

STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA
OFFICE OF PROCUREMENT MANAGEMENT
523 EAST CAPITOL AVENUE
PIERRE, SOUTH DAKOTA 57501-3182

SNAP Employment & Training Third Party Partnerships

PROPOSALS ARE DUE NO LATER THAN JULY 3, 2024 by 5PM CST

RFP10942

BUYER:
Division of Economic Assistance

POC: Kirsten Blachford
Kirsten.Blachford@state.sd.us

READ CAREFULLY

FIRM NAME: _____ AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE: _____
(Digital Signature allowed)

ADDRESS: _____ TYPE OR PRINT NAME: _____

CITY/STATE: _____ TELEPHONE NO: _____

ZIP (9 DIGIT): _____ FAX NO: _____

FEDERAL TAX ID#: _____ E-MAIL: _____

PRIMARY CONTACT INFORMATION

CONTACT NAME: _____ TELEPHONE NO: _____

FAX NO: _____ E-MAIL: _____

1.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1 **PURPOSE OF REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)**

South Dakota is seeking to identify and contract with agencies that are interested in providing Employment and Training services to SNAP participants. The goal is to develop partnerships with agencies and reimburse agencies for providing Employment and Training services to SNAP customers.

- **Background:** The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) has regulations that certain participants must work with an Employment and Training (E&T) program to receive food assistance benefits. The requirements are centered around providing SNAP participants opportunities to gain skills, education, training, work, or experience that will increase their ability to obtain gainful, unsubsidized employment and meet state or local workforce needs. In South Dakota, these requirements and the E&T program are named South Dakota Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Employment and Training (SNAP E&T). SNAP E&T is a state-administered program administered by the Department of Social Services (DSS).
- The SNAP E&T program is currently available to participants in three counties: Minnehaha, Pennington, and Yankton counties and Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWDs) statewide.

Minnehaha and Pennington Counties: Individuals 18 to 21 years old, who are the head of household, who live in Minnehaha or Pennington counties, and who are not otherwise exempt will be referred to SNAP E&T from DSS. This includes ABAWD and non-ABAWD participants.

Yankton County: All individuals in Yankton County can choose to take advantage of the opportunities available with SNAP E&T regardless of age, exemption, or ABAWD status.

ABAWDs Statewide: Any ABAWD statewide can participate in SNAP E&T. ABAWDs have specific requirements that must be met to continue to receive SNAP benefits.

- **Opportunity Overview:** SNAP E&T can partner with eligible agencies to provide employment and training services, potentially expanding services that are available to SNAP participants. These partnerships are referred to as "Third Party Partnerships (TPP)." The goal of a TPP is to leverage existing employment and training expertise in the community that will provide meaningful, intentional opportunities for SNAP participants to move towards career pathways to achieve self-sufficiency with living-wage employment. Implementing a network of TPP's will promote the growth, expansion, and sustainability of needed services and programs for SNAP participants in South Dakota.

TPP partnerships allow for support of agencies that are currently providing services to SNAP participants by reimbursing them for those services. Federally, a TPP can receive 50% reimbursement on allowable training services. Additionally, a State can withhold a portion of the 50% federal reimbursement to pay for administrative costs incurred.

There are four principal goals for a TPP to better help the outcomes of E&T participants:

- Provide specialized services for SNAP E&T participants.
 - Which specialized services?
 - How and why are services considered specialized?
 - How many participants will your agency serve?
- Increase employment readiness for SNAP E&T participants.
 - How will your agency specifically increase employment readiness?
 - Through which activities/services?
 - How many participants will be served?

- Increase employment outcomes for SNAP E&T participants, particularly to quality employment.
 - How will your agency specifically increase employment outcomes?
 - How will you work towards finding and securing quality employment for clients?
 - How many participants will be served?
- Offer credentials for SNAP E&T participants so that the participant can find quality employment.
 - Which credentials will you offer or what type of training will you provide (name, length, purpose, type, etc.)?
 - How long will those credentials/training lead to quality employment?
 - How many participants will be served?

Agencies responding to this RFP will need to meet at least one of the above goals and measurable outcomes.

- Funding
 - Funding Requirements
 - A Third-Party Partner must have a source of non-federal funding available for 50/50 reimbursement
 - Funds must be non-committed as a match for other federally funded programs
 - Funds are available throughout the entire federal fiscal year (October 1 through September 30)
 - Allowable Funding Examples
 - Local tax levies, donation from private firms or non-profit organizations
 - Sub-grantees of a county agency or third-party funders and providers of approved Employment and Training services can fund Employment and Training activities and can be reimbursed with 50% Federal funds.
 - For non-governmental organizations, there must be a cash outlay for the SNAP Employment and Training goods or services provided to receive a 50% reimbursement.
 - If an agency is already serving SNAP participants or already receiving State funds, the agency must demonstrate that Third-Party funds will be used to serve clients above and beyond services currently being rendered.
 - Not Allowable Funding Examples
 - In-kind contributions from non-government organizations.
 - Federal Employment and Training funds cannot be used to reimburse expenses paid with other Federal funds unless specified by Federal legislation.
 - Cost Charging
 - The Contractor must charge SD SNAP E&T consistently with how the contractor would charge other local, State, or Federal grants.
 - No Cost Service
 - A service that is offered at no cost to non- SD SNAP E&T participants and that is not allocated to any other grant, cannot be charged to SD SNAP E&T- third party for reimbursement.

- Financial Standing – The agency must have sufficient cash flow to support providing services to SD SNAP E&T clients. Reimbursements will be issued to the agency between 60 and 90 days after the month in which the services were provided.
- Please refer to the following documents which provide supportive information:
 - SNAP E&T Third Party Partnership Operations Handbook (see **Attachment B**)
 - See website: United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Services SNAP E&T. <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap-et/potential-provider>

1.2 ISSUING OFFICE AND RFP REFERENCE NUMBER

The Division of Economic Assistance is the issuing office for this document and all subsequent addenda relating to it, on behalf of the State of South Dakota, Department of Social Services. The reference number for the transaction is RFP10942. Refer to this number on all proposals, correspondence, and documentation relating to the RFP.

Please refer to the Department of Social Services website link <http://dss.sd.gov/keyresources/rfp.aspx> for the RFP, any related questions/answers, changes to schedule of activities, amendments, etc.

1.3 LETTER OF INTENT

All interested offerors are requested to submit a non-binding Letter of Intent to respond to this RFP. While preferred, a Letter of Intent is not mandatory to submit a proposal.

The letter of intent must be received by email in the Department of Social Services by no later than June 6, 2024 and must be addressed to Kirsten.Blachford@state.sd.us. Place the following in the subject line of your email: Letter of Intent for RFP10942. Be sure to reference the RFP number in any attached letter or document.

1.4 SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

RFP Publication	<u>05/30/24</u>
Letter of Intent to Respond Due	<u>06/06/24</u>
Deadline for Submission of Written Inquiries	<u>06/13/24</u>
Responses to Offeror Questions	<u>06/20/24</u>
Request for SFTP folder	<u>07/02/24</u>
Proposal Submission	<u>07/03/24</u>
Oral Presentations/discussions (if required)	<u>TBD</u>
Proposal Revisions (if required)	<u>TBD</u>
Anticipated Award Decision/Contract Negotiation	<u>07/31/24</u>

1.5 SUBMITTING YOUR PROPOSAL

All proposals must be completed and received by the Division of Economic Assistance by the date and time indicated in the Schedule of Activities.

Proposals received after the deadline will be late and ineligible for consideration.

Proposals must be submitted as PDF's via Secured File Transfer Protocol (SFTP). Offerors must request an SFTP folder no later than July 2, 2024 by emailing Kirsten Blachford at the email indicated on page one.

The subject line should be "RFP10942 SFTP Request". The email should contain the name and the email of the person who will be responsible for uploading the document(s).

Please note, offeror will need to work with their own technical support staff to set up an SFTP compatible software on offeror's end. While the State of South Dakota can answer questions, State of South Dakota is not responsible for the software required.

All proposals may be signed in ink or digitally by an officer of the offeror legally authorized to bind the offeror to the proposal, and sealed in the form intended by the respondent. Proposals that are not properly signed may be rejected.

No proposal may be accepted from, or any contract or purchase order awarded to any person, firm or corporation that is in arrears upon any obligations to the State of South Dakota, or that otherwise may be deemed irresponsible or unreliable by the State of South Dakota.

1.6 CERTIFICATION REGARDING DEBARMENT, SUSPENSION, INELIGIBILITY AND VOLUNTARY EXCLUSION – LOWER TIER COVERED TRANSACTIONS

By signing and submitting this proposal, the offeror certifies that neither it nor its principals is presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation, by any Federal department or agency, from transactions involving the use of Federal funds. Where the offeror is unable to certify to any of the statements in this certification, the bidder shall attach an explanation to their offer.

1.7 NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

The State of South Dakota requires that all contractors, vendors, and suppliers doing business with any State agency, department, or institution, provide a statement of non-discrimination. By signing and submitting their proposal, the offeror certifies they do not discriminate in their employment practices with regard to race, color, creed, religion, age, sex, ancestry, national origin or disability.

1.8 RESTRICTION OF BOYCOTT OF ISRAEL

For contractors, vendors, suppliers, or subcontractors with five (5) or more employees who enter into a contract with the State of South Dakota that involves the expenditure of one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) or more, by submitting a response to this solicitation or agreeing to contract with the State, the bidder or offeror certifies and agrees that the following information is correct:

The bidder or offeror, in preparing its response or offer or in considering proposals submitted from qualified, potential vendors, suppliers, and subcontractors, or in the solicitation, selection, or commercial treatment of any vendor, supplier, or subcontractor, has not refused to transact business activities, has not terminated business activities, and has not taken other similar actions intended to limit its commercial relations, related to the subject matter of the bid or offer, with a person or entity on the basis of Israeli national origin, or residence or incorporation in Israel or its territories, with the specific intent to accomplish a boycott or divestment of Israel in a discriminatory manner. It is understood and agreed that, if this certification is false, such false certification will constitute grounds for the State to reject the bid or response submitted by the bidder or offeror on this project and terminate any contract awarded based on the bid or response. The successful bidder or offeror further agrees to provide immediate written notice to the contracting executive branch agency if during the term of the contract it no longer complies with this certification and agrees such noncompliance may be grounds for contract termination.

1.9 CERTIFICATION RELATING TO PROHIBITED ENTITY

For contractors, vendors, suppliers, or subcontractors who enter into a contract with the State of South Dakota by submitting a response to this solicitation or agreeing to contract with the State, the bidder or offeror certifies and agrees that the following information is correct:

The bidder or offeror, in preparing its response or offer or in considering proposals submitted from qualified, potential vendors, suppliers, and subcontractors, or in the solicitation, selection, or commercial treatment of any vendor, supplier, or subcontractor, is not an entity, regardless of its principal place of business, that is ultimately owned or controlled, directly or indirectly, by a foreign national, a foreign parent entity, or foreign government from China, Iran, North Korea, Russia, Cuba, or Venezuela, as defined by South Dakota Executive Order 2023-02. It is understood and agreed that, if this certification is false, such false certification will constitute grounds for the State to reject the bid or response submitted by the bidder or offeror on this project and terminate any contract awarded based on the bid or response. The successful bidder or offeror further agrees to provide immediate written notice to the contracting

executive branch agency if during the term of the contract it no longer complies with this certification and agrees such noncompliance may be grounds for contract termination.

1.10 CERTIFICATION OF NO STATE LEGISLATOR INTEREST

Offeror (i) understands neither a state legislator nor a business in which a state legislator has an ownership interest may be directly or indirectly interested in any contract with the State that was authorized by any law passed during the term for which that legislator was elected, or within one year thereafter, and (ii) has read South Dakota Constitution Article 3, Section 12 and has had the opportunity to seek independent legal advice on the applicability of that provision to any Agreement entered into as a result of this RFP. By signing an Agreement pursuant to this RFP, Offeror hereby certifies that the Agreement is not made in violation of the South Dakota Constitution Article 3, Section 12.

1.11 MODIFICATION OR WITHDRAWAL OF PROPOSALS

Proposals may be modified or withdrawn by the offeror prior to the established due date and time.

No oral, telephonic, telegraphic or facsimile responses or modifications to informal, formal bids, or Request for Proposals will be considered.

1.12 OFFEROR INQUIRIES

Offerors may email inquiries concerning this RFP to obtain clarification of requirements. No inquiries will be accepted after June 13, 2024. Email inquiries must be sent to Kirsten.Blachford@state.sd.us with the following wording in the subject line: RFP10942 Questions.

The Department of Social Services (DSS) will respond to offerors' inquiries by posting offeror aggregated questions and Department responses on the DSS website at <http://dss.sd.gov/keyresources/rfp.aspx> no later than June 20, 2024. For expediency, DSS may combine similar questions. Offerors may not rely on any other statements, either of a written or oral nature, that alter any specification or other term or condition of this RFP. Offerors will be notified in the same manner as indicated above regarding any modifications to this RFP.

1.13 PROPRIETARY INFORMATION

The proposal of the successful offeror(s) becomes public information.

Proprietary information can be protected under limited circumstances such as client lists and non-public financial statements. An entire proposal may not be marked as proprietary. Offerors must clearly identify in the Executive Summary and mark in the body of the proposal any specific proprietary information they are requesting to be protected. The Executive Summary must contain specific justification explaining why the information is to be protected. Proposals may be reviewed and evaluated by any person at the discretion of the State. All materials submitted become the property of the State of South Dakota and may be returned only at the State's option.

Offerors may submit a redacted copy of their proposal when they respond though this is optional.

1.14 LENGTH OF CONTRACT

The contract resulting from this RFP may be issued for a period of one (1) year, beginning as soon as October 1, 2024. A resulting contract can be renewed for four (4) additional one-year periods at the sole discretion of the state, contingent upon funds being appropriated, budgeted, and otherwise made available, and other contractual requirements, if applicable, being satisfied.

1.15 GOVERNING LAW

Venue for any and all legal action regarding or arising out of the transaction covered herein shall be solely in Hughes County, State of South Dakota. The laws of South Dakota shall govern this transaction.

1.16 DISCUSSIONS WITH OFFERORS (ORAL PRESENTATION/NEGOTIATIONS)

An oral presentation by an offeror to clarify a proposal may be required at the sole discretion of the State. However, the State may award a contract based on the initial proposals received without discussion with the offeror. If oral presentations are required, they will be scheduled after the submission of proposals. Oral presentations will be made at the offeror's expense.

This process is a Request for Proposal/Competitive Negotiation process. Each Proposal shall be evaluated, and each respondent shall be available for negotiation meetings at the State's request. The State reserves the right to negotiate on any and/or all components of every proposal submitted. From the time the proposals are submitted until the formal award of a contract, each proposal is considered a working document and as such, will be kept confidential. The negotiation discussions will also be held as confidential until such time as the award is completed.

2.0 STANDARD AGREEMENT TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Any contract or agreement resulting from this RFP will include, at minimum, the State's standard terms and conditions as seen in **Attachment A**.

The offeror should indicate in their response any issues they have with any specific contract terms. If the offeror does not indicate any contract term issues, then the State will assume the terms are acceptable.

3.0 SCOPE OF WORK

3.1 South Dakota is seeking to identify and contract with agencies that are interested in providing Employment and Training services to SNAP participants.

- The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment and Training (E&T) program promotes long-term self-sufficiency and independence by preparing SNAP participants for meaningful employment through work-related education and training activities.
- South Dakota is seeking agencies to enter into a Third-Party Partnership (TPP), in which the agency will provide specialized services that increase employment readiness, increase employment outcomes, offer assistance and guidance in reskilling, upskilling, new skilling, and obtaining certificates and credentials that strengthen the employability of eligible SNAP participants.
- Eligible individuals are SNAP participants ages 16 and over who are receiving food assistance benefits through the State of South Dakota's SNAP program and are able to work upon program completion.
- This partnership will leverage existing expertise in the community and build upon already established employment and training-focused agencies that work with SNAP clients and assist the hardest-to-serve individuals to become economically self-sufficient.

3.2 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- 3.2.1 The Program Operator shall perform all work under all applicable federal and State statutes, regulations, and rules, including but not limited to provisions from the 2 CFR 200, 2 CFR 400, 7 CFR 271-285, 2018 Agricultural Improvement Act, SNAP E&T Toolkit, South Dakota's SNAP Employment and Training State Plan, and the SD SNAP E&T Third Party Partnership Operations Handbook as now and hereafter amended, and the requirements described in this Scope of Work.
- 3.2.2 The Department will provide the current version of the SD SNAP E&T Third Party Partnership Operations Handbook and the Program Operator must adhere to the requirements outlined

throughout the program year. The most current version of the SD SNAP E&T Third Party Partnership Operations Handbook (see **Attachment B**).

- 3.2.3 The Program Operator shall work closely and collaboratively with the Department, discuss suggestions or issues as issues occur, and incorporate guidance from the Department while performing the work described within this Statement of Work and the SD SNAP E&T Operations Handbook.
- 3.2.4 The Program Operator shall incorporate any policies deemed necessary and created for the SD DSS TPP program by the Department. These policies include but are not limited to Case Management, Fraud, and Supportive Services.
- 3.2.5 The Program Operator shall coordinate and prioritize all work to ensure all performance requirements are fulfilled by their deadlines.
- 3.2.6 The Program Operator shall employ an internal quality control process to ensure that all deliverables are complete, accurate, easy to understand, and of high quality. The Program Operator shall participate in the review and revision process until the Department provides written acceptance of the deliverable.
- 3.2.7 The Program Operator shall retain all supporting documentation for all deliverables for four years (Including the current contract period).
- 3.2.8 The Program Operator must provide copies of any supporting documentation to the Department upon request of the Department and without charge within three business days of the request.

3.3 DIRECT SERVICES

- 3.3.1 The Program Operator shall provide case management services, participant reimbursements, and at least one component to SNAP participants, in alignment with the costs, activity details, maximum limits, and method of disbursement from the Department and the FNS-approved SNAP E&T State Plan, to receive reimbursement for these direct services.
- 3.3.2 Case Management Services - refer to 3.4 Case Management Requirements and the SD SNAP E&T Third Party Partnership Operations Handbook for further details regarding case management services.
- 3.3.3 Participant Reimbursement - refer to the allowable supportive service reimbursement limits table provided in the SD SNAP E&T Third Party Partnership Operations Handbook for further details regarding participant reimbursements.
- 3.3.4 Components - refer to the SD SNAP E&T Third Party Partnership Operations Handbook for further details regarding which components are reimbursable to the Program Operator. The Program Operator may seek reimbursement on additional components AFTER written approval from both the Department and USDA Federal Nutrition Services (FNS).

3.4 CASE MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS

- 3.4.1 The Program Operator must provide case management services to all SNAP E&T participants clients. Case management services must include the following:
 - 3.4.1.1 A comprehensive employability assessment. The comprehensive employability assessment is to be completed at the initial case management appointment and at least once a year (ongoing employability assessments are recommended). A Department-approved comprehensive employability assessment is provided in the SD SNAP E&T

Third Party Partnership Operations Handbook. The Program Operator may use their own comprehensive employability assessment with written approval from the Program Administrator.

- 3.4.1.2 Individualized employment plans (IEP). IEPs are to be individualized to the client, developed in partnership between a client and case manager, and updated at least once every 120 days. A Department-approved IEP is provided in the SD SNAP E&T Third Party Partnership Operations Handbook. The Program Operator may use their own IEP with written approval from the Program Administrator.
- 3.4.1.3 Progress monitoring through case comments (attempted contact and contact with the client). Progress monitoring through case comments are to be completed at least once a month. Refer to the SNAP E&T Program Operations Handbook for further details on what should be included in a good, high-quality case comment.
- 3.4.1.4 Coordination with and referrals to other employment and training service providers, when applicable (must be developed and revisited when the individualized service plan is developed).
- 3.4.1.5 The Program Operator must conduct follow-up attempts (through email, phone, or written notification) for at least 60 days before closing the client's case when the client has stopped engaging in program services.
- 3.4.2 Documentation for all case management services and activities must be retained in the client's physical program file as outlined in the SD SNAP E&T Third Party Partnership Operations Handbook.
- 3.4.3 All forms of case management services, communication, and activities must be entered as outlined in the SD SNAP E&T Third Party Partnership Operations Handbook.
- 3.4.4 Refer to the SD SNAP E&T Third Party Partnership Operations Handbook for further details on case management services and expectations.

3.5 PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS/REPORTING

- 3.5.1 Data Entry
 - 3.5.1.1 The Program Operator shall use a manual tracking system of reporting as required in the SNAP E&T Program Operations Handbook for all reporting of programmatic activity.
 - 3.5.1.2 These programmatic activities include, but are not limited to:
 - verifying client SNAP E&T program eligibility
 - client activities
 - client attendance hours
 - client participant reimbursements
 - client employment and credential outcomes
 - client case comments
- 3.5.2 The Program Operator shall use data tracking reports to manage the data entry workload, ensure data entry completion by the 6th of each month (for services rendered in the previous month), and determine the number of SNAP participants and services that the Program Operator can request reimbursement for each month. These reports include, but are not limited to:
 - 3.5.2.1 TPP Monthly Participation Report Form

- 3.5.2.2 Other reports recommended by the Program Administrator
- 3.5.3 Participant Logs and Invoices
 - 3.5.3.1 The Program Operator shall submit Participant Logs and Invoices monthly via encrypted email, as outlined in the SD SNAP E&T Third Party Partnership Operations Handbook.
 - 3.5.3.2 Participant Logs are due by the 5th of each month (for services rendered in the previous month), unless otherwise requested by the Program Administrator.
 - 3.5.3.3 Invoices are due by the 15th of each month (for services rendered in the previous month), unless otherwise requested by the Program Administrator. The Program Administrator will review and approve invoices no earlier than the 7th of the following month.
 - 3.5.3.4 If the above days do not fall on a business day, the participant logs/invoices will be due on the next business day.
 - 3.5.3.5 If the Program Operator does not plan to submit an invoice, the Program Operator must inform the Program Administrator in writing by the 5th of the month.
 - 3.5.3.6 If the Program Operator needs an extension to submit their monthly Participant Log and/or Invoice, the Program Operator must seek written approval from the Program Administrator prior to their submission deadline.
 - 3.5.3.7 If the Program Administrator does not receive the Program Operator's invoice within 30 days of the invoice's due date, the Program Operator may forfeit their reimbursement at the Department's discretion.
- 3.5.4 Budget And Budget Amendments
 - 3.5.4.1 A budget must be submitted using the budget template provided by the Department and include the following:
 - Costs must be tied to services that meet or exceed the requirements and expected outcomes and a majority of the funding allocation are spent on participants.
 - Costs must describe expenses and necessity and a reasonable cost per client amount for the services provided.
 - Costs must be associated with personnel activities and program development work.
 - A thorough budget narrative must be submitted.
 - 3.5.4.2 Program Operators are responsible for using the invoice template provided by the Department for this program.
 - 3.5.4.3 It is at the Department's discretion to reduce or add funding to the existing contract via a contract amendment at any point during the contract period, based on program oversight findings and monitoring of spend-down.
 - 3.5.4.4 Any budget modifications, which may include an increase in the average cost/participant, adjusting or moving expenses from one line item to another (ex: Admin to PRM), must be submitted by email and approved by the Program Administrator before any changes or adjustments are made to the budget. Any budget adjustments greater than 10% shift across line items will require the Department's SNAP E&T Management approval and a contract amendment.
 - 3.5.4.5 The Program Operator shall provide the Department with an estimate of potential

unspent funds for the remainder of the federal fiscal year by April 15, unless otherwise requested by the Program Administrator.

3.5.4.6 Requests from Program Operators to increase their budget allocation must be submitted by email to the Program Administrator between April 16 through June 15. Requests to increase budget allocations will require the Department's SNAP E&T Management approval and a contract amendment.

3.5.4.7 If the above dates do not fall on a business day, the certification will be due on the previous business day.

3.5.5 Success Stories

3.5.5.1 The Program Operator shall provide success stories to the Department annually at the end of the Federal Fiscal Year.

3.5.6 Program Operator Plans and Request for Proposal (RFP)

3.5.6.1 As a condition of a contract extension, the Program Operator shall provide an updated Program Operator Plan, or RFP application, between late spring and mid-summer, as part of the contract extension process for the next federal fiscal year. Deadlines and expectations for these documents will be communicated with the Program Operator by the Department 60-90 days in advance of the submission deadline.

3.5.6.2 If the Department does not receive an updated Program Operator Plan (or RFP application), or the Department cannot approve the Program Operator's submitted plan by their internal procurement timeline, the Department will not be able to offer a contract extension for the new federal fiscal year; the Program Operator's current contract will expire as of the listed Current Contract Expiration Date.

3.5.6.3 Program Operators are responsible for budgeting themselves appropriately to ensure the funding lasts through the fiscal year so that they can continue to provide services through the contract term.

3.5.6.4 Program Operators must adhere to the program design and costs outlined in their approved Program Operator Plan (or RFP application).

3.5.6.5 Contract extensions will occur via a contract amendment and will include an updated budget, Statement of Work, and Exhibits for the new federal fiscal year. Contract extensions are not to exceed five years from the original Contract Performance Beginning Date.

3.5.7 Department-led Training and Program Meetings

3.5.7.1 The Program Operator must have direct service staff in attendance at the SD SNAP E&T Kick-Off Meeting. This annual training is held at the start of the program year and discusses various topics, including but not limited to: program goals, governance structure, fiscal and budget information, billing process, program design and requirements.

3.5.7.2 The Program Operator must have at least one staff member in attendance at additional department-led training and program meetings. This may include, but is not limited to:

- SD SNAP E&T group training and group technical assistance meetings
- SD SNAP E&T Quarterly Forums
- Department-led Virtual Meetings
- Department-led special projects and initiatives (when appropriate)

- If the Program Operator is unsure if or when their staff should attend a department-led training and program meeting, they are to seek guidance from the Program Administrator.

3.5.8 Statewide Performance Outcomes

- 3.5.8.1 The Program Operator must track and report specific program performance outcome measures as outlined in the SD SNAP E&T Handbook.

3.6 MONITORING

- 3.6.1 The Department will conduct random, monthly spot-checks on client files and supporting documentation for completion and accuracy. Failure to complete data entry or provide supporting documentation may result in delayed invoice approval or denial of reimbursement expenses.
- 3.6.2 The Department will conduct a Management Evaluation for all new Program Operators during the first contract year, and at least every third year the Program Operator is contracted with the Department. The Department will conduct the management evaluations virtually or in person. The management evaluation will include a sample review of SNAP recipients' files. A report summarizing the management evaluation will be sent to the Program Operator within 14 days following the management evaluation.
- 3.6.3 The Department will conduct a fiscal review, file reviews, and interviews with the Program Operator and staff as needed in all other contract years.
- 3.6.4 The Department will inspect the Program Operator's records to ensure compliance regarding the performance and terms of this Statement of Work and the FNS-approved SD SNAP E&T State Plan.
- 3.6.5 The Program Operator shall adhere to any additional State and Federal audits that are deemed necessary by the Department.

4.0 PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS AND COMPANY QUALIFICATIONS

- 4.1 Provide the following information related to at **least** three previous and current service/contracts performed by the offeror's organization which are similar to the requirements of this RFP. Provide this information as well for any service/contract that has been terminated, expired or not renewed in the past three years:
- 4.1.1 Name, address and telephone number of client/contracting agency and a representative of that agency who may be contacted for verification of all information submitted;
 - 4.1.2 Dates of the service/contract; and
 - 4.1.3 A brief, written description of the specific prior services performed and requirements thereof.
- 4.2 The offeror must submit information that demonstrates their availability and familiarity with the locale in which the project (s) are to be implemented.
- 4.3 The offeror must detail examples that document their ability and proven history in handling special project constraints.
- 4.4 The offeror must describe their proposed project management techniques.
- 4.5 The offeror is cautioned that it is the offeror's sole responsibility to submit information related to the evaluation categories and that the State of South Dakota is under no obligation to solicit such information if it is not included with the proposal. The offeror's failure to submit such information may cause an adverse impact on the evaluation of the proposal.

- 4.6 Offeror's Contacts: Offerors and their agents (including subcontractors, employees, consultants, or anyone else acting on their behalf) must direct all of their questions or comments regarding the RFP, the evaluation, etc. to the buyer of record indicated on the first page of this RFP. Offerors and their agents may not contact any state employee other than the buyer of record regarding any of these matters during the solicitation and evaluation process. Inappropriate contacts are grounds for suspension and/or exclusion from specific procurements. Offerors and their agents who have questions regarding this matter should contact the buyer of record.
- 4.7 The offeror may be a copy of their most recent independently audited financial statements.
- 4.8 If an offeror's proposal is not accepted by the State, the proposal will not be reviewed/evaluated.

5.0 PROPOSAL RESPONSE FORMAT

- 5.1 Only a PDF copy shall be submitted.
 - 5.1.1 As outlined in section 1.5 "SUBMITTING YOUR PROPOSAL" proposals shall only be submitted electronically via SFTP.
 - 5.1.2 The proposal should be page numbered and should have an index and/or a table of contents referencing the appropriate page number.
- 5.2 All proposals must be organized and have a separator page between each the following headings. The separator page should have the heading names on it.
 - 5.2.1 **RFP Form.** The State's Request for Proposal form completed and signed.
 - 5.2.2 **Executive Summary.** The one or two page executive summary is to briefly describe the offeror's proposal. This summary should highlight the major features of the proposal. It must indicate any requirements that cannot be met by the offeror. The reader should be able to determine the essence of the proposal by reading the executive summary. Proprietary information requests should be identified in this section.
 - 5.2.3 **Detailed Response.** This section should constitute the major portion of the proposal and must contain at least the following information:
 - 5.2.3.1 A complete narrative of the offeror's assessment of the work to be performed, the offeror's ability and approach, and the resources necessary to fulfill the requirements. This should demonstrate the offeror's understanding of the desired overall performance expectations.
 - 5.2.3.2 A specific point-by-point response, in the order listed, to each requirement in the RFP as detailed in Sections 3 and 4. The response should identify each requirement being addressed as enumerated in the RFP.
 - 5.2.3.3 A clear description of any options or alternatives proposed.
 - 5.2.4 **Cost Proposal.** Cost will be evaluated independently from the technical proposal. Offerors may submit multiple cost proposals. All costs related to the provision of the required services must be included in each cost proposal offered.

See section 7.0 for more information related to the cost proposal.

6.0 PROPOSAL EVALUATION AND AWARD PROCESS

- 6.1 After determining that a proposal satisfies the mandatory requirements stated in the Request for Proposal, the evaluator(s) shall use subjective judgment in conducting a comparative assessment of the proposal by considering each of the following criteria listed in order of importance:
 - 6.1.1 Specialized expertise, capabilities, and technical competence as demonstrated by the proposed approach and methodology to meet the project requirements;

- 6.1.2 Resources available to perform the work, including any specialized services, within the specified time limits for the project;
 - 6.1.3 Record of past performance, including price and cost data from previous projects, quality of work, ability to meet schedules, cost control, and contract administration;
 - 6.1.4 Availability to the project locale;
 - 6.1.5 Familiarity with the project locale;
 - 6.1.6 Proposed project management techniques;
 - 6.1.7 Ability and proven history in handling special project constraints, and
 - 6.1.8 Cost proposal.
- 6.2** Experience and reliability of the offeror's organization are considered subjectively in the evaluation process. Therefore, the offeror is advised to submit any information which documents successful and reliable experience in past performances, especially those performances related to the requirements of this RFP.
- 6.3** The qualifications of the personnel proposed by the offeror to perform the requirements of this RFP, whether from the offeror's organization or from a proposed subcontractor, will be subjectively evaluated. Therefore, the offeror should submit detailed information related to the experience and qualifications, including education and training, of proposed personnel.
- 6.4** The State reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, waive technicalities, and make award(s) as deemed to be in the best interest of the State of South Dakota.
- 6.5 Award:** The requesting agency and the highest ranked offeror shall mutually discuss and refine the scope of services for the project and shall negotiate terms, including compensation and performance schedule.
- 6.5.1 If the agency and the highest ranked offeror are unable for any reason to negotiate a contract at a compensation level that is reasonable and fair to the agency, the agency shall, either orally or in writing, terminate negotiations with the contractor. The agency may then negotiate with the next highest ranked contractor.
 - 6.5.2 The negotiation process may continue through successive offerors, according to agency ranking, until an agreement is reached or the agency terminates the contracting process.
 - 6.5.3 Only the response of the vendor awarded work becomes public. Responses to work orders for vendors not selected and the evaluation criteria and scoring for all proposals are not public. Vendors may submit a redacted copy with the full proposal as stated in Section 1.12 Proprietary Information. SDCL 1-27-1.5 and See SDCL 1-27-1.5 and 1-27-1.6.

7.0 COST PROPOSAL

- 7.1** Offeror's cost proposal must address the Scope of Work as outlined in Section 3.0. Offerors must utilize the SD SNAP E&T Program Operator Plan Budget Template (see **Attachment C**).

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