

Responses to Questions for RFP 1127
Foster/Adoptive Parent Certification and Approval Process Software

| Section 4.0 Scope of Work | |
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| Q1 | <u>Paragraph 3</u> Please provide more details about the NYS SSO solution. |
| A1 | The solution should be able to integrate with a 3 rd party identity provider, specifically the NYS Single Sign-On, via either the SAML or OpenID-Connect protocols. |
| Q2 | <u>Page 15</u> <i>“Each VA will have foster care and/or adoptive application tracks customized based on their OCFS-approved corporate authority for board-out/foster care and/or place-out/adoption. VAs may also have emergency approval tracks.”</i> a) Based on Licensing module requirements as stated, does OCFS have expectations for each LDSS and VA to create their own customized tracks within the software for (1) Foster Parent Only, (2) Foster and Adoptive, (3) Adoptive Parent Only, and (4) Emergency Foster Parent? b) Looking forward to a reporting and performance measure outcomes perspective, has OCFS any preferences to standardization of data indicators for all LDSS and VA agencies? |
| A2 | a) No, Local Department of Social Services (LDSS) and Voluntary Agencies (VA) are not customizing tracks within the software. There will be one OCFS-customized track for each of the four identified application tracks. b) Yes, OCFS will identify specific preferences to standardization of data indicators for all LDSS/VA. |
| Q3 | <u>Page 15</u> <i>“Each LDSS and VA will have their own separate web page as part of the proposed software.”</i> Can OCFS confirm the data for each LDSS and VA may reside within the same database? |
| A3 | Yes, each web page will live within the same database. Access to each web page will be limited to user role. |
| Q4 | <u>Page 15</u> Please describe the customization each LDSS/VA will require in terms of complexity and volume, referenced on Page 15. |
| A4 | The LDSS/VA will have the ability to have their business logo and OCFS-approved forms to be included on their individual web page. |
| Q5 | <u>Page 15</u> <i>“System design will allow for any documents or workflow of the NYS foster/adoptive certification or approval process to be easily configured into the system at the direction of NYS.”</i> Would OCFS be able to provide existing workflows currently available? We understand these may change as a result of discovery during implementation. |
| A5 | OCFS is prepared to share workflows and diagrams post-contract with the awarded vendor. |
| Q6 | <u>Page 15, sub bullet under first bullet.</u> Can the agency provide a more detailed breakdown of the estimated 8,500 users, including how many will be OCFS staff, LDSS staff, VA staff, and prospective foster/adoptive parents? |

Responses to Questions for RFP 1127
Foster/Adoptive Parent Certification and Approval Process Software

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| A6 | RFP Section 4.0 Scope of Work states unlimited users. Currently there are approximately 100 OCFS staff, approximately 10,150 LDSS/VA staff, and approximately 25,000 prospective and active foster/adoptive parents. |
| Q7 | Is it possible to get a breakdown of 8,500 users by OCFS staff users, LDSS users, VA Users including number of VAs, prospective foster/adoptive parents, and other users? Reference: "approximately 8,500 total users are anticipated" |
| A7 | See A6. |
| Q8 | Approximately 8,500 total users are expected. Please provide the breakdown of external and internal user counts. |
| A8 | See A6. |
| Q9 | What is the breakdown of expected users for each of the following groups? a) OCFS staff b) LDSS c) VA staff d) Prospective foster / adoptive parents |
| A9 | See A6. |
| Q10 | Please share details about Sub-Agencies – LDSSs and VAs like a) External users count b) Internal users count c) Do these agencies complete the application form on behalf of the applicant? e) Can we access existing applications? |
| A10 | a) See A6. b) See A6. c) LDSS/VA will complete certain forms for those applicants who cannot complete them electronically on their own and for Emergency Approved Foster Homes. d) The awarded vendor will have access to all current data within the existing system for the purposes of transitioning the data to the new system. |
| Q11 | Please provide more detail regarding the LDSSs and VAs that will benefit from the system. For example, how many LDSSs and VAs will need access? |
| A11 | There are 58 LDSS and 55 VAs. The solution must be flexible if agencies need to be added in the future. |
| Q12 | How many total users will need access to the system? |
| A12 | The system must be able to support unlimited users. As stated in RFP Section 4.0 Scope of Work, OCFS anticipates approximately 8,500 total active users, but the actual number of users may be higher. The current assessment of maximum potential users is approximately 35,250. Refer to A6. |
| Q13 | How many users do you anticipate will be using this portal/community? |
| A13 | See A12. |
| Q14 | a) Roughly how many foster/adoptive parents, prospective foster/adoptive parents, or other types of contacts are in the database today and b) what is the anticipated rate of growth? |
| A14 | a) There are approximately 7,500 preapproval/precertification applications and approximately 15,000 active foster/ foster & adoptive/relative homes that may need reauthorization on a yearly basis. The solution must accommodate these numbers and build onto these base estimates annually. |

Responses to Questions for RFP 1127
Foster/Adoptive Parent Certification and Approval Process Software

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| | b) OCFS can not predict the growth annually, but it will likely increase. Applicant information and documents must be retained indefinitely. |
| Q15 | What are the different user roles (e.g., OCFS staff, LDSS staff, VA staff, prospective foster/ adoptive parents)? |
| A15 | User roles include prospective applicants, household members of prospective applicants, OCFS administrative staff, LDSS/VA caseworkers, supervisors and clerical staff. OCFS will review and discuss in more detail with awarded vendor. |
| Q16 | Will role-based access be required for different functionalities? |
| A16 | Yes. |
| Q17 | How many different user roles and access levels are currently supported by OCFS? |
| A17 | Refer to A15. There are a minimum of six roles. The solution should be flexible if new roles are needed. |
| Q18 | Who are the primary users of OCFS' portal/community (e.g., customers, partners, employees)? |
| A18 | Primary users of the proposed system will include LDSS/VA employees and prospective and current foster/adoptive parents. Please refer to RFP Section 4.0 Scope of Work for additional information. |
| Q19 | a) Are the portal/community users a mix of both parents and providers/partners (e.g. NGOs)? b) If a mix of both, do you know the number break down of parents and providers/partners? |
| A19 | a) Refer to A18. b) Refer to A15. |
| Q20 | How many users do you anticipate need access to a record/base on behalf of someone else or collaborate on someone else's record (e.g. an NGO helps with a certification)? |
| A20 | All LDSS/VA users, applicants, and co-applicants will have different levels of security access to a record based on their roles. Each user requires their own unique ID, log in information and multifactor identification. |
| Q21 | How often do you expect users to log in to the community (e.g., daily, weekly, monthly)? |
| A21 | For OCFS/LDSS/VA users it could be daily. OCFS currently does not track foster/adoptive parent usage. |
| Q22 | If you expect different users to log into the portal/ community at different frequencies, can you provide the following details: a) What type of user (individual or partner i.e. NGO)? b) what level of frequency? c) how many logins do you anticipate per user per month? d) do you have any historical data on user login frequency? |
| A22 | a) Refer to A21. b) Refer to A21. c) Refer to A12 d) Refer to A12 |
| Q23 | Are there peak times or seasons when user activity is higher? |

Responses to Questions for RFP 1127
Foster/Adoptive Parent Certification and Approval Process Software

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| A23 | OCFS is unable to provide this level of detail at this time. The system is anticipated to see significant usage year-round. |
| Q24 | <u>Page 15</u> Is there an existing data sharing agreement for the bidirectional dataflow API with CONX? |
| A24 | No, this is not required for this RFP. |
| Q25 | Is there additional information for interacting with CONX? |
| A25 | CONX uses a REST-based API that relies on specified function calls to transmit data to and from the system. OCFS will provide API documentation to the awarded vendor after they are approved for access. |
| Q26 | The RFP states that bidirectional data flow with CONX is required using APIs. a) To clarify the scope, could you please provide a detailed list of the data points that OCFS considers "critical data" for this exchange? b) Is there anticipated volume and frequency(real time vs scheduled)? |
| A26 | a) OCFS will provide the bi-directional data points with the awarded vendor. b) The bi-directional data flow will be in real time. |
| Q27 | Does CONX support REST API's? |
| A27 | Refer to A25. |
| Q28 | What database technology is used by the CONNECTIONS (CONX) data warehouse? |
| A28 | Any proposed solution would interact with the API gateway to exchange data with CONNECTIONS. |
| Q29 | <u>Page 16</u> <i>"System will store and produce LDSS and VA identifying data for use in the application and the CONX bidirectional data exchange."</i> Is there API documentation available for CONX OCFS might provide? |
| A29 | Refer to A25. |
| Q30 | What are the specific data exchange requirements with CONX? |
| A30 | Refer to A25. |
| Q31 | Will the solution perform direct create, read, update, and delete operations on CONX? |
| A31 | Refer to A25. |
| Q32 | <u>Page 17</u> Would OCFS be able to provide a list or required reports or expectations of specific reporting requirements? |
| A32 | Currently there are 35 reports. Reports should include at a minimum, the status of each application and recertification/renewal of approval at any point in time in the process, applications and caseloads assigned to LDSS/VA, number of applications/recertification/renewal of approval that are outstanding/overdue, list of required elements that are outstanding. Additional reporting requirements will be reviewed and discussed with the awarded vendor. |
| Q33 | <u>Page 17, Securely submit/upload required documentation</u> Does the agency own any document management system for storing documents etc., can you provide details? |
| A33 | Proposals must include a document storage solution. |

Responses to Questions for RFP 1127
Foster/Adoptive Parent Certification and Approval Process Software

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| Q34 | <u>Page 17, Securely submit/upload required documentation</u> Are vendors allowed to propose document management systems as part of their solution? |
| A34 | Refer to A33. |
| Q35 | How do you currently manage document uploads and storage (e.g., birth certificates, legal paperwork)? |
| A35 | Refer to A33. |
| Q36 | a) Since OCFS is currently paper based, are the forms being scanned once they are completed? b) If yes, what format are they being stored in and how many electronic documents are there? c) How large are the files? d) Would OCFS expect the documents to be migrated to the new system? |
| A36 | a) Forms are currently being completed within a pilot solution. Applications that cannot be completed electronically as well as supporting documents are uploaded into the system. b) PDF, Word, JPEG, TIFF, and PNG formats are currently supported. c) The solution must be able to accommodate photos that could be up to 10mb in size and support multiple-page PDF document uploads. d) Yes, RFP Section 2.3 notes that if a new contractor is selected, a transition period is anticipated. Documents stored in the pilot solution would be migrated to the new system during that transition period. |
| Q37 | Are we taking paper applications via in person, email then these agencies manually entered data or scanned documents? |
| A37 | Applicants have the ability to complete a paper application. LDSS/VA would enter data into the system and upload the completed documents if the applicants choose to complete the paper application. Ideally, the majority of applicants will choose to complete the applications on-line in the system. |
| Q38 | <u>Page 18, Training, Support, and Maintenance</u> Does the agency have an existing Learning Management System to aid with training? |
| A38 | No. |
| Q39 | <u>Page 18, Training, Support, and Maintenance</u> Can vendors propose LMS? |
| A39 | Yes, a vendor could propose a Learning Management System (LMS) as part of their proposal and budget. |
| Q40 | Is the training requirement for LDSSs and VAs a train-the-trainer model of full scope end user training? |
| A40 | No, OCFS requires the vendor to provide direct systems training to LDSS/VA users as well as technical assistance throughout the life of the contract. |
| Q41 | How many users will require training? |
| A41 | See A6. OCFS staff and LDSS/VA staff must be trained by the awarded vendor as stated in RFP Section 4.0 Scope of Work. |
| Q42 | <u>Page 18, Data Management</u> Does the agency have a Data Warehouse / Data lake solution implemented or planned for the future? |

Responses to Questions for RFP 1127
Foster/Adoptive Parent Certification and Approval Process Software

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| A42 | Yes, OCFS has an external data warehouse, but expects that the proposed solution will be able to independently generate data reports. |
| Q43 | <u>Page 18, Data Management, Second bullet</u> Please provide details around the volume of data to be migrated. |
| A43 | Refer to A14 and A15 and RFP Section 4.0 Scope of Work. Currently there are approximately 7,500 applications in process of initial certification/approval and 10,500 approved/certified foster/adoptive homes. |
| Q44 | a) Will historical data need to be migrated? b) If yes, what is the volume of data that needs to be migrated from the existing system? c) Are there any data quality issues that need to be addressed before migration? d) Where is the data stored today and in what format? |
| A44 | a) Refer to A36(d). b) Refer to A43. c) Yes, pilot data elements must match CONX data elements prior to migration of old data to the new system provided by the awarded vendor. d) Refer to A36. |
| Q45 | <u>Page 18, Data Management, Second bullet</u> a) Could you please confirm which Enterprise Service Bus (ESB) / API Gateway the agency is currently using? b) Additionally, are vendors required to use the same ESB for integrations in their proposed solutions? |
| A45 | a) Refer to A25. b) The proposed solution will be required to use the NYS API gateway for API-based data exchanges. |
| Q46 | Are there requirements for API Gateway to secure API based traffic between applications and systems? |
| A46 | As stated in several places throughout the RFP, proposed solutions must comply with all NYS ITS policies: https://its.ny.gov/policies . As such, any system connecting to the NYS API gateway shall comply with NYS Information Security Policy and related standards: https://its.ny.gov/information-security-policy . All data in transit shall meet NYS Encryption standards: https://its.ny.gov/encryption |
| Q47 | <u>Page 18, Data Management, Second bullet</u> Are vendors allowed to propose ESB tool of their choice? |
| A47 | No, all vendors must use the NYS API gateway. |
| Q48 | <u>Page 18, Tracking, Reports, and Search Features</u> a) Does the Agency have analytics and visualization tools currently in use? b) If so, can you please provide their names? |
| A48 | a) Yes. b) The current pilot has proprietary analytics and visualization tools. OCFS expects the proposed solution to support analytics and visualization tools. |
| Q49 | a) Are there any specific dashboards and reports for OCFS? b) How many dashboards and reports are currently being used in OCFS? |

Responses to Questions for RFP 1127
Foster/Adoptive Parent Certification and Approval Process Software

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| A49 | a) See A32. Yes, all roles have access to dashboards/reports and access is based on security role. b) Currently there are approximately 35 different reports. Each applicant, LDSS/VA user and OCFS user would have their own dashboard. The awarded vendor shall be flexible with the number of dashboards and reports. |
| Q50 | <u>Page 18, Tracking, Reports, and Search Features</u> Are vendors allowed to propose analytics and visualization tools as part of their solution? |
| A50 | Yes, a vendor could propose analytics and visualization tools as part of their proposal and budget. |
| Q51 | <u>Page 18, Tracking, Reports, and Search Features, Second and Third Bullet</u> Can the agency provide details around reporting requirements of the solution? |
| A51 | Refer to A32 and A49. |
| Q52 | Do you have a preferred reporting platform like Power BI or Tableau? |
| A52 | Refer to A48. OCFS has the ability to work with Tableau and Cognos. |
| Q53 | How many certification requests are received per year? |
| A53 | Currently the number of initial requests and certifications and approvals are approximated at 7,500 annually. Existing foster homes must be recertified/approved on an annual basis. |
| Q54 | What are the estimated number of completed/executed documents/applications and associated workflows being completed/processed/submitted annually? |
| A54 | OCFS does not have the ability to calculate the number of documents executed. There are approximately 45 documents per foster/adoptive parent applicant for at least 3 of the 4 tracks. All of these documents must be available to an applying foster/adoptive parent applications (7,500 currently homes) and all yearly reauthorizations of foster/adoptive parents (15,000 individuals in 10,500 foster/adoptive homes). |
| Q55 | How many applications do you process a year? Please provide a volume of applications per annum. |
| A55 | Refer to A14. |
| Q56 | What is the average annual volume of foster application and adoption applications that are processed? |
| A56 | Refer to A14. |
| Q57 | Can the agency provide the following details: a) Case Volume - per month/annum. b) DB size c) Expected annual growth - case volume & DB size. |
| A57 | a) Refer to A14. b & c) This information is not currently available. OCFS will review the current data storage requirements and growth storage with the awarded vendor. |
| Q58 | Is there an estimated budget for this RFP? |
| A58 | No, the awarded budget will be determined based on the costs requested by the proposals received. As this is a best-value procurement, applicants are encouraged to keep costs as low as possible to better compete with other organizations applying to this procurement. Please see RFP Section 5.5 Part III – Cost Proposal and RFP Section 6.4 Cost Evaluation for additional information. |
| Q59 | What is the total budget earmarked for this procurement? |

Responses to Questions for RFP 1127
Foster/Adoptive Parent Certification and Approval Process Software

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| A59 | Refer to A58. |
| Q60 | What amount is being budgeted, for ongoing support, software licensing, hosting, and support of the new system? |
| A60 | Refer to A58. |
| Q61 | Are OCFS looking to develop custom software from scratch or to have an off-the-shelf solution? |
| A61 | The proposed solution, either custom or off-the-shelf, must meet all requirements of the RFP and NYS. Please refer to RFP Section 4.0 Scope of Work for the complete list of requirements. |
| Q62 | Will the solution be integrated with an existing web content management solution or will the solution be stand-alone? |
| A62 | The solution will be stand-alone. |
| Q63 | Does the software need to integrate with existing systems such as CONNECTIONS (CONX)? |
| A63 | Yes, the software will have a bi-directional interface with CONX. |
| Q64 | a) What external systems does the OCFS integrate with (e.g., payment gateways, other state systems, third-party applications)? b) Are there existing APIs or connectors that can be leveraged, or will custom integration be required? |
| A64 | a) The proposed solution must integrate with CONX as outlined in RFP Section 4.0 Scope of Work. b) OCFS will review with the awarded vendor. |
| Q65 | Please provide a detailed list of required systems integrations and level of complexity for each. |
| A65 | Per RFP Section 4, the licensing module must allow for Single Sign-On (SSO) integration with the NYS SSO solution and CONX. OCFS will review and discuss this further with the awarded vendor. Also See A1. |
| Q66 | Are you looking to integrate existing systems (e.g., case management, document storage) or build a new one from scratch? |
| A66 | Refer to A61. |
| Q67 | Can the agency provide a complete list of interfacing systems that will integrate with the proposed solution? |
| A67 | See A65. |
| Q68 | Regarding offline capability, does this imply a native mobile app is required? |
| A68 | Offline capability is not a component of the proposed solution. A mobile app is not required, but mobile accessibility is required for this solution. |
| Q69 | a) Do you need mobile accessibility for caseworkers, foster parents, or applicants? b) Is a mobile app required for this solution? |
| A69 | a) Yes b) No. Refer to A68. |
| Q70 | For applicants initiating the certification and approval process, will the solution simply provide URLs to online forms for submission? |

Responses to Questions for RFP 1127
Foster/Adoptive Parent Certification and Approval Process Software

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| A70 | No. The requirements outlined in the RFP include a software that allows the user to create, complete, and update an application within the system. The system must replicate the appearance and functionality of any and all relevant OCFS approved forms and templates. |
| Q71 | Will the solution enable applicants to create accounts to provide access to a portal or dashboard? |
| A71 | Yes. End users will be required to create an account to access the solution. The NYS SSO identity solution that the proposed solution is required to integrate with will allow end users to self serve and create their own user accounts. |
| Q72 | What are the compliance requirements for data security and privacy (e.g., NYS security policies, FedRAMP)? |
| A72 | Refer to RFP, Section 3.1 Minimum Qualifications and Section 4 Scope of Work. |
| Q73 | Are there specific logging and auditing requirements for the system? |
| A73 | Yes. Data entry and monitoring/auditing will be consistent with NYS laws, regulations and policy for foster/adoptive certification and approval. As listed in the RFP Section 3.1 Minimum Qualifications, compliance with the NYS Security Logging Standard (https://its.ny.gov/security-logging) is required. See A46. |
| Q74 | If there is a data conversion requirements, please inventory all data sources, file formats, and size of the current data sets to be converted and migrated into the new system. |
| A74 | Yes, there will be data conversion requirements. OCFS will review and discuss with the awarded vendor. |
| Q75 | For data conversion requirements, please inventory all data sources, file formats, and size of the current data sets to be converted and migrated into the new system. |
| A75 | See A74. |
| Q76 | Can OCFS provide more clarity on data conversion scope in terms of number of source systems and tables, and corresponding volumes of data? |
| A76 | See A32, A36, and A54. OCFS will review additional details with the awarded vendor. |
| Q77 | a) What are the requirements for data retention and export at the end of the contract? b) Are there specific formats or processes that need to be followed? |
| A77 | a) Upon the termination and/or expiration of the contract, the awarded vendor will first ensure that all data and uploaded documentation is accessible to OCFS and the replacement vendor. Any remaining copies of such data would be disposed of pursuant to the NYS sanitization/secure disposal standard (NYS-S13-003) completed within thirty (30) days of OCFS's confirmation of the successful transfer of the data to the new vendor. Please refer to RFP Section 4.0 Scope of Work – Data Management for additional information. b) See A77(a). Any other specific details will be decided at the end of the contract. |
| Q78 | Is the vendor required to be on site for any portion of the contract term? |
| A78 | OCFS will expect the vendor to be available for onsite meetings where OCFS determines that in person meetings are required for the successful implementation and/or deployment of the system. |
| Q79 | Recruitment of foster parents is usually a high priority for our clients, but we do not see it in scope. Is recruitment on your roadmap? |

Responses to Questions for RFP 1127
Foster/Adoptive Parent Certification and Approval Process Software

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| A79 | Correct, recruitment is not in the scope of work for the software solution. Per RFP Section 2.1 Purpose and Procurement Objectives, “the recruitment, certification/approval, and direct oversight of foster and adoptive homes is the responsibility of 58 county local departments of social services (LDSSs), New York City, the Saint Regis Mohawk Reservation and multiple voluntary authorized agencies (VAs)... It is the goal that the software system alleviates the administrative burden of LDSSs and VAs and will allow administrators more time to address complex child welfare needs and require less time on paperwork and redundant data entry.” |
| Q80 | a) Platform: Does OCFS possess any of the CRM licenses (ServiceNow, Salesforce, MS Dynamics or any other CRM) which can be leveraged? b) Is OCFS okay with a solution that sits on one of the CRM? |
| A80 | a) No. b) This may be considered acceptable. OCFS will review and discuss with the awarded vendor. |
| Q81 | What is the current Identity Store for OCFS Staff, LDSS and VA users? |
| A81 | The proposed solution should use the NYS SOS Solution and will use the OCFS Identity Store. |
| Q82 | Per NYS ITS policies, based on user's Identity and Authenticator Assurance level, we may need to enforce ID proofing or MFA or both for users accessing the system. Does the agency have an existing ID proofing and MFA service which can be leveraged? |
| A82 | Yes. |
| Q83 | The link to the 55 OCFS- approved forms/templates seems to have moved to another page. Please provide the updated link. |
| A83 | The link to where the forms/templates are listed has been updated in the RFP Section 4.0 on page 16. https://ocfs.ny.gov/publications/fostercare/Home-Finding-Practice-Guide.pdf |
| Q84 | Can you please provide a list of OCFS-approved forms? |
| A84 | Refer to A83. |

| Other Sections | |
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| Q85 | <u>Section 2.1 Purpose and Procurement Objectives – paragraph 1, page 9</u> a) Does the agency have any preference for a specific cloud service provider such as AWS, Azure, or Salesforce? b) Which cloud service providers are currently utilized by the Agency? |
| A85 | a) No, OCFS does not have a preference. b) OCFS will review and discuss with vendor awardee. |
| Q86 | <u>Section 2.2 Background – paragraph 1</u> Based on the information in Section 2.2 Background of the RFP, it appears (OCFS) has an existing vendor. Could you please clarify the purpose of this RFP? |
| A86 | The current vendor was contracted for a time-limited pilot project which helped OCFS gain experience and knowledge needed to competitively procure this service successfully. NYS Finance Law requires competitive applications to be solicited for this work, which may necessitate transition of this project to a new vendor. OCFS is competitively bidding out this project with the intention of procuring a system solution that provides the best value to the state. All interested and eligible vendors are encouraged to apply. |

Responses to Questions for RFP 1127
Foster/Adoptive Parent Certification and Approval Process Software

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| Q87 | a) Has the Agency seen demonstrations of any solutions prior to the RFP release? b) If so, can you share the vendor's name? |
| A87 | a) OCFS has seen demonstrations of multiple potential software solutions in the past as part of a data-gathering process to see what types of potential solutions are out there. b) This information is not relevant to this RFP. This procurement stands alone. Any and all appropriate solutions proposed by interested and eligible applicants will be considered by OCFS. With OCFS intending to select the best-value solution after performing a cost and technical evaluation. |
| Q88 | a) Could you please confirm whether there is an incumbent vendor currently providing services related to the Foster/Adoptive Parent Certification and Approval Process Software? b) If so, could you provide details about the incumbent's role and scope? |
| A88 | a) Yes, OCFS is piloting with an existing vendor currently providing services related to the Foster/Adoptive Parent Certification and Approval. Please also see A86. b) OCFS will review and discuss with the awarded vendor. |
| Q89 | Is there an existing system/platform in place currently providing some or all of the requested services in this RFP? |
| A89 | Yes. See A86. |
| Q90 | Please identify the technology platforms that are used in the pilot. |
| A90 | Specific details regarding the pilot are not relevant to applicants submitting proposals in response to this RFP. See A86 and A87. |
| Q91 | We understand from your June 2024 summary report that you have been piloting with a software/services vendor. Foster-Care-Report-Summary-2024Jun.pdf (ny.gov). Are you considering maintaining and/or building upon the pilot software platform and looking for a system integrator to implement the same or are you open to other software platforms or offerings? |
| A91 | OCFS is open to new solutions and other offerings. |
| Q92 | Is the vendor who delivered the pilot excluded from bidding due to perceived conflict of interest? |
| A92 | No, the vendor associated with the pilot is not excluded from submitting a proposal to this RFP, as this would unfairly disadvantage them from competing for this award. The pilot contractor has not been involved in the development of this procurement. All interested and eligible applicants are being treated equally and are welcome to propose their own unique solutions that comply with the requirements of RF Section 4.0 Scope of Work. It is also worth noting that the scope of work under this procurement is not the same as the scope of work under the pilot contract. |
| Q93 | <u>Section 2.3 Term of Contract – paragraph 2</u> Does OCFS have a planned timeline for the actual implementation, separate from the contract duration? |
| A93 | The implementation timeline aligns with the transition period described in the RFP Section 2.3. The awarded vendor has from 3/1/2025 - 9/7/2025 to implement the proposed solution and transition data from the pilot project. |
| Q94 | <u>Section 2.3 Term of Contract</u> a) The timeframe of seven months to deliver the system configured to the extent we anticipate is desired would benefit from a lengthier implementation period. Does the state have the ability to extend the current contract transition period? Adding three |

Responses to Questions for RFP 1127
Foster/Adoptive Parent Certification and Approval Process Software

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| | <p>to six months would benefit all vendors, resulting in lower costs for the state while ensuring time for delivery.</p> <p>b) If the timeframe cannot be extended, would the state approve a phased approach that delivers the most required functionality in phase 1 and additional functionality in the second phase?</p> |
| A94 | <p>a) No, the state cannot provide a longer transition period to due funding constraints and approvals. The maximum amount of time is currently being provided.</p> <p>b) It is necessary for the solution to be fully functional for all foster/adoptive applications/certifications/approval and recertifications/renewal of approvals by 9/7/2025. OCFS may allow discussions regarding the implementation of the bi-directional functionality to occur after the initial seven-month period on an as-needed basis. This would be at the sole discretion of OCFS.</p> |
| Q95 | <p><u>Section 2.3 Term of Contract – page 11</u></p> <p>a) Could you please provide clarification on the expected timeline for the Design, Development, and Implementation (DDI) phase for the project? We would like to better understand the agency’s envisioned start and end dates for the DDI phase.</p> <p>b) If vendors are to consider 3/1/2025 as the DDI start date?</p> <p>c) What is the agency's expected end date?</p> |
| A95 | <p>a) Refer to A93 and A94.</p> <p>b) Yes.</p> <p>c) 9/7/2025 is the anticipated completion date for design, development, and implementation. The operational period end date for this contract is anticipated to be 8/31/2032.</p> |
| Q96 | <p><u>Section 2.3 Term of Contract - page 11</u></p> <p>Could you please provide clarification on the expected timeline for the Maintenance and Operations (M&O) phase? Envisioned start and end dates.</p> |
| A96 | <p>If the selected awardee is a new contractor, a transition period is anticipated from 3/1/2025 to 9/7/2025. During the transition period, the new contractor will be paid from 3/1/2025 – 9/7/2025 under their new contract for startup and implementation activities and the existing/outgoing contractor will continue to be paid under their existing contract to run operations while the incoming contractor initiates and completes implementation. At the conclusion of the transition period, the new operational period will begin on 9/8/2025. The anticipated end date of the contract is 8/31/2032.</p> |
| Q97 | <p><u>Section 3.0 Minimum Qualifications to propose – page 25</u></p> <p><i>“agree to satisfy each of the requirements listed in Section 3.0 Minimum Qualifications and in Section 4.0 Scope of Work.”</i></p> <p>In response to the question requested, for Section 4.0 specifically –</p> <p>a) is NYS OCFS looking simply for a yes/no affirmation/agreement response or instead potentially interested in reviewing additional details from the prospective vendor associated with whether or not specific functional requirements is enabled/can be enabled within existing proposed solutions offered, and</p> <p>b) if so could these be included within a supplied Appendix for example?</p> |
| A97 | <p>a) Please complete Attachment 1 – Proposer’s Certified Statements (yes/no) then elaborate within responses to the questions posed in Section 5.4.1 Proposal Content - Technical Proposal Section 3.</p> <p>b) Yes</p> |

Responses to Questions for RFP 1127
Foster/Adoptive Parent Certification and Approval Process Software

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| Q98 | <u>Section 3.1 Minimum Qualifications</u> Minimum Qualification sections talks about vendor experience in Child Welfare services is a must. Is OCFS willing to consider vendor solution which will meet the need as defined in the scope of work though the vendor may not have exposure to Child Welfare services? |
| A98 | No, experience with some form of child welfare services is considered essential to the success of this project. |
| Q99 | <u>Section 5.3 Part I - Administrative Proposal, Bullet D</u> Please confirm if OCFS-3460, Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprises (MWBE) Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Policy Statement, is the only form that needs to be submitted here? The link shared in the RFP (https://ocfs.ny.gov/search/docs.php?document_type=1&category_number=44) has a set of forms, out of which only form OCFS-3460 needs to be downloaded and completed. Please confirm. |
| A99 | Yes, for bullet D, only the OCFS-3460 form is required. |
| Q100 | <u>Section 5.4.1 Proposal Content, bullet 6, sub-bullets 1&2</u> Considering we operate a Software as a Service (SaaS) model, are vendors permitted to utilize offshore resources for configuration/customization activities, cloud maintenance, ongoing report generation, Commercial Off-The-Shelf (COTS) testing, and Maintenance & Operations (M&O), provided that all data will continue to reside within the Continental United States? |
| A100 | No. The proposed solution and all staffing must be within continental US (CONUS). |
| Q101 | <u>Section 5.4.1 Proposal Content – Technical Proposal Section 3</u> Experience and Project Proposal, B. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (Up to 15 points), Pg 26: We understand the RFP includes diversity, equity, and inclusion as part of the evaluation criteria. a) Can you please clarify if points will be reduced for vendors that do not qualify as BIPOC-led organizations? b) Additionally, how will vendors be evaluated on diversity if they do not meet the BIPOC leadership criteria but demonstrate strong diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts? |
| A101 | a) Yes, see RFP Section 5.4.1 (B) if a vendor does not meet the criteria in #2 there will be no points awarded for that section. b) RFP Section 5.4.1 (B) #1 is rated separately from #2. If a vendor demonstrates the criteria outlined in #1, points will be earned. |
| Q102 | <u>Section 5.4.1 Proposal Content – Technical Proposal Section 3</u> Training and Support, part 2: Is the state requesting that the vendor provide real-time support services directly or requesting the vendor to provide the tools for the state to provide the services? |
| A102 | The RFP Section 4.0 Scope of Work, Training, Support and Maintenance requires the vendor to provide real-time support. |
| Q103 | <u>Section 5.4.1.C.2 Proposal content – paragraphs 1-7</u> a) Is a SAML or OIDC integration preferred? b) Is SCIM provisioning required? |

Responses to Questions for RFP 1127
Foster/Adoptive Parent Certification and Approval Process Software

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| A103 | a) This solution may be acceptable. OCFS will review and discuss with the awarded vendor. b) Yes, for foster/adoptive parents. |
| Q104 | <u>Section 5.5, Part III – Cost Proposal – A. Personal Services</u> Will OCFS consider a Firm Fixed price contract and provide an exemption from providing personal services details? |
| A104 | No, the RFP requires the budget is to be expense-based. |
| Q105 | <u>Section 5.5, Part III – Cost Proposal – A. Personal Services</u> Would OCFS be open to a different approach to purchasing licenses such as resell? |
| A105 | Yes. A vendor could propose this as part of their proposal and budget. |
| Q106 | <u>Section 6.4 Cost Evaluation - page 44</u> Cost Evaluation indicates a maximum cost score of 52 points. However, page 32 indicates a maximum cost score of 59 possible points, which seems correct based on the total of the two individual cost point awards. |
| A106 | Cost Evaluation is worth a maximum of 52 points, as indicated on both pages you referenced. On page 44, it is represented as 52 points overall; on page 32 it is represented as 13 points (transition period budget) plus 39 points (annual operating period budget) for a maximum possible cost score that adds up to 52 points. |
| Q107 | <u>Section 7.4 Insurance Requirements, 7.5.1 Confidentiality</u> The link to the Confidentiality Non-Disclosure Agreement is not available (https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/Forms/Contracts/OCFS-4715%20Confidentiality%20Non-Disclosure%20Agreement.dot). Please provide the new link. |
| A107 | An updated link is as follows: https://ocfs.ny.gov/forms/ocfs/OCFS-4715.pdf |
| Q108 | <u>Section 7.6.2 MWBE Business Participation Opportunities – OCFS-Established Goals</u> Define “meaningful participation” by MWBE? |
| A108 | OCFS encourages all contractors to use MWBE for subcontracting opportunities. Meaningful participation is expenses incurred by MWBE subcontractors in support of the contract during the contract term. |
| Q109 | <u>MWBE and SDVOB Participation</u> a) Please confirm if it's mandatory to engage an MWBE and SDVOB as part of this procurement? b) If yes, is it mandatory to list the names of the MWBE and SDVOB, and fill relevant forms (for example, OCFS-3460) as part of RFP submission? |
| A109 | a) No, there are no required MWBE/SDVOB goals for this contract. b) For RFP submission, the only MWBE requirement is form OCFS-3460. |
| Q110 | <u>MWBE and SDVOB Participation</u> If it's mandatory to engage an MWBE and SDVOB, and vendors don't propose names / or fill up relevant forms how will vendors be evaluated? |
| A110 | Refer to A109. |
| Q111 | <u>7.21 (Appendix A - Standard Clauses for NYS contracts), Pg 65</u> This section states “Please review the sample contract templates provided here: https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/contracts/samples.php” there are four contract samples in this link Grant Contract Sample - State, Non-Grant Contract Sample - State, Grant Contract Sample - Federal, Non-Grant Contract Sample - Federal, Consultant |

Responses to Questions for RFP 1127
Foster/Adoptive Parent Certification and Approval Process Software

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| | Agreement Template. Could you please clarify which of these templates would be applicable for this RFP submission? We want to ensure we are aligning with the correct contract format. |
| A111 | “Non-Grant Contract Sample – Federal” would be the applicable contract template. |

| Attachments | |
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| Q112 | <u>Attachment 2 - Appendix A-2 Program Specific Terms and Conditions</u> Is this the only T&C file that needs to be reviewed for exceptions and/or caveats? |
| A112 | No. The Program Specific Terms and Conditions is not the only contract document that must be reviewed for exceptions or caveats. The “Non-Grant Contract – Federal” sample contract referenced in RFP Section 7.21 and located here: https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/contracts/docs/Non-Grant-Contract-Template-Federal.pdf contains the AGREEMENT between OCFS and the awarded contractor and the APPENDIX A Standard Clauses for New York State Contracts that are applicable to this procurement. These documents along with the Appendix A-2 Program Specific Terms and Conditions will be a part of your contract, if awarded. |
| Q113 | <u>Attachment 6 - Cost Proposal, A-1 Personal Narrative</u> Does the agency have any preference to specific key roles or positions that should be included in the project team? |
| A113 | It is the responsibility of the applicant to specify the roles and positions they propose to fulfill the scope of work of this project. |
| Q114 | <u>Attachment 6 – Cost Proposal, Attachment B – Budget</u> Please clarify how vendors should complete the cost worksheet. Usually, vendors are asked to put a rate card per assigned resource or project implementation and training fees. The sheet is requesting Annual Salary which is not public information for vendor employees. Additionally, are the columns titled Local Share and OCFS Grant Funds for internal use? |
| A114 | As stated in the RFP Section 5.5, the information requested by OCFS will be held in confidence and will not be revealed to or discussed with other bidders, except as required by applicable laws, rules, and regulations. It is also permissible to withhold the names of the employees if applicants do not wish to share them. Please provide title, annual salary, percentage of time on project and how funded (Local Share and/or OCFS Grant Funds). |
| Q115 | <u>Attachment 6 – Cost Proposal, Attachment B – Budget</u> Where should responding vendors enter the software fees in the cost proposal - would it be in B8. Other Expenses? |
| A115 | Yes. |
| Q116 | Can OCFS confirm that each proposer must submit two copies of the cost proposal? |
| A116 | Yes. As stated in the RFP Section 5.5 Part III – Cost Proposal , each application must contain two separate proposed budgets: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A transition and startup period budget for the period 3/1/2025 – 9/7/2025. • An annual operating budget for the period 9/8/2025 – 8/31/2026. |
| Q117 | Can OCFS provide an excel with formulas for the cost proposal to ensure all vendors use consistent formulas while calculating cost? |

Responses to Questions for RFP 1127
Foster/Adoptive Parent Certification and Approval Process Software

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| A117 | No. Please use the provided Attachment 6 – Cost Proposal and calculate your costs using whatever methods are most convenient for you. |
| Q118 | Would OCFS consider editing table A-1 Summary of Personnel Costs to reflect a Rate Card multiplied by house versus providing Annual Salary multiplied by % of time? |
| A118 | No. |
| Q119 | Can OCFS confirm the column labeled OCFS Grant Funds is the total amount OCFS will pay to the awarded vendor? |
| A119 | Yes. Please list the anticipated amount of OCFS Grant Funds that will pay for your proposed expenses. |

| Additional Questions | |
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| Q120 | Proactive status updates can serve to reduce the number of calls requesting information and updates. a) How are communications to foster parents managed, both for mass comms (such as regulatory updates, event invitations, "marketing" comms, etc.) and for personalized comms throughout the foster licensing process? b) Is there an existing email service provider? |
| A120 | a) With regard to the software solution currently in the pilot, communications to applicants and current foster/adoptive parents are generated through emails at OCFS defined intervals. b) Emails are generated through the pilot software system. |
| Q121 | a) What communications channels are in use today? b) How many messages are being sent per channel? |
| A121 | a) Refer to A120. b) OCFS is unable to provide that level of detail regarding volume of messages. |
| Q122 | On real time alerts, what channel would those flow to – text, email, Teams/Slack? |
| A122 | Foster/Adoptive parents, LDSS, and VA staff receive email alerts regarding the application. Other channels of communication can be discussed by OCFS and the RFP awardee. |
| Q123 | Would you prefer to send notifications via multiple channels, such as email, SMS, and postal mail? |
| A123 | Vendors may propose multiple channels of communications within their proposal. |
| Q124 | Are you looking to extend support with your current solution? |
| A124 | This question is unclear, however if you are referring to customer support, OCFS would like applicants to propose a solution. See A123. |
| Q125 | In reviewing similar procurements, we have seen a requirement of a sandbox environment as part of the procurement process. Is that something that NYS OCFS is also considering? |
| A125 | Yes, OCFS would require a sandbox for testing, training purposes, and OCFS administrative users at all times. The solution must comply with the “Additional Security Controls” portion of RFP Section 4.0 Scope of Work. |
| Q126 | Can the agency provide a list of SLAs (for example - availability, response time etc.,) that vendors have to adhere to? |

Responses to Questions for RFP 1127
Foster/Adoptive Parent Certification and Approval Process Software

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| A126 | See RFP Section 4 which states that the system must be available 24/7 and cannot be down more than three hours. Real time support must be provided at a minimum Monday – Saturday 9 am – 9 pm EST to all users. |
| Q127 | Is Organizational Change Management (OCM) part of the scope? |
| A127 | No. |
| Q128 | a) Does the agency currently utilize a rules engine? b) Can vendors use it? |
| A128 | a) No. b) Not applicable. |
| Q129 | Can the Vendors propose a Rule Engine of their choice? |
| A129 | Yes. A vendor could propose a rules engine as part of their proposal and budget. |
| Q130 | Are there any specific security requirements and access controls for OCFS which will be different from the rest of the system? |
| A130 | Each VA and LDSS will only be able to see their own information unless there are transfers requested from one VA/LDSS to another VA/LDSS. OCFS must be able to see all information across the state for VA and LDSS. In addition, if there is a LDSS that has contracted with a VA(s) to process certify/approve applications on behalf of the the LDSS, then that LDSS will be able to view only the applicable LDSS contracted certified/approved homes. A VA may have multiple contracts with different LDSSs and the LDSS will only have access to the data related to the applications/ certification/approvals and recertifications/renewals under their contract. . |
| Q131 | In the RFP, there are 2 Sub Agencies mentioned – LDSSs and VAs. Please share if there are any other agencies involved. |
| A131 | LDSS/VA are the only sub-agencies involved in the software solution. Refer to A11. |
| Q132 | Is any license or certification required for applicants before submitting a foster care application? |
| A132 | No. |
| Q133 | How many different or distinct application types will be supported in this solution? Please provide a comprehensive list. |
| A133 | Per RFP Section 4.0 Scope of Work, a licensing module comprising of initial certification or approval and reauthorization will be developed and/or integrated by the selected awardee to encompass four different application tracks: Foster Parent Only (approval or certification), Foster and Adoptive Parent (approval or certification and approval), Adoptive Parent Only (approval), and Emergency Foster Parent (approval). |
| Q134 | Is OCFS using E-signature tools currently for E-sign? |
| A134 | Yes, OCFS is currently using a tool that supports e-signatures. Requirements for e-signatures are outlined in RFP Section 4.0 Scope of Work. |
| Q135 | Are there specific challenges you face during the home study or background check processes? |
| A135 | No. |
| Q136 | a) How do you currently track caseworkers' assignments and interactions with foster families? b) Would you like a more automated or integrated approach? |

Responses to Questions for RFP 1127
Foster/Adoptive Parent Certification and Approval Process Software

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| A136 | a) Currently OCFS has the ability to view the workload assignments in a report or dashboard for caseworkers and supervisors. b) Yes. OCFS expects this as part of the proposed solution and budget. |
| Q137 | Would OCFS extend the RFP submission date by two weeks? |
| A137 | Yes, the RFP submission deadline has been extended. Please see the most recent amended RFP posted on 10/24/2024. |
| Q138 | How often do you conduct public outreach or training sessions for potential foster parents? |
| A138 | Public outreach and training sessions for potential foster and/or adoptive parents are the responsibility of the LDSSs and VAs. Public outreach is a continuous task for LDSSs and VAs. Training session schedules vary across all LDSSs and VAs. |
| Q139 | Do you need document templates (e.g., licenses, certificates, letters) to be automatically generated within the system? |
| A139 | Yes. |
| Q140 | a) How do you handle foster care payments (e.g., stipends, reimbursement)? b) Would you want to integrate financial tracking into the system? c) Please share existing Financial system details (if any). |
| A140 | a) Foster care payments are not handled within this solution. b) Currently there are no plans to incorporate payments or financial tracking within this system. c) Not applicable to this RFP. |
| Q141 | Would you like to have a self-service portal for foster parents to check the status of applications, training, or certification? |
| A141 | Yes, this would be preferred and can be included in your proposal. |
| Q142 | Is a multilingual solution necessary for the proposed system? Please share languages required. |
| A142 | Yes. At a minimum, Spanish must be included. OCFS follows NYS requirements for language access and will determine additional languages based on the top 12 most commonly spoken non-English languages. NYS Chapter 18 Executive Article 10 Section 202a: https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/laws/EXC/202-A |
| Q143 | Does OCFS allow vendors to use onshore and offshore delivery model for software implementation? |
| A143 | Refer to A100. |
| Q144 | Does the scope of work allow using Offshore resources? |
| A144 | Refer to A100. |
| Q145 | Can you please confirm if the agency expects only the key resources to be onsite for specific critical activities and allow other project personnel to work offsite? |
| A145 | Refer to A78. |
| Q146 | Is there any on site meetings or work required during this project? |
| A146 | Refer to A78. |
| Q147 | Please provide a detailed requirements document that outlines the required system business and technical functionality. |
| A147 | See RFP Section 4.0 Scope of Work for this information. OCFS will explain and review these requirements further with the vendor selected for award. |
| Q148 | Are there any technology platforms that are excluded from use for this proposal? |

Responses to Questions for RFP 1127
Foster/Adoptive Parent Certification and Approval Process Software

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| A148 | No. Any proposed platforms must conform with the requirements of the RFP. |
| Q149 | Do we need to submit proof of Professional Liability and Data Breach Insurance referenced in Section 7.4 of the RFP in our application? |
| A149 | No, per RFP Section 7.19 Forms Required After Award & Before Contracting in the amended RFP, proof of insurance will be requested by OCFS during contract development with the organization that is awarded. |
| Q150 | RFP Section 5.5 Part III – Cost Proposal on Page 40, second bullet: may we charge more than the de minimis rate of 10% of Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC)? |
| A150 | Yes. Applicants may elect to charge a de minimis rate up to 15% of Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC). Please see the most recent amendment to the RFP posted on 10/24/2024. |