



Responses to questions:

Q1. Is this contract single source or for multiple awards?

R1. **The number of contracts will be determined by the responses.**

Q2. The RFP states interpreters need to be employees; our interpreters are independent contractors and receive 1099s. Are you specifically looking for W-2 employees?

R2. **Vendors may utilize contracted employees.**

Q3. Would we need to be audited by an outside bank or will financial statements suffice?

R3. **Financial statements will suffice.**

Q4. How pleased are you with the current vendor?

R4. **The information you have requested is not relevant to this procurement.**

Q5. Are there any specific challenges with the current vendor that you are looking to address with this new contract?

R5. **All requirements for the new contract are documented in the request for proposals (RFP).**

Q6. Is there a rate sheet for the current vendor that we can access?

R6. **Yes. Vendors may request this information by submitting their requests to me via email to www.starr.stewart@dhr.alabama.gov. Reference the procurement title/number and specify the vendor.**

Q7. For this bid, we would like to submit our proposal only for written translation services. Do you select vendors for either of the services?

R7. **Yes.**

Q8. Employees vs. Subcontractors. Section 1.7.3, page 9, identifies the use of "subcontractors" whereas Section 3.5, page 16 refers to interpreters being "employed/contracted" to provide services. However, Section 3.0, paragraph 3, page 15 states "Interpreters/Translators must be employees of the contracting agency." It also says in Section 3.23, #10, page 18 "Interpreters must be employees of the contracting agency..."

The standard practice in the interpreting and translation industry is that interpreters and translators be considered subcontractors since they usually work a very short period of time on any assignment and perform work for more than one entity. Can we assume that interpreters and/or translators to be used for purposes of this contract may be contract interpreters or contract translators (and thus subcontractors in this contract) and not necessarily employees?

R8. **Yes.**



Q9. Section 3.3, page 15. Cancellations. “The Department reserves the right to cancel interpreter appointments within twenty-four hours of their scheduled time without penalty or charge.” Our understanding of this statement is that if DHR cancels an appointment in less than 24 hours, the contractor can bill for the appointment. Please confirm that our understanding is correct or, if not, please clarify the cancellation clause.

R9. Yes.

Q10. Section 3.4, page 15, Certifications. “All interpreters must be free of infectious diseases.” Due to HIPAA laws and privacy concerns, we are not sure how we can enforce this; please clarify what is meant by “infectious diseases.” Would this be tuberculosis, for example?

R10. Yes, that is one example. This is required on all face-to-face interpreters, and there must be documentation that interpreters have met the requirement and are free of infectious diseases.

Q11. Section 3.23 FACE to FACE Interpreter Services, page 17-18,

- a. Paragraph 1, page 17. “Vendors must provide written confirmation to a referring county social worker of scheduling for all requests for face-to-face interpreter services.” Many requests come within short timeframes or when social workers are in the field, thus he/she does not have immediate access to a fax machine (or computer or smartphone) when requesting an interpreter. Given that the goal is to provide the social worker with the interpreter’s name as soon as possible, could the requirement be amended so that we can provide the social worker a telephone call first, with follow up by email or fax, if required?
- b. Paragraph 3, page 18. “Interpreters may serve no more than ten families at any one time.” Does this refer to a period of one day? For example, if Interpreter A arrives at County X office to interpret for a client, and more clients arrive while she is there, she is only allowed to interpret for no more than 10 of them?
- c. Paragraph 8, page 18. “Vendors must ensure that interpreters have reliable transportation, a valid Alabama driver’s license and current automobile insurance”. We understand the intent of this sentence is that the interpreter has adequate transportation to the interpreting site and it is his/her responsibility to get there and the Contractor’s responsibility that they know when and where they are to arrive. Do we understand this correctly or if not, please explain.
- d. Paragraph 10, page 18. “...the Vendor must attest that all interpreters have completed criminal history checks and CAN Central Registry clearances.” Paragraph 4.2.5.1.6, #10 on page 22 also states that “each employee (i.e. interpreter) has had an ABI and an FBI criminal background check.” Given that the interpreter is NEVER alone with a DHR client nor participates in unsupervised visits, and must always be accompanied by a DHR social worker or family service provider, please clarify the requirement for these background checks and whether all three are required.

R11. a. No, the requirement remains as presented in the RFP.

b. No more than 10 families served in a day per interpreter, unless in an emergency situation and approved by SDHR prior to the service delivery.



c. Yes.

d. This requirement is for face-to-face interpreters.

Q12. Section 3.24 page 18 Telephone Interpreter Services, last sentence. "Vendors must provide reports to the referring county social worker within ten working days of the completion of the assignment." Please explain the type of report which must be provided to the county social worker. We believe this section may refer to the monthly usage report.

R12. This would be the monthly usage report. If counties need specific reports on cases they are working, they may ask for additional reports on individual cases. This would mainly be associated with face-to-face services.

Q13. Section 4.2 page 20 Proposal Format. Are inexpensive (vinyl) three-ring binders permissible, given that a normal stapler may not be effective to collate?

R13. Yes.

Q14. Section 4.2.5.2, page 22 Vendor Financial Stability. "Vendors must submit an audited financial summary for the past year ..." As a small business, we have never been required to do a formal audit, as this is a very expensive and time consuming procedure, usually not required of businesses of our size. Our CPA firm assures us that submitting a Financial Compilation, which would include the balance sheet along with Statements of Income and Retained Earnings would give DHR an adequate picture of our finances. Would this be permissible?

R14. Yes.

Q15. General Question – Non Section Specific
What is prompting this RFP release?

R15. It was in the best interest of the Department to do so.

Q16. Section 3, Scope of Project, Page 15, 3.0 Programmatic Information, Paragraph 1
With regards to the stated languages (Spanish, Guatemalan, Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean) for which services are being sought, can you please provide the estimated monthly volume for the following:

- Minutes of Over-the-Phone interpretation
- Hours or Frequency of Face-to-Face interpretation bookings
- Words per language translated

R16. The information you have requested is not available.

Q17. Section 3, Scope of Project, Page 15, 3.0 Programmatic Information, Paragraph 3
Would the contract holder be responsible for any back ground checks for the linguists?

R17. Yes.

Q18. Section 3, Scope of Project, Page 15, 3.0 Programmatic Information, Paragraph 3
RFP states that 'vendors must attest that all interpreters will complete criminal history checks and CAN Central Registry clearances prior to working with children and families referred by the Department'



Since Over-the-Phone interpreters will not know the identity of the organization or LEP, nor come in contact at any point please clarify whether this applies to them.

R18. This requirement is for face-to-face interpreters.

Q19. Section 3, Scope of Project, Page 15, 3.2 Languages to be Interpreted

There are specific languages referenced in the RFP, does this mean these are the only languages that will require interpreting/translation?

R19. Yes, at this time.

Q20. Section 3, Scope of Project, Page 15, 3.3 Cancellations

RFP states 'The Department reserves the right to cancel interpreter appointments within twenty-four (24) hours of their scheduled time without penalty or charge.'

Please provide details of the number of cancellations the Department has cancelled with 24 hours' notice in the last 12 months

R20. The information you have requested is not available.

Q21. Section 3, Scope of Project, Page 15, 3.4 Certifications

For testing of infectious diseases, will the contract holder be responsible for these tests and the payment?

R21. Yes.

Q22. Section 3, Scope of Project, Page 16, 3.5 Listing

This is considered trade secret information for Over-the-Phone interpretation and translation services – please clarify whether it is acceptable to provide details substituting names with linguist ID numbers

R22. No. Names must be provided; however, the information may be declared a trade secret in all applicable sections within proposals, and therefore, will not be shared with the public.

Q23. Section 3 Scope of Project, Page 16, 3.6 Photo Identification

Please clarify what is meant by 'visible at all times' – we advise Face-to-Face interpreters to carry a passport/drivers license at all times as these documents cannot be forged. We do not expect these to be displayed, but available upon request. Does the Department have a standard ID badge that you would like Face-to-Face linguists to wear?

R23. In face-to-face interpreting services, a photo identification must be visible at all times. We certainly do not recommend a drivers license to be worn externally, but the requirement for this remains applicable. The Department will not be issuing identification cards.

Q24. Section 3, Scope of Project, Page 16, 3.7 No Denial of Services Allowed

The RFP states we are not able to refuse service but if the contractor is unable to provide a service at the requested time is the contractor able to suggest another date and time to service the booking?



- R24. The vendor is expected to be available to meet the counties' needs for court dates and emergency situations.**
- Q25. Section 3, Scope of Project, Page 17, 3.23 Face-to-Face Interpreter Services, #3**
In what respect will interpreters be assigned to specific families? Please clarify if interpreters work with set families that is decided by the Department of Human Resources
- R25. The Individualized Service Planning team may make a recommendation that it is in the best interest of a family or youth for continuity purposes to have a particular interpreter assigned to the family. We would expect the vendor to honor these recommendations, if at all possible.**
- Q26. Section 3, Scope of Project, Page 18, 3.23 Face-to-Face Interpreter Services, #10**
We utilize both 'contract for services based' and employee interpreters. Is this allowed?
- R26. Yes.**