH deposit. In no event shall the State be responsible or liable to pay for any goods and services provided by the Vendor prior to the Effective Date of the contract, and the Vendor hereby waives any claim or cause of action for any such goods or services.

F. LATE PAYMENT (Nonnegotiable)

The Vendor may charge the responsible agency interest for late payment in compliance with the State of Nebraska Prompt Payment Act (See Neb. Rev. Stat. §§ 81-2401 through 81-2408).

G. SUBJECT TO FUNDING / FUNDING OUT CLAUSE FOR LOSS OF APPROPRIATIONS (Nonnegotiable)

The State's obligation to pay amounts due on the Contract for fiscal years following the current fiscal year is contingent upon legislative or federal appropriation of funds. Should said funds not be appropriated, the State may terminate the contract with respect to those payments for the fiscal year(s) for which such funds are not appropriated. The State will give the Vendor reasonable written notice prior to the effective date of termination. All obligations of the State to make payments after the termination date will cease. The Vendor shall be entitled to receive just and equitable compensation for any authorized work which has been satisfactorily completed as of the termination date. In no event shall the Vendor be paid for a loss of anticipated profit.

H. RIGHT TO AUDIT (First Paragraph is Nonnegotiable)

The State shall have the right to audit the Vendor's performance of this contract upon a thirty (30) days' written notice. Vendor shall utilize generally accepted accounting principles, and shall maintain the accounting records, and other records and information relevant to the contract (Information) to enable the State to audit the contract. (Neb. Rev. Stat. § 84-304 et seq.) The State may audit, and the Vendor shall maintain, the Information during the term of the contract and for a period of five (5) years after the completion of this contract or until all issues or litigation are resolved, whichever is later. The Vendor shall make the Information available to the State at Vendor's place of business or a location acceptable to both Parties during normal business hours. If this is not practical or the Vendor so elects, the Vendor may provide electronic or paper copies of the Information. The State reserves the right to examine, make copies of, and take notes on any Information relevant to this contract, regardless of the form or the Information, how it is stored, or who possesses the Information. Under no circumstance will the Vendor be required to create or maintain documents not kept in the ordinary course of Vendor's business operations, nor will Vendor be required to disclose any information, including but not limited to product cost data, which is confidential or proprietary to Vendor.

The Parties shall pay their own costs of the audit unless the audit finds a previously undisclosed overpayment by the State. If a previously undisclosed overpayment exceeds one-half of one percent (.5%) of the total contract billings, or if fraud, material misrepresentations, or non-performance is discovered on the part of the Vendor, the Vendor shall reimburse the State for the total costs of the audit. Overpayments and audit costs owed to the State shall be paid within ninety (90) days of written notice of the claim. The Vendor agrees to correct any material weaknesses or condition found as a result of the audit.

V. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND SCOPE OF WORK

A. PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Tobacco Free Nebraska (TFN) Program requests proposals to provide Nebraska Tobacco Quitline services (Quitline). The primary audience for the Quitline is Nebraskans who smoke cigarettes and/or use other tobacco products (including e-cigarettes) and who have shown a readiness to quit. TFN will provide support and assistance to the Contractor, leading to the success of the Nebraska Tobacco Quitline and success for Nebraskans quitting tobacco.

The Quitline is a free and convenient statewide tobacco cessation service to assist tobacco users. Depending on an individual's readiness to quit, the Quitline will provide registration, counseling/consultation, evaluation/quality assurance, and screening/recommendations related to the use of support materials and /or referrals to community-based cessation programs. For participants receiving counseling, after screening the participant for medical contraindications, the participant may be recommended and provided with Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) (nicotine gum, patch, and/or lozenge).

1. The Quitline will provide support to other tobacco control initiatives in Nebraska in the following ways:
 - a. Provide a foundation of cessation services at no charge to the participant that are available for all Nebraskans who want help to quit using tobacco products.
 - b. Encourage healthcare professionals to address tobacco use with patients by providing comprehensive online training complete with continuing education units and resources that support intervention.
 - c. Serve as an incentive for insurers and employers to make tobacco dependence treatment a fully covered benefit so more Nebraskans will have access to counseling and other effective treatments.
 - d. Be a resource for public or voluntary policies that may serve to encourage tobacco users to quit.

Based on the CDC's "Best Practices for Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs", the Nebraska State Plan for Tobacco Use Prevention and Cessation indicates that simultaneous comprehensive approaches in prevention, cessation, and protection are necessary to effectively reduce the harm caused by tobacco use and achieve the following goals:

- a. Prevent the initiation of tobacco use among youth.
 - b. Promote quitting among youth and adults.
 - c. Eliminate exposure to secondhand smoke.
 - d. Identify and eliminate health disparities related to commercial tobacco use.
2. Quitline service expectations will be based on the recommendations contained in the following resources:
 - a. Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Telephone Quitline: A Resource for Development, Implementation, and Evaluation
<https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/hcp/patient-care/quitlines-and-other-resources.html>
 - b. U.S. Public Health Service Clinical Practice Guideline on Treating Tobacco Use and Dependence
<https://www.ahrq.gov/prevention/guidelines/tobacco/clinicians/update/correctadd.html>
 - c. North American Quitline Consortium (NAQC) Minimal Data Set (MDS) offering a standard approach to evaluating tobacco cessation Quitline www.naquitline.org

B. CURRENT PROJECT ENVIRONMENT AND STATISTICS

Nebraska is a participant in the National Network of Quitline. TFN will promote the 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669) and the 1-855-DEJELLO-YA (1-855-335-3569) numbers as the avenue to access the Contractor's services.

The proactive Quitline responds to incoming calls with immediate "reactive" assistance and follows up initial contact with more comprehensive services through outbound (proactive) calls.

1. **CEREMONIAL USE OF TOBACCO IN NATIVE AMERICAN CULTURE**

TFN acknowledges the spiritual and ceremonial value that tobacco has in Native American culture. The phrases such as 'tobacco-free', tobacco user', tobacco prevention', and 'tobacco control' mentioned in this document refer to commercially produced tobacco products and non-ceremonial use of tobacco.
2. **QUITLINE MEDIA CAMPAIGNS**

TFN or its media contractor will coordinate the development and implementation of the media campaign to promote the Quitline to the public. TFN attempts, whenever possible, to provide advance notice to the contractor about media campaigns, media events and earned media activities.

3. PROMOTION TO HEALTHCARE SYSTEMS

TFN will be responsible for promoting the Quitline throughout the healthcare delivery system.

Tobacco use remains Nebraska's leading cause of preventable death, killing an estimated 2,500 Nebraskans each year – more than auto accidents, AIDS, suicides, murders, alcohol and illegal drugs combined. Tobacco costs the state a total of \$952 million annually in medical costs, including \$174.4 million of Nebraska's annual Medicaid expenditures. Smoking-related mortality also results in more than \$651.9 million in lost productivity each year in the state. Nebraska's adult smoking rate is 12.2% (2024 Behavioral Risk Factor Survey). The state adult smokeless tobacco use rate is 4.9% (2024 Behavioral Risk Factor Survey).

C. MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

The State of Nebraska, Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), is seeking a vendor with the following minimum qualifications to be deemed responsible and eligible for evaluation. If your company does not meet and/or exceed all essential qualifications listed herein, your company is advised not to proceed with preparing and submitting an RFP response to this solicitation.

Failure to address minimum qualifications in your proposal submission shall result in the proposal being deemed as a "Non-Responsive Solicitation Response" and disqualified from consideration. Minimum qualifications are:

1. Bidder shall provide proof of active membership in the North America Quitline Consortium (NAQC) within last five (5) years.
2. Bidder must demonstrate five (5) years' experience in tobacco cessation services serving diverse clients and providing awareness/participation in accordance with NAQC efforts.
3. Bidder shall provide evidence of three (3) successful clients utilizing similar scope of this RFP within the last five (5) years.
4. Bidder or any proposed subcontractors cannot have a current, or within the past five years, contract or affiliation with tobacco companies. In addition, the awarded Contractor or any proposed subcontractor may not accept tobacco industry business (contract or affiliation) for the duration of this contract.

D. SCOPE OF WORK

The Nebraska Tobacco Quitline's service (Quitline) is a no-charge to participant, telephone- and web-based tobacco use cessation Quitline providing a variety of resources in an effort to assist Nebraskans to quit tobacco usage. Depending on an individual's readiness to quit, the Quitline will provide registration, counseling/consultation, evaluation/quality assurance, and screening/recommendations related to the use of support materials and /or referrals to community-based cessation programs.

For participants receiving counseling, after screening the participant for medical contraindications, recommendations may include NRT (nicotine gum, patch, and/or lozenges). Resources will include referrals to community-based cessation programs when and if community programs are available. No physical call center is required for this RFP.

1. QUITLINE SYSTEM CAPABILITY

- a. System must handle multiple, simultaneous incoming and outgoing calls with multi-lingual capability and be accessible through a TTY/TDD line.
- b. System must provide a live answer during the "live" response hours of operations, per Section V.D.2.
- c. System must offer, at a minimum, a strong and scalable communications server; automatic call distribution functionality; real-time monitoring of overall activity as well as individual calls; collection, analysis and reporting of data; and telephonic integration allowing information exchange between voice and data systems.
- d. System data tracking and collection must tabulate unique individuals, services provided, call patterns, participant demographics, and create analysis for data reporting on a monthly, quarterly, and annual basis.
- e. System must produce reports on the types and amounts of services provided per participant, call patterns by time of day/week/ month, and estimates of costs by types of service provided.
- f. System must track calls during and outside of hours of operation, including features such as "hits to the line", abandonment rates, wait times, and length of call.
- g. System must record all participant communication for quality assurance purposes.
- h. System must accept referrals through fax referrals, an online form, eReferrals/secure email system, and "live referrals".
 - i. System must handle "live referrals" from healthcare providers with the client/patient during healthcare appointments. Healthcare providers will turn the interaction over to the client/patient for completion of Intake/Assessment and scheduling for coaching call.
 - ii. System must accept an electronic health record referral (e-Referral). The preferred bi-directional e-Referral should meet the NAQC standards.

- iii. System must have the ability to implement an electronic connection to interface with healthcare provider systems electronic health records for purposes of electronic referral to Quitline with electronic feedback.
 - iv. System must have the ability to send two-way electronic referrals for healthcare systems, as identified by DHHS, at no cost to DHHS.
 - i. System must provide a twenty-four (24) hour web-based service as an enhancement to the telephone-based services provided and/or as a stand-alone web-based tobacco cessation program. Refer to section V. D. 2. (a-e) for specific details. TFN prefers a system in which participants will be able to register for telephone-based and web-based services through the Internet.
 - j. System collaboration with TFN is required to ensure transfer of the Quitline telephone number, fax referral telephone number, and texting service number. The vendor must plan to transfer telephone numbers back to TFN upon contract expiration.
 - k. System collaboration with TFN is required to determine the best option for coordination with NAQC and other Quitline support resources that may become available to Nebraskans over the duration of the contract period.
 - l. Vendor will disclose any usage of Artificial Intelligence (AI) or Automated Callers to provide services to Nebraskans and will provide alternative services without AI or Automated Callers if requested. Vendors will prioritize that interactions will be conducted by live, trained human cessation coaches, intake specialists, or other appropriate positions.
 - m. System must provide services that are culturally and linguistically appropriate for the following specific populations:
 - i. Medicaid beneficiaries
 - ii. Uninsured/Low Socioeconomic Status
 - iii. Pregnant women
 - iv. Senior adults
 - v. Veterans
 - vi. Smokeless tobacco users
 - vii. Native Americans
 - viii. African Americans
 - ix. Hispanic/Latinos
 - x. Spanish-speaking participants
 - xi. Deaf and hard of hearing
 - xii. Participants with mental health or substance abuse disorders
 - xiii. Teens
 - xiv. Other limited English-speaking populations

2. QUITLINE HOURS OF OPERATION

System must provide “live” response to phone calls 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Peak times for phone calls must be continuously monitored, and staffing shall be modified accordingly to meet peak volume times. Volume must be assessed during live hours of coverage, and as needed in collaboration with media events. An automated answering service may only be used when Quitline personnel are unavailable. If an automated answering system is used, the caller must not be required to **select more than two options** prior to speaking with a registration specialist or other staff person.

Coverage is required for all holidays. Allowed exceptions to “live” response operations are listed below:

- a. No system operation on Thanksgiving Day.
- b. No system operation on Christmas Day.
- c. Call Center can close early at 2:00 p.m. Central Time on Christmas Eve. Operations must commence at 8:00 a.m. the following day.
- d. Call Center can close early at 5:00 p.m. Central Time on New Year’s Eve. Operations must commence at 8:00 a.m. the following day.
- e. Call Center can close early at 5:00 p.m. Central Time on Labor Day, Memorial Day, and July 4. Operations must commence at 8:00 a.m. the following day.

System must provide online web access to coaching. 24/7 live response is not applicable; however, it is preferred.

3. QUITLINE PARTICIPANT MANAGEMENT

Services to be provided include, but are not limited to: registration, counseling/consultation, and evaluation/quality assurance related to the use of support materials and/or referrals to community-based cessation programs.

I. REGISTRATION

Screening of tobacco users must include, but is not limited to:

1. Quitline standardized procedures for screening and recommendations should follow the North American Quitline Consortium (NAQC) Minimal Data Set (MDS), offering a standard approach to evaluating tobacco cessation Quitline's (www.naquitline.org), with TFN's approval.
2. Identifying informative services and resources applicable to Nebraskan tobacco users and non-users on tobacco dependence, available treatment, the dangers of secondhand smoke, and other tobacco-related information.
 - a. Identify informative services and resources applicable to participants who want to support family and friends quitting tobacco.
 - b. Identify informative services and resources applicable to registrants on counseling and coaching cessation of tobacco use.
3. Obtaining permission from tobacco users to be contacted for follow-up for quit rate evaluation.
 - a. Participants who complete registration via phone, web or text and re-submit registration within 30 calendar days shall not be re-billed to DHHS.
 - b. Participants who complete registration via phone, web or text and re-submit registration after 30 calendar days shall be allowed for re-billing to DHHS.

II. COUNSELING AND CONSULTATION

- a. Provide a simple, no-cost point of access to services to assist tobacco users in quitting by providing screening and assessment of readiness to quit, counseling, NRT with information on the U.S. Public Health Service recommendations for the use of pharmacological cessation aids, support materials, and referral to community-based services as appropriate.
- b. For participants who are ready to quit:
 1. A personalized quit plan must be developed
 2. Comprehensive, proactive behavioral counseling must be scheduled
 3. Information on available health plan coverage for tobacco dependence treatment must be provided
 4. Referral to community-based services, if desired, must be provided.
- c. For healthcare providers:
 1. Technical assistance and consultation on a variety of effective tobacco dependence treatment topics must be provided.
 - a. Topics may include but are not limited to:
 - i. Up-to-date information about NRT
 - ii. How to send high-quality referrals to the Quitline,
 - iii. Implementing in-office cessation procedures including Quitline referrals following the Public Health Service Clinical Practice Guidelines on Treating Tobacco Use and Dependence
 - iv. Assistance on complicated patient case management issues; community-based tobacco cessation programs
 - v. Provide free comprehensive online training (including free continuing education units) on brief tobacco intervention techniques, and
 - vi. Best practices to help healthcare providers work with patients quitting tobacco.
- d. Provide healthcare providers with participant information to ensure continuity of care and seamless delivery of services.

III. QUITLINE EVALUATION AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

- a. Collaborate with TFN and any applicable third party to facilitate evaluation of the quality and effectiveness of services and referrals.
- b. Maintain a client database that meets the measures determined by TFN, to ensure confidential, efficient means of transferring the database as needed to conduct evaluation.
- c. Verify tobacco use status and measure client satisfaction. Follow-up evaluation and client satisfaction surveys may be made to a random sample of participants meeting evaluation criteria after the receipt of services, at seven (7) months as referenced in Exhibit 1-Reporting Quit Rates).
 - a. The term "quit" shall be fully defined by seven (7) month follow-ups, from the quit date, when the client is contacted to determine smoking/tobacco use status within the past month.
 - b. The number of total evaluation participants must reach NAQC's recommended value of $n = 400$, as found in the [2009 "Measuring Quit Rates" Issue Paper](#).
 - d. Facilitate effective evaluation of the Quitline by working collaboratively with TFN.
 - e. Provide opportunities for TFN to engage in Quitline – related research in conjunction with other states.
 - f. Develop, implement, and follow a comprehensive quality assurance plan for Quitline operations and clinical service delivery.
 - i. The quality assurance plan must describe the procedures, standards, and measures to be used to ensure quality.

- ii. Discuss how the organization's performance in the various areas of quality assurance is to be reported, how the reported data should be interpreted, and how that information will be used not only to maintain the quality of services, but to improve them as well.
- iii. Submit a quality assurance plan to TFN for review and approval no later than 60 days after contract start date.
- g. Maintain database system to ensure reporting accuracy.
- h. Develop mechanism to address complaints internally while maintaining participant privacy under HIPAA.
- i. Notify TFN of complaints about Quitline services within five (5) business days. Each year, the Contractor will provide at least one (1) narrative success story from a Nebraska Tobacco Quitline participant who has successfully ceased using tobacco products. The story should highlight the participant's journey, the effectiveness of Quitline services (including counseling, if applicable), and the positive impact on their life. It should be made available to DHHS for public distribution. The vendor is responsible for getting the participant's consent to share the story.
- j. Maintain current, science-based, high quality services through guidance by a Scientific Panel or Advisory Board.
- k. Maintain Quitline website, including but not limited to content updates, maintenance, and modernization.
- l. If Quitline app is available, maintain app with content updates, maintenance, and modernization.
- m. Quitline medical director role must work with the Quitline staff and healthcare professionals to resolve complex issues.

4. **QUITLINE MANAGEMENT AND STAFFING**

- a. Manage ability to identify participants who may be eligible for Quitline services through a health plan, employer, or other resource and if such eligibility is determined.
- b. Manage and facilitate a warm transfer of those participants to the Quitline service for which they are eligible, and no charge to TFN for the Quitline services received.
- c. Manage and maintain single point of contact (account representative) for communications between vendor and TFN. A clinical and/or medical director must be available to provide technical assistance and oversight as needed.
- d. Develop and manage a staffing plan that will support "live" call response for 24 hours a day, seven days a week by tobacco treatment specialists.
 - i. Minimum qualifications for Quitline Coaches and Quitline Medical Director are outlined in Section VI. A.(1).(i.) Summary of Bidder's Proposed Personnel/Management Approach.
- e. Manage and maintain minimum supervisor to staff ratio during "live" response operations. Quitline's need to be flexible and resource-driven, ensuring enough trained staff (and thus, appropriate supervision) to meet participant demand effectively, using performance data to guide decisions. The recommended staff to supervisor ratio is anywhere between 8/1 to 12/1.
- f. Manage and maintain adequate orientation training and refresher training for all staff.
 - i. Training must include competencies for interaction with, pregnant women, mental health/substance use disorders, and cultural competencies for interaction with Native Americans, African Americans, and Hispanics/Latinos.
- g. Physical call center is not required for this RFP; however, account representative must have a plan to supervise, monitor and train home-based workers.
 - i. If physical call center is utilized, office space must accommodate administrative, counseling, and support staff. It must also have sufficient equipment (telephone lines, telephones, computers, supplies/hardware/software to protect HIPAA records).
 - ii. A TTY/TDD line must be managed for the hearing impaired.
- h. Develop plan to work with TFN to conduct regular communications to discuss the management of funds available under this contract. Vendor should report when call volume demand begins to exceed the available State budget.
- i. Manage and maintain ability to bill and receive reimbursement from all participating health plans and Medicaid for services provided.
- j. Manage and maintain use of the Nebraska fax referral form, Exhibit 2-Example Quitline Fax Referral Form, which allows healthcare professionals to fax a referral to the Quitline toll-free. TFN prefers that the vendor also be able to have a community referral form for community organizations and social workers to send referrals.

5. **QUITLINE CALL PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

The following are minimum performance measures to assess the success of the Quitline. Vendor should detail ability to meet or exceed minimum standards and evaluation plan.

- a. 90% of calls received during operation hours to the Quitline shall receive a live response.
- b. Average live answer speed shall be within 30 seconds.
- c. 80% of callers interested in speaking with a Quitline Coach shall be transferred directly after completing registration. The remaining 20% will be contacted within the time frame that the participant requests.
- d. 90% of multiple call participants during the established appointment time for interventions should be tracked and documented.
- e. 70% of multiple call participants will receive a call within 48 hours of their quit date.
- f. Within 24 hours of receipt of referral, first contact attempt must be made.
- g. Less than 5% abandonment for calls waiting greater than 30 seconds following the initial client queue message.
- h. 100% of self-help materials shall be sent within one day of registration.
- i. 95% of voicemail messages shall be initiated for return the following business day.
- j. 15% of referrals must result in the person referred registering for the Quitline.

6. **REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

Reporting must be submitted utilizing Exhibit 3-Nebraska Tobacco Quitline Reporting Requirements and Exhibit 4-Nebraska Tobacco Quitline Reports.

- a. Data collection requirements may change upon mutual agreement of TFN and the Contractor. Collection of data listed below supports reporting of performance measures as listed in V.D.5.
 - i. Live Response
 - ii. Answer Speed
 - iii. Call volume
 - iv. Multiple calls
 - v. Referrals
 - vi. Abandonment
 - vii. Materials sent
 - viii. Voicemails
 - ix. Counseling
- b. Ability to send de-identified data to TFN.
- c. Ability to maintain confidentiality of caller records.
- d. Establish process for issuing a Notice of Privacy Practices and obtaining permission from participants to be contacted for evaluation.
- e. Create and maintain precautions to ensure files and programs can be re-created in the event of loss by any cause, including plan to safeguard data files (frequency of back-up copies, storage location, methodology for restoring backup copies when activity has been processed in the interim).
- f. Submit monthly Quitline usage with invoice to TFN to receive payment for reporting period. Usage must detail quantity of each service utilized within each month
- g. Submit monthly, quarterly and annual reports (Exhibit 3-Nebraska Tobacco Quitline Reporting Requirements and Exhibit 4-Nebraska Tobacco Quitline Reports) to TFN to track use of the Quitline. Include participant levels, participant progress, usage and services provided with aggregate data by county.
- h. Submit monthly, quarterly and annual reports to TFN.
- i. Ability to complete NAQC reporting and meet federal reporting requirements.
- j. Contractor must provide and keep updated definitions of each item contained in the report.
- k. Track and report analytics for online healthcare provider training to TFN.

7. **SERVICE DELIVERY PROTOCOLS**

Protocols for all counseling interventions, both initial and follow-up, must be based on research showing effectiveness inducing behavior change utilizing motivational interviewing and a cognitive-behavioral approach to treating tobacco use. All protocols require review and approval by TFN. Protocols must be revised as needed, to keep pace with research on effective tobacco-depending treatment interventions. Quitline must provide the following services that are consistent, systematic and research-based:

- a. Ability to provide services to all clients, with no minimum age.
- b. Ability to document guardian consent for minor participants, if legally required;
- c. Ability to provide counseling over the phone, online or through text message.
- d. Ability to conduct intake screening of all participants and provide general information upon request.
- e. Ability to provide information to non-tobacco users seeking assistance on behalf of friends or relatives who use tobacco.
- f. Assess participants' tobacco usage and readiness to quit for review of tobacco treatment benefits, including Medicaid, provided by the participant's third-party payer and facilitate linking them to the benefit.
- g. For Nebraskans ready to quit, at no cost:
 - i. Provide an immediate counseling intervention with a Quitline coach, for effective quitting.

- ii. Provide the option to receive up to five (5) proactive follow-up behavioral counseling sessions based on the participant's need for the service. TFN may approve up to ten (10) proactive follow-up calls for specific populations, after written request is approved.
- iii. Review U.S. Public Health Service recommendations on the use of pharmacological cessation aids, nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) and referrals to physicians or other healthcare professionals as needed.
 - 1. If applicable, the NRT can be distributed directly to a participant's address.
- iv. Provide supplemental self-help materials such as relevant, tailored education materials upon registration via mail. Email or text options may be available. Provide additional materials as requested.
- v. Provide Nebraskans with the ability to opt-in to supportive messaging through email and text services tailored to special population characteristics, type of tobacco use, readiness to quit, etc. It is preferred that supportive text services utilize keyword support.
- h. Ability to provide comprehensive proactive counseling support initiated by Quitline coach to participants who are ready to quit and agree to counseling. The counseling must be based on protocols demonstrated through randomized clinical trials research to be effective in providing support and assistance in helping people successfully quit tobacco use and prevent relapses.
- i. Ability to schedule the proactive follow-up counseling sessions such as appointments with the participant at a specific date and time, or a specific date and range of time within which the session might be scheduled.
- j. Collaboration with TFN to facilitate follow-up evaluation at seven (7) months, from quit date, verify tobacco use status and client satisfaction.
- k. For tobacco users who are not interested in receiving follow-up proactive counseling:
 - i. Offer encouragement to call the Quitline again for assistance as needed.
 - ii. Offer motivational messages to promote effective quitting
 - iii. Offer to send self-help and other appropriate materials via mail, email or text.
 - iv. Offer support resources for family and friends of tobacco users to assist with a quit attempt.
 - v. If participants are within the United States Preventative Services Task Force's recommended population to have lung cancer screening (adults aged 50 to 80 years who have a 20 pack-year smoking history and currently smoke or have quit within the past 15 years):
 - 1. Offer opportunity to opt into lung cancer screening or pre-screening.
 - 2. Provide updated list of lung cancer screening providers in Nebraska.
 - 3. Provide resources for education on the benefits of lung cancer screening.

8. **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS**

The primary healthcare professionals referenced for this RFP consist of, but are not limited to physicians, nurses, substance abuse counselors, mental health counselors, psychologists, social workers, oral health providers, and certified Tobacco Treatment Specialists. Healthcare professionals calling the Quitline must be provided with the following services as requested and available.

- a. Free comprehensive online training on brief tobacco intervention techniques and best practices to help healthcare providers work with patients quitting tobacco.
 - i. Ensure all training is developed, delivered and maintained in compliance with accreditation requirements for continuing education units (CEUs) of the target audience.
 - ii. At minimum, CEUs must be available for all licensed prescriber healthcare professionals.
 - iii. Topics should include, but not be limited to:
 - 1. Up-to-date information and recommendations based on the Public Health Service Clinical Practice Guidelines on Treating Tobacco Use and Dependence with regard to the use of pharmacotherapies.
 - 2. Implementation of in-office procedures to address tobacco use.
 - 3. Recording of intervention on electronic health records.
 - 4. Tobacco dependence treatment with special populations.
 - 5. Tobacco dependence treatment for youth.
 - 6. How to utilize information on how clients can utilize the Quitline and its services;
 - 7. Effective in-office or community-based tobacco cessation interventions including the 5A's: Ask, Advise, Assess, Assist & Arrange or 2A's and a R: Ask, Advise and Refer.
- b. Process and provide free continuing education units (CEUs) to providers upon completion of the course.
- c. Trainings should be updated yearly with up-to-date information and any technical updates needed.
- d. Provide technical assistance and consultation to TFN staff working with healthcare professionals on a variety of effective tobacco dependence treatment issues.

9. **SUPPORT MATERIALS**

Tailored materials must be made available for populations listed in 11.(e). All support materials must be approved by TFN prior to implementation. The Nebraska Tobacco Quitline logo must be visible on all printed materials for distribution to Quitline participants, unless otherwise approved by TFN. Any revisions to materials must be approved by TFN prior to implementation.

- a. Develop, maintain or utilize existing cessation support materials that address self-help cessation techniques for tobacco users.
- b. Materials are required to meet low literacy level needs (4th grade) and utilize pictures and graphics extensively.
- c. All materials must be made available in English and Spanish, at a minimum.
- d. Materials may be required in additional languages if call volume data indicates.
- e. Information on secondhand smoke and other tobacco-related educational materials must be appropriately mailed, emailed or texted as requested by participants.
- f. Within 48 hours of request, support materials must be provided to, but not limited to:
 - i. Proxy callers
 - ii. Healthcare professionals
 - iii. Tobacco users, not ready to quit
 - iv. Tobacco users, ready to quit but not interested in ongoing counseling. Specific populations (e.g., racial and ethnic minority groups, behavioral health conditions, and rural populations)

10. **PROMOTION TO HEALTHCARE SYSTEMS**

- a. Collaborate with TFN in updating and utilizing promotional materials that will be disseminated by TFN to healthcare professionals and systems.
- b. Collaborate with TFN to ensure effective coordination of promotion to healthcare professionals and Quitline services.
- c. Collaborate with TFN to respond to calls generated as a result of paid media promotion, earned media promotion, and promotion through health systems.
- d. Collaborate and assist TFN or media Vendor to assure effective coordination with media promotion, promotion to healthcare professionals, and other tobacco control activities in Nebraska.
- e. Participation in annual presentations (up to two) at state conference/training programs identified by TFN to educate and inform stakeholders, healthcare professionals, administrators, insurers, and purchasers about the Quitline and promote the systems change recommendations contained in the U.S. Public Health Service Clinical Practice Guideline, Treating Tobacco Use and Dependence.
- f. Provide technical assistance to TFN regarding the development and utilization of a fax and web referral system to increase the number of healthcare providers who refer patients to the Quitline.
- g. Provide technical assistance to TFN regarding the development and utilization of a community referral system to increase the number of healthcare providers who refer patients to the Quitline.

11. **COUNSELING TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS**

Provide a Counseling System that has the following:

- a. Protocols for the first contact during live hours
- b. Protocols to triage the participant's need for services
- c. Protocols for counseling online and over the phone, and through text message (optional but preferred).
- d. Protocols to assess a tobacco user's readiness to quit. For participants who are ready to quit, the Counseling System must track:
 - i. Registration for services
 - ii. Initial counseling for successful quitting
 - iii. Provision of self-help materials or other resources
 - iv. Assessment of participant's interest in proactive cessation counseling
 - v. Assessment of participant's insurance status including Medicaid and Medicare and feedback to the participant about the availability of tobacco dependence treatment coverage through health insurance
 - vi. Provide comprehensive, proactive follow-up cessation counseling. Counseling must be based on protocols that research in randomized trials has demonstrated to be effective in supporting people as they cease the use of tobacco products and in preventing relapse
 - vii. Provide cessation counseling to educate on nicotine replacement therapy options, how the participant will be screened for medical eligibility and how the proper nicotine replacement therapy will be selected for the participant
- e. Familiarity with the listed populations, but is not limited to:
 - i. Medicaid beneficiaries
 - ii. Uninsured/Low Socioeconomic Status
 - iii. Pregnant women

- iv. Senior adults
- v. Veterans
- vi. Smokeless tobacco users
- vii. Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS) users
- viii. People with mental health or substance use conditions
- ix. Diverse ethnic, racial and cultural minorities, particularly Native Americans
- f. Provide interpreter or referral services to participants with limited English proficiency. A third-party interpreter is acceptable.
- g. Vendor must describe, to insured participants, how insured participants will be linked to their healthcare system to access a tobacco dependence treatment benefit, if available, or to a healthcare professional for prescription cessation aids or other medical follow-up.
- h. Will provide options for program completion with incentives that can't be used to purchase tobacco or alcohol.
- i. Provide professional staff.
- j. It is important that Nebraska participants feel they have found meaningful help when they reach the Nebraska Tobacco Quitline and that the Quitline staff will go the extra mile to assure needs are met whether for information, referral, immediate counseling, or reassurance.

12. **NICOTINE REPLACEMENT THERAPY (NRT)**

For participants receiving counseling, after registration and screening for medical contraindications, recommendations may include nicotine replacement therapy (nicotine gum, patch, and/or lozenge). Vendor is responsible for all packaging and postage necessary to provide NRT distribution to qualified participants and for monitoring the TFN-approved budget and distribution timeline.

- a. Assume full responsibility for screening participants, receiving medical authorization when necessary, and ordering NRT.
- b. Ensure that NRT will be available to eligible participants screened during distribution times determined by Tobacco Free Nebraska.
- c. Mail NRT directly to the participant's permanent home mailing address or residential facility.
- d. TFN will approve a period of time and budget for when NRT will be available through distribution, the supply length (example: two (2) weeks, four (4) weeks), the NRT options (example: Nicotine Gum, Patch, Lozenges, Combination Therapy) and who is eligible.
- e. Provide a supply of NRT to medically qualified participants over the age of eighteen (18) enrolled in the Nebraska Tobacco Quitline.
- f. Provide and follow the NRT screening protocols. Protocols must be submitted to TFN for approval, a minimum of 30 days prior to implementation.
- g. Upon TFN approval, provide NRT options including nicotine gum, patch, and/or lozenge, or combination therapy of the gum, patch and/or lozenge. Dosage and type of NRT shall be determined by the Quitline Coach and the participant and should align with product labeling and clinical guidance.
 - i. Vendor must disclose how much NRT (i.e. how many gum, patch, and/or lozenge) are included in a two (2) or four (4) week supply. The daily quantity of NRT supplied should align with the following recommendations ([Smoking Cessation: A Report of the Surgeon General, Table 6.2](#))
 - 1. Nicotine gum: At least 9/day to 1 for every 1-2 hours
 - 2. Nicotine patch: 1/day
 - 3. Nicotine lozenge: At least 9/day to 1 for every 1-2 hours

*NRT Products (Two- and Four-Week Distributions) aligned with Surgeon General recommendations.
Nicotine Gum (Two-week supply) (126 tablets, or 9 tablets each day)
Nicotine Gum (Four-week supply) (252 tablets, or 9 tablets each day)
Nicotine Patch (Two-week supply) (14 patches, or 1 patch each day)
Nicotine Patch (Four-week supply) (28 patches, or 1 patch each day)
Nicotine Lozenges (Two-week supply) (126 tablets, or 9 tablets each day)

Nicotine Lozenges (Four-week supply)
(252 tablets, or 9 tablets each day)

13. **DELIVERABLES**

- a. Registration (phone)
- b. Registration (web and text)
- c. General Phone Coaching / Counseling Services
- d. Web Counseling
- e. Special Population Phone Coaching / Counseling Services
- f. Lung Cancer Pre-Screening (must not include registration costs)
- g. Program Development / Implementation (one-time cost)
- h. E-Referral Interface
- i. Evaluations – Seven (7) month
- j. Provider Training – Healthcare Provider Online Training – Development, Implementation, Maintenance, and Updates
- k. Continuing Education Credits for Healthcare Provider Training
- l. Nicotine Replacement Therapy Products
- m. Optional Services – Innovative Projects, Custom Evaluation and Text Counseling

E. OPTIONAL SERVICES

1. Innovative Projects

Changes or additions to the contract beyond the scope are not permitted unless required to ensure compliance with any applicable law, or unless, in DHHS's sole determination, such changes or modifications are essential to ensure maximum use of other resources consistent with the purposes of this RFP.

2. Custom Evaluation

Custom evaluation efforts, as requested by TFN, go beyond the seven (7) month quit rate and satisfaction rate evaluation. Custom Evaluation could focus on a specific population using the Quitline, a specific Quitline service provided, and/or other TFN Quitline initiatives and could involve gathering information from Quitline participants through a survey or other means as developed in the custom evaluation plan.

3. Text Counseling

Tobacco cessation coaching session delivered through text messaging services between a live Quit Coach and a participant. Text counseling is interactive, tailored, immediate and continued texting based on motivation, readiness, dependence, and confidence levels, quit date, etc. ([Recommended Best and Promising Practices on Technology-Mediated Services for Quitlines, NAQC 2021](#)) Billable only per participant for duration for active counseling.

F. LIST OF EXHIBITS

- Exhibit 1 – Reporting Quit Rates
- Exhibit 2 – Example Quitline Fax Referral Form
- Exhibit 3 – Nebraska Tobacco Quitline Reporting Requirements
- Exhibit 4 – Nebraska Tobacco Quitline Reports
- Exhibit 5 – Nebraska Local Health Districts Map

VI. SOLICITATION RESPONSE INSTRUCTIONS

This section documents the requirements that should be met by bidders in preparing the Corporate Overview and Technical Response portions of the solicitation response. The solicitation Cost Sheet template should be completed by bidders and submitted as a separate attachment with their solicitation response. Bidders should identify the subdivisions of "Project Description and Scope of Work" clearly in their solicitation response; failure to do so may result in disqualification. Failure to respond to a specific requirement may be the basis for elimination from consideration during the State's comparative evaluation.

Solicitation responses are due by the date and time shown in the Schedule of Events. Content requirements for the Corporate Overview and Technical Response are presented separately in the following subdivisions:

A. SOLICITATION RESPONSE SUBMISSION

1. CORPORATE OVERVIEW

The Corporate Overview section of the solicitation response should consist of the following subdivisions:

a. BIDDER IDENTIFICATION AND INFORMATION

The bidder should provide the full company or corporate name, address of the company's headquarters, entity organization (corporation, partnership, proprietorship), state in which the bidder is incorporated or otherwise organized to do business, year in which the bidder first organized to do business and whether the name and form of organization has changed since first organized.

b. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The bidder should provide financial statements applicable to the firm. If publicly held, the bidder should provide a copy of the corporation's most recent audited financial reports and statements, and the name, address, and telephone number of the fiscally responsible representative of the bidder's financial or banking organization.

If the bidder is not a publicly held corporation, either the reports and statements required of a publicly held corporation, or a description of the organization, including size, longevity, client base, areas of specialization and expertise, and any other pertinent information, should be submitted in such a manner that solicitation evaluators may reasonably formulate a determination about the stability and financial strength of the organization. Additionally, a non-publicly held firm should provide a banking reference.

The bidder must disclose any and all judgments, pending or expected litigation, or other real or potential financial reversals, which might materially affect the viability or stability of the organization, or state that no such condition is known to exist.

The State may elect to use a third party to conduct credit checks as part of the corporate overview evaluation.

c. CHANGE OF OWNERSHIP

If any change in ownership or control of the company is anticipated during the twelve (12) months following the solicitation response due date, the bidder should describe the circumstances of such change and indicate when the change will likely occur. Any change of ownership to an awarded bidder(s) will require notification to the State.

d. OFFICE LOCATION

The bidder's office location responsible for performance pursuant to an award of a contract with the State of Nebraska should be identified.

e. RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE STATE

The bidder should describe any dealings with the State over the previous **five (5) years**. If the organization, its predecessor, or any Party named in the bidder's solicitation response has contracted with the State, the bidder should identify the contract number(s) and/or any other information available to identify such contract(s). If no such contracts exist, so declare.

f. BIDDER'S EMPLOYEE RELATIONS TO STATE

If any Party named in the bidder's solicitation response is or was an employee of the State within the past six (6) months, identify the individual(s) by name, State agency with whom employed, job title or position held with the State, and separation date. If no such relationship exists or has existed, so declare.

If any employee of any agency of the State of Nebraska is employed by the bidder or is a subcontractor to the bidder, as of the due date for solicitation response submission, identify all such persons by name, position held with the bidder, and position held with the State (including job title and agency). Describe the responsibilities of such persons within the proposing organization. If, after review of this information by the State, it is determined that a conflict of interest exists or may exist, the bidder may be disqualified from further consideration in this solicitation. If no such relationship exists, so declare.

g. **CONTRACT PERFORMANCE**

If the bidder or any proposed subcontractor has had a contract terminated for default during the past five (5) years, all such instances must be described as required below. Termination for default is defined as a notice to stop performance delivery due to the bidder's non-performance or poor performance, and the issue was either not litigated due to inaction on the part of the bidder or litigated and such litigation determined the bidder to be in default.

It is mandatory that the bidder submit full details of all termination for default experienced during the past five (5) years, including the other Party's name, address, and telephone number. The response to this section must present the bidder's position on the matter. The State will evaluate the facts and will score the bidder's solicitation response accordingly. If no such termination for default has been experienced by the bidder in the past five (5) years, so declare.

If at any time during the past five (5) years, the bidder has had a contract terminated for convenience, non-performance, non-allocation of funds, or any other reason, describe fully all circumstances surrounding such termination, including the name and address of the other contracting Party.

h. **SUMMARY OF BIDDER'S CORPORATE EXPERIENCE**

The bidder should provide a summary matrix listing the bidder's previous projects similar to this Solicitation in size, scope, and complexity. The State will use no more than three (3) narrative project descriptions submitted by the bidder during its evaluation of the solicitation response. Highlight any experience working with State Health Departments and/or State Tobacco Control programs on tobacco cessation interventions.

The bidder should address the following:

- i. Provide narrative descriptions to highlight the similarities between the bidder's experience and this Solicitation. These descriptions should include:
 1. The time period of the project,
 2. The scheduled and actual completion dates,
 3. The bidder's responsibilities,
 4. For reference purposes, a customer name (including the name of a contact person, a current telephone number, a facsimile number, and e-mail address); and
 5. Each project description should identify whether the work was performed as the prime Vendor or as a subcontractor. If a bidder performed as the prime Vendor, the description should provide the originally scheduled completion date and budget, as well as the actual (or currently planned) completion date and actual (or currently planned) budget.
- ii. Bidder and Subcontractor(s) experience should be listed separately. Narrative descriptions submitted for Subcontractors should be specifically identified as subcontractor projects.
- iii. If the work was performed as a subcontractor, the narrative description should identify the same information as requested for the bidders above. In addition, subcontractors should identify what share of contract costs, project responsibilities, and time period were performed as a subcontractor.

i. **SUMMARY OF BIDDER'S PROPOSED PERSONNEL/MANAGEMENT APPROACH**

The bidder should present a detailed description of its proposed approach to the management of the project.

Required Personnel Credentials and Licensure:

Quit Coaches Minimum Qualifications:

1. Bachelor or Master degree in social work, psychology, or other behavioral health field of study
2. At minimum, staff shall have two years of counseling experience.

Quitline Medical Director Minimum Qualifications:

1. Ph.D. or equivalent experience and credentials.

Bidder must notify DHHS immediately if any change in personnel in key positions of this RFP is terminated and replaced. Replacement staff must be reviewed by DHHS program to ensure compliance to the required credentials and/or licensure at any time during the life of the Contract.

The bidder should identify the specific professionals who will work on the State's project if their company is awarded the contract resulting from this Solicitation. The names and titles of the team proposed for assignment to the State project should be identified in full, with a description of the team leadership, interface, and support functions, and reporting relationships. The primary work assigned to each person should also be identified.

The bidder should provide resumes for all personnel proposed by the bidder to work on the project. The State will consider the resumes as a key indicator of the bidder's understanding of the skill mixes required to carry out the requirements of the Solicitation in addition to assessing the experience of specific individuals.

Resumes should not be longer than three (3) pages. Resumes should include, at a minimum, academic background and degrees, professional certifications, understanding of the process, and at least three (3) references (name, address, and telephone number) who can attest to the competence and skill level of the individual. Any changes in proposed personnel shall only be implemented after written approval from the State.

j. SUBCONTRACTORS

If the bidder intends to subcontract any part of its performance hereunder, the bidder should provide:

- i. name, address, and telephone number of the subcontractor(s),
- ii. specific tasks for each subcontractor(s),
- iii. percentage of performance hours intended for each subcontract; and
- iv. total percentage of subcontractor(s) performance hours.

2. TECHNICAL RESPONSE

The Technical Response section of the solicitation response should consist of the following subsections:

- a. Understanding of the project requirements;
- b. Proposed development approach;
- c. Technical requirements;
- d. Detailed project work plan; and
- e. Deliverables and due dates.

3. COST SHEET

The Pricing evaluation and point distribution will be based on Unit Costs calculated against estimated quantities for cost analysis and assignment of points for the collective total of Initial Contract term and renewals.

CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT FORM

BIDDER MUST COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING

By signing this Contractual Agreement Form, the bidder guarantees compliance with the provisions stated in this solicitation and agrees to the terms and conditions unless otherwise indicated in writing and certifies that bidder is not owned by the Chinese Communist Party.

Per Nebraska’s Transparency in Government Procurement Act, Neb. Rev Stat § 73-603, DAS is required to collect statistical information regarding the number of contracts awarded to Nebraska Vendors. This information is for statistical purposes only and will not be considered for contract award purposes.

_____ NEBRASKA VENDOR AFFIDAVIT: Bidder hereby attests that bidder is a Nebraska Vendor. “Nebraska Vendor” shall mean any bidder who has maintained a bona fide place of business and at least one employee within this state for at least the six (6) months immediately preceding the posting date of this Solicitation. All vendors who are not a Nebraska Vendor are considered Foreign Vendors under Neb. Rev Stat § 73-603 (c).

_____ I hereby certify that I am a Resident disabled veteran or business located in a designated enterprise zone in accordance with Neb. Rev. Stat. § 73-107 and wish to have preference, if applicable, considered in the award of this contract.

_____ I hereby certify that I am a blind person licensed by the Commission for the Blind & Visually Impaired in accordance with Neb. Rev. Stat. § 71-8611 and wish to have preference considered in the award of this contract.

THIS FORM MUST BE SIGNED MANUALLY IN INK OR BY DOCUSIGN

COMPANY:	
ADDRESS:	
PHONE:	
EMAIL:	
BIDDER NAME & TITLE:	
SIGNATURE:	
DATE:	

VENDOR COMMUNICATION WITH THE STATE CONTACT INFORMATION (IF DIFFERENT FROM ABOVE)	
NAME:	
TITLE:	
PHONE:	
EMAIL:	