



*Questions and Responses:*

**Q1.** RFP Section 1.7.1, p. 12 Please confirm that the reference to “Section 1.8.1 Required Copies and Deadline for Receipt of Proposals” should be Section 1.9.1.

**R1.** Yes, the reference to Section 1.8.1 should be Section 1.9.1.

**Q2.** RFP Section 2.3, Para. 3, p. 15 RFP states: “Any subcontractor hired to perform work under a contract must attest to such by providing to the Department with a completed and signed certificate of compliance (Appendix D). Subcontractors must also enroll in the E-Verify program prior to performing any work on a project and must attach to the sworn affidavit documentation establishing that the subcontractor is enrolled in the E-Verify program.”

Please confirm that Appendix D and supporting E-Verify documentation can be submitted for any subcontractors following contract award and is not required to be submitted with our proposal.

**R2.** The required documentation must be included in the proposal at the time of submission.

**Q3.** RFP Section 2.6, Para. 1, p. 16 Please confirm that confidential information can be submitted in the same binder as the rest of the technical proposal but separated by a tab.

If a separate binder is required, how many copies should be submitted?

**R3.** Either is fine; however, an original and the required number of copies must be submitted.

**Q4.** RFP Section 4.2, p. 23-24 RFP Section 4.2 states “Do not use adhesive tabs, tabs with the paper inserts, sheet protectors, rings or prong fasteners. Is it permissible for Vendors to provide their proposal in a three-ring binder?

**R4.** Yes.

**Q5.** RFP Section 4.2, p. 23-24 RFP Section 4.2 states “All proposals must include labeled tabs that correspond with the bolded sections and subsections to which the information pertains.” As it appears that all of the headings in the RFP are bolded, please confirm that this requirement applies to the sections/headings in RFP Section 4 and that additional tabs may be used as appropriate to break up the major sections of the Scope of Work portion of the proposal response that ties to RFP Section 5.

**R5.** This requirement applies to the sections/headings in RFP Section 4 and that additional tabs may be used as appropriate to break up the major sections of the Scope of Work portion of the proposal response that ties to RFP Section 5.



- Q6.** RFP Section 4.2, p. 23-24 Are Vendors permitted to include a Transmittal Letter and Executive Summary in their proposal responses?
- R6.** **The aforementioned documents may be included, but are not necessary.**
- Q7.** RFP Section 4.2, p. 23-24 The RFP restricts page size to 8 ½ X 11 inch paper. For complex documents like Microsoft Project plans and architecture diagrams, may Bidders use larger paper folded down to 8 ½ X 11 inch size?
- R7.** **Yes, only on such documents.**
- Q8.** RFP Section 4.2, p. 23-24 The RFP requires Bidders to respond using 12-point font. May Bidders use a smaller, still readable -font for the following: headers and footers, requirement text, exhibits, and tables?
- R8.** **No, header, footers and required text must use a 12 pt. font. See R9.**
- Q9.** RFP Section 4.2, p. 23-24 Several requested documents/samples do not comply with font restrictions and they are not available in a native MS Office format for font adjustments. Please confirm that it is permissible to submit those documents as is.
- R9.** **The documents/samples may be submitted in their current format/font.**
- Q10.** RFP Section 4.2.2, p. 24 RFP states “Numbering of the proposal pages should begin with page 1 of the Table of Contents.”
- Is this statement meant to imply that the proposal must be consecutively numbered from front to back?
  - Is it permissible to consecutively number pages by proposal tab (e.g., 4.2.5-1, 4.2.6-1, etc.)?
  - If consecutive numbering is required, can Bidders exclude signed forms, attachments, etc. from the consecutive numbering requirement?
- R10.** **a) Yes.**  
**b) No.**  
**c) No. The pages must be numbered.**
- Q11.** RFP Section 4.2.6, p. 24 RFP Section 4.2.6 ATTACHMENTS states “Vendors must include all applicable forms identified below as attachments (i.e., Attachment A, B, C, etc.), applicable forms must follow the Technical Proposal.” However, RFP Section 4 states “The proposal must state the section/subsection headings from each requirement verbatim, employing the same numbering system used in the RFP.”  
Would the State please clarify whether these attachments should be numbered using the same numbering system as the RFP or labeled as Attachment A, B, C, etc.?



- R11. Attachments should be labeled A, B, C, etc.**
- Q12.** RFP Section 4.2.6.2, p. 24 Please confirm that the reference to Appendix D should be a reference to Appendix C.
- R12. Yes, the reference to Appendix D should be Appendix C.**
- Q13.** RFP Section 5.3.2.8, p. 32 The RFP requires the Vendor to prepare and submit a Training Plan. Would the State confirm that the Training Plan is due after award?
- R13. Yes, the actual training plan will be due after the contract has been awarded. The proposal should provide an overview of the vendor's proposed training plan.**
- Q14.** RFP Section 5.6.2, p. 41-42 Would the State verify that should there be any withholding for non-compliance for performance that it intends to do so against the cost per case month monthly invoice?
- R14. Yes, withholding for non-compliance for performance would be executed in the form of delayed payment of the monthly invoice.**
- Q15.** RFP Section 5.7, Para. 2 & 3, p. 42 Under Account Maintenance and Set-up, the State requires debit cards to be mailed within 24 hours. Would the State confirm that the 24 hours is upon receipt of a valid file by the contractor?
- R15. Yes, the cards should be mailed within 24 hours of receipt of valid file by contractor.**
- Q16.** RFP Section 5.7.1, Para. 1, p. 43 The RFP states "The Contractor must also provide the option of issuing the customer's cash and SNAP benefits on two separate EBT cards, thereby allowing one customer to have two active EBT accounts, one for cash and one for SNAP."  
Would the State consider issuing cash benefits on a standalone EFT/EPC card (no other State agency benefits would be co-mingled)?
- R16. The State would consider the option of issuing cash benefits on a stand-alone EFT/EPC card; however, the preference at this time is issuing the cash benefits on a separate EBT card from the SNAP benefits.**
- Q17.** RFP Section 5.8.1.1, Para. 1, p. 47 There are many variations as to how to implement photo cards, such as where are the photos taken, where are they stored, are new card printers required, and others. Would the State provide guidance on how Vendors should respond to this requirement to allow for accurate pricing?



**R17. This is an option that the State may consider sometime in the future. The Vendor should present the options they have available to the State for the State to consider.**

**Q18.** RFP Section 5.8.1.3, Para. 2, p. 48 Would the State please verify the current Bank Identification Number (BIN)/Issuer Identification Number (IIN) for AL Vantage cards?

**R18. The correct BIN for AL Vantage cards is 5151431.**

**Q19.** RFP Section 5.8.2, p. 49 The Card and PIN Issuance section states in part “A card activation sticker is placed on the card with instructions to the client for activating the card. The Contractor is liable for any misuse of the card until activated by the client.”

Would the State agree to forego the required activation sticker and if the selected contractor provides a better option that meets prevailing industry standards?

**R19. Currently the State would prefer the required sticker; however, the State would be willing to consider other options presented by the vendor which meet prevailing industry standards.**

**Q20.** RFP Section 5.8.2.1, p. 49 Issuance Through Mail Requirements – Would the State confirm that this section applies only to EBT?

**R20. This section applies to debit cards as well as EBT cards.**

**Q21.** RFP Section 5.8.2.2, p. 49 Timeframe Requirements – Would the State confirm that this section applies only to EBT? If not, the requirement appears to contradict RFP Section 5.8.2.

**R21. Yes, Section 5.8.2.2 – Timeframe Requirements apply only to EBT cards.**

**Q22.** RFP Section 5.8.3.2, p. 49 Due to stringent security standards PINs are not automatically transferred to reissued debit cards. Would the State amend the requirement to reflect this applies to EBT only?

**R22. The requirement that PINS be automatically transferred does not apply to debit cards.**

**Q23.** RFP Sections 5.10.2, p. 53-54 & 6.8, p. 80 We understand that State law only permits disbursement from the State Treasury. This places an undue burden and financial risk on Contractor on State Holidays or days when the State is unable to make the transfers.

Would the State agree to prefund the settlement account on State Holidays or days that it know they will be closed for FA/Medicaid and allow vendor to pull the necessary funding from the ASAP system on your behalf on those same days? If



the latter options are not feasible, will the State agree to own the bank accounts from which the ACH file will be drawn so vendor is not responsible for any overdraft that may occur?

**R23. No, the State does not advance funds to vendors for this purpose.**

**Q24.** RFP Section 5.176.1, p. 72 Please confirm that RFP Section 5.176.1 MONTHLY CLIENT HELP DESK STATISTICS should be numbered as 5.17.6.1.

**R24. Yes, Section 5.176.1 in RFP should be Section 5.17.6.1.**

**Q25.** RFP Section 5.12.5, p. 60 Manual Authorizations - The Farm Bill precludes the use of manual vouchers but for a few circumstances. May bidders apply the Farm Bill mandate to this and other sections? Will the State update the RFP language to utilize Farm Bill standards?

**R25. The State's RFP has been reviewed and approved by FNS as written; therefore the state will not be updating any language in the RFP.**

**Q26.** RFP Section 5.12.5.2, p. 61 Stand-in Processing – Would the State agree to add “per day” for the amount the contractor is liable for stand-in processing?

**R26. Yes, the contractor would be liable for \$40 per day in the case of stand-in processing.**

**Q27.** RFP Section 5.12.8, p. 62 Would the State amend this section to include that adjustments to debit cards follow Payment Card Industry and branded card vendor requirements or adjust section to apply to EBT only?

**R27. This section is for EBT only. Debit cards should follow debit card standards.**

**Q28.** RFP Section 5.17, Para. 8, p. 68 ADOL requires that reports be accessible from a secure website on a daily basis and include at a minimum information concerning Account Activation, Account Creation, Account Activity Detail, Account Balance Summary, Direct Deposit Setup, Days After Expiration Date, Cards Lost/Stolen, Negative Balance, Mailed Cards, Returned Cards (undeliverable), Transaction Detail and Value Load Detail.

Funds distributed to a debit card are provided the same privacy and financial protections as funds distributed to a bank account through direct deposit. In both cases, funds are considered distributed and “owned” by the cardholder and therefore not subject to viewing unless in accordance with a subpoena or other legal action according to appropriate jurisdiction.

Providing the State with specific transaction data could potentially violate Privacy laws and regulations such as Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act and Regulation P (which under Federal law requires cardholder privacy and confidentiality of personal



information and prohibits information being shared about a consumer). In order for contractor to comply with the aforementioned regulations, would the State agree to either remove this requirement, amend to be summary information only or discuss an alternative solution that addresses the underlying requirement while ensuring that PII information remains fully protected?

- R28. The State would be willing to discuss an alternative solution that addresses the underlying requirement while ensuring that PII information remains fully protected.**
- Q29.** RFP Section 6.0, p. 77 Would the State please clarify whether they would like the pricing forms provided within the sections they are referenced (e.g., Schedule VI-1 would be included in Section 6.2) or should the entire Schedule VI be included at the end of the pricing response?
- R29. The cost proposal must be submitted in a separate envelope and clearly labeled cost proposal. See “Special Instructions” on the RFP cover sheet.**
- Q30.** RFP Section 6, Schedule VI-5, p. 88 May Vendors include optional service fees for debit cards at the end of the fee schedule?
- R30. Yes.**
- Q31.** Appendix A, p. 98 Would the State please confirm that Contractor has no duty to perform services in the absence or expiration of program funding?
- R31. Detailed contract language will be discussed with the selected Vendor.**
- Q32.** Appendix A (Standard T&C) – Charge Backs, p. 98 Please confirm that federal charge backs will only be deducted from Contractor payments if and to the extent Contractor’s negligence caused the State to incur the charge back.
- R32. Detailed contract language will be discussed with the selected Vendor.**
- Q33.** Appendix A (Standard T&C) – Hold Harmless/Indemnification, p. 99 Please confirm that Contractor’s duty to indemnify the State would be limited to those circumstances where Contractor was negligent in causing harm to the State? Also, please confirm that, in circumstances where Contractor’s negligence combines with the negligence of the State, liability will be equitably apportioned based on each party’s degree of fault.
- R33. Detailed contract language will be discussed with the selected Vendor.**
- Q34.** Appendix A (Standard T&C) – Hold Harmless/Indemnification, p. 99 Would the State agree to negotiate a reasonable aggregate limitation on Contractor’s liability?



**R34. Detailed contract language will be discussed with the selected Vendor.**

**Q35.** Appendix A (Standard Terms and Conditions), Section B.4.d, p. 101-102 This is not a cost reimbursement contract. Would the State please confirm that OMB Circular A-133 audits are not required on this program?

**R35. Detailed contract language will be discussed with the selected Vendor.**

**Q36.** Appendix A (Standard T&C) – Section B.9, p. 104-105 Would the State agree to certain technical modifications to the insurance provisions to ensure that they are aligned with vendor’s standard corporate insurance policies?

**R36. Detailed contract language will be discussed with the selected Vendor.**

**Q37.** Appendix A (Standard T&C) – Section B.21, p. 109 While we acknowledge that the State is not liable for the payment of any amounts in excess of those specified in the Pricing Schedules, would the State please confirm that vendor has no obligation to perform work beyond the funding cap or not-to-exceed amount specified in the contract or purchase order issued thereunder?

**R37. Detailed contract language will be discussed with the selected Vendor.**

**Q38.** Appendix A (Standard T&C) – Section B.28.c, p. 116 Would the State please confirm that “equitable compensation” in the context of a termination for convenience includes compensation for work performed, as well as payment for start-up costs and reasonable and necessary wind down expenses?

**R38. Detailed contract language will be discussed with the selected Vendor.**

**Q39.** Appendix A (Standard T&C) – Section B.31, p. 117 Would the State please confirm that Contractor retains exclusive ownership of all hardware and software tools used to perform the services? Also, please confirm that the State will retain no rights to such tools beyond the term of the Agreement.

**R39. Detailed contract language will be discussed with the selected Vendor.**

**Q40.** 1.7.3 Disclosure Statement Pg. 13 The Disclosure Statement could not be found on the website in Publication and Forms. The pdf link is inactive. Could the State please provide the Disclosure Statement that the Vendors are expected to sign?

**R40. The Vendor Disclosure Statement can be accessed by going to [www.ago.alabama.gov](http://www.ago.alabama.gov). Click on the Resource tab and you will find the statement under the Forms heading.**



- Q41.** 3.0.1 Services Provided by EBT/EFT Contractor Pg. 19 Can the State please share where the current contractor's customer service centers are located for EBT and EFT services?
- R41.** **The primary customer service center is located in San Antonio, TX. There are back up customer service centers located in Tallahassee, FL and Erie, PA.**
- Q42.** 4.2 Proposal Format Pg. 26 Would the State please confirm that the proposal should be printed as a single-sided rather than a double-sided document?
- R42.** **As stated in the RFP the proposal should be printed on a single-sided document.**
- Q43.** 5.0 Scope of Services Pg. 26 Would the State please indicate which services are required to be available in both English and Spanish? Additionally, does this requirement apply to retailer equipment, contracts, training material, etc.?
- R43.** **Clients and Retailers should have the option of selecting English or Spanish on all EBT/EFT services provided by the Contractor.**
- Q44.** 5.8.2 Card and PIN Issuance Pg. 49 Would the State please confirm that only initial cards will be sent in an inactive mode and will need to be activated by the client?
- R44.** **All cards – initials as well as replacements – will be sent in an inactive status and will need to be active by the client.**
- Q45.** 5.4.13 Cash Access from POS Terminals Pg. 64 Would the State please clarify whether or not cash access is allowed from exempt EBT-only POS terminals?
- R45.** **No, cash access is not allowed through exempt EBT-only POS terminals.**
- Q46.** Cost Proposal, Schedule 2, EBT CPCM Pg.83 Could the State please indicate the current Cost Per Case Month price point based on the current active case count as of March 2015?
- R46.** **As of March 2015 there are:**  
**- 402,454 SNAP only cases with CPCM of 0.61,**  
**- 2,647 Cash only cases with CPCM of 0.60, and**  
**- 10,820 combined SNAP and Cash cases with CPCM of 1.20.**
- Q47.** Cost Proposal, Schedule 2, EBT CPCM Pg.83 Could the State please explain how the Cost Per Case Month pricing chart will be scored? Will all rows within Schedule VI-2 be scored the same, and if not, can the State please indicate which rows will be scored (or weighted differently)?





- R47.** The state will take into consideration the caseloads listed in Appendix E of the RFP (as well as projected future growth) to determine which tier will be used to score the Cost Per Case Month pricing. Once a tier has been determined only that tier will be scored; however the State does expect that the Vendor will offer their best and lowest price on all tiers.
- Q48.** Cost Proposal, Schedule 3, Optional Services Pg. 85 Will the Optional Services pricing in Schedule 3 be included in the scoring evaluation of the Cost Proposal? If so, how will this Schedule be weighted amongst the required services within the Cost Proposal?
- R48.** No.
- Q49.** Section 7, Evaluation Criteria Pg.92 Could the State please provide further breakdown of how the 400 available points for the Cost Proposal will be distributed among the six (6) pricing tables?
- R49.** Schedule VI-1 – Max 50 pts  
Schedule VI-2 – Max 250 pts  
Schedule VI-3 - Max 0 pts  
Schedule VI-4 – Max 30 pts  
Schedule VI-5 – Max 70 pts  
Schedule VI-6 – Max 0 pts
- Q50.** N/A – General Question N/A Would the State consider a second round of questions from the vendors in case there are any follow-up questions as a result of the Answers to all of the vendor's Questions to the State?
- R50.** No.