

Responses to Questions for IFB # 1160  
Grant Compliance Review Services - Child Care Stabilization 1.0 Monitoring

<b>Q1</b>	<b>Is it possible to get the FOIL information or an historical information for similar services that were awarded in the past?</b>
A1	All FOIL requests must be sent in accordance with the instructions and process described at: <a href="https://ocfs.ny.gov/help/foil/">https://ocfs.ny.gov/help/foil/</a> . There were no similar services bid out in the recent past.
<b>Q2</b>	<b>The items that are not required to be submitted with the original RFP (IFB), how soon after the award has been granted, are they required to be submitted?</b>
A2	Per IFB Section 2.2 Packaging of IFB Response - Required Contents of Bid Proposal, there is a list of forms "required during the contract development process". These forms may either be submitted with the bid or will be required post-award. The award letter typically allows 25-30 days for submission of required documents.
<b>Q3</b>	<b>Will a guideline be provided, specifically, outlining the reporting requirements?</b>
A3	Guidelines for the written report are listed in IFB Section 3.2 Product/Service Specifications, #9.
<b>Q4</b>	<b>Is the RFP (IFB) for Compliance review of Childcare Stabilization Grant 1.0 expected to expand in a later date to include Childcare Stabilization for work force supports Grant 2.0?</b>
A4	At OCFS discretion, the monitoring effort may be expanded to other areas with the possibility of a time and cost increase. This would be determined at a later date.
<b>Q5</b>	<b>MWBE opportunities section mentions a 0% MWBE requirement. However, it outlines that in a lower section, in the same paragraph, that if an MWBE is used a requirement of 25% is required. May you kindly confirm that the MWBE requirement is 0%?</b>
A5	Yes, the MWBE requirement is 0% for this procurement. The language referencing 25% credit is regarding utilization of MWBE-certified brokers/dealers does not apply to this RFP
<b>Q6</b>	<b>As this is an RFP (IFB) for the Stabilization Childcare Grant 1.0, which is the 1st of 2, it would appear there is currently not an incumbent? Is there an incumbent for this opportunity? If there is, may we kindly request the amount of hours, Rate, and total contract value that they have been paid for work to the OCFS.</b>
A6	No, there is no incumbent for the stabilization monitoring effort. As this is a new initiative, contract expense data is not available.
<b>Q7</b>	<b>Is any type of Pre-conference going to be held for this IFB 1160?</b>
A7	No.
<b>Q8</b>	<b>Would OCFS consider a bidder who, while not having the exact experience and references specified, deals with the scope of work in its everyday course of business, such as collecting and reviewing documents?</b>
A8	No, the bidder must have 3+ years of relevant experience conducting compliance reviews with human service agencies and/or nonprofit agencies as specified by IFB Section 3.1 Eligible Bidders.
<b>Q9</b>	<b>If a prospective offeror can demonstrate the ability to meet the scope of work within the estimated time frame with a team size that the agency deems appropriate for the scope, even if it's fewer than 10 employees, would that bid be considered?</b>
A9	No, all bidders must satisfy the eligibility criteria outlined in Section 3.1 of the IFB. See also A29.
<b>Q10</b>	<b>The RFP (IFB) has a 0% goal for MWBE participation, could you clarify the OCFS's intentions regarding MWBE involvement in this contract?</b>
A10	As the MWBE participation goal is 0%, MWBE involvement is not required but is encouraged.

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<b>Q11</b>	<b>What systems does OCFS utilize for secure storage, as referenced in item 3.1?</b>
A11	Microsoft SharePoint will be used to provide secure storage.
<b>Q12</b>	<b>Would OCFS consider proposed exceptions to the terms and conditions of the contract?</b>
A12	No. If an applicant cannot agree to the NYS Standard Terms and Conditions, they should not apply. Please refer to IFB Section 4.27 Standard Contract Language and IFB Section 4.28 Appendix A - Standard Clauses for NYS Contracts.
<b>Q13</b>	<p><b>Section 2.2. Required Contents of the Bid proposal</b>  <b>From the RFP (IFB) (page 9): “The following documents should also be completed and provided in the bid, otherwise they will be required during the contract development process: Form AC-3271 S “</b></p> <p><b>From Instructions to Form AC-3271S:</b></p> <p><b>“Upon notification of contract award, use form AC 3271-S, NYS Consultant Services Contractor’s Planned Employment, From Contract Start Date Through the end of the Contract Term (FORM A), attached to these instructions, to report the necessary planned employment information prospectively from the start date through the end of the contract term. This is a one-time reporting requirement.”</b></p> <p><b>Question: Does the proposer have to fill out Form A and submit it with the Proposal or only after the Contract award? If Form A is not required at the time of proposal, does the proposer have to include Instructions to fill out the form following the link provided in the RFP (IFB)?</b></p>
A13	The AC 3271-S (Form A) can be completed and provided during contract development, if selected for an award. The instructions are not required to be provided with the form.
<b>Q14</b>	<p><b>Section 4.2 Price</b>  <b>From the RFP (IFB): “Bidders are expected to provide a single hourly bid rate for all work to be performed, exclusive of travel. Offerer is not to include travel expenses in their bid price.”</b></p> <p><b>Question: Does OCFS have a preferred template for budget submission? If not, should a proposer submit a single hourly bid rate for all labor categories (blended) with total hours or a single hourly bid rate for each labor category with hours for each and total for the project?</b></p>
A14	The OCFS-0910 Request for Bid Form requires one hourly bid rate submitted with the bid proposal. There is no other budget document to completed as a part of the bid.
<b>Q15</b>	<p><b>Section 4.13 : MWBE participation opportunities – Page 23</b></p> <p><b>From the RFP (IFB): “A contractor on any contract resulting from this procurement (Contract) must document its good faith efforts to provide meaningful participation by MWBE as subcontractors and suppliers in the performance of the contract. To that end, by submitting a response to this IFB, the respondent agrees that OCFS may withhold payment pursuant to any contract awarded as a result of this IFB pending receipt of the required MWBE documentation.”</b></p>

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	<b>Question: if MWBE goal for this solicitation is 0%, does the proposer still have to submit the Utilization plan with their Proposal?</b>
A15	No, the MWBE Utilization Plan is not required.
Q16	<b>4.2, pg. 14 Does OCFS only want a single hourly price for the cost response, or is OCFS also requiring estimated number of hours to complete the entire project?</b>
A16	The OCFS-0910 Request for Bid Form requires one hourly bid rate submitted with the bid proposal. The estimated hours are provided. The form says, "The maximum total bid amount inclusive of possible translation and all direct services cannot exceed \$990,000. The maximum total bid amount will be calculated by multiplying 4,500 hours by your hourly bid rate. Any bid exceeding this amount will be disqualified from consideration."
Q17	<b>Bidder's Notice - Statement at top of page 2 reads as follows:</b>  <b>"Addition to IFB Section 3.2 Product/Service Specifications, item 5: Contractor staff will be required to complete and sign the OCFS-4715 Confidentiality Non-Disclosure Agreement in accordance with Section 4.24 of this IFB and must make reasonable efforts to safeguard all provider data."</b>  <b>Can OCFS please confirm if all staff who are proposed in a bidder's response must sign the OCFS-4715 Confidentiality Non-Disclosure Agreement ?</b>
A17	The OCFS-4715 form is required to be signed by contractor staff participating in the compliance reviews with access to confidential information and would need to be updated during contract execution as staffing changes occur.
Q18	<b>Section 1. Introduction: Does OCFS intend to replace providers that are non-responsive to requests for information to reach the estimated 750 sample size, or will the unresponsive providers be considered a 'Completed Review' (and therefore reduce the overall sample size to less than 750)?</b>
A18	We will not reduce the sample size to less than 750. We would consider this to be a completed review by the vendor. OCFS will not replace providers.
Q19	<b>Section 1.1 (Page 4): Approximately 750 providers will be receiving a grant compliance review. Have these providers been selected?</b>
A19	The sample will be random and providers have not yet been selected.
Q20	<b>Section 1.1 (Page 4): Providers are required to keep written or electronic records for at least 5 years in case of an audit. Are grant recipients aware of this requirement?</b>
A21	Yes, the providers agreed to the documentation retention terms.
Q22	<b>Section 1.1 (Page 4): Reviews are to determine whether providers' documentation adequately supports their expenses, including whether they can provide proof of payment. Documentation may include expense receipts, invoices, or other similar documents. What happens in the case of providers not having proper supporting documentation?</b>
A22	If the vendor determines documentation submitted does not support expenses, they must report their findings to OCFS for review and determination of next steps. Lack of documentation may result in a collection effort that would not be the vendor's responsibility.

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Q23	<p><b>Section 1.1 (Page 5):</b> Outside of the actual review of documentation, the length of time needed to establish contact with providers, obtain their supporting documentation, and follow-up on any questions or obtain additional documentation is estimated to be approximately 5 to 40 business days.</p> <p><b>Is there a required timeline for providers to submit documentation and/or respond to document requests?</b></p>
A23	Grantees have 30 days to respond. If no response, a follow-up letter will be sent, and grantees will have 15 more days to submit the required documentation.
Q24	<p><b>Section 1.1 (Page 5):</b> <b>What is the required documentation submission and response timeline for providers?</b></p>
A24	Grantees have 30 days to respond. If no response, a follow-up letter will be sent, and grantees will have 15 more days to submit the required documentation.
Q25	<p><b>Section 1.1 (Page 5):</b> <b>Does the contractor have discretion to establish a timeline for document submission?</b></p>
A25	Grantees have 30 days to respond. If no response, a follow-up letter will be sent, and grantees will have 15 more days to submit the required documentation.
Q26	<p><b>Section 1.1 (Page 5):</b> <b>Will OCFS replace nonresponsive providers with a new assignment?</b></p>
A26	See A18.
Q27	<p><b>Section 2.2 Required Contents of Bid Proposal, A written narrative describing how the organization meets the eligibility requirements (Page 9):</b> Has at least 10 employees and identifies at least 1 physical office location in NYS that will be used for this project.</p> <p>9. Does the 10-employee minimum include specific position types? If so, what positions?</p>
A27	No, specific position types are not required.
Q28	<p><b>Section 2.2 Required Contents of Bid Proposal, A written narrative describing how the organization meets the eligibility requirements (Page 9):</b> <b>How does the 10-employee minimum relate to the services requested?</b></p>
A28	The 10 employee minimum is required to demonstrate organizational capacity.
Q29	<p><b>Section 2.2 Required Contents of Bid Proposal, A written narrative describing how the organization meets the eligibility requirements (Page 9):</b> <b>Is OCFS requiring a minimum of 10 employees to be assigned to this engagement to perform the services requested?</b></p>
A29	No.
Q30	<p><b>Section 2.2 Required Contents of Bid Proposal, A written narrative describing how the organization meets the eligibility requirements (Page 9):</b> <b>Is the agency requiring a minimum number of employees to perform the services requested?</b></p>
A30	No.
Q31	<p><b>Section 2.2 Required Contents of Bid Proposal, A written narrative describing how the organization meets the eligibility requirements (Page 9):</b> <b>How does the physical office in NYS relate to the services requested?</b></p>

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A31	A physical office is required for anticipated site visits throughout NYS. In-state travel is anticipated to be more cost-effective than out-of-state travel.
<b>Q32</b>	<b>Section 2.2 Required Contents of Bid Proposal, A written narrative describing how the organization meets the eligibility requirements (Page 9): If the work will be performed as desk reviews (page 13) or onsite, what work is required to be performed at the contractor's physical NY office?</b>
A32	Most work is expected to be completed at the awarded vendor's office remotely with provider documents stored in the OCFS-provided secure SharePoint site. We are requiring bidders to have a NYS office presence due to the anticipated site visits and the transfer of non-electronic documents. If the provider only has hard copies that they cannot upload to the SharePoint, the vendor will have to hand deliver or ship the documents via certified or tracked carrier service to OCFS at 52 Washington Street, Rensselaer, NY.
<b>Q33</b>	<b>Section 2.2 Required Contents of Bid Proposal, A written narrative describing how the organization meets the eligibility requirements (Page 9): What is the required location for onsite reviews to be performed?</b>
A33	Desk Reviews will be conducted remotely through our SharePoint site. Site visits may need to be conducted statewide depending on the child care program's location and ability to electronically provide documentation.
<b>Q34</b>	<b>Section 2.2 Required Contents of Bid Proposal, A written narrative describing how the organization meets the eligibility requirements (Page 9): If the review cannot be performed virtually, are providers required to travel to the contractor's NY office for the review to be conducted?</b>
A34	No, the contractor may have to travel to the provider site within NYS.
<b>Q35</b>	<b>Agrees to utilize an OCFS-provided system and secure storage location for use while conducting grant compliance reviews. Have a secure means of electronically accessing and viewing providers' supporting documentation. What OCFS system will be provided for the contractor's use and what type of data does it contain?</b>
A35	SharePoint. The data will include PII and cannot be downloaded. NYS OCFS is responsible for document retention.
<b>Q36</b>	<b>Is the secure storage location referring to storage of physical and/or electronic documents?</b>
A36	See A32.
<b>Q37</b>	<b>Is there a vendor, software, and/or location requirement associated with the secure storage location or electronically accessing, storing, and viewing providers' supporting documentation?</b>
A37	An OCFS SharePoint site will be provided to the vendor for secure storage and viewing of provider's supporting documentation.
<b>Q38</b>	<b>Packaging of IFB Response: Does the technology used to collect and store provider documentation need to be FedRAMP certified or would a commercial technology suffice (e.g., Azure Commercial).</b>
A38	We are not requiring the vendor to be FedRAMP certified. OCFS will be providing the secure storage location for the vendor to use.

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Q39	<p><b>Section 3.2 Product/Service Specifications: The awarded contractor will perform the following work: (Pages 11-12):</b>  <b>#2 Be available to answer questions providers may have about the review, including technical assistance with electronically uploading their documentation to the <u>secure environment provided by OCFS</u> for the awarded contractor to perform their grant compliance review.</b></p> <p><b>Is OCFS providing the secure system for documents to be transferred between the contractor and the providers?</b></p>
A39	Yes, OCFS will be providing the SharePoint site for document retention.
Q40	<p><b>Section 3.2 Product/Service Specifications: The awarded contractor will perform the following work: (Pages 11-12):</b>  <b>What system will be provided by the OCFS for documents to be transferred between the contractor and the providers?</b></p>
A40	See A37 and A38.
Q41	<p><b>#5 Contractor staff will be required to complete and sign the OCFS-4715 Confidentiality Non-Disclosure Agreement in accordance with Section 4.24 of this IFB and must make reasonable efforts to safeguard all provider data.</b></p> <p><b>Should the NDA be completed by the contractor and submitted with the proposal, or is it to be completed by all indicated parties after the contract is awarded and the review/evaluation is being completed?</b></p>
A41	The OCFS-4715 forms should be submitted post-award during contract development by all individuals who will have access to the data, if selected for award.
Q42	<p><b>Vendors must have capacity to work with providers that have limited English speaking/writing/ reading abilities and be able to communicate in the provider's primary language.</b>  <b>Does AQC know how many of the 750 providers that will be monitored have limited English speaking/writing/reading abilities?</b></p>
A42	Per IFB Section 3.2 Product/Service Specifications #1, OCFS estimates 10% of providers are LEP.
Q43	<p><b>For each provider within the sample, AQC will provide provider expense reports, including Stabilization 1.0 expenditures. Have providers already submitted expenditure reports? Was supporting documentation required to be submitted along with the expenditure report?</b></p>
A43	Yes, expense reports were required to be submitted by the providers. Supporting documentation was not gathered at that time. The grant terms required providers to supply supporting documentation available upon request.
Q44	<p><b>Does the estimate of 6 hours per review include the following: time required to issue requests for information; communicate with the providers and collect documentation; analyze documents received; conduct follow up inquires; and develop and send the closeout letters?</b></p>
A44	Yes.
Q45	<p><b>Does OCFS intend to provide support to the vendor if childcare providers are unresponsive?</b></p>

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A45	Grantees have 30 days to respond to the vendor. If no response, a follow-up letter will be sent by the vendor, and grantees will have 15 more days to submit the required documentation. If the provider is non-responsive, the vendor's review would be considered complete.
<b>Q46</b>	<b>Does OCFS intend to provide support to the vendor to address complex inquiries or challenges by childcare providers?</b>
A46	Yes, OCFS Audit and Quality Control (AQC) will be the point of contact and will assist the vendor. AQC will partner with the OCFS Division of Child Care Services (DCCS) on complex inquiries on an as-needed basis.
<b>Q47</b>	<b>Section 3. Specifications, 3.2. Product/Service Specifications (Page 13): Will the request for information be issued to providers at the direction of OCFS on agency letterhead?</b>
A47	No, the request for information will come from the vendor and will not include OCFS agency letterhead. OCFS will send a letter out informing the providers of a pending review with the selected vendor's name .
<b>Q48</b>	<b>Section 3. Specifications, 3.2. Product/Service Specifications (Page 13): Will the closeout letters be issued to the providers at the direction of OCFS on agency letterhead?</b>
A48	The closeout letter will be sent to the providers on vendor letterhead. Grantees can appeal to DCCS for final determination.
<b>Q49</b>	<b>Section 3. Specifications, 3.2. Product/Service Specifications (Page 13): Will OCFS provide the Vendor team with OCFS email addresses and phone numbers to use in communications with providers?</b>
A49	No, the successful bidder will not be provided with OCFS email addresses and phone numbers. They will use their own email addresses and phone numbers to conduct these activities.
<b>Q50</b>	<b>Please confirm if the work needs to be completed within one year of the contract start date.</b>
A50	Confirmed. The contract deliverables must be completed within 12 months from the contract start date,
<b>Q51</b>	<b>What percent of reviews do you anticipate will require onsite visits?</b>
A51	AQC anticipates reviews requiring travel may be 3 - 5% of the sample size of 750.
<b>Q52</b>	<b>A travel budget of \$10,000 will be added to all bids as an estimate of travel costs. What will happen if the travel budget is exceeded?</b>
A52	At OCFS discretion, the travel line might be increased if there is available funding left in the contract, however the total contract value cannot exceed \$1M.
<b>Q53</b>	<b>Will the selected vendor be responsible for collection activities?</b>
A53	OCFS will be responsible for any collection efforts.
<b>Q54</b>	<b>What financial software does the Office of Child and Family Services use to manage and track the grant funds?</b>
A54	OCFS uses the Statewide Financial System (SFS) to manage grant funding.
<b>Q55</b>	<b>Does the Audit &amp; Quality Control have contingency plans in place to address non-responsive providers?</b>
A55	Yes, OCFS will address non-responsive providers.
<b>Q56</b>	<b>Should the selected Vendor assume they will be operating at the complete direction of OCFS, or is the Vendor expected to operate independently?</b>

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A56	The vendor will work independently with oversight from OCFS.
<b>Q57</b>	<b>Do you have analytics on the number of counties and childcare providers within each county who received the grant?</b>
A57	The sample will be selected at random and AQC cannot anticipate the split between providers and counties until the selection is made.
<b>Q58</b>	<b>Does the OCFS have a centralized repository that can be utilized to upload and store documents?</b>
A58	Yes, SharePoint will be provided by OCFS to be used for this purpose.
<b>Q59</b>	<b>Page 23 specifies the MWBE participation goals are 0%. Please confirm there are no MWBE participation goals under this contract. If 0%, please confirm if the associated MWBE forms should be completed and submitted as NA within the response.</b>
A59	As stated in the IFB, MWBE participation goals are 0%. Required and recommended documents to be submitted in response to this IFB are listed in IFB Section 2.2 Packaging of IFB Response, Required Contents of Bid Proposal.
<b>Q60</b>	<b>What is the format of the engagement? Is it an agreed upon procedure (AUP) or a program specific audit?</b>
A60	The form of engagement will be AUP.
<b>Q61</b>	<b>Are we going to test/review 100% of submitted expenses or just a selection of samples?</b>
A61	100% of receipts/invoices for submitted expenses should be reviewed.
<b>Q62</b>	<b>Does the Q&amp;A from the original bid still apply, or do we need to ask all relevant questions again?</b>
A62	This IFB is a new unique procurement for these services. Responses to questions from the previous bid that was cancelled/withdrawn are not applicable to this procurement. Prospective bidders have been instructed to ask their questions again.