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Agency of Administration

SEALED BID

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Integrated Eligibility and Enrollment Noticing Solution

ISSUE DATE	May 08, 2024
QUESTIONS DUE	June 07, 2024 – 4:30 PM (EST)
RFP RESPONSES DUE BY	August 06, 2024– 4:30 PM (EST)

PLEASE BE ADVISED THAT ALL NOTIFICATIONS, RELEASES, AND ADDENDUMS ASSOCIATED WITH THIS RFP WILL BE POSTED AT:

<http://www.bgs.state.vt.us/pca/bids/bids.php>

THE STATE WILL MAKE NO ATTEMPT TO CONTACT INTERESTED PARTIES WITH UPDATED INFORMATION. IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF EACH BIDDER TO PERIODICALLY CHECK THE ABOVE WEBPAGE FOR ANY AND ALL NOTIFICATIONS, RELEASES AND ADDENDUMS ASSOCIATED WITH THIS RFP.

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USE SUBJECT: IEE NOTICING SOLUTION

1. OVERVIEW:

- 1.1. SCOPE AND BACKGROUND:** Through this Request for Proposal (RFP) the Agency of Digital Services (ADS), on behalf of the Agency of Human Services (AHS and hereinafter the “State”) is seeking to establish a contract with one company that can provide a Noticing Solution for the Integrated Eligibility and Enrollment (IE&E) Program.
- 1.2. CONTRACT PERIOD:** The Contract arising from this RFP will be the period of Design, Development and Implementation (DDI) services, plus up to five years for annual operating costs (maintenance and operations). The State may consider an option to include the ability to renew for up to two additional twelve-month periods.
- 1.3. SINGLE POINT OF CONTACT:** All communications concerning this RFP are to be addressed in writing to the State Contact listed on the front page of this RFP. Actual or attempted contact with any other individual from the State concerning this RFP is strictly prohibited and may result in disqualification.
- 1.4. BIDDERS’ CONFERENCE:** A bidders’ conference will not be held.
- 1.5. QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD:** Any bidder requiring clarification of any section of this RFP or wishing to comment on any requirement of the RFP must submit specific questions in writing no later than the deadline for question indicated on the first page of this RFP. Questions are to be e-mailed to the point of contact on the front page of this RFP. Questions or comments not raised in writing on or before the last day of the question period are thereafter waived. At the close of the question period a copy of all questions or comments and the State's responses will be posted on the State’s web site <http://www.bgs.state.vt.us/pca/bids/bids.php> . Every effort will be made to post this information as soon as possible after the question period ends, contingent on the number and complexity of the questions.
- 1.6. CHANGES TO THIS RFP:** Any modifications to this RFP will be made in writing by the State through the issuance of an Addendum to this RFP and posted online at <http://www.bgs.state.vt.us/pca/bids/bids.php>. Modifications from any other source are not to be considered.
- 1.7.SOURCE OF FUNDS:** Socioeconomic affirmative steps under 2 C.F.R. § 200.321 If using applicable federal funds Socioeconomic affirmative steps under 2 C.F.R. § 200.321 affirmative steps must include at least the following six steps:
 - 1.7.1.** Placing qualified small and minority businesses and women’s business enterprises on solicitation lists;
 - 1.7.2.** Assuring that small and minority businesses and women’s business enterprises are solicited whenever they are potential sources;
 - 1.7.3.** Dividing total requirements, when economically feasible, into smaller tasks or quantities to permit maximum participation by small and minority businesses, and women’s business enterprises;
 - 1.7.4.** Establishing delivery schedules, where the requirement permits, which encourage participation by small and minority businesses, and women’s business enterprises;
 - 1.7.5.** Using the services and assistance, as appropriate, of such organizations as the Small Business Administration and the Minority Business Development Agency of the Department of Commerce; and

1.7.6. Requiring the prime/general contractor, if subcontracts are to be let, to take the same affirmative steps as listed in numbers 1 through 5.

1.8 If a bidder requires assistance in preparing their proposal or needs guidance on socioeconomic certifications, the bidder may contact the Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC). PTAC specializes in helping small businesses navigate the documentation associated with State and Federal procurement. Their website is: <https://accd.vermont.gov/economic-development/programs/ptac>.

2 DETAILED REQUIREMENTS/DESIRED OUTCOMES:

2.1 BACKGROUND:

2.1.1 The Economic Services Division (ESD) and Department of Vermont Health Access (DVHA) are looking to procure a Customer Communication Management System (CCMS) to modernize its current Noticing Solution. Currently, ESD and DVHA Bulk and Manual Noticing Solutions are very old, mission critical applications. The current operational state of the ESD and DVHA noticing solutions create a significant business risk. The current operational state also does not allow the ADS to address a significant AHS enhancement backlog (including findings from Federal partners) to improve operational efficiencies and the citizen user experience.

2.1.2 In the recent past, the State issued an RFP for similar functionality, however the State has made a significant deviation from that Noticing procurement strategy. That previous documentation requested for vendors to develop a “translation service” to interpret the output from the State’s legacy Eligibility & Enrollment application (ACCESS) and integrate with the State’s Hyland Content Composer (HCC) notice generation application. This new RFP is the result of the State:

2.1.2.1 No longer mandating HCC,

2.1.2.2 Requiring bidders to propose, implement, and integrate with their recommended CCMS,

2.1.2.3 Removing the “translation service” workstream and moving the functionality that was requested in the “translation service” to the Integration Platform and CCMS components of this procurement,

2.1.2.4 Removal of the four “workstreams”,

2.1.2.5 Requiring a single vendor to bid on the entire scope of the requirements with their ability to use subcontractors if needed.,

2.1.2.6 Allowing Bidders to offer requirements previously listed in a future phase in their initial offering if price and time does not adversely affect the State.

2.2 DESIRED APPROACH

2.2.1 ESD and DVHA’s goal is to implement a modern CCMS as the foundational Integrated Eligibility and Enrollment (IE&E) Notice Solution.

The State is seeking to establish a single contract with a primary vendor. The selected vendor must be able to successfully implement their recommended CCMS in accordance with the requirements outlined hereafter in this RFP, the Bidder's Response Form, the documents that make up the Procurement Library, the resulting Contract, and as discussed in Joint Application Development (or Design) (JAD) sessions. The use of subcontractor(s) is permitted; however, the State will only be dealing with the primary vendor directly and all subcontractor(s) are held to the same standards as specified throughout these procurement documents.

This procurement is for Phase 1 of the ESD and DVHA Noticing solution, however the long-term goal for correspondence generation is a multi-phased approach to produce ESD and DVHA Notices as well as other customer communications from a single CCMS. These future phases will require the CCMS to receive data files or API transactions from case management systems other than ACCESS.

From a very high-level ESD & DVHA are looking for a vendor to:

- 2.2.1.1 Implement a CCMS for ESD & DVHA use,
- 2.2.1.2 Integrate with State's Integration Platform,
- 2.2.1.3 Receive batch Notice data, via SFTP, from the ACCESS legacy mainframe,
- 2.2.1.4 Receive on-demand Notice data, via ExtireX, from the ACCESS legacy mainframe,
- 2.2.1.5 Process these data receipts into PDF Notices,
- 2.2.1.6 Send the Notices and required attachments to district printers and Buildings, and General Services (BGS),
- 2.2.1.7 Send PDF version of the Notice and required attachments to the State's Enterprise Content Management (ECM) System (OnBase),
- 2.2.1.8 Send acknowledgement of the Notice process status to the ACCESS system.

2.3 STATE RESPONSIBILITIES:

The State is accountable for ensuring project management and any necessary business analysis activities follow Vermont standards and expectations. Regarding technical and financial responsibilities of this effort the State will provide access to and be responsible for costs to implement, licenses, Maintenance and Operations (M&O), and Disaster Recovery (DR) of the State's Integration Gateway, which is running in the FedRAMP Moderate Azure cloud. The State will also cover costs related to licenses, use, M&O, and DR of its Enterprise Content Management solution, Hyland OnBase. The current OnBase implementation is operating in the State's datacenter with plans to move to Azure cloud mid calendar year of 2024. The State will pay for the EntireX licenses (both the master and client instances), while ensuring M&O, and DR for the master component running on ACCESS. Finally, the State will provide support needed for integration with the ACCESS mainframe application, noting that the goal of this

effort should require no to minimal changes to ACCESS or its generated output as well as no to minimal changes required for the receipt of Notice acknowledgement.

The State will be responsible for decommissioning all existing legacy Noticing infrastructure and processes and ensuring ACCESS no longer uses the existing channels for Notice generation. Also, if absolutely required as a last option, the State will be responsible for the programming changes to the legacy ACCESS system.

The State, or its designee, is responsible for migrating previously created Notices from the legacy storage to the State's OnBase instance. This migration will include moving the PDF Notice images as well as their corresponding metadata.

2.4 VENDOR RESPONSIBILITIES:

The vendor is responsible for following Vermont's standards for project management, business analysis, and technical implementation. The vendor will also be leading the efforts needed to fulfill this request, excluding the areas mentioned above in the State responsibilities section. The vendor will be required to work with the State resources as well as resources from other vendor supported solutions. The vendor must create and document a process to re-implement the current solution notice templates in their proposed CCMS. The vendor must create all necessary templates currently needed and train SOV staff to create variations to these templates or new templates as needed. See requirements for more details. The vendor is responsible for creating and maintaining APIs for sharing generated Notices, their attachments, and the corresponding metadata to OnBase. Under this described architecture the vendor will also need to provide an environment for the EntireX client as well as the cost for security, M&O and DR for this environment. This is needed to receive the on-demand Notice requests from ACCESS (the State's Eligibility and Enrollment) application running on a mainframe.

While the initial implementation will include Notices from the ACCESS application, the State is looking to the bidder's experience and the completeness of their solution offering to recommend which of the additional or future requirements listed could be incorporated in the Phase I release without prolonging the DDI effort. The State acknowledges that each CCMS and vendor proposal may provide differing functionality that could benefit the State at a timeframe sooner than anticipated. The State does not want to increase Phase I costs or to extend the DDI timeline by requesting functionality outside the stated Phase I requirements which would otherwise be satisfied by default, already included or available function in the Bidder's standard CCMS Product offering.

The selected vendor will be required to assist the State and its future Integrated and Eligibility and Enrollment (IE&E) vendor achieve CMS certification in partnership with the Vermont Integrated Eligibility System (VT-IES) project, slated to start DDI in 2026. Noticing will not be presented to CMS for Certification until VT-IES is ready for certification as a whole. This Noticing solution is anticipated to be a component/module of VT-IES and as such, will require the vendor's participation in certification for all Noticing related needs. Do not include certification costs in your

pricing response to this procurement. A separate Contract Amendment will be executed for this cost outside the scope of this project.

2.5 EXISTING TECHNOLOGY ENVIRONMENT

2.5.1 Notices consists of four independent processes which are tied together by a SQL Server database. The four processes control the creation of the Notice, the viewing of the Notice on the Web, the creation of the printable version of the Notice and the actual printing of the Notice. Each one of these processes operates independently of each other for a Notice to be printed. It goes sequentially through each one of the steps (with exception of the Browser view) to produce a final Notice document which requires all three tasks to be running.

2.5.1.1 Paragraph Text Manager (PTM) short description

The Paragraph Text Manager (PTM) application manages the creation and management to include the promotion of blurbs through development, certification, and production environments updating the Notices SQL Database. The Notices viewing process Queries the Notices SQL Database for notices by specified criteria and translates notice types into descriptions from Notices SQL Database. Upon selection of a specific notice, a PDF is generated real time using the Notice Creation Service to be subsequently displayed.

2.5.1.2 Notice Creation Service short description

The process is started by the Notice Creator Service; this program checks the Mainframe every second to see if there any new Notices to be created. When it receives notification of a new Notice, it creates a new row to be inserted into the SQL table.

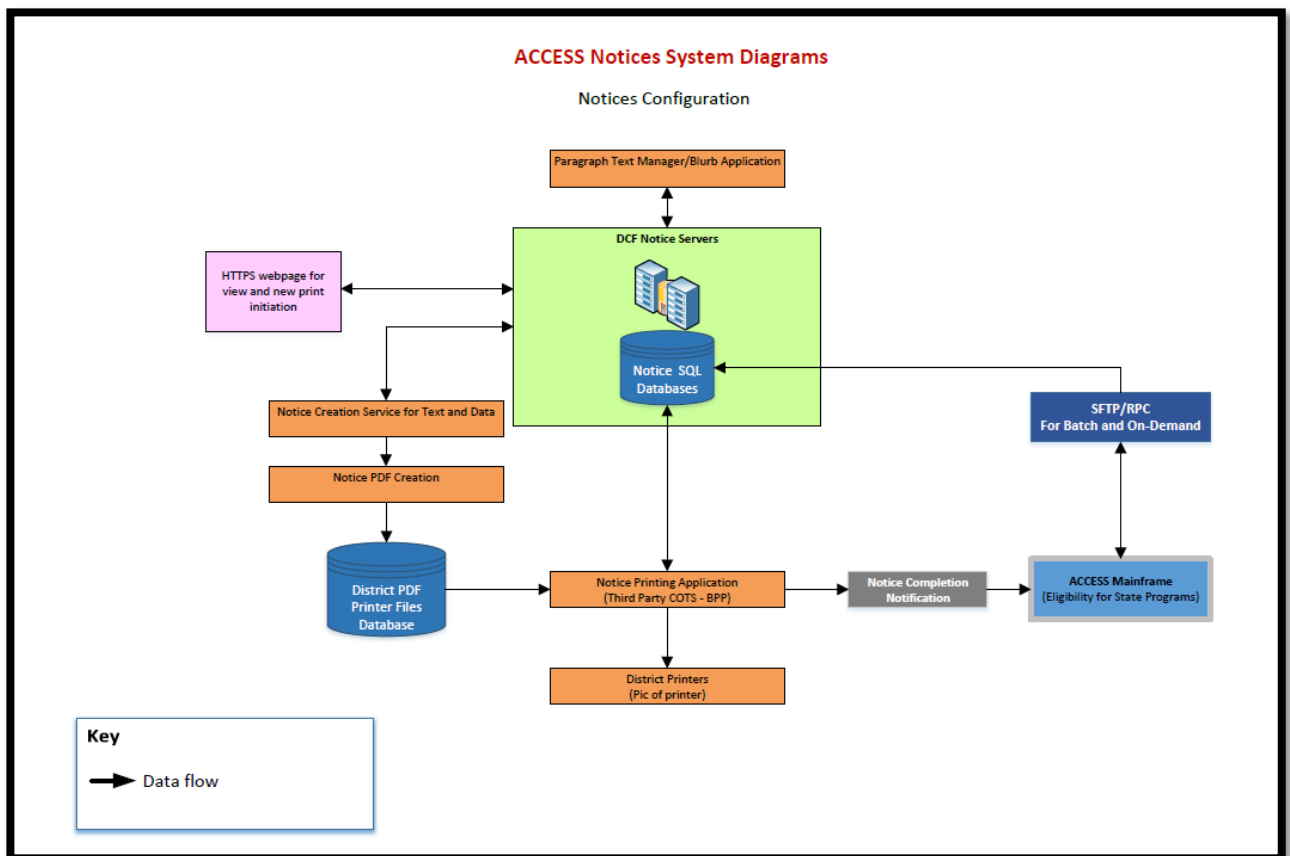
2.5.1.3 Notice PDF creation short description

The PDFCreator is next in line which checks the SQL table every two minutes for any new Notices to be printed. If it finds new Notices, this program will create the PDF for the Notice and place it in a specific folder.

2.5.1.4 Notice Printing Application short description

BPP (Batch and Print Pro) is the next program in the process. BPP is a purchased program; no source code exists for this program. BPP checks all designated folders every 30 seconds for new PDF documents, when it finds new PDF it sends it to the identified printer for that folder

2.5.2 Figure 1: Existing Notices Diagram



2.5.3 Reference the PATH Notices Server Side Report.pdf found in section 2.9.2 for additional details.

2.6 The State of Vermont seeks to achieve the following Business Value(s):

- 2.6.1 Cost Savings:** Potential savings by reducing the number of calls to the ESD Benefits Service Center and the Health Care call center to address incorrect notices.
- 2.6.2 Customer Service Improvement:** More accurate notices, correct attachments included with notices, ability to modify notice wording for more user-friendly and accessible notices.
- 2.6.3 Compliance:** ESD and DVHA need the ability to send Notices in the preferred language of the customer.
- 2.6.4 Compliance:** State staff need to be able to create, update, and edit the language in the Notice quickly and easily, without complicated technical support.

2.7 Functional and Non-Functional Requirements:

2.7.1 The State’s Functional and Non-Functional Requirements are provided in the attached IEE Noticing Solution BRF Criteria Workbook.

The Functional and Non-Functional Requirements include requirements for the following:

- 2.7.1.1 “3.1 Functional Requirements”
- 2.7.1.2 “4.1 Application Solution”
- 2.7.1.3 “4.2 CMS”
- 2.7.1.4 “4.3 FNS”
- 2.7.1.5 “4.4 Testing”
- 2.7.1.6 “4.5 Data Compliance”
- 2.7.1.7 “4.6 Cybersecurity 2023-01”
- 2.7.1.8 “4.7 Security DR BC”

2.8 Potential Future State:

2.8.1 General:

For this procurement the State has a strong preference for a solution that is hosted off State premises and is not running in the State’s data center. The State will not consider procuring a solution that would run in the State’s data center or one that will be maintained by State resources. The Solution must be capable of meeting the included functional and non-functional requirements. The solution must be implemented to be scalable, extensible, and elastic to handle the needs and workload discussed in this procurement documentation.

Currently, Notices are printed at State of Vermont District printers and BGS print shop and are sent via United State Postal Services (USPS), to include on demand/manual mail distribution. The existing legacy case management system does not have the ability to track customer delivery preferences. This ability will be added in a future phase.

The Notice counts from the past 24 months are described below in Table 1. These are actuals counts and do not project future growth which is anticipated to keep pace with National expectations.

Number of Notices	Occurrence
1,887	Average Daily
40,000	Minimum Monthly
110,000	Maximum Monthly
57,414	Average Monthly
150,000	Cost of Living Adjustment or Desk Review - Annually or as mandated by the State / Federal Partners

Table 1

The core case management system, ACCESS, will remain. Changes to ACCESS must be avoided and only requested under extenuating circumstances because it is an aged application that is being scheduled for replacement by the State’s Vermont Integrated

Eligibility & Enrollment System (VT-IES) procurement and any changes needed in this system would be temporary and throw away work for the State's long-term objective.

For the short-term, until the new VT-IES is implemented, ACCESS will continue to generate ASCII data files for batch processing sent via SFTP or on-demand Notice requests in near real-time using an EntireX programming interface. In the future (estimated for calendar year 2026) it is anticipated that VT-IES will communicate Notice requests through the State's Integration Gateway APIs to the CCMS being implemented with this project. While the future standard communication will be via APIs it is also possible, and likely, that batch data sharing (SFTP) may still occur in the event of a desk review or other process(es).

The CCMS will track and report on successful receipt, processing, generation of and sending the Notice to the printer and OnBase solution. During the Design, Development, and Implementation (DDI) phases of the project the State, vendor and 3rd party vendors will work cohesively to identify logging and audit needs at the various steps in the Noticing processes. The CCMS will also be required to name, and store processed data for a period of 3 months for troubleshooting and record keeping policies.

2.8.2 Data extract from ACCESS:

This is an existing process that will generate a batch data file or a single call, using EntireX, to have Notice data gathered from ACCESS and sent to the CCMS vendor. This process will not change unless there are extenuating circumstances that mandate a change to this process. If applicable, extenuating circumstance(s) will be assessed and weighed and would include situations where the State desires to add a new data element to indicate a preferred communication channel, language preference or in the event the data being supplied causes processing errors that cannot be handled by the CCMS and mandate a change to ACCESS in order to complete the Notice generation process.

2.8.3 Integrate via Real-time and Batch:

The selected vendor will create and implement APIs for EntireX exchange requests or SFTP transactions using the State's SFTP utility. The State's Integration Gateway will be used by the selected solution to send the completed, electronic version of the Notice from their CCMS to the State's OnBase instance, see section 2.8.7 below for chronological timing and additional details.

2.8.4 Ingest Notice Data:

2.8.5 The vendor's CCMS will ingest the data sent via SFTP or EntireX. The data ingestion will require parsing the data and may include data transformation and/or translations needed to parse and translate the request to identify the required Notice template. Ingestion will also require the CCMS to receive metadata associated with the Notice record. **Generate Notice:**

In this step the Notice will be generated based on the Notice ID, data, blurbs, edits, blocks, and template needed to create the appropriate Notice, including the appropriate attachments and applications. During the Notice generation the CCMS or developed software is responsible for the conversion of existing/legacy Notices artifacts of Notice ID/Type, Blurbs, and data (see bidders' technical library for details) to newly constructed CCMS Document Templates and Blocks to include other features to replace existing Document/Notices.

2.8.6 Send Notice to Printer(s):

Here the Notice(s) and the appropriate attachments are sent to the district Printer for physical printing. The printed notices are then stuffed in envelopes and mailed.

The CCMS Notice generation also identifies a Print Stream Optimizer for specific printer destinations. This provides the ability to concatenate PDF files to construct a single large print file up to a specified number of pages (currently 100 pages without the last concatenated PDF being segregated/fractured from the collection) as read from a configuration file.

2.8.7 Send Notice to OnBase via the State's Integration Gateway:

During creation of a Notice, an Adobe pdf version (or other format if agreed upon between the State and Contractor) is generated and saved. In this step the electronic Notice and any associated metadata are sent, via the State's Integration Gateway, to the State's OnBase implementation where it will be stored and accessible for viewing. This version of the Notice must be identical to what is sent to the customer and will allow internal staff to view an electronic version of the printed notice. In the future and using a user interface that is yet to be determined, these electronic versions of Notices and other customer communications saved electronically, are expected to be viewable by the customer.

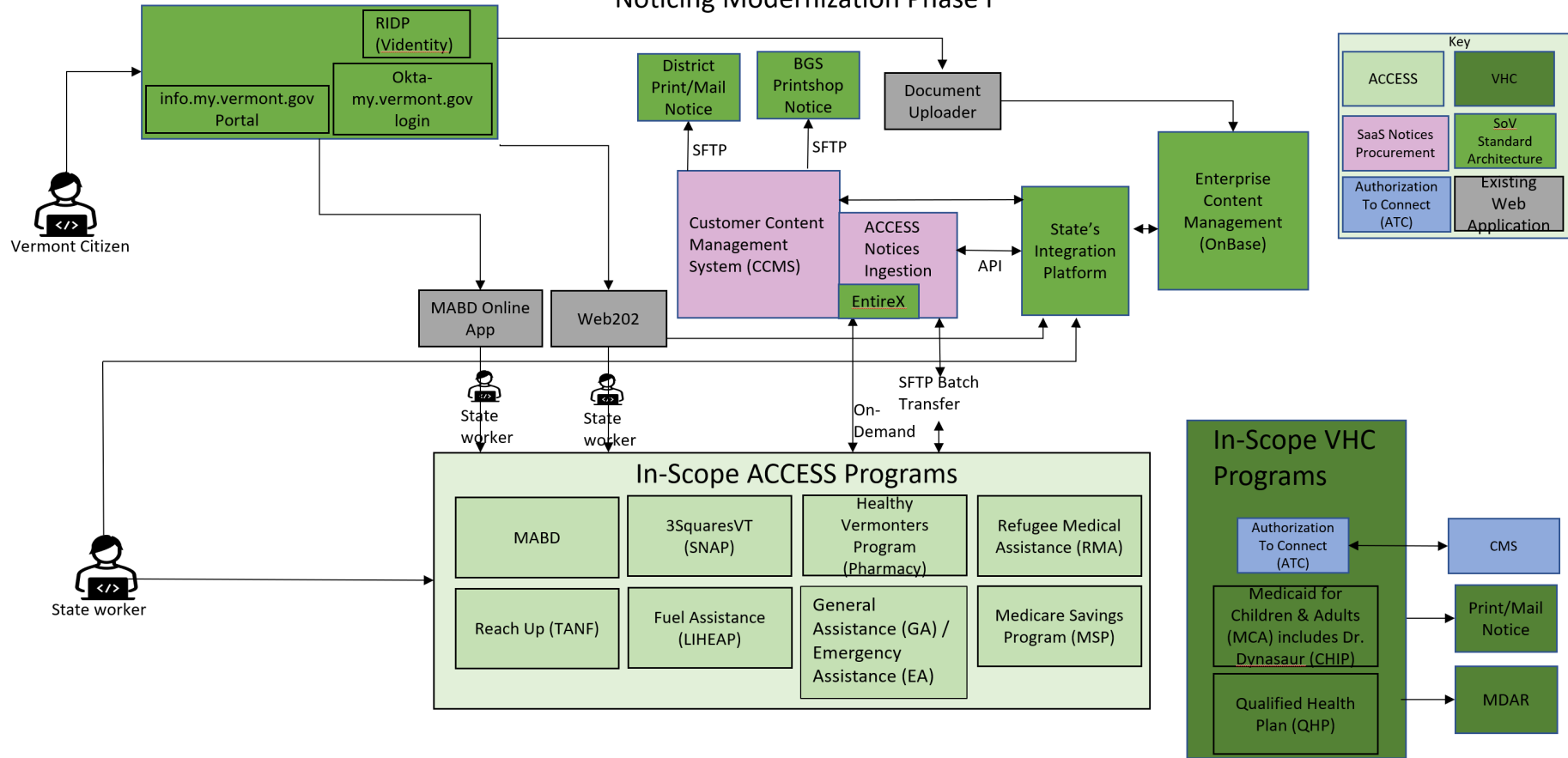
2.8.8 Send Notice Status Acknowledgement:

A Notice status acknowledgement must be sent to the originating ACCESS application. ACCESS uses this acknowledgement to update the Notice status element of the case management system. The intent of this data element is to allow the ACCESS system to be updated with the result of the notices solution for internal State user awareness. Both batch and on-demand request methods rely on an EntireX response to inform ACCESS the Notice request(s) was processed. In the future this Notice status element may be communicated to VT-IES using an API or other communication protocol. See the Bidder's library "Shared Documents" for an example.

2.8.8.1 Future State Notices Diagram:

Below is an anticipated conceptual diagram for the architecture of the Noticing solution.

Noticing Modernization Phase I



2.9 Bidders Library:

The State will include a Bidders Library which is a collection of Exhibits that provide additional technical knowledge and insight into the State’s goals. The exhibits that comprise the Bidders Library summarized in section 2.9.1 It is the responsibility of the Bidder to obtain and review all pertinent information relating to the RFP. The Bidder’s Library is comprised of Exhibits that are provided as attachments issued with this RFP.

2.9.1 Bidders Library Documents:

Topic	Document Name	Description
Existing Noticing Services Documents	Existing IV-A notice processes	Process of the existing notice process. Including Online process, Batch processing, and formatting conditions.
	Notice Browser SS1	Image of an example Notice including searchable fields and results.
	Test ESD Notice Data	Example of current notice construction including example dummy data.
	PATH Notices Server-Side Report	Reference document for current State Diagram found in section 2.5.2
	Test ESD Notice View	Example of fully constructed notice
Vermont ACCESS Notices	Current ACCESS Notices	A list of current ACCESS Notices to be considered as a guideline for Notices being requested for Phase 1. *The State reserves the right to increase or adjust the list during JAD sessions.
Future Phase Vermont Health Connect Noticing Overview Summary Document	VHCGMC Notice Initial Requirements	Provides a high-level overview of our Health Care Notice process. This document is included as an informational document only as this work will be requested in a future phase through a Contract Amendment.

3 DELIVERABLE ACCEPTANCE PROCESS

This section explains the process and documents used by the vendor to submit project deliverables to the State for review, comment on, and acceptance.

3.1 Deliverable submission, review, and approval process:

- 3.1.1** Contractor shall submit each deliverable to the State for review and approval once the Contractor has determined the deliverable is in a final state.
- 3.1.2** The State shall have five business days to review and approve the deliverable, or to provide comments to Contractor if the deliverable is not acceptable.
- 3.1.3** During the five business day period, the State may schedule and conduct a joint walkthrough of the deliverable with Contractor so that Contractor can make real-time updates based on State feedback. At the conclusion of the walkthrough, the goal is to confirm that updates to the deliverable are agreed. State may approve the deliverable after this walkthrough or may provide additional comments during the five business day period.
- 3.1.4** If at the end of the five business day period, the State has neither accepted, nor provided comments on the deliverable, the deliverable may be escalated by the Contractor.
- 3.1.5** If the State provides comments to Contractor on or before the end of the five business day period, Contractor shall have five business days from receipt of State's comments to incorporate comments and resubmit the deliverable to State for review.
- 3.1.6** The State will have an additional five business days to confirm that comments provided have addressed the feedback and approve or disapprove the deliverable. If the State does not approve the deliverable, the Contractor and State shall endeavor to resolve any remaining issues within three business days.

3.2 Deliverable Expectation Document (DED): The Contractor shall complete a Deliverable Expectation Document (DED) for each product deliverable prior to work beginning to ensure a common understanding between the State and the Contractor regarding the scope, content, and structure of the deliverable prior to beginning work. DED's will follow the acceptance process outlined in Section 3.

3.3 Deliverable Acceptance Document (DAD): Upon completion of each deliverable product and deliverable document, the Contractor must submit a Deliverable Acceptance Document (DAD) for State review and approval. The DAD must ensure the requirements of the product deliverable stated in the approved DED were met.

- 3.3.1** Approval of a DAD must be preceded by a thorough walkthrough of the product deliverable by the Contractor as the formal review process of the deliverable with State and Contractor. The State and the Contractor will establish a mutually agreed upon cadence to which the DAD review and approval process will adhere.

3.4 Deliverable Best Practices:

- 3.4.1** Deliverables shall be in English and will utilize any existing State style guide; if the State does not have a style guide the Contractor's style guide will be used instead. Deliverable documents will be written for the intended audience, e.g., user manuals should be written for business users and design documents should be written for

technical staff. There should be no embedded documents. With the exception of security documents, links to related material should point to documents on the State SharePoint site. Deliverables are to be approved based on the acceptance criteria agreed to in the associated DED.

- 3.4.2 Supplemental material, including third-party documents and/or documents created under different contracts, may be provided to direct readers to related information that is not part of the DED criteria in the deliverable.
- 3.4.3 Deliverable documents must include the following components:
 - 3.4.3.1 Title Page – which includes project name, document title, unique document ID, revision number, and issuance date.
 - 3.4.3.2 Revision History – record of changes and who made the changes;
 - 3.4.3.3 Table of Contents – list of major sections in the document (include table of figures if applicable);
 - 3.4.3.4 Objective – the purpose of the document; and
 - 3.4.3.5 Scope – content as defined by the DED.
- 3.4.4 Deliverable documents will not be submitted without first being proofread by the Contractor to help ensure all spelling and grammar errors are fixed. The deliverable documents are to be complete and in a final draft before requesting review from the State.
- 3.4.5 Deliverable documents will be maintained throughout the life of this agreement. If a Change Request or defect causes a modification to the system, any deliverable pertaining to that functionality will be reviewed and updated appropriately. Updates will be made and follow the approval process as if the deliverable document was a newly submitted item.

3.5 Deliverable List and Descriptions

Deliverable Title	Description
Implementation Plan	The Implementation Plan (ImP) is a document that describes how the solution will be developed, deployed, installed, and transitioned into an operational system. The plan contains an overview of the system, implementation strategy, descriptions of the major tasks involved in the implementation, the overall resources needed to support the implementation effort (such as hardware, software, facilities, materials, and personnel), and overall schedule of the implementation effort.

User Training Plan	<p>The User Training Plan (UTP) is a formal document that defines and describes the contractor(s) overall methodology and approach to the development, planning (e.g., annual training schedule), and delivery of user-focused instruction for all system-based and business/process requirements throughout the life cycle of the contract engagement. Additionally, this plan identifies and defines all necessary/critical training materials/modes, user guides, and ancillary materials that the Bidder must construct/develop for user comprehension and retainage of knowledge.</p>
Maintenance & Operations Plan	<p>The Maintenance and Operations Plan (M&O Plan), subject to State review and approval, should identify and define the contractor(s) overall approach to comprehensive system maintenance of the solution. The M&O Plan should also address the contractor(s) approach to making changes to existing functionality and features that are necessary to continue proper system and/or operational services. The plan should include significant detail around all maintenance activities necessary for successful operations, maintenance, and performance of the system, including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) routine maintenance b) data corrections c) executing maintenance, performance, and defect reports d) system maintenance scheduling/communication to State-authorized stakeholders e) root cause analysis f) applying change requirements to software, hardware, or network upgrades g) configuration changes
IEE Noticing Test Plan	<p>The IEE Noticing Test plan will be developed in collaboration with the state to provide in detail the comprehensive testing approach for all project phases and testing levels. Details to include scope of testing (including functional and non-functional requirements), test level descriptions and approach, roles and responsibilities, test cases to be executed, test management, multi-vendor testing approach (where applicable), defect triage and management, requirements traceability, accessibility compliance testing (WCAG 2.2 A, AA), unit testing, system and integration testing, user acceptance testing, regression testing, data migration and validation, pilot testing, test results and reporting.</p> <p>The test plan must describe how all system testing will be conducted to verify that the system complies with all State and Federal/SNAP requirements and system design</p>

	<p>specifications. Vendor must agree to participate and comply with all required State and Federal/SNAP UAT and Pilot testing requirements and milestones.</p>
<p>Business Continuity/Disaster Recovery (BC/DR) Plan</p>	<p>Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery Plan (BC/DR) are a set of processes and techniques used to help the contractor(s) and the State recover from a disaster, specific testing plans/schedules for bringing systems back to operational status, in order for the systems to continue and/or resume routine business operations.</p> <p>The solution contractor(s) will provide, test, update, maintain, and submit, a Business Continuity (BC)/Disaster Recovery (DR) Plan that is aligned to NIST CP-2, current version of NIST-800-53, and current version of MARS-E standards; and meet all Federal and State standards, on an annual basis or more frequently as directed by the State, such as after a major system change that materially affects the DR/BC Plan.</p>
<p>Migration Plan</p>	<p>The Migration Plan (MiP) defines the contractor(s) approach for migrating or converting data and metadata from legacy systems to the new solution. This includes outlining tools, roles, responsibilities, and processes for data migration and conversion.</p>
<p>Formal Acceptance Sign-off</p>	<p>A formal acceptance and sign-off of the final product implemented.</p>
<p>Closeout Plan</p>	<p>The Closeout Plan (COP) is a document that details the contractor(s) approach to contractual/engagement turnover/closeout phase of the complete, or any portion/part, of the solution. The plan provides specification surrounding the necessary processes and analysis required to define timeline, identify necessary resources, construct a Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, Informed (RACI) matrix for all processes/activities, and update/construct documents/artifacts (e.g., manuals, documentation/guide updates) deemed necessary to complete a formal closeout of business with the contractor(s).</p>

Data Management Plan	The Data Management Plan is a comprehensive document that outlines, details, and provides the contractor(s) overall approach to data management and data transition. This document will provide ERDs and visual (e.g., drawings, diagrams, tables).
Interface Control Document	The Interface Control Document (ICD) provides details, the identification for each interface between the CCMS and other infrastructure. This document provides a definition of each source and downstream/subsystem integration points used. The document will contain details such as the source and destination infrastructure, type of data being shared, frequency, communication protocol, dependencies, execution, and re-execution steps needed to complete the transaction(s). The ICD will include both visual (e.g., drawings, diagrams, tables) and textual representation of the underlying interfaces (both implemented/existing and planned). This document supports and expands upon the integration points and interfaces presented in the Business Design / System Design Document (BD/SDD) and aligns with the Data Management Plan document.
System Security Plan (SSP)	<p>The solution contractor(s) will collaborate with the State to provide a System Security Plan (SSP) that, at a minimum, documents, utilizing the MARS-E template, the State's plan to comply with State and Federal Security and Privacy rules, and sufficiently addresses the challenges represented within a multi-Contractor, integrated systems solution. The State must approve the SSP and all associated artifacts, and must conduct audits/evaluations of the Plan established by the Contractor at least annually.</p> <p>The solution contractor(s) will provide , update, maintain, and submit, a System Security Plan that is aligned to NIST, PL-2 current version of NIST-800-53, NIST 800-34, and current version of MARS-E standards; and meet all Federal and State standards, on an annual basis or more frequently as directed by the State, such as after a major system change that materially affects the SSP.</p>
Business Design / System Design Document	The Business Design / System Design Document (BD/SDD) is a document that illustrates and provides the overall technical and business design of the solution. This document provides adequate detail that enables stakeholders to understand how the solution is built and defines all elements of the system solution. It describes and illustrates the system including interfaces, logic, data design.

Incident Response Plan	<p>The Incident Response Plan (IRP) is a document that outlines procedures to detect, respond, and limit the impact of an incident such as data breaches, malware, and compromised accounts.</p> <p>The solution contractor(s) will provide, test, update, maintain, and submit, an Incident Response Plan that is aligned to NIST IR-8, current version of NIST-800-53, NIST 800-34, and current version of MARS-E standards; and meet all Federal and State standards, on an annual basis or more frequently as directed by the State, such as after a major system change that materially affects the IRP.</p>
Performance Management Plan	<p>The Performance Management Plan (PerfMP) is a document that establishes clear contractual (business and system/information technology) performance expectations through which all stakeholders can easily understand what is expected. The State expects the contractor(s) to define and implement a collaborative process and approach to consistently meet and re-evaluate contractual Service Level Agreements (SLAs).</p> <p>The PerfMP will detail how contractor(s) will monitor the resourcing needs of the system including conducting analytics on forecasted demand and growth. Perform regular evaluation to reflect changing needs and circumstances to ensure adequate capacity for systems and services.</p>
Change Management Plan	<p>The Change Management Plan (CMP) is a document that defines the governance (structure and processes) surrounding project/solution change and modifications, while identifying the activities and roles/resources necessary to manage and control change throughout all phases of the contract life cycle. Examples of such changes include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) State rule changes b) infrastructure policy impacts c) corrective or adaptive maintenance
Project Management Alignment	<p>Vendor is responsible for reviewing (providing feedback) and signing off on State of Vermont project management documentation.</p>

Master Schedule	To include tasks, resource allocations, and team coordination. It will also outline key milestones, deadlines, and deliverables. Regular updates and adjustments will be made to adapt to changes in challenges during the project lifecycle.
Status Reporting	Includes weekly documentation and communication of the current progress, achievements, challenges, and upcoming tasks of the project.
Meeting Minutes	Comprehensive records documenting discussions, decisions, and action items from project meetings.

4. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS:

4.1 Pricing: Bidders must price the terms of this solicitation at their best pricing. Any and all costs that Bidder wishes the State to consider must be submitted for consideration.

4.1.1 Prices and/or rates shall remain firm for the initial term of the contract. The pricing policy submitted by Bidder must (i) be clearly structured, accountable, and auditable and (ii) cover the full spectrum of materials and/or services required. The State acknowledges that bidders may use varying methods to derive their pricing proposals to this RFP which may include pricing based on the number of licensed users, the number of Notice requests, CPU usage, a flat rate/fee or other methods. The questions in “Part 8: PRICING” as well as the Pricing table in Part 8 of the Bidder’s Response Form provides an opportunity for the bidder to describe their pricing model and parameters used in their proposal.

4.1.2 Retainage: In the discretion of the State, a contract resulting from this RFP may provide that the State withhold a percentage of the total amount payable for some or all deliverables, such retainage to be payable upon satisfactory completion and State acceptance in accordance with the terms and conditions of the contract.

4.2 Statement of Rights: The State shall have the authority to evaluate Responses and select the Bidder(s) as may be determined to be in the best interest of the State and consistent with the goals and performance requirements outlined in this RFP. The State of Vermont reserves the right to obtain clarification or additional information necessary to properly evaluate a proposal. Failure of bidder to respond to a request for additional information or clarification could result in rejection of that bidder's proposal. To secure a project that is deemed to be in the best interest of the State, the State reserves the right to accept or reject any and all bids, in whole or in part, with or without cause, and to waive technicalities in submissions. The State also reserves the right to make purchases outside of the awarded contracts where it is deemed in the best interest of the State.

4.2.1 Best and Final Offer (BAFO): At any time after submission of Responses and prior to the final selection of Bidder(s) for Contract negotiation or execution, the State may invite Bidder(s) to provide a BAFO. The state reserves the right to request BAFOs from only those Bidders that meet the minimum qualification requirements and/or have not been eliminated from consideration during the evaluation process.

4.2.2 Presentation: An in-person or webinar presentation by the Bidder may be required by the State if it will help the State’s evaluation process. The State will factor information presented during presentations into the evaluation. Bidders will be responsible for all costs associated with providing the presentation.

4.3 Worker Classification Compliance Requirements: In accordance with Section 32 of The Vermont Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Act No. 54), Bidders must comply with the following provisions and requirements.

4.3.1 Self-Reporting: For bid amounts exceeding \$250,000.00, Bidder shall complete the appropriate section in the attached Certificate of Compliance for purposes of self-reporting information relating to past violations, convictions, suspensions, and any other information related to past performance relative to coding and classification of workers. The State is requiring information on any violations that occurred in the previous 12 months.

4.3.2 Subcontractor Reporting: For bid amounts exceeding \$250,000.00, Bidders are hereby notified that upon award of contract, and prior to contract execution, the State shall be provided with a list of all proposed subcontractors and subcontractors’ subcontractors, together with the identity of those subcontractors’ workers compensation insurance providers, and additional required or requested information, as applicable, in accordance with Section 32 of The Vermont Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Act No. 54). This requirement does not apply to subcontractors providing supplies only and no labor to the overall contract or project. This list **MUST** be updated and provided to the State as additional subcontractors are hired. A sample form is available online at <http://bgs.vermont.gov/purchasing-contracting/forms> . The subcontractor reporting form is not required to be submitted with the bid response.

4.4 Method of Award: Awards will be made in the best interest of the State. The State may award one or more contracts and reserves the right to make additional awards to other compliant bidders at any time if such award is deemed to be in the best interest of the State.

4.4.1 Evaluation Criteria: Consideration shall be given to the Bidder’s solution, project approach and methodology, qualifications and experience, ability to provide the services within the defined timeline, cost, and/or success in completing similar projects, as applicable, and to the extent specified below. The following weight factors will be used to evaluate proposals.

Evaluation Factors	Total Points for This Factor
Vendor Profile: Experience, Financial Strength, References (Bidder Response Form Part 1)	5
Vendor Proposal/Solution: Vendor Demonstration/Interview, Functional and Non-Functional Requirements, and ability to meet the State’s requirements (Bidder Response Form Part 2-5 and 9)	65
Maintenance and Operation and Support Services, and Technical Services (Bidder Response Form Part 6 and 7)	15
Pricing: total cost, flexible pricing model, flexible terms, etc. (Bidder Response Form Part 8)	15

Acceptance of State Terms and Conditions	Pass/Fail
Adherence to Mandatory Bidding Requirements	Pass/Fail
Financial Strength	Pass/Fail

4.5 Contract Negotiation: Upon completion of the evaluation process, the State may select one or more bidders with which to negotiate a contract, based on the evaluation findings and other criteria deemed relevant for ensuring that the decision made is in the best interest of the State. In the event the State is not successful in negotiating a contract with a selected bidder, the State reserves the option of negotiating with another bidder, or to end the proposal process entirely.

4.6 Cost of Preparation: Bidder shall be solely responsible for all expenses incurred in the preparation of a response to this RFP and shall be responsible for all expenses associated with any presentations or demonstrations associated with this request and/or any proposals made.

4.7 Contract Terms: The selected bidder(s) will be expected to sign a contract with the State, including the Standard Contract Form and Attachment C as attached to this RFP for reference. If IT Attachment D is included in this RFP, terms may be modified based upon the solution proposed by the Bidder, subject to approval by the Agency of Digital Services.

4.7.1 Business Registration: To be awarded a contract by the State of Vermont a bidder (except an individual doing business in his/her own name) must be registered with the Vermont Secretary of State's office and must obtain a Contractor's Business Account Number issued by the Vermont Department of Taxes <http://tax.vermont.gov/>.

4.7.2 The contract will obligate the bidder to provide the services and/or products identified in its bid, at the prices listed.

4.7.3 Payment Terms: Percentage discounts may be offered for prompt payments of invoices; however, such discounts must be in effect for a period of 30 days or more in order to be considered in making awards.

4.7.4 Vendors are required to submit their actual development hours worked against each APD-funded procurement on a monthly basis,

4.7.5 Quality: If applicable, all products provided under a contract with the State will be new and unused, unless otherwise stated. Factory seconds or remanufactured products will not be accepted unless specifically requested by the purchasing agency. All products provided by the contractor must meet all federal, state, and local standards for quality and safety requirements. Products not meeting these standards will be deemed unacceptable and returned to the contractor for credit at no charge to the State.

4.8 Demonstration: An in-person or webinar demonstration by the Bidder may be required by the State if it will help the State's evaluation process. The State will factor information presented during demonstrations into the evaluation. The Bidder will be responsible for all costs associated with providing the demonstration.

4.9 Independent Review: Certain State information technology projects require independent expert review as described under 3 V.S.A. § 3303(d). Such review, if applicable, will inform the State's decision to award any contract(s) resulting from this RFP.

5. CONTENT AND FORMAT OF RESPONSES: The content and format requirements listed below are the minimum requirements for State evaluation. These requirements are not intended to limit the content of a Bidder's proposal. Bidders may include additional information or offer alternative solutions for the State's consideration. However, the State discourages overly lengthy and costly proposals, and Bidders are advised to include only such information in their response as may be relevant to the requirements of this RFP.

5.1 Cover Letter:

5.1.1 Confidentiality. To the extent your bid contains information you consider to be proprietary and confidential, you must comply with the following requirements concerning the contents of your cover letter and the submission of a redacted copy of your bid (or affected portions thereof).

5.1.2 All responses to this RFP will become part of the contract file and will become a matter of public record under the State's Public Records Act, 1 V.S.A. § 315 et seq. (the "Public Records Act"). If your response must include material that you consider to be proprietary and confidential under the Public Records Act, your cover letter must clearly identify each page or section of your response that you consider proprietary and confidential. Your cover letter must also include a written explanation for each marked section explaining why such material should be considered exempt from public disclosure in the event of a public records request, pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 317(c), including the prospective harm to the competitive position of the bidder if the identified material were to be released. Additionally, you must include a redacted copy of your response for portions that are considered proprietary and confidential. Redactions must be limited so that the reviewer may understand the nature of the information being withheld. It is typically inappropriate to redact entire pages, or to redact the titles/captions of tables and figures. Under no circumstances may your entire response be marked confidential, and the State reserves the right to disqualify responses so marked.

5.1.3 Exceptions to Contract Terms and Conditions. If a Bidder wishes to propose an exception to any terms and conditions set forth in the Standard Contract Form and its attachments, such exceptions must be included in Part 9: Terms and Conditions in the Bidders Response Form. Failure to note exceptions when responding to the RFP will be deemed to be acceptance of the State contract terms and conditions. If exceptions are not noted in the response to this RFP but raised during contract negotiations, the State reserves the right to cancel the negotiation if deemed to be in the best interests of the State. Note that exceptions to contract terms may cause rejection of the proposal.

5.2 Technical Response: In response to this RFP, a Bidder shall:

5.2.1 Provide details concerning your form of business organization, company size and resources.

5.2.2 Describe your capabilities and particular experience relevant to the RFP requirements.

5.2.2.1 Identify all current or past State projects.

5.2.2.2 Identify the names of all subcontractors you intend to use, the portions of the work the subcontractors will perform, and address the background and experience of the subcontractor(s), as per RFP section 4.3.2 above.

5.3 References: References are to be provided as detailed in Part 1: Vendor Profile, of the Bidders Response Form

5.4 Reporting Requirements: Provide a sample of any reporting documentation that may be applicable to the Detailed Requirements of this RFP.

5.5 Price Schedule: Bidders shall submit their pricing information in the Price Schedule in the Bidders Response Form as Part 8: Pricing

5.6 Certificate of Compliance: Part 10 of the Bidders Response Form. This form must be completed and submitted as part of the response for the proposal to be considered valid.

5.7 State of Vermont Bidder Response Form: This form must be completed and submitted as part of the response for the proposal to be considered valid. The State of Vermont Bidder Response Form provides a standard format and content for bidder proposals. When required, this form will prompt Bidders to supply the information required in the above RFP sections 4.3 through 4.7. Note: In addition to completing the State of Vermont Bidder Response Form, Bidders are required to provide the specific attachments that are described within the Bidder Response Form.

6. SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS:

6.1 Closing Date: Bids must be received by the State by the due date specified on the front page of this RFP. Late bids will not be considered.

6.1.1 The State may, for cause, issue an addendum to change the date and/or time when bids are due. If a change is made, the State will inform all bidders by posting at the webpage indicated on the front page of this RFP.

6.1.2 There will not be a public bid opening. However, the State will record the name, city, and state for any and all bids received by the due date. This information will be posted as promptly as possible following the due date online at: <https://bgs.vermont.gov/content/opc-bid-tabulation-sheets-0> Bidders are hereby notified to review the information posted after the bid opening deadline to confirm receipt of bid by the State. Any bidder that submitted a bid, and is not listed on the bid tabulation sheet, shall promptly notify the State Contact listed on the front page of this RFP. Should a bidder fail to notify the State Contact listed on the front page of this RFP within two weeks of posting the bid tabulation sheet, the State shall not be required to consider the bid.

6.2 BID Delivery Instructions:

6.2.1 ELECTRONIC: Only Electronic bids will be accepted.

6.2.2 E-MAIL BIDS. Bids will be accepted via email submission to SOV.ThePathForward@vermont.gov. Bids must consist of a single email with a single, digitally searchable PDF attachment containing all components of the bid. Multiple emails and/or multiple attachments will not be accepted. There is an attachment size limit of 40 MB. It is the Bidder's responsibility to compress the PDF file containing its bid if necessary to meet this size limitation.

6.3 BID Submission Checklist:

6.3.1 Cover Letter

6.3.2 Redacted Technical Response, if applicable

6.3.3 State of Vermont Bidder Response Form and Attachments

- 6.3.4 Technical Response (included in Bidder Response Form)
- 6.3.5 References (included in Bidder Response Form)
- 6.3.6 Price Schedule (included in Bidder Response Form)
- 6.3.7 Certificate of Compliance (**included in Bidder Response Form**)

7. ATTACHMENTS:

- 7.1.1 IE&E Noticing Solution BRF
- 7.1.2 IE&E Noticing Solution BRF Criteria
- 7.1.3 IE&E Noticing Sample Contract with Attachments
- 7.1.4 Existing IV-A notice processes
- 7.1.5 Notice Browser SS1
- 7.1.6 TestESD Notice Data
- 7.1.7 TestESD Notice View
- 7.1.8 Current ACCESS Notices
- 7.1.9 Path Notices Server Side Report
- 7.1.10 VHC GMC Notice Initial Requirements

RFP/PROJECT:
DATE:

SUBCONTRACTOR REPORTING FORM

This form must be completed in its entirety and submitted prior to contract execution and updated as necessary and provided to the State as additional subcontractors are hired.

The Department of Buildings and General Services in accordance with Act 54, Section 32 of the Acts of 2009 and for total project costs exceeding \$250,000.00 requires bidders to comply with the following provisions and requirements.

Contractor is required to provide a list of subcontractors on the job along with lists of subcontractor's subcontractors and by whom those subcontractors are insured for workers' compensation purposes. Include additional pages if necessary. This is not a requirement for subcontractors providing supplies only and no labor to the overall contract or project.

Subcontractor	Insured By		Subcontractor's Sub	Insured By

Date: _____

Name of Company: _____

Contact Name: _____

Address: _____

Title: _____

Phone Number: _____

E-mail: _____

Fax Number: _____

By: _____

Name: _____

Failure to adhere to Act 54, Section 32 of the Acts of 2009 and submit Subcontractor Reporting: Worker Classification Compliance Requirement will constitute non-compliance and may result in cancellation of contract and/or forfeiture of future bidding privileges until resolved.

Send Completed Form to: Office of Purchasing & Contracting
 133 State Street, 5th Floor
 Montpelier, VT 05633-8000