



**Solicitation Information  
September 15, 2016**

**RFP# 7550951**

**TITLE: STATEWIDE INFORMATION AND REFERRAL SERVICE**

**SUBMISSION DEADLINE: October 13, 2016 at 10:00 AM (Eastern Time)**

**PRE-BID/ PROPOSAL CONFERENCE: No**

Questions concerning this solicitation must be received by the Division of Purchases at [david.francis@purchasing.ri.gov](mailto:david.francis@purchasing.ri.gov) no later than **September 23, 2016 at 10:00 AM (ET)**. Questions should be submitted in a *Microsoft Word attachment*. Please reference the RFP# on all correspondence. Questions received, if any, will be posted on the Internet as an addendum to this solicitation. It is the responsibility of all interested parties to download this information.

**SURETY REQUIRED: No**

**BOND REQUIRED: No**

**David J. Francis  
Interdepartmental Project Manager**

Applicants must register on-line at the State Purchasing Website at [www.purchasing.ri.gov](http://www.purchasing.ri.gov)

**Note to Applicants:**

Offers received without the entire completed three-page RIVIP Generated Bidder Certification Form attached may result in disqualification.

**THIS PAGE IS NOT A BIDDER CERTIFICATION FORM**

## **Table of Contents**

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION.....	3
INSTRUCTIONS AND NOTIFICATIONS TO OFFERORS:.....	3
SECTION 2: BACKGROUND.....	5
Background and Purpose .....	5
Authority to Bill for Services .....	5
Specific Requirements .....	5
SECTION 3: SCOPE OF WORK .....	5
General Scope of Work .....	5
Specific Activities / Tasks .....	5
SECTION 4: TECHNICAL PROPOSAL.....	6
SECTION 5: COST PROPOSAL .....	7
SECTION 6: EVALUATION AND SELECTION.....	7
SECTION 7: PROPOSAL SUBMISSION .....	8
ATTACHMENT A: BUDGET FORM.....	10

## **SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION**

The Rhode Island Department of Administration/Division of Purchases, on behalf of the Rhode Island Department of Human Services is soliciting proposals from qualified vendors to provide year-round, twenty-four hours each day, seven days a week (365/24/7) statewide information and referral for social services in accordance with the terms of this Request for Proposals and the State's General Conditions of Purchase, which may be obtained at the Rhode Island Division of Purchases Home Page by Internet at [www.purchasing.ri.gov](http://www.purchasing.ri.gov).

The initial contract period will be for one year. Contracts may be renewed for up to four additional 12-month periods based on vendor performance and the availability of funds.

This is a Request for Proposals, not an Invitation for Bid. Responses will be evaluated on the basis of the relative merits of the proposal, in addition to price; there will be no public opening and reading of responses received by the Division of Purchases pursuant to this Request, other than to name those offerors who have submitted proposals.

### **INSTRUCTIONS AND NOTIFICATIONS TO OFFERORS:**

1. Potential vendors are advised to review all sections of this RFP carefully and to follow instructions completely, as failure to make a complete submission as described elsewhere herein may result in rejection of the proposal.
2. Alternative approaches and/or methodologies to accomplish the desired or intended results of this procurement are solicited. However, proposals which depart from or materially alter the terms, requirements, or scope of work defined by this RFP will be rejected as being non-responsive.
3. All costs associated with developing or submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, or to provide oral or written clarification of its content shall be borne by the vendor. The State assumes no responsibility for these costs.
4. Proposals are considered to be irrevocable for a period of not less than 60 days following the opening date, and may not be withdrawn, except with the express written permission of the State Purchasing Agent.
5. All pricing submitted will be considered to be firm and fixed unless otherwise indicated herein.
6. Proposals misdirected to other state locations, or which are otherwise not present in the Division at the time of opening for any cause will be determined to be late and will not be considered. For the purposes of this requirement, the official time and date shall be that of the time clock in the reception area of the Division.
7. It is intended that an award pursuant to this RFP will be made to a prime vendor, or prime vendors in the various categories, who will assume responsibility for all aspects of the work. Joint venture and cooperative proposals will not be considered. Subcontracts are permitted, provided that their use is clearly indicated in the vendor's proposal and the subcontractor(s) to be used is identified in the proposal.

8. All proposals should include the vendor's FEIN or Social Security number as evidenced by a W9, downloadable from the Division's website at [www.purchasing.ri.gov](http://www.purchasing.ri.gov).
9. The purchase of services under an award made pursuant to this RFP will be contingent on the availability of funds.
10. Vendors are advised that all materials submitted to the State for consideration in response to this RFP will be considered to be Public Records as defined in Title 38, Chapter 2 of the General Laws of Rhode Island, without exception, and will be released for inspection immediately upon request once an award has been made.
11. Interested parties are instructed to peruse the Division of Purchases website on a regular basis, as additional information relating to this solicitation may be released in the form of an addendum to this RFP.
12. Equal Employment Opportunity (G.L. 1956 § 28-5.1-1, et seq.) – § 28-5.1-1 Declaration of policy – (a) Equal opportunity and affirmative action toward its achievement is the policy of all units of Rhode Island state government, including all public and quasi-public agencies, commissions, boards and authorities, and in the classified, unclassified, and non-classified services of state employment. This policy applies to all areas where State dollars are spent, in employment, public services, grants and financial assistance, and in state licensing and regulation.
13. In accordance with Title 7, Chapter 1.2 of the General Laws of Rhode Island, no foreign corporation, a corporation without a Rhode Island business address, shall have the right to transact business in the State until it shall have procured a Certificate of Authority to do so from the Rhode Island Secretary of State (401-222-3040). This is a requirement only of the successful vendor(s).
14. The vendor should be aware of the State's Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) requirements, which address the State's goal of ten percent (10%) participation by MBE's in all State procurements. For further information visit the website [www.mbe.ri.gov](http://www.mbe.ri.gov)
15. Under HIPAA, a "business associate" is a person or entity, other than a member of the workforce of a HIPAA covered entity, who performs functions or activities on behalf of, or provides certain services to, a HIPAA covered entity that involves access by the business associate to HIPAA protected health information. A "business associate" also is a subcontractor that creates, receives, maintains, or transmits HIPAA protected health information on behalf of another business associate. The HIPAA rules generally require that HIPAA covered entities and business associates enter into contracts with their business associates to ensure that the business associates will appropriately safeguard HIPAA protected health information. Therefore, if a Contractor qualifies as a business associate, it will be required to sign a HIPAA business associate agreement
16. In order to perform the contemplated services related to the Rhode Island Health Benefits Exchange (HealthSourceRI), the vendor hereby certifies that it is an "eligible entity," as defined by 45 C.F.R. § 155.110, in order to carry out one or more of the responsibilities of

a health insurance exchange. The vendor agrees to indemnify and hold the State of Rhode Island harmless for all expenses that are deemed to be unallowable by the Federal government because it is determined that the vendor is not an “eligible entity,” as defined by 45 C.F.R. § 155.110.

## **SECTION 2: BACKGROUND**

### **Background and Purpose**

Pursuant to **Title XX, Subtitle A—Block Grants to States for Social Services**, 42 U.S.C. § 1397 et seq., the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services authorizes funds to furnish information and referral services, specifically described as, “services or activities designed to provide information about services provided by public and private service providers and a brief assessment of client needs (but not diagnosis and evaluation) to facilitate appropriate referral to these community resources”. (Social Services Block Grant Uniform Definition of Services) (CFDA: 93.667)

### **Authority to Bill for Services**

By designation of the Governor of the State of Rhode Island, the Rhode Island Department of Human Services is responsible for the administration of the Title XX, Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) funds.

### **Specific Requirements**

The vendor must be a Rhode Island organization or a collaboration of two or more organizations that has a documented history of providing statewide information and referral services directing clients to appropriate social services that would include programs and services administered by the Rhode Island Department of Human Services.

The vendor will combine funding provided through the Social Services Block Grant with other sources of funding to provide information and referral services 365/24/7.

## **SECTION 3: SCOPE OF WORK**

### **General Scope of Work**

The vendor will use the funds provided in combination with other sources of funding:

1. to provide statewide information and referral services using telephone and online tools that would direct clients to appropriate social services that include programs and services administered by the Rhode Island Department of Human Services;
2. to ensure that these information and referral services are available to all Rhode Island residents with referrals made to appropriate services throughout the State of Rhode Island;
3. to ensure that the provision of these information and referral services is linguistically and culturally appropriate;
4. to provide these information and referral services 365/24/7.

### **Specific Activities / Tasks**

1. The vendor shall provide statewide information and referral services using telephone and online tools that would direct clients to appropriate social services that include programs and services administered by the Rhode Island Department of Human Services. The programs and services administered by the Department of Human Services are:
  - RIWorks (TANF)
  - Child Care Assistance Program
  - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
  - Long-Term Care

- General Public Assistance
- State Supplemental Payment
- Low-Income Home Energy Assistance
- Weatherization Assistance Program
- Eligibility for Medicaid
- Administration of Grants: Community Service Block Grant, Social Services Block Grant, Family Violence Prevention Services Grant; Refugee Resettlement Grants, Emergency Food Assistance Program grants, state Domestic Violence grants.

Additionally, the department administers programs and services for specific populations and needs through its:

- Division of Elderly Affairs
- Division of Veterans Affairs
- Office of Child Support Services
- Office of Rehabilitation Services

2. The vendor shall provide information and referral services statewide using telephone and online tools.
3. The vendor shall provide information and referral services in such a way that clients are able to communicate in languages they understand.
4. The vendor shall present a plan as to how it will fund a 365/24/7 information and referral service using funds provided through the Social Services Block Grant and other sources of funding.
5. The vendor shall meet quarterly to review the programs and services offered by the Rhode Island Department of Human Services to ensure that the information the vendor supplies is accurate and up-to-date.
6. The vendor shall ensure that no fees are levied for assistance or services provided with funds awarded.
7. The vendor shall not:
  - (i) disclose any personally identifying information collected in connection with services requested (including services utilized or denied);
  - (ii) reveal personally identifying information without informed, written, reasonably time-limited consent by the person about whom information is sought.
8. The vendor shall submit reports as required by the RI Department of Human Services that satisfy the reporting requirements of the Social Services Block Grant. The vendor shall report data that will include but not be limited to: unduplicated count of clients served, and demographic details of clients served.

#### **SECTION 4: TECHNICAL PROPOSAL**

1. **Staff Qualifications:** Through the use of brief descriptions of experience and qualifications, demonstrate that staff fulfilling key functions may successfully execute the activities called for in this proposal.
2. **Capability, Capacity, and Qualifications of the Offeror:** Please provide a detailed description of the vendor's history in the provision of information and referral services, and the collection and reporting of data.

Please provide a funding plan to demonstrate how the funds provided through the Social Services Block Grant will be combined with other funds to support a 365/24/7 information and referral service.

3. **Work Plan:** For the elements of the General Scope of Work and Specific Activities/Tasks, listed above, describe how the vendor will deliver these services, identifying a timeline and logical sequence in which those activities will be delivered. When responding, refer to Section 3 by number.
4. **Approach/Methodology:** For the elements of the General Scope of Work and Specific Activities/Tasks listed above, describe how they will be accomplished. In the descriptions, it is necessary to:
  - a. Describe the staffing plan for 365/24/7 provision of information and referral services;
  - b. Describe the equipment that will be used to provide these services;
  - c. Describe how information and referral services will be offered online;
  - d. Describe how clients will be engaged in languages they can understand;
  - e. Describe the training staff will receive to prepare them for provision of information and referral services;
  - f. Describe how activity data will be collected and evaluated;
  - g. Describe how it will be verified that the needs of all geographic areas in the state are being addressed;

## **SECTION 5: COST PROPOSAL**

### *Detailed Budget and Budget Narrative:*

Vendors must use the budget template provided in Attachment A: Budget Form to submit a budget for the proposal. The budget should focus on and detail where and how the budgeted amount will be spent. The budget should be formatted with Attachment A.

### *Payment Structure:*

Proposals will be reimbursed 80%, and paid 20% based on either performance or outcome measures. Please provide a clearly delineated fee structure that details costs for eighty percent (80%) of the total cost proposal that would be paid on a monthly basis once the contract is awarded and commences. The balance of twenty percent (20%) of the total cost proposal would be paid by the department upon meeting certain outcome or performance targets during the performance period of the contract. The vendor must include a schedule of performance targets and cost reimbursements that would total twenty percent of the cost proposal.

The state has the right to modify, change or substitute the twenty (20) percent basis of payment based on the best interest of the state.

## **SECTION 6: EVALUATION AND SELECTION**

Proposals will be reviewed by a Technical Review Committee comprised of staff from state agencies. To advance to the Cost Evaluation phase, the Technical Proposal must receive a minimum of 60 (85.7%) out of a maximum of 70 technical points. Any technical proposals scoring less than 60 points will not have the cost component opened and evaluated. The proposal will be dropped from further consideration.

Proposals scoring 60 technical points or higher will be evaluated for cost and assigned up to a maximum of 30 points in cost category, bringing the potential maximum score to 100 points.

The Rhode Island Department of Human Services reserves the exclusive right to select the individual(s) or firm (vendor) that it deems to be in its best interest to accomplish the project as specified herein; and conversely, reserves the right cancel the solicitation.

Proposals will be reviewed and scored based upon the following criteria:

Criteria	Possible Points
Staff Qualifications	10 Points
Capability, Capacity, and Qualifications of the Offeror	20 Points
Quality of the Work plan	25 Points
Suitability of Approach/Methodology	15 Points
<b>Total Possible Technical Points</b>	<b>70 Points</b>
Cost calculated as lowest responsive cost proposal divided by (this cost proposal) times 30 points *	30 Points
<b>Total Possible Points</b>	<b>100 Points</b>

\*The Low bidder will receive one hundred percent (100%) of the available points for cost. All other bidders will be awarded cost points based upon the following formula:

$$(\text{low bid} / \text{vendors bid}) * \text{available points}$$

For example: If the low bidder (Vendor A) bids \$65,000 and Vendor B bids \$100,000 for monthly cost and service fee and the total points available are Thirty (30), vendor B's cost points are calculated as follows:

$$\$65,000 / \$100,000 * 30 = 19.5$$

Points will be assigned based on the offeror's clear demonstration of his/her abilities to complete the work, apply appropriate methods to complete the work, create innovative solutions and quality of past performance in similar projects.

Applicants may be required to submit additional written information or be asked to make an oral presentation before the technical review committee to clarify statements made in their proposal.

**SECTION 7: PROPOSAL SUBMISSION**

Questions concerning this solicitation may be e-mailed to the Division of Purchases at [david.francis@purchasing.ri.gov](mailto:david.francis@purchasing.ri.gov) no later than the date and time indicated on page one of this solicitation. Please reference **RFP # 7550951** on all correspondence. Questions should be submitted in a Microsoft Word attachment. Answers to questions received, if any, will be posted on the Internet as an addendum to this solicitation. It is the responsibility of all interested parties to download this information. If technical assistance is required to download, call the Help Desk at (401) 574-8100.

Offerors are encouraged to submit written questions to the Division of Purchases. **No other contact with State parties will be permitted.** Interested offerors may submit proposals to provide the services covered by this Request on or before the date and time listed on the cover page of this solicitation. Responses received after this date and time, as registered by the official time clock in the reception area of the Division of Purchases will not be considered.

Responses (**an original plus four (4) copies**) should be mailed or hand-delivered in a sealed envelope marked “**RFP# 7550951 STATEWIDE INFORMATION AND REFERRAL SERVICE**” to:

RI Dept. of Administration  
Division of Purchases, 2nd floor  
One Capitol Hill  
Providence, RI 02908-5855

NOTE: Proposals received after the above-referenced due date and time will not be considered. Proposals misdirected to other State locations or those not presented to the Division of Purchases by the scheduled due date and time will be determined to be late and will not be considered. Proposals faxed or emailed to the Division of Purchases will not be considered. The official time clock is in the reception area of the Division of Purchases.

### **RESPONSE CONTENTS**

Responses shall include the following:

1. One completed and signed three-page R.I.V.I.P generated bidder certification cover sheet (included in the original copy only) downloaded from the RI Division of Purchases Internet home page at [www.purchasing.ri.gov](http://www.purchasing.ri.gov).
2. One completed and signed W-9 (included in the original copy only) downloaded from the RI Division of Purchases Internet home page at [www.purchasing.ri.gov](http://www.purchasing.ri.gov).
3. **A separate Technical Proposal** describing the qualifications and background of the applicant, experience with and capacity for this and similar projects, work plan, approach and methodology, and all information described earlier in this solicitation. The Technical Proposal is limited to twenty (20) pages (this excludes any appendices).
4. **A separate, signed and sealed Cost Proposal** reflecting the reimbursement and fee structure proposed to complete all of the requirements of this project.
5. In addition to the multiple hard copies of proposals required, Respondents are requested to provide their proposal in **electronic format (CD-Rom, disc, or flash drive)**. Microsoft Word / Excel OR PDF format is preferable. Only 1 electronic copy is requested, and it should be placed in the proposal marked “original”.

### **CONCLUDING STATEMENTS**

Notwithstanding the above, the State reserves the right not to award this contract or to award on the basis of cost alone, to accept or reject any or all proposals, and to award in its best interest.

Proposals found to be technically or substantially non-responsive at any point in the evaluation process will be rejected and not considered further.

The State may, at its sole option, elect to require presentation(s) by offerors clearly in consideration for award.

The State’s General Conditions of Purchase contain the specific contract terms, stipulations and affirmations to be utilized for the contract awarded to the RFP. The State’s General Conditions of Purchases/General Terms and Conditions can be found at the following URL:

<https://www.purchasing.ri.gov/RIVIP/publicdocuments/ATTA.pdf> .



**ATTACHMENT A**

**RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

**SOCIAL SERVICES BLOCK GRANT BUDGET**

NAME OF AGENCY: \_\_\_\_\_

FEDERAL EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

DUNS NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/TOWN: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_ FAX: \_\_\_\_\_

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR / AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE: \_\_\_\_\_

TIME OF PERFORMANCE: FROM \_\_\_\_\_ October 1, 2016 \_\_\_\_\_ TO \_\_\_\_\_ September 30, 2017 \_\_\_\_\_

INDIRECT COST RATE, AS ASSIGNED BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT: \_\_\_\_\_ % \_\_\_\_\_

**BUDGET SUMMARY**

<b>COST CATEGORY</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>
1. PERSONNEL	_____ <b>\$0</b>
2. CONSULTANT AND SUB CONTRACT SERVICES	_____ <b>\$0</b>
3. TRAVEL	_____ <b>\$0</b>
4. SPACE	_____ <b>\$0</b>
5. SUPPLIES	_____ <b>\$0</b>
6. EQUIPMENT	_____ <b>\$0</b>
7. ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS	_____ <b>\$0</b>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS REQUESTED:</b>	<b>_____ <u><u>\$0</u></u></b>



**RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

**SOCIAL SERVICES BLOCK GRANT BUDGET DETAIL**

CONSULTANTS & SUB CONTRACT SERVICES	TYPE, NAME, HOURLY RATE, NUMBER OF HOURS, ETC		COST	TOTAL COST	OTHER FUNDING SOURCE FOR SERVICE
	Enter on page 1, line 2		CATEGORY TOTAL →	\$0	
TRAVEL	PURPOSE, RATE, NUMBER OF MILES, ETC		COST	TOTAL COST	OTHER FUNDING SOURCE FOR SERVICE
	Enter on page 1, line 3		CATEGORY TOTAL →	\$0	
SPACE	DESCRIPTION	COST PER MONTH	COST	TOTAL COST	OTHER FUNDING SOURCE FOR SERVICE
	Enter on page 1, line 4		CATEGORY TOTAL →	\$0	
SUPPLIES	DESCRIPTION	COST PER MONTH	COST	TOTAL COST	OTHER FUNDING SOURCE FOR SERVICE
	Enter on page 1, line 5		CATEGORY TOTAL →	\$0	
EQUIPMENT	PURCHASE, LEASE, RENTAL		COST	TOTAL COST	OTHER FUNDING SOURCE FOR SERVICE
	Enter on page 1, line 6		CATEGORY TOTAL →	\$0	
ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS*	DESCRIPTION	COST PER MONTH	COST	TOTAL COST	OTHER FUNDING SOURCE FOR SERVICE
	Enter on page 1, line 7		CATEGORY TOTAL →	\$0	

\*Administrative Costs are costs associated with central executive functions that do not directly support the provision of a specific project or service (those are direct program costs). These costs would relate to the general management of the grantee organization and may include costs such as: Accounting, Budgeting, Personnel administration, Procurement, Legal services, Central offices.

**RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

**SSBG SERVICE CATEGORY EXPENDITURE DETAIL**

<b>SERVICE CATEGORY 1: (Type in Title of Service Category from Definition of Services)</b>				<b>COST TO SSBG</b>	<b>TOTAL COST</b>	<b>OTHER FUNDING SOURCES FOR THIS SERVICE</b>
<b>SERVICE CATEGORY 2: (Type in Title of Service Category from Definition of Services)</b>				<b>COST TO SSBG</b>	<b>TOTAL COST</b>	<b>OTHER FUNDING SOURCES FOR THIS SERVICE</b>
<b>SERVICE CATEGORY 3: (Type in Title of Service Category from Definition of Services)</b>				<b>COST TO SSBG</b>	<b>TOTAL COST</b>	<b>OTHER FUNDING SOURCES FOR THIS SERVICE</b>
<b>SERVICE CATEGORY 4: (Type in Title of Service Category from Definition of Services)</b>				<b>COST TO SSBG</b>	<b>TOTAL COST</b>	<b>OTHER FUNDING SOURCES FOR THIS SERVICE</b>
<b>SERVICE CATEGORY 5: (Type in Title of Service Category from Definition of Services)</b>				<b>COST TO SSBG</b>	<b>TOTAL COST</b>	<b>OTHER FUNDING SOURCES FOR THIS SERVICE</b>
			<b>TOTALS</b>	\$0	\$0	