



MARTIN O'MALLEY  
Governor

ANTHONY BROWN  
Lieutenant Governor

T. ELOISE FOSTER  
Secretary

**QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES # 1**  
**PROJECT NO. F10B4400013**  
**Department of Budget and Management, Central Collection Unit**  
**Account Verification Services**  
**June 17, 2014**

Ladies/Gentlemen:

This List of Questions and Responses, questions #1 through #9, is issued to clarify certain information contained in the above named IFB.

In most instances the submitted questions and the Department's responses merely serve to clarify the existing requirements of the IFB. Sometimes, however, in submitting questions potential Offerors may make statements or express interpretations of contract requirements that may be inconsistent with the Department's intent. To the extent that the Department recognizes such an incorrect interpretation, the provided answer will note that the interpretation is erroneous and either state that the question is moot once the correct interpretation is explained or provide the answer based upon the correct interpretation.

No provided answer to a question may in and of itself change any requirement of the IFB. If, based upon a submitted question, it is determined that any portion of the IFB should be changed, the actual change may only be implemented via a formal amendment to the IFB. In this situation, the answer provided will reference the amendment which contains the IFB change.

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 IFB. 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. Are there any exceptions to the minimum qualifications requirement (Section 2.1) to provide references from three different local, state, or federal government entities within the last year?*

~Effective Resource Management~

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**RESPONSE:** No, there are no exceptions to the Minimum Qualifications. CCU is looking for a Contractor who has experience providing the requested information to government entities because it will be using the information provided by the Contractor to intercept tax refunds in some instances, and requiring the Contractor to have provided the requested information to other government entities ensures the Contractor is capable of providing the quality of information a government entity can reasonably rely on.

2. *Will the Department of Budget & Management provide the web application server to load the database or will this be a contractor hosted web server with access been granted to the front end?*

**RESPONSE:** CCU currently has an FTP Servicer available for these vendor exchanges.

3. *Who is the current contractor?*

**RESPONSE:** The contractor for the 2013 Account Verification Services contract is Thomson Reuters (West Publishing Corporation), of Eagan, Minnesota.

4. *Can you verify in what format the files/accounts will be provided (ex:XML)?*

**RESPONSE:** CCU will work with the Contractor to determine the best format for transferring Account files to the Contractor. Currently, the files are transferred in ASCII format.

5. *In Section 1.24 Mandatory Contractual Terms (page 12), the solicitation indicates that “any exceptions to this IFB or the Contract must be raised prior to Bid submission.” Can the State provide additional information regarding the manner by which exceptions should be submitted to the State (e.g., specific submittal deadline, submittal method)?*

**RESPONSE:** Exceptions to the IFB must be submitted sufficiently prior to the Bid submission for answers to be provided and taken into consideration by Bidders. Exceptions to the terms or conditions of the IFB or Contract can be sent to the Procurement Officer in writing via email or fax.

6. *Sections 4.4.3 and 4.4.4 of the solicitation ask Bidders to provide three copies of the required information. Sections 4.4.5 – 4.4.10 of the solicitation ask Bidders to provide two copies of the required information. To streamline the submission process, would it be allowable for Bidders to provide three copies of all of the required information from Sections 4.4.3 –4.4.10? Can these copies be provided in three separate three-ring binders? If the State prefers that submissions be made as indicated in the solicitation, can the State please provide more guidance as to how Bidders should provide the required information?*

**RESPONSE:** As long as the stated minimum number of copies of the required information in Sections 4.4.3-4.4.10 is included in the bid submission, a Bidder may provide three copies of the required information in order to streamline the submission process. Additionally, per Amendment 2 issued with this List of Questions and Responses, Bidders need to provide only one copy of the submissions requested in 4.4.5-4.4.10; Bidders are also required to provide an electronic version of their bid submission. Please see Amendment 2, Items 1 and 2 for changes to the bid submission requirements.

7. Section 3.2.3 says the online research service for 15 staff members cannot be priced as a separate line item. Would the State consider changing this requirement to allow a separate line item? We would provide flat-rate per user, per month pricing for our online investigative research solution. This would allow CCU unlimited searching of our online database for all types of data requested. However, the online flat-rate pricing needs its own line item because it is inconsistent with bid form's "unit price" per various batch-search types.

**RESPONSE:** Yes, the Department has reconsidered its pricing structure in order to allow Bidders to price per CCU user, per month for online access to the Contractor's database. Please see Amendment 1, Items 1-4 and the Revised Bid Form, Attachment F, issued June 12, 2014.

8. Section 3.2.1.3(3) requires numerous types of bankruptcy information for the 1,000 test accounts, including whether the debtor is in bankruptcy, the Social Security number the debtor put on the bankruptcy case, case number of the bankruptcy proceeding, the disposition of the bankruptcy case, and the date the status of the bankruptcy case changed. Please answer the following:

A. In lieu of all this bankruptcy information, would CCU accept only a bankruptcy "flag" indicating whether the individual/account has been associated with a bankruptcy? Inclusion of all the additional information in 3.2.1.3(3) would create additional expenses for CCU and subject the agency to stricter FCRA credentialing requirements and restrictions. With a bankruptcy flag only, CCU would be subject to non-FCRA restrictions, which means less paperwork and expense.

B. If CCU won't change 3.2.1.3(3) as requested for the test accounts, is a bankruptcy flag acceptable for the remaining 10,000+ accounts? Or would CCU require all bankruptcy information listed in 3.2.1.3(3) for the 10,000+ accounts?

**RESPONSE:**

A. CCU would not accept a "flag" indicating whether a test Account has been associated with a bankruptcy for the 1,000 test Accounts. CCU is requiring the Contractor to provide the information listed in IFB Section 3.2.1.3 (3), understanding that doing so will subject CCU to stricter FCRA credentialing requirements and restrictions than a "flag" would. Please see Section 3.2.5 "Credentialing" for details regarding how the apparent successful Bidder would credential CCU.

B. A bankruptcy "flag" is not acceptable for either the 1,000 test Accounts referenced in 3.2.1 or the approximately 10,000 monthly Accounts referenced in 3.2.2. All information requested in 3.2.1.3 (3) is requested for both the test Accounts and the monthly batch of approximately 10,000 Accounts.

9. Will the Online Search Function specified in 3.2.3 be limited to the data sets mentioned in the IFB?

**RESPONSE:** Yes, the Online Search Function (RFP Section 3.2.3) will be limited to the data sets mentioned in IFB Section 3.2.3, namely, bankruptcy (to include whether the debtor is in bankruptcy, the Social Security number the debtor put on the bankruptcy case, the number of the

bankruptcy proceeding, the disposition of the bankruptcy case, and the date the status of the bankruptcy case changed), death, Social Security number, and address information.

**Remember bids are due on July 22, 2014, no later than 12:00 p.m.** If there are questions concerning this solicitation, please contact me via e-mail at [rachel.hershey@maryland.gov](mailto:rachel.hershey@maryland.gov) or call me at (410) 260-7681 as soon as possible.

Date Issued: 06/17/2014

By:

<signed>  
Rachel Hershey  
Procurement Officer