

## **RFP #: 3000010882**

### Questions and Answers

Q1. Whether companies from Outside USA can apply for this?  
(like, from India or Canada)

A1. There is no restriction on the country of origin of proposers. Any qualified company may bid. However, all proposers will be subject to the FNS regulations found at 7 CFR 274.12 and 41 USC 83 Buy American as well as any restriction that may apply to the FNS federal funding for EBT transactions.

Q2. Whether we need to come over there for meetings?

A2. Please refer to Section 2.3.1 of the RFP for in-person meeting requirements regarding the proposer's project manager and Section 2.3.3.1 of the RFP for in-person meeting requirements regarding the proposer's key personnel.

Q3. Can we perform the tasks (related to RFP) outside USA?  
(like, from India or Canada)

A3. All proposers will be subject to the FNS regulations found at 7 CFR 274.12 and 41 USC 83 Buy American as well as any restriction that may apply to the FNS federal funding for EBT transactions.

Q4. Can we submit the proposals via email?

A4. Please see Section 1.4 of the RFP for the answer to this question.

Q5. The Table of Contents in the RFP references section "1.7.1 Pre-proposal Conference", however in the document Section 1.7.1 contains instructions for proposers' inquiries. Can you clarify if Louisiana is holding a pre-proposal conference for this procurement, and if so, provide the details for the conference?

A5. Please disregard the mention of a pre-proposal conference in the Table of Contents. This language is a holdover from a previous draft and should have been deleted. There will not be a pre-proposal conference for this procurement.

Q6. Section 1.41, Proposers' Library, references a Library Access Authorization Form available in Appendix X, Forms and Attachments. However, there isn't an

Appendix for Forms and Attachments. Would you provide the information needed to access the Proposer's Library for this procurement?

A6. Please disregard the mention of the Library Access Authorization Form. This language also should have been deleted from a previous draft of the document. There is no Proposer's Library or Library Access Authorization Form for this procurement.

Q7. We need some input from you on an issue we found in the RFP that needs some clarification prior to Q&A being answered.

1. Proposers' Library: Section 1.41 (Language included below)
  - a. The link provided isn't functional
  - b. The forms to request access aren't included in the RFP
2. Intent to Bid: Section 1.41 (Language included below)
  - a. Intent to Bid form is referenced in 1.41 in relation to the Proposers' Library, but isn't named as a requirement and there is no form included
  - b. This impacts access to Proposers' Library
  - c. We do not know at this point if the state intends to require an umbrella Intent to Bid or if this is a production error

A7. As stated previously, the Proposer's Library language was included in the document in error. It was from a previous draft and should have been deleted. There is no Proposer's Library for this procurement. Also, the Intent to Bid form language also should have been deleted from a previous draft. It was included in the document in error. There is no Intent to Bid form necessary for this procurement.

Q8. Please confirm if the Addendum 2 cover page is to be signed and returned with proposals. If so, please also confirm that the column titled "Extended Amount" should be left blank.

A8. Proposers are required to sign and return the cover page of each addendum however, please place "N/A (see original cover sheet)". The official price quote should only be placed on the original cover sheet of the bid.

Q9. The State references programs added subsequent to award that may be negotiated. What other programs does the State have in mind? (1.1.2 Goals and Objectives Pg. 8)

A9. The State has no other programs in mind at this time. With a 6-year contract with two possible 2-year extensions, the State is just letting the proposer know that any potential future benefit program would be negotiated if/when such a program is added.

Q10. This section clearly requires bidders to provide detailed responses to the specific questions included in sections 1.5.E(1) and 1.5.E(2) as the core part of the technical response. This is further clarified by the evaluation procedures on page 77 that state the evaluation committee will follow the process described in Part 1, Section 1.5. However, the requirements contained in Part II, Scope of Work/Services, are not referenced in these instructions or the description of the evaluation process. Therefore, if Part II is included for information only to describe the detailed specifications bidders are committing to provide if awarded the contract, please confirm that bidders are not to provide detailed responses to each of the items contained in Part II, Scope of Work/Services, and are only to include detailed responses to the questions in section 1.5.E.1 and 1.5. E.2. (1.5, Proposal Format Pg. 14 – 20 And Part II, Scope of Work Pg. 35-76)

A10. The bullet points in Sections 1.5 E.1 and 1.5 E.2 are intended to highlight important items to be addressed within the Approach and Methodology section of the proposal and not to be an exclusive list of items for proposers to address or committee members to score.

Bidders are to provide detailed responses to each item in Part II, Scope of Work/Services and will be scored accordingly. All Sections 1.5 E.1 and 1.5 E.2 are intended to convey is that in responding to Part II, Scope of Work/Services the items mentioned in 1.5 E.1 should be addressed and all items mentioned in 1.5 E.2 must be addressed. If any item in 1.5 E.2 is not addressed, the proposal will be considered non-compliant and therefore will be rejected in total without scoring. In prior procurements proposers have used this section like a legend in which each bullet point is listed and under each one the section of their proposal where the item can be located is listed therefore allowing evaluators to easily find the items.

Regarding the Evaluation Committee's review following the process in Section 1.5, this is simply stating that the committee will review and score the proposal which will contain the following sections: Cover Letter, Table of Contents, Executive Summary, Company Background and Experience, Approach and Methodology, Staff Qualifications, Cost Proposal, Certification Statement, and Outsourcing of Key Controls.

Q11. If detailed responses are to be provided to each specification contained in Part II, Scope of Work/Services, where within the proposal should they be included?

A11. It is expected that the entire proposal will be a response to the items listed in Part II, Scope of Work/Services. Often proposers list our RFP sections then respond with their proposed solution to each section.

Q12. This question asks bidders to define its functional approach to explain how each Task and Service will be performed taking into account project phasing, tools, technologies, project management and quality assurance. Will the State confirm that they intend bidders to include their project management approach that would be used to deliver the technical specifications contained in Part II, Scope of Work/Services, as the answer to this bullet point rather than providing a detailed response to each item contained in Part II? (1.5.E.1, 2nd Bullet Pg. 15)

A12. It would be sufficient to list the Sections within the Approach and Methodology portion of the proposal where the items listed in 1.5 E.1 bullet #2 are addressed.

Q13. Item #2 under the 7<sup>th</sup> bullet of this section references Section 2.6.10 which includes specifications for disaster services. Does the State intend for bidders to provide information related to their system availability and reliability during a disaster situation, or should this item reference system availability and reliability reporting included in Section 2.6.9, Reports? (1.5.E(1) Pg. 15)

A13. The reference should have been 2.6.9 Reports. The intent of item 2 was to have proposers list any reports that deal with availability or reliability of the system that they may have in addition to what was defined in Section 2.6.9 of the RFP.

Q14. Can the State explain how the incumbent is preventing the relocation and/or replacement of government supplied equipment today? (1.5.E(1) Pg. 15)

A14. Currently this is done through the use of unique terminal IDs. Since FNS requires this language in EBT RFPs, the state is curious to know each proposer's solution to this problem.

Q15. Item #7 under the 7<sup>th</sup> bullet of this section references support for Vietnamese callers. Please confirm if Vietnamese support is required for:

- Cardholder ARU
  - Cardholder CSR support
  - Retailer ARU
  - Retailer CSR support
- (1.5.E(1) Pg. 16)

A15. Yes. The three required languages for SNAP in Louisiana are English, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

Q16. What is the current monthly volume of ARU calls and the currently monthly volume of CSR calls for:

- English calls
- Spanish calls

- Vietnamese calls  
(1.5.E(1) Pg.16)

A16. This information is not readily available. The current contract required English and Spanish. FNS has since added Vietnamese to the required list for Louisiana.

Q17. Where is the call center located that currently supports the Louisiana EBT program?

A17. Juarez, Mexico

Q18. The 4<sup>th</sup> bullet in this section requests a solution for non-traditional retailers that do not have access to telephone or electrical services. How are these route retailers, roadside retailers and farmers' markets supported under the current contract? (1.5.E (2) Pg.17)

A18. The current contract went into effect prior to the passage of the last Farm Bill so vouchers or wired terminals are all that the state has to offer these retailers. The state is interested in wireless terminal options for the non-traditional state-supplied retailers.

Q19. Will the State clarify the intent of providing a user role for a database administrator? Typically, only user roles for administrative terminal users and system administrators are provided to the State while any user role related to database administration is reserved for the EBT contractor's resources (1.5.E (2) Pg.17)

A19. The requirement here is for the proposer to define the separate user roles and responsibilities for each area of system security. The state is not mandating that the roles be on the state side. As long as the proposal defines the separate roles and duties, it would be considered compliant and would not be thrown out if one of the roles is strictly for contractor staff. The State reserves the right to request and/or use any of the proposed roles. Please include this information in the proposal.

Q20. Resumes are required for key personnel assigned to various functional areas including "installation". Would the State clarify what "installation" refers to in this section? Does this refer to retailer equipment installation or something else? (1.5.F Pg. 18)

A20. Yes, this is in reference to equipment installation for state-supplied POS devices.

Q21. The last paragraph of this section references “staff qualifications described in Section 1.4.1”. Section 1.4.1 references fiscal soundness, capability and stability to operate an EBT system. Will the State provide the correct section reference for the staff qualifications description required by this paragraph? (1.5.F Pg. 18)

A21. 2.3.1 Key Personnel

Q22. Is the per-card price for disaster cards required in this section referring to vault card stock or individual replacement cards? (1.5.G, 7<sup>th</sup> Bullet Pg. 19)

A22. Vault card stock with manifests. We require manifests with pull-off card numbers for disasters in case we have to go back to paper applications if the DSNAP portal is offline for any reason. The card number labels are then attached to the applications so the information would be available when the system comes back online.

Q 23. Is the per-card price for disaster cards to include overnight delivery for individual replacement cards? (1.5.G, 7<sup>th</sup> Bullet Pg. 19)

A 23. No. Just vault card stock with the associated manifests. In Louisiana, we do all disaster card issuance over-the-counter (OTC) with vault cards and all regular EBT issuance via the mail from the EBT Contractor’s card subcontractor.

Q 24. How many disaster cards have been issued during the current contract term, both vault and individual mail-issuance cards? (1.5.G, 7<sup>th</sup> Bullet Pg. 19)

A24. 450,716 Vault cards. There are no individual mail-issuance disaster cards. We specifically pull all disaster card fees out of the CPCM pricing due to Louisiana’s history of disasters. We realize that proposers would worry about how many potential disaster card issuances could occur over the life of the contract. Therefore, we ask for a per-card price to be billed separately to make the calculation of the CPCM pricing less burdensome for proposers.

Q25. What specific information is to be provided in response to this section with regard to “information regarding the company’s last security audit”? (1.5.J, Outsourcing of Key Controls Pg. 20)

A25. Copies of the company’s last SAS70 or SSAE 18 audit

Q26. Is a letter from our General Counsel confirming company officials' authority to sign on behalf of the company sufficient to meet the requirement for a copy of a corporate resolution granting such authority?

A26. This requirement is intended to assure the state that the correct individual with authority to bind the company is submitting the proposal response. We would accept a notarized copy of any document that would verify the individual's authority to bind company however, it is preferable to receive the corporate resolution because this is part of the packet required by the Office of State Procurement and therefore this document will have to be produced and some point during the process. There must be legal authority to bind the company to the offer made within the proposal.

Q27. When would the State anticipate holding the two separate rounds of presentations? Given the time between the proposal due date and the anticipated announcement of the award encompasses the traditional holidays between November and January, it would be helpful to bidders' key resources to have tentative dates. (1.18, Written or Oral Discussions/ Presentations Pg. 24)

A27. The first round of presentations are tentatively scheduled for the week of December 3-7 for all proposers. The state will schedule approximately two proposers per day during that week. Proposers shall include their first and second choice of date and time to present. If the proposer does not intend to include a presentation, please indicate that in the proposal response. The state will confirm the date and time upon receipt of the proposal.

The second round of presentations, should the state determine that they are necessary, will be held January 3 or 4, 2019. As per section 1.18 these are all to be at the State's discretion and convenience.

Q28. How much time does the State anticipate will be between the first round of presentations and the second? (1.18, Written or Oral Discussions/ Presentations Pg. 24)

A28. Please see response above. Please see section 1.18 as a reminder that the second dates are reserved for the highest ranking proposers.

Q29. This section states that the State reserves the right to make multiple awards. Could the State clarify how it would separate the required services contained in the RFP in a way that would lead to multiple awards? (1.22, Notice of Intent to Award Pg. 26)

A29. The reservation of multiple awards allows the state the opportunity to purchase new or innovative concepts that may be presented within the RFP responses. It is unlikely that the state will exercise this option, however, it is a reservation that is made in order to allow for this option to be exercised and it will be subject to the approval of the Office of State procurement.

Q30. This paragraph explains that an active case is one for which at least one benefit has been deposited during the calendar month. The paragraph also states that billing will not be allowed for cases in a dormant status. However, benefit deposits can be deposited to accounts in a dormant status. Will the State confirm that cases are billable that have received at least one benefit deposit from the State in a given month? (1.26, Payment Pg. 29)

A30. It is the state's intent to pay for a case, by type, that receives at least one deposit per month.

Q31 How often does the State issue benefit deposits to dormant accounts? What was the monthly volume of dormant accounts receiving benefits in the past 12 months? (1.26, Payment Pg. 29)

A31. When Louisiana had "dormant" benefits we held those offline. If the recipient came back and requested a reinstatement we sent the benefit across to the vendor like a new case so they were billed just like any other case receiving at least one deposit per month. It seems that this question is regarding deposits to an account that may be in an inactive status. If so, it is the state's intent to pay for each case, by type, that receives at least one deposit per month. The state is not willing to pay for benefits sitting dormant in a stale or inactive account if there is no deposit for a given month. That is what this language is meant to convey.

Q32. Of the approximately 411,000 current cases, how many are in a dormant status? (1.26, Payment Pg. 29)

A32. That was the active billable case count as of the time the RFP was written. The state has no way to know the number of those that may be inactive at any given time.

Q33. We understand the intent of the State's personnel replacement fee is to prevent proposed staffing from being moved off the project without reason, but Contractors require flexibility to manage their project teams especially given the typically lengthy terms of EBT contracts. Would the State agree to waive this fee in cases of promotion or other internal career moves such as when an employee



accepts a position within another business unit of the company? (1.3, Substitution of Personnel Pg. 32)

A33. This is part of the standard RFP language for the State of Louisiana. As long as the contractor receives prior consent from the state to change out personnel on the contract, it is difficult to envision this becoming an issue. Should an employee become eligible for a promotion or an internal career move, the contractor is required to give the State notice and explain the reason for the transition. No blanket waiver of the replacement fee up front for the life of the contract will be granted. It is expected that these situations would be looked at on an individual basis.

Q34. Section 1.41, Proposers' Library, references a Library Access Authorization Form available in Appendix X, *Forms and Attachments*. However, there isn't an Appendix for Forms and Attachments. Would the State provide the information needed to access the Proposer's Library for this procurement? (1.41, Proposers' Library Pg. 33)

A34. Please refer to A6 above.

Q35. This section states the contract phases will begin after the contract is signed and approved, and no later than July 1, 2019.  
The *Term of Contract* paragraph in Section 1.1.2, states the contract shall begin on July 1, 2020 and end on June 30, 2026.  
Section 2.2, *Period of Agreement*, states the initial term will be six years beginning upon execution of the contract, which we assume to be no later than July 1, 2019 based on Section 2.3.3. Therefore, we interpret this to mean that the initial six-year term would begin in 2019 and end in 2025.  
Will the State confirm the date it expects the contract to be executed (signed), the date the project work is to begin, and the date it anticipates converting to operations with a new vendor?

A35. The structure of the current contract is such that upon award it was agreed that work would begin 12 months prior to the contractor processing EBT transactions for the state. Billing would occur after the EBT contractor began providing EBT services for the Louisiana caseload for at least one month. This meant that the EBT CPCM pricing that started July 1 2010 included all of the transition/conversion costs that the current vendor experienced as of the beginning of the transition on July 1, 2009. The contract that was signed at that time had a begin date of July 1 2010 which allowed that vendor to allocate their costs over the entire 6-year term of the initial contract (July 2010 to June 2016). The termination language in the contract that was negotiated allowed the Contractor to "receive compensation for work satisfactorily completed as of the termination date, which shall be deemed to include work reasonably commenced

by Contractor upon authorization by the State, the un-amortized cost of which the Contractor has not been otherwise reimbursed on a cost-per-case-month (CPCM) basis and contractor shall provide reasonable documentation for such claim". This allowed the incoming EBT Contractor to receive reimbursement if anything were to happen prior to the billing cycle that began with the processing of EBT benefits for the State of Louisiana in July 2010.

The dates in the RFP reflect a similar arrangement, but proposers are free to take exception to the contract terms as specified in Section 1.21.

Q36. The required elements for the acceptance testing include "live field tests". As all Proposers' systems are in production and live field tests are no longer performed, will the State remove this requirement? (2.3.3.2, Development Phase Pg. 39)

A36. This requirement came in from standard FNS language so if FNS is amenable to dropping the requirement from the Acceptance Test Plan, then the State will be as well.

Q37. Please provide a sample of the printed materials provided to cardholders with their card. (2.6.2.2 Card Issuance Pg. 43)

A37. The information that is required to accompany the card must be drafted in accordance with state and federal law and proofing of this text will occur during the implementation phase of the project.

Q38. Are printed materials required to be included in all mailed cards or only replacement cards? (2.6.2.2 Card Issuance Pg. 43)

A38. It is expected that all cards would be provided on a card mailer that contains basic information to the cardholder

Q39. What is the monthly average of expedited card requests? Does the State send expedited card requests via a separate file? (2.6.2.2 Card Issuance Pg. 43)

A39. There are no "expedited card requests". All mailed cards are handled the same way by the Contractor. The contractual requirement for the Contractor is to mail the cards the next business day after receipt of the card request file. We handle the timeframes on the eligibility side. If a case is flagged as "expedited" the request goes across to the EBT vendor that night regardless of whether or not the case has been certified or not.

Q40. With regard to agency-initiated adjustments to benefits already posted to the household account prior to the availability date, what is the monthly average number of such adjustments? (2.6.2.6, Issuance of Benefits Pg. 45)

A40. We have approximately 2 or 3 of these a year. They are rare. We have had to do this for entire files on occasion for special runs during a disaster event. We expect to handle these in the batch interface.

Q41. How does the State make these adjustments currently? (2.6.2.6, Issuance of Benefits Pg. 45)

A41. The individual records are marked as a debit rather than a credit and have one other field that changes in the standard batch file currently. The issuance would just zero out on the EBT system prior to the availability date (the current vendor does not post to AMA until the benefit availability date).

Q42. Is direct deposit functionality a mandatory requirement? (2.6.2.6, Issuance of Benefits Pg. 45)

A42. No.

Q43. How many recipients currently receive their cash benefits via direct deposit? What is the monthly volume over the last 12 months? (2.6.2.11, Direct Deposit Pg. 47)

A43. Zero. We do not do direct deposit currently.

Q44. How are the direct deposit processes handled today for enrolling recipients in direct deposit, collecting their bank account information, and working with banks on the ACH rejection process (2.6.2.11, Direct Deposit Pg. 47)

A44. See A43

Q45 Does the incumbent EBT contractor currently support the direct deposit process? (2.6.2.11, Direct Deposit Pg. 47)

A45. See A43

Q46. Will the State confirm that it will work with the Contractor to obtain reimbursement from FNS on interoperable transactions? (2.6.2.13 Pg. 47)

A46. As stated in the RFP, we expect this cost to be included in the CPCM pricing for the contract.

Q47. How often is the incumbent EBT contractor's representative required to represent the agency in fair hearings, judicial reviews and/or appellate proceedings? (2.6.2.14, Fair Hearing Pg. 47)

A 47. The current project director receives 2 or 3 subpoenas in a given quarter. They are usually adjusted to where he is on standby and does not have to show up for a proceeding. He hasn't actually had to appear at any over the life of the contract so far.

Q48. How often are investigative accounts set up? What is the average monthly volume of new investigative accounts? (2.6.2.15, Program Integrity Pg. 48)

A48. They create about 6 of these a year.

Q49. How is this requirement for route retailers, roadside retailers and farmers' markets different from the requirement in the 4<sup>th</sup> bullet in Section 1.5.E (2)? (2.6.3.6, Alternate Procedure Pg. 51)

A49. It is the same requirement. It was just mentioned in Section 1.5 E (2)

Q50. What viable technical solution supports these retailers today? (2.6.3.6, Alternate Procedures Pg. 51)

A50. Please see A18

Q51. Please provide the amount of unscheduled downtime, minutes and or hours, that the State experienced with the incumbents EBT Authorization Processing System or other named component(s) that eliminated cardholders from redeeming benefits at the point of sale. (2.6.4.3, POS Software Requirements Pg. 54)

A51. There have been multiple downtimes with the current vendor. The State does not have a total hour count over the years readily available.

Q52. This section requires the last four digits of the recipient case number to be included on the POS receipt. FNS regulations require the last four digits of the card number. Would the State confirm this requirement is for the last four digits of the card number, and not the case number? (2.6.4.3, POS Software Requirements Pg. 54)

A52. Yes, this should read card number.

Q53. Would the State confirm that this requirement applies to Exempt EBT-only retailers only? (2.6.4.4 Pg. 55)

A53 Yes, this would only apply to state-supplied terminals.

Q54. Would the State confirm that the last paragraph of this requirement applies to Exempt EBT-only retailers only? (2.6.4.5 Pg. 55)

A54. Yes, this entire section is referring to EBT-only retailers.

Q55. How many FNS certified eligible farmers' markets are in the State and how many wireless POS devices are being supported by the State today in these markets? (2.6.4.5 Pg. 55)

A55. There are 14 markets with zero using wireless POS devices supported by the State.

Q56. How many direct-marketing farmers are FNS certified in the State and how many wireless POS devices does the State support for these farmers? (2.6.4.5 Pg. 55)

A56. None that we are aware of. Zero.

Q57. What is the monthly volume of pay phone calls currently received? (2.6.4.8.A, Retailer Call Center Functional Requirements Pg. 58)

A57. This is unknown. We receive no documentation on this from the current Contractor.

Q58. If callers without an FNS number are routed to a CSR today, how many of the calls are from retailers without their FNS number and how many are from cardholders incorrectly calling the number from the back of their card? (2.6.4.8.A, Retailer Call Center Functional Requirements Pg. 58)

A58. The Customer Service Number for cardholders and the Retailer Help Desk numbers are different so this scenario isn't possible. There are no statistics provided to the state for the number of retailers who don't have their FNS number handy when calling the Retailer Help Desk.

Q59. Will the State modify this requirement to allow the call procedures manual to be provided for review 3 months prior to the conversion, or other mutually agreed upon timeframe? (2.6.4.8.B, Retailer Call Center Operational Requirements Pg. 59)

A59. The State would be open to negotiating a mutually agreed upon timeframe.

Q60. This specification states that performance requirements are to be “consistent with industry standards for customer service.” Please provide the specific industry standards. (2.6.4.8.C., Retailer Call Center Performance Requirements Pg. 59 – 60)

A60. That language is to give the Proposer room to propose other performance standards during contract negotiation. Otherwise, the standards listed in this section will be the default.

Q61. These paragraphs state that performance of the call center will be rated quarterly. As the call center reports are required on a monthly basis, please describe the process that will be used to “rate” the call center on a quarterly basis. (2.6.4.8.C., Retailer Call Center Performance Requirements, 4th Paragraph Pg. 60 And 2.6.7.3, Performance Requirements, 4th Paragraph Pg. 71).

A61. The percentages are averaged across the 3 months of the quarter. If the Proposer would prefer to have these rated monthly, that can be negotiated after contract award.

Q62. Would the State please provide clarification between sections 2.6.5.1 and 2.6.5.4 on how they wish to reimburse the contractor for TANF settlement that is paid to retailers and banks participating in the EBT Project?

In section 2.6.5.1 it states that the contractor will withdraw the State funds for TANF settlement from the Louisiana fiscal intermediary bank account.  
In section 2.6.5.4 it states that Chase bank will wire transfer funds to the contractor’s concentrator bank so that the concentrator bank can provide settlement of the TANF obligations to the retailers and banks participating in the EBT project. (2.6.5.1 Crediting Retailer and Financial Institutions for Redeemed Benefits Pg. 61 and 2.6.5.4 TANF Special Provisions)

A62. The State fiscal intermediary bank account is at Chase Bank currently. It is against Louisiana law for Contractors to draw money out of the State Treasury account directly so Louisiana DCFS uses a zero balance account to fund the

cash draw on any given day. The prior day's drawdown totals will be provided by the Contractor via reports or the administrative terminal (or both) and DCFS will request transfer of funds to cover the daily balance from the Treasury account. Once these funds hit the zero balance account, they will be transferred to the Contractor's settlement account.

Q63. Please confirm that it is the State's intent for CSRs to verify mailing address information, not to make changes to it. Address changes are referred back to the local office to help ensure a secure process for demographic updates. (2.6.7, Client Call Center Pg. 66)

A63. It is the State's intent to have CSR's both verify and change mailing addresses if they are not correct to ensure that replacement card requests received by the contractor go to the correct address for the client. This is how the current system works in Louisiana. All non-DSNAP EBT cards are delivered by the contractor through the mail. Cardholders are never to be referred "to the local office" since Louisiana went to a regional service structure with work distributed electronically around the state to the next available worker. There is no "local office" to refer cardholders to.

Q64. Please clarify what a Settlement and Reconciliation Request is and why one would be needed for a cardholder requesting transaction history information. (2.6.7.1, Client Call Center Services Pg. 69)

A64. This language is just the term one of our EBT contractors over the years used for anything related to disputes or transactions and the term was left in the document. Anything that involved transactions required the submission of a "Settlement and Reconciliation Request" by the CSR in their procedures.

Q65. Please clarify the process to "Complete Settlement and Reconciliation Request" as it applies to reports of unauthorized card usage. (2.6.7.1, Client Call Center Services Pg. 69)

A65. Again, this is just a holdover term. Proposers should insert their term, procedure, process name, etc. and explain how they will perform the service listed in the left hand column of the chart.

Q66. How often does the State intend to change the temporary messages on the cardholder IVR? How many times has this messaging been changed in the current contract term? (2.6.7.2, Operational Requirements Pg. 71)

A66. The state intends to change the temporary message as often as necessary. This provision is for things like disasters, widespread system outages, rumors about government shutdowns, and so forth that drive large call volumes from cardholders. We are simply requiring that the contractor have the ability to quickly add a “scratch message” to the beginning of the call flow when an emergency situation arises.

Q67. What was the volume of retailer and cardholder calls during declared disasters during the current contract term? (2.6.10, Disaster Response Pg. 75)

A67.

<b>09/2012 (Isaac)</b>		<b>03/2016 (Flooding 2016)</b>		<b>08/2016 (Flood Aug)</b>	
Client	3,663,356	Client	2,119,697	Client	2,585,895
Merchant	3,286	Merchant	716	Merchant	1,496
<b>Totals</b>	<b>3,666,642</b>	<b>Totals</b>	<b>2,120,413</b>	<b>Totals</b>	<b>2,587,391</b>

Q68. Please clarify to which sections of 1.5 each of the following sets of points will be aligned:

- a. Proposer Experience, Organizational Strength and Personnel
  - b. Proposed Technical Solution
  - c. Project Management and Schedule of Tasks.
- (3.3, Evaluation Criteria Pg. 77 – 78)

A68. These would align with the Company Background and Experience, Approach and Methodology, Staff Qualifications, and Outsourcing of Key Controls sections of 1.5

Q69. How will the 230 points available for this criterion be allocated across the bulleted questions in Section 1.5.E.1 and 1.5.E.2? (3.3.b, Proposed Technical Solution Pg. 77 – 78)

A69. As previously stated, the points awarded are not limited to the bulleted questions in Sections 1.5.E.1 and 1.5.E.2.

Q70. Will points only be allocated across the bullet questions in Section 1.5.E.2 based on the fact that responses to this section are “required”, while response to bulleted questions in Section 1.5.E.1 are “requested”? (3.3.b, Proposed Technical Solution Pg. 77 – 78)



A70. Points will be allocated based on the responder's overall proposal and are not limited to Section 1.5.E.2 and Section 1.5.E.1. Full or partial points will be awarded to items highlighted in Section 1.5.E.1 based upon the answers provided. If any item in Section 1.5.E.2 is missing, the proposal will be rejected and no scoring will take place.

Q71 Will detailed responses to the technical specifications in Part II, Scope of Work/Services, be scored as part of this criterion, or only answers to the bulleted questions in Section 1.5.E.1 and 1.5.E.2? (3.3.b, Proposed Technical Solution Pg. 77 – 78).

A71. Please refer to A10.

Q72. For what reason, and in what amounts, have liquidated damages been assessed on the incumbent EBT contractor under the current contract term? (Part IV Pg. 80)

A72. Failure to post benefits by 5 AM on the availability date. \$10,000 in damages were assessed (\$5,000 for the SNAP file and \$5,000 for the cash file).

Q73. Item #3 requires bidders to accept the mandatory contract terms and conditions set forth in the RFP. However, Section 1.5.C and Section 1.21 allow for bidders to identify exceptions to contract terms and provide alternative language. Will the State either remove this sentence from the Certification Statement or allow proposers to sign the statement with the caveat of the exceptions they've included in their Executive Summary as allowed by the RFP instructions? (Attachment I, Certification Statement Pg. 83)

A73. Bidders should base their proposals on the mandatory contract terms in the RFP. Any changes to the contract terms can be negotiated post award however, the contractor should be aware that there are certain clauses that will be mandatory as a part of requirements from the Office of State Procurement to contract with the State of Louisiana. Bidders are allowed to identify exceptions to contract terms and provide alternative language, however they will be required to sign the certification statement. Any proposed changes to the contract language would become part of the contract negotiation if awarded. Proposers should not base their pricing upon their preferred contract language as the changes may not be acceptable to the state. Furthermore, be advised that proposals that do not adhere to the RFP requirements and contain all of the signed and executed requirements can be considered non-responsive by the State. Furthermore, the state reserves the right to ensure that any required language from the Office of State Procurement is included within the contract.

Q74. Within Attachment III, bidders are to include an hourly rate for work on any requested Ad Hoc reports. If the State should need any other professional services performed during the contract term, where are bidders to include those hourly rates? (Attachment III, Cost Schedule Pg. 103)

A74. Please see page 104 "hourly rate for preparing ad hoc reports." Please quote rate on that line. All costs other than those listed separately on the Cost Schedule should be included in the monthly CPCM pricing. Any large change orders requested after contract award would require successful negotiation of a contract amendment.

Q75. Under the Cost Schedule column, please define the reference to "price must be less than Base price". Is the base price aligned to the row referencing the 411,399 SNAP cases? (Attachment III, Cost Schedule Pg. 103)

A75. Yes, base price refers to the price for the "Base Caseload" shown on the Cost Schedule.

Q76. Are the Total Calls for Recipient and Total Calls for Merchant the total number of calls coming into the Recipient and Merchant IVRs respectively (Attachment V, Louisiana Call Volume Pg. 105)

A76. Yes

Q77. Is the Calls Handled number a subset of the Total Calls number? (Attachment V, Louisiana Call Volume Pg. 105)

A77. Yes

Q78. Please provide the definition of "Calls Handled." Does this refer to calls actually answered by a CSR? (Attachment V, Louisiana Call Volume Pg. 105)

A78. Yes – not abandoned

Q79. What event occurred in October 2016 that caused the Recipient call volume to spike. (Attachment V, Louisiana Call Volume Pg. 105)

A79. A second round of DSNAP issuances to designated parishes after the August 2016 flooding event.

Q80. Please provide the average number of calls in a month that receive a busy signal. (Attachment V, Louisiana Call Volume Pg. 105)

A80. This information is not readily available to the State.

Q81. Please provide the average number of calls per month transferred from the Recipient IVR and the Merchant IVR to the call center (i.e., calls offered to the call center to be answered). (Attachment V, Louisiana Call Volume Pg. 105)

A81. The information is in the chart in Attachment V (CSR Handled + Abandoned in Transit + Abandoned after 25 sec.)

Q82. Are calls in the "Single Call PIN" column calls that were PIN selection/change calls handled by the IVR? (Attachment V, Louisiana Call Volume Pg. 105)

A82. Yes

Q83. Please provide a recent monthly Call Type report that shows the breakdown of calls by reason (lost/stolen, benefit availability information, PIN change support, etc.) that were handled by CSRs. (Attachment V, Louisiana Call Volume Pg. 105)

A83.



LAEBT Call Center Statistics Report



LAEBT Call Center Statistics Report AU

Q84. Should this section be titled Attachment VII as there is already and Attachment VII which begins on page 120 and includes the State's waiver requests? If so, should the current Attachment VIII, Electronic Vendor Payment Solution, be renamed to Attachment IX? (Attachment VII, Corporate and Government Contract Experience Pg.130 And Attachment VIII, Electronic Vendor Payment Solution Pg. 131)

A84. Yes, this is a typo.

Q85. Is this Attachment required to be completed and returned with the proposal, or is this meant to only be executed by the selected contractor following award? If it is

to be signed and included in the proposal, where in the proposal should it be provided? (Attachment VIII, Electronic Vendor Payment Solution Pg. 131)

A85. This is for the selected contractor after award.

Q86. Please provide copies of billing reports for each of the past 12 months, August 2017 to August 2018, which show the monthly SNAP only, TANF only, and combination SNAP/TANF combined case counts.

A86. Our bill doesn't show combined cases since we pay by benefit type and do not have a different rate for combined cases. See embedded reports below.



EBT Billing  
Reports.zip

Q87. Please provide a copy of the current incumbent contract and all amendments.

A87. Please file a Freedom of Information Act or Public Record request for this information.

Q88. Please provide the current CPCM Cost Schedule for the current contract with the incumbent.

A88. Please see the document below.



Cost Schedule.docx

Q89. Please provide a copy of any Performance Deficiency notices presented to the incumbent.

A89. Please file a Freedom of Information Act or Public Record request for this information.

Q90. The instructions indicate that Proposers should include any exceptions and /or contract language modifications within their Executive Summary. How will such items be accounted for in the evaluation? (1.5.C, Pg. 14)

A90. Please refer to A73

Q91. Will any recommended contract language modifications or requests to discuss and/or negotiate items negatively impact a Proposer's evaluation score? (1.5.C, Pg. 14)

A91. Please refer to A73.

Q92. Annual reports, which include the required financial information, are lengthy documents. May Proposers include their annual report on a flash drive or provide the URL for its annual report in response to this requirement? (1.5.D, Pg. 14)

A 92. Please refer to Sections 1.4 and 1.5.1 for the proposal submission requirements.

Q93. Please confirm if an active Able-bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD) waiver is in place today, and if so, when does it expire?

A93. Yes, Louisiana has an ABAWD waiver in place that expires August 2019.

Q94. What percentage of the current active case volume do the ABAWD cases represent?

A94. As of the August 2018 billing counts, approximately 13% of SNAP cases.

Q95. Is it appropriate for proposers to include signed addenda with the Transmittal Letter?

A95. Please refer to A8.

Q96. Given the length of our audited financial statements (more than 200 pages), may Bidders provide these documents in electronic format only? (D, Company Background and Experience)

A96. Please refer to A92.

Q97. Typically cost proposals are submitted under separate cover from the technical proposal. Would the State please confirm that the Cost Proposal should be separate from the Technical Proposal? Would the State also confirm the

required number of copies of the Cost Proposal needed for submission? (Part I 1.5. G)

A97. Yes, please provide the cost proposals under separate cover. Please provide the same number of cost proposals as technical proposals.

Q98. Is it acceptable for proposers to include RFP Sections 1.5.I, Certification Statement and 1.5.J, Outsourcing of Key Controls in a section marked "Additional Required Material" at the end of our technical proposal? (Part I 1.5.I and 1.5.J)

A98. Please refer to A10 for the explanation of the overall proposal structure. We expect this information to be included in the Technical Proposal. Please label the Sections "Certification Statement" and "Outsourcing of Key Controls" for clarity.

Q99. Would the State modify the language in the requirement as follows: "If so requested, the Contractor shall make copies of insurance policies available for review at an agreed upon time and place ~~also submit copies of insurance policies~~ for inspection and approval of the State of Louisiana before work is commenced?" (Sec. 1.24).

A99. No, this language is standard for the State of Louisiana and DCFS does not have authority to waive this language without approval of the Office of State Procurement.

Q100. Would the State modify the language of the requirement as follows: "The Contractor shall maintain during the life of the contract, Automobile Liability Insurance in an amount not less than combined single limits of \$1,000,000 per accident ~~occurrence~~ for bodily injury/property damage?" (Sec. 1.24).

A100. No, this language is standard for the State of Louisiana and DCFS does not have authority to waive this language without approval of the Office of State Procurement.

Q101. Would the State modify the language of the requirement as follows: "Insurance shall be placed with insurers with an A.M. Best's rating of no less than A-VII." (Sec. 1.24).

A101. No, this language is standard for the State of Louisiana and DCFS does not have authority to waive this language without approval of the Office of State Procurement.

Q102. It is our understanding that SSAE 16 SOC 1 or 2 has been replaced by SSAE 18 SOC 1 and/or 2. Would the State please confirm one way or the other? If this is not the case, there seems to be an inconsistency between the RFP language and the Sample contract. RFP Sec. 1.40 (p. 32) calls for SSAE 18 SOC 1 and/or 2. Sample Contract Sec. 20 (p. 99) calls for SSAE 16 SOC 1 or 2. Would the state please correct which language takes precedent? (Part I, 1.40 and Sample Contract Sec. 20)

A102. Yes, the requirement is for the SSAE 18 SOC 1 and/or 2. The sample contract is basically a version of the current contract with all of the new state boilerplate language added and the reference to the SSAE 16 SOC 1 or 2 was not updated as it should have been.

Q103. Link is not functional. Will the state please advise on how to best access the Proposers' Library? (Part I, 1.41)

A103. Please refer to A6 and A7.

Q104. Appendix X is not included in the RFP. Will the state please advise on how to best access the Proposers' Library Contents and Links? (Part I, 1.41)

A104. Please refer to A6 and A7.

Q105. Appendix X is not included in the RFP. Will the state please advise on how to best access the Proposers' Library Access Authorization Form and Confidentiality Statement? (Part I, 1.41)

A105. Please refer to A6 and A7.

Q106. Intent to Bid (Form #X) is not included in the RFP. Will the state please advise on how to best access Intent to Bid (Form #X)? (Part I, 1.41)

A106. Please refer to A6 and A7

Q107. Would the State please confirm which deliverables and plans are due with the proposal? Would you please provide due dates for those deliverables not due with the proposal? (2.4)

A107. These are all contract deliverables and are not expected to be part of the proposal. Due dates are to be discussed and mutually agreed upon during the Design Phase as mentioned in Section 2.3.3.1.

Q108. The section numbers here jump from 2.4 to 2.6. Does the State intend to add a 2.5 or should vendors keep numbering as is? (Part II 2.4 and 2.6)

A108. This is a continuity error that occurred during late revisions of the document. Please keep the numbering as it is to make it easier for the evaluation team to link the proposal sections back to the RFP requirements.

Q109. How many FNS authorized route retailers, roadside retailers, and farmer's markets do not have access to POS devices today? (Part II, 2.6.3.6)

A109. This data is not readily available to the State. Under the current contract, the State cannot offer anything but vouchers or wired terminals. The state is seeking a wireless POS solution for locations such as Farmer's Markets that qualify for state-supplied POS equipment.

Q110. Would the State allow its chosen contractor to withdraw (ACH) CASH/TANF funds for funding Cash/TANF transactions from a state-owned bank account, as opposed to the state sending these funds via wire transfer? There are benefits to the State, including eliminating the wire cost to transfer the funds; eliminating any errors as the ACH draw that does the "pull" is done systematically, not manually; eliminates possible non-funding by the State for unexpected state employee absences and/or the weather; and the State still retains complete accountability and has access to reports via an Administrative Terminal to balance.

While contractors prefer "pulling" the funds and we ask that this be approved, there are two sections where this is discussed in the RFP but they appear to contradict each other and it is unclear on how CASH/TANF is to be funded.

The RFP States in section 2.6.5.1 "The contractor will also withdraw the state funds from the Louisiana fiscal intermediary bank for settlement of cash transactions made that day." In section 2.6.5.4, however, it states "Chase Bank will wire transfer funds to the contractor's concentrator bank so that the concentrator bank can provide settlement of the TANF obligations to the retailers and banks participating in the EBT project." (Part II, 2.6.5.1, 2.6.5.4)

A110. Please refer to A62.

Q111. Would the State confirm that this Attachment needs to be completed and included in our proposal response? If yes, where in the proposal should it be included? (Attachment VIII)

A111. Please refer to A85.



Q112. Does proposer need to include Attachment VII for each subcontractor? Are copies of certified audits required for subcontractors? (1.5 D - Company Background and Experience (page 15))

A112. Yes, this information should be provided for all subcontractors as well. If the information cannot be obtained in time for proposal submission, the total amount of information obtained should be provided along with the following statement, "The proposer was unable to obtain all of the documents at the time of submission and will provide them in contract negotiation. The State reserves the right to approve any subcontractor. Unless the consent or approval specifically provides otherwise, neither consent to review the proposal or contract award shall shift the liability of said subcontractor's financial viability or costs to the state nor does this relieve the prime contractor of any responsibility of performing this contract. The prime contractor assumes all liability as to the subcontractor's financial viability to perform the contract."

Q113. Can the State please identify the functional areas of expertise of members making up the evaluation committee? (Part III: Evaluation, 3.1 Evaluation Committee)

A113. SNAP and/or TANF program policy, EBT/EFT systems/policy, applications programming, state's technical infrastructure, and Louisiana procurement law and procedures.

Q114. Given that H. is not applicable to this RFP, should proposer omit H. from the proposal and go from G to I? Or, how does the state wish to see the organization of the RFP in light of this non-applicable item? (1.5 H. Veteran-Owned and Service-Connected Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Entrepreneurships (Veteran Initiative) and Louisiana Initiative for Small Entrepreneurships (Hudson Initiative) Programs Participation)

A114. That is part of the standard RFP template which is why the section is listed. Please just mark section H as N/A or something similar so that the sections will mirror the RFP and information will be easier for the review team to find in the proposal.

Q115. Please confirm that if a corrected report/file is submitted within 5 working days (or other mutually agreed upon period), no damages will be assessed? (4.2 Performance Measurement/Evaluation, Reports/Files)

A115. This is correct. The intent is to allow the contractor the chance to correct the issue.

Q116. For a daily report missing for 6 days, please show the calculation for assessing damages. (4.2 Performance Measurement/Evaluation, Reports/Files).

A116. If the contractor has been notified by the state that a report is missing, and both parties agreed upon a 5-day cure period AND the contractor still has not provided the required report, \$500 would be assessed on day 6 and again on day 7 and so forth until the report is provided. The intent is to work with the Contractor to avoid damages in this situation. We have never had to assess damages over a report in the three EBT contracts Louisiana has had so far.

Q117. This section does not indicate where the Proposer includes responses to Part II: SCOPE OF WORK/SERVICES. Should we include this information in 1.5 E. Approach and Methodology? (1.5 Proposal Format)

A117. Please refer to A10 and A11.

Q118. Does this mean the Call Center will be able to update Client addresses per the Client's request? (2.6.7)

A118. Yes, the mailing address only may be updated. This is to facilitate replacement cards being mailed to the cardholder at the correct address. The Contractor issues all regular (non-DSNAP) cards via the mail.

Q119. Can the State please explain what "via the internet" is referring to. (2.6.7.1)

A119. Any method other than an IVR or similar call-based technology. A customer website, a smartphone app, etc. is all this is referring to.

Q120. Please share the incumbent provider's history of non-performance resulting in a formal notification, notice of contract default, or deficiencies in service in the current contract period.

A120. Please refer to A72.

Q121. Please provide the EBT Call Center statistics for CSR handled calls by language.

A121. Please refer to A16.

Q122. Of the active EBT cards in Louisiana, can the agency provide the number of cards that have both SNAP and Cash benefits?

A122.

YEAR	MONTH	UNIQUE_CASES
2017	8	4965
2017	9	5079
2017	10	5175
2017	11	5306
2017	12	5414
2018	1	5349
2018	2	5356
2018	3	5362
2018	4	5200
2018	5	5172
2018	6	4968
2018	7	4835
2018	8	4803

Q123. Please provide current interface file specification for case maintenance file, benefit file & etc. This will help us to understand any State specific business rules and customizations required to establish interface with the State (2.6.6 Interface Requirements)

A123. The State is in the middle of a transition from a mainframe-based eligibility system to a server-based Integrated Eligibility system. DCFS does not want to maintain its currently file formats and Connect:Direct connectivity. The desire is to modernize our interface. Having noted that, the State has a rather simple interface. We use an implied update protocol on demographic data meaning that if any one element associated to a case ID changes, we send all data fields across to the EBT contractor to be updated. We currently activate both the cash and SNAP account types upon adding of a new case to the system to eliminate all of the triggering necessary to do it by benefit type. We are a one card per household state so there is no complicated interface to deal with Authorized Representative cards or anything like that. It is expected that upon contract award, the incoming EBT vendor will participate in Joint Application Design (JAD) sessions with the State's IE vendor to design the most efficient interface between the two systems.

Q124. Is 365 days of inactivity applicable to both SNAP & Cash benefit expungement? Please share if expungement period for SNAP and Cash benefits are different. (2.6.2.9 Stale or Dormant Benefits).

A124. Yes, this applies to all benefit types except DSNAP. DSNAP benefits are to expunge after 365 days on the system regardless of account inactivity. These will be separate cases and accounts from the normal EBT accounts so they should be easily identifiable on the EBT Contractor's system.

Q125. Please share the Agency's desired format for the reports. Is PDF & CSV format acceptable? (2.6.9 Reports).

A125. CSV would be the preferred format for reports received via the interface from the EBT Contractor.

Q126. Please provide the statistics for the number of TANF POS cash withdrawal transactions monthly over the last 12-month period.

A126.

YEAR	MONTH	UNIQUE_CASES	SUM_AMT
2017	8	5486	\$1,581,826.32
2017	9	5595	\$1,602,017.51
2017	10	5756	\$1,661,056.56
2017	11	5831	\$1,678,435.32
2017	12	5925	\$1,696,703.47
2018	1	5913	\$1,672,734.84
2018	2	5890	\$1,682,353.82
2018	3	5881	\$1,681,703.55
2018	4	5776	\$1,649,384.22
2018	5	5730	\$1,661,512.59
2018	6	5499	\$1,604,410.57
2018	7	5361	\$1,579,580.02
2018	8	5333	\$1,591,749.89

Q127. Please provide the annual number of state-deployed terminals over the past 6 years.

A127. The State is declining to provide this information because it would be misleading to bidders. The period requested would pull in data from before the 2014 Farm Bill which drastically reduced the number of retailers who qualified for state-supplied POS equipment. Prior to 2014, the state's EBT contractor was

obligated to supply POS equipment to thousands of retailers around the state. With the changes in the 2014 Farm Bill, the number has remained less than 100 retailers statewide at any given point in time since the change went into effect.

Q128. Please provide how many of these POS devices have external pin pads.

A128. Because Louisiana DCFS does not have a separate contract cost per POS device, we do not collect statistics on individual terminals issued to retailers. Therefore, the agency does not have the requested data readily available to report.

Q129. Please confirm that the cost of these terminals should be included in the CPCM.

A129. Yes, all costs not otherwise specified on the Cost Schedule in Attachment III should be included in the CPCM pricing.

Q130. How will the State reimburse the Contractor for state-deployed POS terminals and associated maintenance costs?

A130. The Contractor will be reimbursed for all costs not otherwise specified on the Cost Schedule in Attachment III through the monthly CPCM pricing. The proposer should figure these costs into the CPCM pricing included in their proposal. There is no separate line item for those costs and therefore they should be calculated into the CPCM pricing.

Q131. Please provide the statistics for the number of households that had both SNAP and CASH on the same card over the last 12-month period.

A131. Please refer to A122 for this information.

Q132. Consistent with industry practice, please confirm the Contractor can assess both the SNAP and CASH CPCM fee for households with both SNAP and TANF on the same card?

A132. Yes, this is the State's expectation.

Q133. Please provide a breakdown by English, Spanish, and Vietnamese for both the ARU/IVR for the following call center metrics:

Number of calls  
Average handle time

Average talk time  
Average seconds answered

A133. Please refer to A16.

- Q134. 1) How many retailers currently have redemptions under \$100 per month?  
2) Does the current EBT provider offer an electronic solution, and if so, what is that solution?  
3) Current FNS rules allow for manual vouchers for retailers that have redemption volumes under \$100 per month. Is the State prohibiting the use of manual vouchers for these retailers?

A134.

1)

Year Month	Unique LA Stores
201708	45
201709	36
201710	40
201711	35
201712	45
201801	57
201802	40
201803	29
201804	38
201805	37
201806	52
201807	63
201808	58

2) No.

3) The State is not prohibiting the use of manual vouchers for these retailers. We are looking for wireless POS devices though for Farmer's Markets. Some of our markets are small and may not redeem more than \$100 every month. We would not want a Farmer's Market to lose their terminal unless they consistently redeem under \$100 a month for several consecutive months.

Q135. Please provide the current call center performance standards and how the incumbent vendor has performed against those standards.

A135. The current contract performance standards are the same as the standards listed in the RFP and the sample contract. We have never had to assess damages against the current contractor.

Q136. 1) Please describe the current Contractor's solution for route retailers, roadside retailers and farmer's markets.  
2) Please provide the annual number of these retailers over the past 6 years.  
3) If the current contractor's solution is POS devices, are these included in the 60 POS devices deployed by the State count as referenced in RFP Section 1.1 Background?

A136. 1) Vouchers and wired POS terminals  
2) Please refer to A127 and A134  
3) The Farmer's Markets would be in that count, but not the route or roadside retailers.

Q137. Consistent with industry practice, please confirm the Project Manager can attend these meetings remotely?

A137. It is acceptable that the Project Manager attend the required quarterly meetings remotely.

Q138. Please provide the current interface specifications for the FAMIS system (i.e. Case Maintenance file, Issuance files, expected response files)?

A138. Please refer to A123.

The state currently sends the following files daily (and receives return files for each):

- Demographic files (new and changes) x2 each day
- Same-day-available benefit files (SNAP and cash) x2 each day (so 4 files in total)
- Next-day-available benefit files (SNAP and cash) once a day

The state currently sends the following files monthly (and receives return files for each):

- Monthly ongoing issuance file (SNAP and cash). These are sent on the second-to-last business day of the month.

The state currently sends the following files daily during a DSNAP response (and receives return files for each):

- Disaster demographic file
- Disaster benefit file

Incoming files from the EBT Contractor each day include:

- Report file – all of the vendor EBT reports

- Daily Activity File – all transactions for the prior financial day

Q139. Please provide statistics for the Card New Issuance data monthly over the last 12-month period by program.

A139. The State does not have this information readily available. We are providing what is available below:

YEAR	MONTH	Card Count	
2018	7	27933	
2018	8	34747	

Q140. Please provide the statistics for the number of expedited EBT cards sent per month over the last 12-month period.

A140. Please refer to A39.

Q141. Please confirm that replacement cards are to be issued in an inactive status and will require that a new PIN is selected.

A141. This is true for regular EBT cards. The DSNAP vault cards are active and pre-pinned (digits 12-15 of the card number). \*This is due to lessons learned during the Hurricane Katrina response when most phone calls resulted in an “all circuits are busy” message for weeks after the event.

Q142. Please confirm that the Contractor's system will generate card numbers (PANs)

A142. Yes, this is correct.

Q143. 1) How many expedited cards are issued per month?  
2) How are these cards delivered to cardholders for both SNAP and TANF cards?

A143. Please refer to A39.

Q144. Please provide statistics for the Card Replacement data monthly over the last 12-month period by program.

A144. Please refer to A139.



Q145. Please provide the statistics for the number of Cash Access fees monthly over the last 12-month period.

A145. This information is not readily available to the State. The goal stated in the RFP of recipients not being assessed more than \$2 per transaction to access cash benefits is a goal and not a requirement.

Q146. 1) If the contractor opts to offer direct deposit, then the recipient provides banking information to the contractor to set up direct deposit. Please clarify what 'negotiations' are needed with the recipient for direct deposit?  
2) Please provide the statistics for the volume of Direct Deposits monthly over the last 12-month period?

A 146. 1) This is simply stating that all communication about bank account numbers and preference for direct deposit would be between the Contractor and the recipient. The State has no way to capture this information.  
2) Zero. We do not currently do Direct Deposit for cash benefits that are on the EBT cards.

Q147. Please provide the statistics for the number of SNAP POS transactions monthly over the last 12-month period.

A147. For all Tran type 300 series:

YEAR	MONTH	Tran_Count
2017	8	4,597,211
2017	9	4,556,349
2017	10	4,671,795
2017	11	4,582,633
2017	12	4,529,674
2018	1	4,348,412
2018	2	4,110,413
2018	3	4,476,302
2018	4	4,376,487
2018	5	4,552,851
2018	6	4,430,680
2018	7	4,514,814
2018	8	4,313,687

Q148. Please provide the statistics for the number of SNAP balance inquires monthly over the last 12-month period.

A148. For all POS balance inquiries:

YEAR	MONTH	Tran_Count
2017	8	12,897
2017	9	12,568
2017	10	13,282
2017	11	12,783
2017	12	12,843
2018	1	12,811
2018	2	11,640
2018	3	11,585
2018	4	11,833
2018	5	12,752
2018	6	12,841
2018	7	13,118
2018	8	12,771

Q149. Please provide the statistics for the number of TANF ATM balance inquires monthly over the last 12-month period.

A149. This data is not readily available to the State.

Q150. Please provide the statistics for the number of TANF ATM withdrawal transactions monthly over the last 12-month period.

A150.

YEAR	MONTH	Tran_Count
2017	8	7,467
2017	9	7,802
2017	10	8,179
2017	11	8,169
2017	12	8,158
2018	1	8,488
2018	2	8,142
2018	3	8,006
2018	4	8,138
2018	5	8,159
2018	6	7,724
2018	7	7,584

2018	8	7,481
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Q151. Please provide the statistics for the number of TANF POS transactions monthly over the last 12-month period.

A151.

YEAR	MONTH	Tran_Count
2017	8	19,729
2017	9	20,011
2017	10	20,946
2017	11	20,927
2017	12	21,306
2018	1	20,372
2018	2	19,914
2018	3	20,964
2018	4	20,566
2018	5	20,678
2018	6	19,724
2018	7	20,051
2018	8	19,371

Q152. Please provide the statistics for the number of TANF POS cash withdrawal transactions monthly over the last 12-month period.

A152.

YEAR	MONTH	Tran_Count
2017	8	556
2017	9	537
2017	10	553
2017	11	510
2017	12	539
2018	1	497
2018	2	546
2018	3	473
2018	4	501
2018	5	443
2018	6	438
2018	7	520
2018	8	456

Q153. 1)Please provide examples of messages sent through the POS devices.  
2)With only 60 EBT-only retailers, what is the goal of having POS messages when the majority of retailers are commercial and do not have messaging capabilities.

A153. This requirement was left in the document from a prior draft and should not have been included. We have not used this functionality since the implementation of the 2014 Farm Bill.

Q154. Please provide the number of retailers where the current Contractor is supplying telephone services.

A154. This information is not readily available to the State.

Q155. In section 1.5.E bullet 7 section 7, the RFP states, "For both Retailer and Client Call Centers, the Proposer shall provide services in English, Vietnamese and Spanish for the ARU/IVR, and may offer services in additional languages if offered at no additional cost to the agency." However, in section 2.6.4.8.A the RFP states, "Call center services, whether obtained through the ARU/IVR unit or from a CSR, shall be available in English and Spanish." Will the State confirm which languages the ARU/IVR and CSR need to be provided at no additional cost?

A155. The requirement is for English, Spanish, and Vietnamese. The State will not pay for other languages unless it asks the contractor to provide another language at the cost listed on Attachment III: Cost Schedule during the life of the contract. If a bidder offers more than the three required languages in the proposal, they must be at no additional cost to the State than would be charged for the three required languages.

Q156. Please clarify the answer rate of "An average of eighty-five percent of calls answered within 4 rings measured over a three-month period. 'Four rings' is defined as 25 seconds. The remaining ten percent of calls to be answered in 60 seconds" as this does not add to 100%.

A156. Please refer to 1.2.2.10 in the sample contract (Attachment II). The remaining 5% are the allowed number of calls to receive a busy signal (after the first 400 calls per month).

Q157. The RFP states that cards are issued through the mail, please clarify why the call center is referring callers to the local office?

A157. This is holdover language from an earlier draft of the document when we did not allow Contractor staff to replace cards. This has now changed. We would now expect card replacements to be handled by the EBT Contractor. If an issue were to prevent the Contractor from issuing the replacement card, we would expect the caller to be directed to the agency's Customer Service number (1-888-LAHELPU).

Q158. 1) Does the base caseload volume tier apply from 411,399 SNAP cases to 472,999 SNAP cases?  
2) Then the '15% above base' applies from 473,000 cases to 534,999 cases?  
3) Similarly, the '15% below base' would apply from 350,000 SNAP cases to 411,398 SNAP cases?

A158. 1) Yes  
2) Yes  
3) Yes

Q159. Where should the Contractor provide pricing for optional services?

A159. Please refer to A74.