



Maryland

**DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET
AND MANAGEMENT**

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Lieutenant Governor

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Secretary

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Deputy Secretary

**QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES
PROJECT NO. F10B0600055
Employee Assistance Program
July 1, 2020**

Ladies/Gentlemen:

This List of Questions and Responses, questions #1 through #29, is being issued to clarify certain information contained in the above named RFP. The statements and interpretations of contract requirements, which are stated in the following questions of potential Offerors, are not binding on the State, unless the State expressly amends the RFP. Nothing in the State's responses to these questions is to be construed as agreement to or acceptance by the State of any statement or interpretation on the part of the vendor asking the question as to what the contract does or does not require.

1. RFP section 2.3.9.2 can the State clarify if the EAP network requires MD Psychiatrists? Typically, an EAP network would not include an MD level provider.

Response: Network providers must hold valid appropriate licenses to practice in the State(s) in which they provide services. While MD Psychiatrists are not required for EAP counseling services, an MD is typically on staff or on regular contract in order to provide consultation and supervision to EAP counselors determining treatment plans and / or referrals. Please refer to section 3.10.1 for Preferred Offeror Experience details.

2. RFP section 2.3.10 can the State confirm they are requiring data related to each individual client's health plan information? Is this information available on the eligibility file?

Response: The State will require the selected vendor to receive individual health plan information as this information can be helpful in conversation concerning treatment beyond EAP sessions. Client health plan information will be included on the eligibility file provided by State when applicable.

3. RFP section 2.3.10.3 – Can the State clarify if the employee appointment report is specifically for employees who are referred to the EAP or all clients (self-referred and performance referred)?

Response: Both supervisory referrals and self-referrals are subject to the same reporting requirements delineated in Request for Proposal at 2.3.10, including the Employee Appointment Report described in subsection 2.3.10.3.

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4. RFP section 3.2.4 D – Can you please clarify what shall be included in daily and weekly back up files?

Response: This refers to end of contract transition. Files would include any property of the State including, but not limited to, billing, payment, eligibility, and utilization data related to all contracted services (EAP, Critical Incident Response, WorkLife, and optional training).

5. Page 54 of RFP- F1 #1. The Offeror shall address each RFP requirement (RFP Section 2, and Section 3), in its Technical Proposal with a cross reference to the requirement. Please clarify the nature of the “cross reference” with an example of the build out and what the vendor is cross referencing to?

Response: The responses in the Technical attachment need to be linked back to the requirements in sections 2 and 3 in the Wrap document

6. RFP section 2.3.3.2 In order to verify the eligibility of individuals accessing core counseling services, the Offeror shall request that each individual accessing services provide their name, date of birth and home address before referral sessions begin. The Offeror will cross check the name received with the monthly eligibility file received from the State to confirm eligibility. The Offeror will assign a case number to each participant for the purpose of tracking utilization and reporting, as well as for verifying eligibility for future episodes (with a discrete set of presenting issues). Will the selected vendor be required to use eligibility files and the case number system? (wasn't sure if this has any pricing implications)

Response: Yes. The contractor is required to utilize eligibility files to verify eligibility status of individuals who attempt to access EAP services. Once eligibility is confirmed the contractor will assign a case number to each participant for the purpose of tracking utilization and reporting, as well as for verifying eligibility for future episodes.

7. CC-7 of the EAP Technical RFP document has a Y/N compliance around files too; CC-10 about case id numbers; CC-12

Response: Yes, verification of eligibility must occur following the initial assessment and before sessions begin. EAP Offeror-assigned case numbers will ensure privacy for tracking and reporting under the self-referral program.

8. RFP section 2.3.5.1 The purpose of the supervisory referral program is to provide treatment to State employees experiencing adverse conditions that may negatively impact (or have negatively impacted) their job performance. A referral submitted by an Agency EAP Representative on behalf of an Active Employee is required for benefits provided through the EAP. An Active employee is entitled to two (2) supervisory-referral episodes per EAP plan year. An Active Employee is not responsible for payment to the Contractor for services provided pursuant to this RFP. The RFP seems to indicate in other places that the State is moving the EAP to being self-referral as well. Does the highlighted still apply?

Response: Yes. In addition to the current Supervisor-referral EAP program, the State is adding a self-referral EAP benefit, allowing individuals direct access to work/life services and up to 5 counseling sessions per episode per year.

9. RFP section 2.3.2.4 Work/Life Support: “The Contractor shall provide additional lifestyle support, including at a minimum financial planning, career coaching, and legal services.” EAP Technical RFP, Page 6, PD-11 “financial planning, career coaching, mediation and legal services on a prepaid basis”

These are inconsistent in how the State describes these services in two different places. What is the State referring to for mediation (legal - like for family law or workplace mediation). And not sure what is meant by “prepaid”? Please clarify.

Response: As these services typically vary by provider, offerors are invited to describe their standard legal, financial, and other professional services that are included in the monthly EAP fee (or, “prepaid”). Please indicate any limitations on such professional services and note whether discounted rates apply to for employees who wish to continue services beyond the “prepaid” benefit. Please EAP Amendment #1 for further clarifications.

10. RFP Technical Q.15 Asks about referring to the appropriate specialist with the State Health Insurance provider network for continued care. Are we providing match to insurance within the EAP sessions? This is not standard for EAP referrals and could incur additional costs to the State. We do however match to insurance for longer-term referrals. Is long term referrals what the State is describing by continued care?

Response: EAP counselors are expected to refer individuals to the appropriate outpatient medical plan network (based on the enrollment information provided on the eligibility file) for treatment beyond the EAP sessions. This only applies in cases where a potential chronic issue is identified and should not represent additional cost.

11. How and when will these questions be answered?

Response: The procurement Officer, based on the availability of time to research and communicate an answer, shall decide whether an answer can be given before the Proposal due date.

12. RFP section 1.1.2., What’s considered “proof”?

Response: This section of the RFP has been amended. Please see EAP Amendment # 1.

13. RFP section 2.3.2.5., Do you mean an actual dedicated website or a state specific login for employees?

Response: Yes, a dedicated website as stated in the RFP to allow for some customization (co-branding and messaging by the State).

14. Our company is an EAP provider. Are we required to register as a TPA with the Maryland Insurance Administration to qualify to participate in this event?

Response: This section of the RFP has been amended. Please see EAP Amendment # 1.

15. If we are required to register as a TAP can a offeror submit proof of beginning this registration process with the proposal?

Response: This section of the RFP has been amended. Please see EAP Amendment # 1.

16. With regard to the Verification of Registration and Tax Payment, for an out of state offeror is there a 30 or 60 day window following the award of the contract to have the verification of the registration and tax payment completed?

Response: Yes, the proposed offeror will be given a reasonable time, usually thirty days, to register its company with the Department of Assessment and Taxation and pay any taxes owed to the State of Maryland.

17. *If out of state companies are required to provide verification of registration and tax payment is it required prior to proposal submission or can proof of filling be submitted with the proposal?*

Response: No, registration is required only when a Vendor is deemed proposed offeror.

18. *In the Financial Capability section, it states that a P& L statement and Balance Sheet for the last two years are standard submission items, and that in addition, offeror may supplement their response by including 1 or more of the following and a list of items is provided. Since the second portion says in addition is it required or optional?*

Response: Ideally the State prefers P & L statement and Balance Sheet for the last two years. But in lieu of that the State will accept the list of items in the Financial Capability section.

19. *Seeking clarification regarding the TPA requirement. Is a bidder who administers a plan and does not have custody, control or authority over plan premiums, payments or assets required to seek TPA registration for this opportunity if not required by Maryland law/regulations?*

Response: This section of the RFP has been amended. Please see EAP Amendment # 1.

20. *RFP section 1.1.1 The offeror shall be registered as a TPA under Md. Ann. Code, Insurance Art Title *, Subtitle 3. We are not an 'administrator' under Section 8-301 if the MD insurance Code because we only administer plan that are subject to ERISA and do not provide benefits through insurance nor administer multiple employer welfare arrangements. Therefore, we are not required to register as a TPA.*

Response: This section of the RFP has been amended. Please see EAP Amendment # 1.

21. *RFP section 2.3.2.3 Critical Incident Response (CIR): This process has the Account Executive as the hub for CISM. Would the State be agreeable to direct access to a 24/7 CISM team that would be available to discuss the event and immediately schedule a response. They would also communicate with the account executive to make sure they are aware. Clinical CISM onsite counselor staffing would be scheduled from our national network of CISM specialists.*

Response: No, the State would not be agreeable to the arrangement described in this question.

22. *RFP section 3.1.3 Number of Personnel to Propose: Q. Would the State be agreeable to us hiring a State of Maryland licensed counselor for the local account manager position should we be awarded the contract? The account manager team would also be staffed with a senior manager and account Management Executive Sponsor.*

Response: The selected contractor should be able to support these events either in-person or virtually based on the needs of the State.

23. *RFP section 4.17 Acceptance of Terms and Conditions: With regards to exceptions/deviations, which exceptions should be listed in the Executive Summary vs. listing on Attachment T-2? (See screen shots below). Should we list them in both places?*

Response: Yes, please list exceptions in both locations.

24. *Can we submit the technical proposal with folders as opposed to tabs (i.e the folders will be labeled Tab A, Tab B etc)*

Response: Yes, you can submit your proposal to the solicitation in a folder. However, each folder must be labeled with the corresponding tab.

25. *With regards to exceptions/deviations, which exceptions should be listed in the Executive Summary vs listing on Attachment T-2? Should we list them in both places?*

Response: Yes, please list exceptions in both locations.

26. *Can you please define dedicated in 2.3.21 Core Counselling Services: Core Services will include a dedicated to free intake line with various counselling access option, including face-to-face, text, telephone, video, and secured email.*

Response: A dedicated toll-free in-take line means a line established for the exclusive use by the State of Maryland's employees (and potentially, their dependents and household members).

27. *In regard to the pre-implementation review noted Section 2.3.7, can the State share what is involved in this review to assist us with our implementation project plan?*

Response: The pre-implementation review will be an onsite review of account management personnel, intake assessment staff, network directory maintenance, quality control measures, testing of call center, website access, electronic provider directory, any mobile resources, verification of billing, information security and compliance measures, functionality testing of automated interactive voice response systems, and functionality of other administrative processes required to support the scope of services outlined in the Request For Proposal.

28. *RFP section 3.1, can you clarify whether the kick-off meeting timeline is based on when notification of contract award is submitted to the Board or if it's based on the completed contract submitted to the board?*

Response: The kick-off meeting timeline is based on the Board of Public Works approval date.

29. *Can you share the State's 2019 open enrollment/fair schedule?*

Response: Yes, please see the attached document labelled open enrollment 2019

Remember proposals are due on July 24, 2020 no later than 2:00 p.m. If there are questions concerning this solicitation, please contact me via e-mail at Lola Tiamiyu at lola.tiamiyu1@maryland.gov .

Date Issued: July 1, 2020

By:

Lola Tiamiyu
Procurement Officer