

Addendum 1

**State of Connecticut
Department of Social Services
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
100% Employment and Training Reimbursement Program 5/7/2013
Request for Proposals**

The State of Connecticut, Department of Social Services is issuing Addendum 1 to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) 100% Employment and Training Reimbursement Program 5/7/2013 Request for Proposals (RFP). All requirements of the original RFP except those requirements specifically changed by this addendum shall remain in effect. In the event of any inconsistency between information provided in the RFP and information in this addendum, the information in this addendum shall prevail.

This addendum amends Section III.C.2 of the RFP.

This addendum also contains questions submitted by interested parties and the Department of Social Services official responses. These responses shall clarify the requirements of the RFP.

Amendment to the RFP

The second paragraph of Section III.C.2 is amended as follows:

~~The Department shall notify each SNAP household about the SNAP 100% E&T Reimbursement Program and the opportunity for the adult members of the household who are active SNAP recipients to participate in the program. Such notification shall be provided when SNAP benefits are granted, and again when SNAP benefits are recertified. The notice shall include a list of the SNAP 100% E&T Reimbursement Program contractors including their locations and telephone numbers. DSS eligibility workers provide information about the SNAP 100% E&T Reimbursement Program to new SNAP recipients when they are in the DSS field offices. If an eligibility worker has a client who is interested in participating, the eligibility worker refers the client to one of the Department's SNAP Employment and Training Program contractors. In addition, the DSS Application for SNAP states, "My application for and receipt of my Food Stamp benefits is a registration for work for myself and all members of my Food Stamp assistance unit who are required to register. I further understand that I and all other members of the Food Stamp assistance unit who are required to do so must participate in Employment Services unless there is good cause not to participate."~~

Questions and Responses

1. *Question:* Does the Department have in mind any geographical breakdown of the funding allocation?

Response: No.

2. *Question:* Would training provided by volunteer organizations such as Literacy Volunteers of America be considered as training providers under the SNAP ET requirement?

Response: Employment and training activities must improve basic skills or employability and have a direct link to employment. Since it is difficult to ascertain that participation with Literacy Volunteers has a direct link to employment, this activity must be coupled with another SNAP Employment and Training activity such as structured job search skills training.

3. *Question:* Would Individual Training Accounts issued by the local Workforce Boards be considered as part of meeting the training requirements for SNAP participants?

Response: An Individual Training Account is funding provided to an eligible participant, which can be used to subsidize or pay the full cost of a training program. By itself this does not meet the training requirements for SNAP participants.

4. *Question:* Will the Department make available statistics regarding the demographic make up (gender and race) of the current ABAWD population?

Response: There are approximately 27,194 male ABAWDs, 28,067 female ABAWDs, 18,267 Hispanic/Latino ABAWDs, and 36,993 non-Hispanic/Latino ABAWDs.

5. *Question:* Is there a difference in the ABAWD population that is referred for the SNAP training vs. the traditional FSET program?

Response: No.

6. *Question:* Are there any sanctions/penalties from DSS for ABAWD's who do not follow on SNAP ET services?

Response: No; the SNAP 100% Employment and Training Reimbursement Program is voluntary.

7. *Question:* In the past there was a requirement for mandatory participation in SNAP ET. The past 2 years participation has become "voluntary". For this upcoming project is there a mandatory requirement for ABAWD's to participate in SNAP ET services?

Response: No; not at this time.

8. *Question:* If an organization has already uploaded the Affirmative Action Analysis Forms and Certifications/Affidavits onto the BizNet Portal do hard copies of these document need to be included in the proposal as appendices?

Response: No.

9. *Question:* Could you please clarify if any annualized or 3 year budget needs to be submitted with the responsive proposal?

Response: A budget is not required.

10. *Question:* How will payments be distributed to the successful bidders? Monthly? Quarterly?

Response: Payment shall be made quarterly upon receipt of satisfactorily completed services and deliverables, and DSS' review and approval of properly executed requests for payment.

11. *Question:* Based on the information provided it appears that no administrative costs can be claimed is this correct?

Response: That is correct.

12. *Question:* Will the Department make available a listing of the bidder questions and answers on the state portal?

Response: Yes.

13. *Question:* In the past the SNAP ET program providers were paid on a performance based methodology based on the delivery of documented contract deliverables. Is the new project performance based, cost reimbursement, or a hybrid of both concepts?

Response: The resulting contract shall be performance based.

14. *Question:* Can you project when DSS might be in a better position to determine if the current waiver of the federal mandatory requirements will be lifted?

Response: No; not at this time.

15. *Question:* Would there be a monthly reporting requirement placed upon the grantee for client non-participation? If so how is this to be completed, in what prescribed format?

Response: At this time, there is no monthly reporting requirement for client non-participation as the Program is voluntary.

16. *Question:* What is the purpose of the monthly electronic SNAP participant listing under this RFP?

Response: The purpose of the monthly electronic file of SNAP recipients who are appropriate for participation in the SNAP 100% E&T Reimbursement Program is to provide the contractor with a list of newly eligible SNAP recipients so the contractor can contact them to engage them in the Program.

17. *Question:* Will DSS notice to SNAP households take the place of past Offer Letter reimbursement practice?

Response: No; please see Section III.C.2 of the RFP as amended above.

18. *Question:* Can you now share an example of the notification of SNAP E&T by DSS to SNAP households?

Response: Please see Section III.C.2 of the RFP as amended above.

Addendum 1
State of Connecticut
Department of Social Services
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
100% Employment and Training Reimbursement Program 5/7/2013
Request for Proposals

Date Issued: May 31, 2013

Approved: *Linda Burns*

Linda Burns

(Original signature on document in procurement file)

This Addendum Acknowledgement must be signed and included with your proposal.

Authorized Signature

Name of Respondent

PROCUREMENT NOTICE

**State of Connecticut
Department of Social Services
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
100% Employment and Training Reimbursement Program 5/7/2013
Request for Proposals**

The State of Connecticut, Department of Social Services (the Department), is seeking proposals from private 501(c)(3) nonprofit provider organizations with an administrative office in Connecticut, Connecticut State agencies, and municipalities to provide Employment and Training (E&T) services to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients. Organizations currently being reimbursed with SNAP 50% E&T Reimbursement Program funds are ineligible to participate in this procurement.

Any organization proposed to provide direct services to clients must meet the following qualifications: 1) a minimum of three years' demonstrated experience providing employment and training services; and 2) the ability to serve multicultural, multilingual populations who may have barriers to employment. Organizations that have acted solely as fiduciary agents or funding "pass through" agencies do not meet the minimum qualifications.

The RFP is available in electronic format on the State Contracting Portal at <http://das.ct.gov/cr1.aspx?page=12> or from the Department's Official Contact:

Name: Linda Burns, Contract Administration and Procurement
Address: 25 Sigourney Street, 9th Floor
Hartford, CT 06106
Phone: (860) 424-5661
E-Mail: Linda.burns@ct.gov

The RFP is also available on the Department's web site at <http://www.ct.gov/dss/cwp/view.asp?a=2345&q=304920>.

Questions or requests for information in alternative formats must be directed to the Department's Official Contact at 860-424-5661. Persons who are deaf or hearing impaired may use a TDD by calling 1-800-842-4524.

The deadline for submission of proposals is June 26, 2013, 2:00 p.m. Eastern Time.

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I. GENERAL INFORMATION

■ A. INTRODUCTION

1. **RFP Name.** Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) 100% Employment and Training (E&T) Reimbursement Program 5/7/2013
2. **Summary.** The State of Connecticut, Department of Social Services (the Department), is seeking proposals from private 501(c)(3) nonprofit provider organizations with an administrative office in Connecticut, Connecticut State agencies, and municipalities to provide Employment and Training (E&T) services to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients. Organizations currently being reimbursed with SNAP 50% E&T Reimbursement Program funds are ineligible to participate in this procurement.
3. **Synopsis.** Any organization proposed to provide direct services to clients must meet the following qualifications: a) a minimum of three years' demonstrated experience providing employment and training services; and b) the ability to serve multicultural, multilingual populations who may have barriers to employment. Organizations that have acted solely as fiduciary agents or funding "pass through" agencies do not meet the minimum qualifications.
4. **Commodity Codes.** The services that the Department wishes to procure through this RFP are as follows:
 - 2000: Community and Social Services
 - 3000: Education and Training Services

■ B. ABBREVIATIONS / ACRONYMS / DEFINITIONS

| | |
|--------|--|
| ABAWD | Able-Bodied Adult Without Dependents |
| BFO | Best and Final Offer |
| C.G.S. | Connecticut General Statutes |
| CHRO | Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CT) |
| CT | Connecticut |
| DAS | Department of Administrative Services (CT) |
| DSS | Department of Social Services (CT) |
| FNS | Food and Nutrition Service of the United States Department of Agriculture |
| FOIA | Freedom of Information Act (CT) |
| IRS | Internal Revenue Service (U.S.) |
| LOI | Letter of Intent |
| OAG | Office of the Attorney General (CT) |
| OPM | Office of Policy and Management (CT) |
| OSC | Office of the State Comptroller (CT) |
| P.A. | Public Act (CT) |
| POS | Purchase of Service |
| PRWORA | Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (U.S.) |
| RFP | Request for Proposals |
| SEEC | State Elections Enforcement Commission (CT) |

| | |
|------|--|
| SNAP | Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, formerly the Food Stamp Program |
| TFA | Temporary Family Assistance |
| U.S. | United States |
| USDA | United States Department of Agriculture |

- *contractor*: a private 501(c)(3) nonprofit provider organization, Connecticut State agency, or municipality that enters into a contract with the Department as a result of this RFP
- *partner*: an individual (other than an employee of the contractor) or business entity proposed to provide a specific health or human service as part of a contract with the Department as a result of this RFP
- *prospective respondent*: a private 501(c)(3) nonprofit provider organization, Connecticut State agency, or municipality that may submit a proposal to the Department in response to this RFP, but has not yet done so
- *respondent*: a private 501(c)(3) nonprofit provider organization, Connecticut State agency, or municipality that has submitted a proposal to the Department in response to this RFP
- *subcontractor*: an individual (other than an employee of the contractor) or business entity proposed to provide a specific health or human service as part of a contract with the Department as a result of this RFP

■ C. INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Official Contact.** The Department has designated the individual below as the Official Contact for purposes of this RFP. The Official Contact is the **only authorized contact** for this procurement and, as such, handles all related communications on behalf of the Department. Respondents, prospective respondents, and other interested parties are advised that any communication with any other Department employee(s) (including appointed officials) or personnel under contract to the Department about this RFP is strictly prohibited. Respondents or prospective respondents who violate this instruction may risk disqualification from further consideration.

Name: Linda Burns, Contract Administration and Procurement
Address: 25 Sigourney Street, 9th Floor
Hartford, CT 06106
Phone: (860) 424-5661
E-Mail: Linda.burns@ct.gov

Please ensure that e-mail screening software (if used) recognizes and accepts e-mails from the Official Contact.

2. **RFP Information.** The RFP, addenda to the RFP, and other information associated with this procurement are available in electronic format from the Official Contact or from the Internet at the following locations:

- Department's RFP Web Page
www.ct.gov/dss/cwp/view.asp?a=2345&q=304920&dssNav=

- State Contracting Portal
<http://das.ct.gov/cr1.aspx?page=12>

It is strongly recommended that any respondent or prospective respondent interested in this procurement subscribe to receive e-mail alerts from the State Contracting Portal. Subscribers will receive a daily e-mail announcing procurements and addenda that are posted on the portal. This service is provided as a courtesy to assist in monitoring activities associated with State procurements, including this RFP.

Printed copies of all documents are also available from the Official Contact upon request.

- 3. Contracts.** The offer of the right to negotiate a contract pursuant to this RFP is dependent upon the availability of funding to the Department. The Department anticipates the following:

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Total Funding Available: | Up to \$724,000 per year for up to three years pending availability of funding |
| Number of Contracts: | To Be Determined |
| Contract Cost: | To Be Determined |
| Contract Term: | October 1, 2013 to September 30, 2016 |

- 4. Eligibility.** Private provider organizations (defined as nonstate entities that are 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporations or partnerships) with an administrative office in Connecticut, Connecticut State agencies, and municipalities are eligible to submit proposals in response to this RFP. Organizations currently being reimbursed with SNAP 50% E&T Reimbursement Program funds are ineligible to participate in this procurement. Individuals who are not a duly formed business entity are ineligible to participate in this procurement.
- 5. Minimum Qualifications of Respondents.** Any organization proposed to provide direct services to clients must meet the following qualifications.
 - a. A minimum of three years' demonstrated experience providing employment and training services. Respondents that have acted solely as fiduciary agents or funding "pass through" agencies do not meet the minimum qualifications.
 - b. The ability to serve multicultural, multilingual populations who may have barriers to employment.

The Department reserves the right to reject the submission of any respondent in default of any current or prior contract.

6. **Procurement Schedule.** See below. Dates after the due date for proposals (“Proposals Due”) are target dates only (*). The Department may amend the schedule, as needed. Any change will be made by means of an addendum to this RFP and will be posted on the State Contracting Portal and the Department’s RFP Web Page.

- RFP Released: May 7, 2013
- Deadline for Questions: May 21, 2013, 2:00 p.m. Eastern Time
- Answers Released (tentative): June 5, 2013
- **MANDATORY** Letter of Intent Due: June 12, 2013, 2:00 p.m. Eastern Time
- Proposals Due: June 26, 2013, 2:00 p.m. Eastern Time
- (*) Start of Contract: October 1, 2013

7. **Letter of Intent.** A Letter of Intent (LOI) is **REQUIRED** by this RFP. The LOI is non-binding and does not obligate the sender to submit a proposal. The LOI must be submitted to the Official Contact by e-mail (preferred) or U.S. mail by the deadline established in the Procurement Schedule. Prospective respondents must complete and use the [Letter of Intent](#) form, which is embedded in this section as a hyperlink. It is the sender’s responsibility to confirm the Department’s receipt of the LOI. **Failure to submit the required LOI in accordance with the requirements set forth herein shall result in disqualification from further consideration.**

8. **Inquiry Procedures.** All questions regarding this RFP or the Department’s procurement process must be submitted to the Official Contact before the deadline specified in the Procurement Schedule. The early submission of questions is encouraged. Questions will not be accepted or answered verbally – neither in person nor over the telephone. All questions received before the deadline will be answered. However, the Department will not answer questions when the source is unknown (i.e., nuisance or anonymous questions). Questions deemed unrelated to the RFP or the procurement process will not be answered. At its discretion, the Department may or may not respond to questions received after the deadline. The Department may combine similar questions and give only one answer. All questions and answers will be compiled into a written addendum to this RFP. If any answer to any question constitutes a material change to the RFP, the question and answer will be placed at the beginning of the addendum and duly noted as such. The agency will release the answers to questions on or about the date established in the Procurement Schedule. The Department will publish any and all addenda to this RFP on the State Contracting Portal and on the Department’s RFP Web Page. At its discretion, the Department may distribute any amendments or addenda to this RFP to prospective respondents who submitted a Letter of Intent. **Proposals must include a signed Addendum Acknowledgement, which will be placed at the end of any and all addenda to this RFP.**

9. **Proposal Due Date and Time.** The Official Contact is the **only authorized recipient** of proposals submitted in response to this RFP. Proposals must be received by the Official Contact on or before the due date and time:

- Due Date: June 26, 2013
- Time: 2:00 p.m. Eastern Time

Faxed or e-mailed proposals will not be evaluated. The Department shall not accept a postmark date as the basis for meeting the proposal due date and time. Respondents should not interpret or otherwise construe receipt of a proposal after the due date and time as acceptance of the proposal, since the actual receipt of the proposal is a clerical function. The Department suggests the respondent use certified or registered mail, or a delivery service such as United Parcel Service (UPS) to deliver the proposal. When hand-delivering proposals respondents should allow extra time to comply with building security and delivery procedures.

Hand-delivered proposals must be delivered to the loading dock located on the north side of the building, at 555 Capitol Avenue, on business days between 8:30 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. Upon arriving at the loading dock, the respondent or courier must ring the buzzer by the door. The Official Contact or designee will receive the proposal and provide the respondent or courier with a receipt upon request. **The Department shall not accept hand-delivered proposals at the Security Console located on the Mezzanine.**

Proposals shall not be considered received by the Department until they are in the hands of the Official Contact or another representative of the Contract Administration and Procurement Unit designated by the Official Contact. At the discretion of the Department, late proposals may be destroyed or retained for pick-up by the submitters.

An acceptable submission must include the following:

- one (1) original proposal;
- four (4) conforming copies of the original proposal; and
- two (2) conforming electronic copies of the original proposal (one copy on each of two Compact Disks clearly labeled with the Legal Name of the respondent and **SNAP E&T 5/7/2013 RFP**).

The original proposal must carry original signatures and be clearly marked on the cover as "Original." Unsigned proposals will not be evaluated. The original proposal and each conforming copy of the proposal must be complete, properly formatted and outlined, and ready for evaluation by the Evaluation Team. **The electronic copies of the proposal must be compatible with Microsoft Office Word.** If any of the required Appendices and Forms identified in Section IV are not compatible with Microsoft Office Word, they must be scanned and submitted in Portable Document Format (PDF) or similar file format.

10. Multiple Proposals. The submission of multiple proposals is not an option with this procurement.

11. Declaration of Confidential Information. Respondents are advised that all materials associated with this procurement are subject to the terms of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), the Privacy Act, and all rules, regulations and interpretations resulting from them. If a respondent deems that certain information required by this RFP is confidential, the respondent must label such information as CONFIDENTIAL. In Section C of the proposal submission, the respondent must reference where the information labeled CONFIDENTIAL is located in the proposal. *EXAMPLE: Section G.1.a.* For each subsection so referenced, the respondent must provide a convincing explanation and rationale sufficient to justify an exemption of the information from release under the FOIA. The explanation and rationale must be stated in terms of (a) the prospective harm to the competitive position of the respondent that would result if the identified information were to be released and (b) the reasons why the information is legally exempt from release pursuant to C.G.S. § 1-210(b).

12. Conflict of Interest - Disclosure Statement. Respondents must include a disclosure statement concerning any current business relationships (within the past three (3) years) that pose a conflict of interest, as defined by C.G.S. § 1-85. A conflict of interest exists when a relationship exists between the respondent and a public official (including an elected official) or State employee that may interfere with fair competition or may be adverse to the interests of the State. The existence of a conflict of interest is not, in and of itself, evidence of wrongdoing. A conflict of interest may, however, become a legal matter if a respondent tries to influence, or succeeds in influencing, the outcome of an official decision for their personal or corporate benefit. The Department will determine whether any disclosed conflict of interest poses a substantial advantage to the respondent over the competition, decreases the overall competitiveness of this procurement, or is not in the best interests of the State. In the absence of any conflict of interest, a respondent must affirm such in the disclosure statement. *“[name of respondent] has no current business relationship (within the past three (3) years) that poses a conflict of interest, as defined by C.G.S. § 1-85.”*

■ D. PROPOSAL FORMAT

- 1. Required Outline.** All proposals must follow the required outline presented in Section IV. Proposal Outline. Proposals that fail to follow the required outline will be deemed, at the discretion of the Department, non-responsive and not evaluated.
- 2. Cover Sheet.** The Cover Sheet is Page 1 of the proposal. Respondents must complete and use the [Cover Sheet](#) form, which is embedded in this section as a hyperlink.
- 3. Table of Contents.** All proposals must include a Table of Contents that conforms to the required proposal outline. (See Section IV.)
- 4. Executive Summary.** Proposals must include a high-level summary of the proposal, not exceeding two pages. The Executive Summary shall include: (a) the legal address of the respondent’s administrative office in Connecticut; and (b) the qualifications of all organizations proposed to provide direct services to clients, namely, a minimum of three years’ demonstrated experience providing employment and training services and the ability to serve multicultural, multilingual populations who may have barriers to employment. The Department will not evaluate proposals from organizations that do not meet these minimum qualifications.

5. **Attachments.** Attachments other than the required Appendices or Forms identified in Section IV are not permitted and will not be evaluated. Further, the required Appendices and Forms must not be altered or used to extend, enhance, or replace any component required by this RFP. Failure to abide by these instructions will result in disqualification.
6. **Style Requirements.** The original proposal and each of the four (4) conforming copies of the original proposal must conform to the following specifications:

Binding Type: Loose leaf binders with the Legal Name of the respondent and the RFP Name appearing on the outside front cover of each binder:
SNAP 100% E&T Reimbursement Program 5/7/2013 RFP

Dividers: A tab sheet keyed to each subsection that appears in bold font style in Section IV, Proposal Outline, must separate each subsection of the proposal; the title of each such subsection must appear on the tab sheet

Paper Size: 8½" x 11", "portrait" orientation

Print Style: 1-sided

Font Size: Minimum of 11-point

Font Type: Arial or Tahoma

Margins: The binding edge margin of all pages shall be a minimum of one and one half inches (1½"); all other margins shall be 1"

Line Spacing: Single-spaced

7. **Pagination.** The respondent's name must be displayed in the header of each page. All pages, from the Cover Sheet through the required Appendices and Forms, must be numbered consecutively in the footer.
8. **Packaging and Labeling Requirements.** All proposals must be submitted in sealed envelopes or packages and be addressed to the Official Contact. The Legal Name and Address of the respondent must appear in the upper left corner of the envelope or package. The RFP Name must be clearly displayed on the envelope or package:
SNAP E&T RFP.

Any received proposal that does not conform to these packaging and labeling instructions will be opened as general mail. Such a proposal may be accepted by the Department as a clerical function, but it will not be evaluated. At the discretion of the Department, such a proposal may be destroyed or retained for pick-up by the submitters.

■ E. EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

1. **Evaluation Process.** It is the intent of the Department to conduct a comprehensive, fair, and impartial evaluation of proposals received in response to this RFP. When evaluating proposals, negotiating with successful respondents, and offering the right to negotiate a contract, the Department will conform to its written procedures for POS procurements (pursuant to C.G.S. § 4-217) and the State's Code of Ethics (pursuant to C.G.S. §§ 1-84 and 1-85).

2. **Evaluation Team.** The Department will designate an Evaluation Team to evaluate proposals submitted in response to this RFP. The contents of all submitted proposals, including any confidential information, will be shared with the Evaluation Team. Only proposals found to be responsive (that is, complying with all instructions and requirements described herein) will be reviewed, rated, and scored. Proposals that fail to comply with all instructions will be rejected without further consideration. Attempts by any respondent (or representative of any respondent) to contact or influence any member of the Evaluation Team may result in disqualification of the respondent.
3. **Minimum Submission Requirements.** All proposals must comply with the requirements specified in this RFP. To be eligible for evaluation, proposals must (a) be received on or before the due date and time; (b) meet the Proposal Format requirements; (c) follow the required Proposal Outline; and (d) be complete. Proposals that fail to follow instructions or satisfy these minimum submission requirements will not be reviewed further. The Department will reject any proposal that deviates significantly from the requirements of this RFP.
4. **Evaluation Criteria (and Weights).** Proposals meeting the Minimum Submission Requirements will be evaluated according to the established criteria. The criteria are the objective standards that the Evaluation Team will use to evaluate the technical merits of the proposals. Only the criteria listed below will be used to evaluate proposals. The criteria are weighted according to their relative importance. The weights are confidential.
 - Organizational Requirements
 - Service Requirements
 - Staffing Requirements *see note*
 - Data and Technology Requirements
 - Subcontractors/Partners
 - Work Plan
 - Financial Requirements
 - Appendices

Note:

As part of its evaluation of the Staffing Requirements, the Evaluation Team will consider the respondent's demonstrated commitment to affirmative action, as required by the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies § 46A-68j-30(10).

5. **Respondent Selection.** Upon completing its evaluation of proposals, the Evaluation Team will submit the rankings of all proposals to the Department head. The final selection of a successful respondent is at the discretion of the Department head. Any respondent selected will be so notified and offered an opportunity to negotiate a contract with the Department. Such negotiations may, but will not automatically, result in a contract. All unsuccessful respondents will be notified by e-mail or U.S. mail, at the Department's discretion, about the outcome of the evaluation and respondent selection process.

- 6. Debriefing.** After receiving notification from the Department, any respondent may contact the Official Contact and request a Debriefing of the procurement process and its proposal. If respondents still have questions after receiving this information, they may contact the Official Contact and request a meeting with the Department to discuss the procurement process. The Department shall schedule and conduct Debriefing meetings that have been properly requested, within fifteen (15) days of the Department's receipt of a request. The Debriefing meeting must not include or allow any information concerning other proposals, nor should the identity of the evaluators be released. The Debriefing process shall not be used to change, alter, or modify the outcome of a competitive procurement. More detailed information about requesting a Debriefing may be obtained from the Official Contact.
- 7. Appeal Process.** Any time after the submission due date, but **not later than thirty (30) days** after the Department notifies respondents about the outcome of a competitive procurement, respondents may submit an Appeal to the Department. The e-mail sent date or the postmark date on the notification envelope will be considered "day one" of the thirty (30) days. Respondents may appeal any aspect of the Department's competitive procurement; however, such Appeal must be in writing and must set forth facts or evidence in sufficient and convincing detail for the Department to determine whether during any aspect of the competitive procurement there was a failure to comply with the State's statutes, regulations, or standards concerning competitive procurement or the provisions of the RFP. Any such Appeal must be submitted to the Agency Head with a copy to the Official Contact. The respondent must include the basis for the Appeal and the remedy requested. The filing of an Appeal shall not be deemed sufficient reason for the Department to delay, suspend, cancel, or terminate the procurement process or execution of a contract. More detailed information about filing an Appeal may be obtained from the Official Contact.
- 8. Contest of Solicitation or Contract Offer.** Pursuant to Section 4e-36 of the Connecticut General Statutes, "Any bidder or proposer on a state contract may contest the solicitation or award of a contract to a subcommittee of the State Contracting Standards Board..." More detailed information is available on the State Contracting Standards Board web site at <http://www.ct.gov/scsb/site/default.asp>.
- 9. Contract Execution.** Any contract developed and executed as a result of this RFP is subject to the Department's contracting procedures, which may include approval by the Office of the Attorney General.

II. MANDATORY PROVISIONS

■ A. STANDARD CONTRACT, PARTS I AND II

By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, the respondent implicitly agrees to comply with the provisions of Parts I and II of the State's "standard contract":

Part I of the standard contract is maintained by the Department and will include the scope of services, contract performance, budget, reports, and other program-specific provisions of any resulting contract. A sample of Part I is available from the Department's Official Contact upon request.

Part II of the standard contract is maintained by OPM and includes the mandatory terms and conditions of the contract. Part II is available on OPM's website at: [OPM: POS Standard Contract Part II](#).

Note:

Included in Part II of the standard contract is the State Elections Enforcement Commission's notice (pursuant to C.G.S. § 9-612(g)(2)) advising executive branch State contractors and prospective State contractors of the ban on campaign contributions and solicitations.

Part I of the standard contract may be amended by means of a written instrument signed by the Department, the selected respondent (contractor), and, if required, the Attorney General's Office. Part II of the standard contract may be amended only in consultation with, and with the approval of, the Office of Policy and Management and the Attorney General's Office.

■ B. ASSURANCES

By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, a respondent implicitly gives the following assurances:

- 1. Collusion.** The respondent represents and warrants that it did not participate in any part of the RFP development process and had no knowledge of the specific contents of the RFP prior to its issuance. The respondent further represents and warrants that no agent, representative, or employee of the State participated directly in the preparation of the respondent's proposal. The respondent also represents and warrants that the submitted proposal is in all respects fair and is made without collusion or fraud.
- 2. State Officials and Employees.** The respondent certifies that no elected or appointed official or employee of the State has or will benefit financially or materially from any contract resulting from this RFP. The Department may terminate a resulting contract if it is determined that gratuities of any kind were either offered or received by any of the aforementioned officials or employees from the respondent, contractor, or its agents or employees.

3. **Competitors.** The respondent assures that the submitted proposal is not made in connection with any competing organization or competitor submitting a separate proposal in response to this RFP. No attempt has been made, or will be made, by the respondent to induce any other organization or competitor to submit, or not submit, a proposal for the purpose of restricting competition. The respondent further assures that the proposed costs have been arrived at independently, without consultation, communication, or agreement with any other organization or competitor for the purpose of restricting competition. Nor has the respondent knowingly disclosed the proposed costs on a prior basis, either directly or indirectly, to any other organization or competitor.
4. **Validity of Proposal.** The respondent certifies that the proposal represents a valid and binding offer to provide services in accordance with the terms and provisions described in this RFP and any amendments or addenda hereto. The proposal shall remain valid for a period of 180 days after the submission due date and may be extended beyond that time by mutual agreement. At its sole discretion, the Department may include the proposal, by reference or otherwise, into any contract with the successful respondent.
5. **Press Releases.** The respondent agrees to obtain prior written consent and approval of the Department for press releases that relate in any manner to this RFP or any resulting contract.

■ C. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, a respondent implicitly agrees to comply with the following terms and conditions:

1. **Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action.** The State is an Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action employer and does not discriminate in its hiring, employment, or business practices. The State is committed to complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and does not discriminate on the basis of disability in admission to, access to, or operation of its programs, services, or activities.
2. **Preparation Expenses.** Neither the State nor the Department shall assume any liability for expenses incurred by a respondent in preparing, submitting, or clarifying any proposal submitted in response to this RFP.
3. **Exclusion of Taxes.** The Department is exempt from the payment of excise and sales taxes imposed by the federal government and the State. Respondents are liable for any other applicable taxes.
4. **Proposed Costs.** No cost submissions that are contingent upon a State action will be accepted. All proposed costs must be fixed through the entire term of the contract.
5. **Changes to Proposal.** No additions or changes to the original proposal will be allowed after submission. While changes are not permitted, the Department may request and authorize respondents to submit written clarification of their proposals, in a manner or format prescribed by the Department, and at the respondent's expense.

6. **Supplemental Information.** Supplemental information will not be considered after the deadline for submission of proposals, unless specifically requested by the Department. The Department may ask a respondent to give demonstrations, interviews, oral presentations or further explanations to clarify information contained in a proposal. Any such demonstration, interview, or oral presentation will be at a time selected and in a place provided by the Department. At its sole discretion, the Department may limit the number of respondents invited to make such a demonstration, interview, or oral presentation and may limit the number of attendees per respondent.
7. **Presentation of Supporting Evidence.** If requested by the Department, a respondent must be prepared to present evidence of experience, ability, data reporting capabilities, financial standing, or other information necessary to satisfactorily meet the requirements set forth or implied in this RFP. The Department may make on-site visits to an operational facility or facilities of a respondent to evaluate further the respondent's capability to perform the duties required by this RFP. At its discretion, the Department may also check or contact any reference provided by the respondent.
8. **RFP Is Not An Offer.** Neither this RFP nor any subsequent discussions shall give rise to any commitment on the part of the State or the Department or confer any rights on any respondent unless and until a contract is fully executed by the necessary parties. The contract document will represent the entire agreement between the respondent and the Department and will supersede all prior negotiations, representations or agreements, alleged or made, between the parties. The State shall assume no liability for costs incurred by the respondent or for payment of services under the terms of the contract until the successful respondent is notified that the contract has been accepted and approved by the Department and, if required, by the Attorney General's Office.

■ D. RIGHTS RESERVED TO THE STATE

By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, a respondent implicitly accepts that the following rights are reserved to the State:

1. **Timing Sequence.** The timing and sequence of events associated with this RFP shall ultimately be determined by the Department.
2. **Amending or Canceling RFP.** The Department reserves the right to amend or cancel this RFP on any date and at any time, if the Department deems it to be necessary, appropriate, or otherwise in the best interests of the State.
3. **No Acceptable Proposals.** In the event that no acceptable proposals are submitted in response to this RFP, the Department may reopen the procurement process, if it is determined to be in the best interests of the State.
4. **Offer and Rejection of Proposals.** The Department reserves the right to offer in part and/or to reject any and all proposals in whole or in part, for misrepresentation or if the proposal limits or modifies any of the terms, conditions, or specifications of this RFP. The Department may waive minor technical defects, irregularities, or omissions, if in its judgment the best interests of the State will be served. The Department reserves the right to reject the proposal of any respondent who submits a proposal after the submission date and time.

5. **Sole Property of the State.** All proposals submitted in response to this RFP are to be the sole property of the State. Any product, whether acceptable or unacceptable, developed under a contract executed as a result of this RFP shall be the sole property of the State, unless stated otherwise in this RFP or subsequent contract. The right to publish, distribute, or disseminate any and all information or reports, or part thereof, shall accrue to the State without recourse.
6. **Contract Negotiation.** The Department reserves the right to negotiate or contract for all or any portion of the services contained in this RFP. The Department further reserves the right to contract with one or more respondent for such services. After reviewing the scored criteria, the Department may seek Best and Final Offers (BFO) on cost from respondents. The Department may set parameters on any BFOs received.
7. **Clerical Errors in Contract Offer.** The Department reserves the right to correct inaccurate offers resulting from its clerical errors. This may include, in extreme circumstances, revoking the offering of the right to negotiate a contract already made to a respondent and subsequently offering the right to negotiate a contract to another respondent. Such action on the part of the State shall not constitute a breach of contract on the part of the State since the contract with the initial respondent is deemed to be void *ab initio* and of no effect as if no contract ever existed between the State and the respondent.
8. **Key Personnel.** When the Department is the sole funder of a purchased service, the Department reserves the right to approve any additions, deletions, or changes in key personnel, with the exception of key personnel who have terminated employment. The Department also reserves the right to approve replacements for key personnel who have terminated employment. The Department further reserves the right to require the removal and replacement of any of the respondent's key personnel who do not perform adequately, regardless of whether they were previously approved by the Department.

■ E. STATUTORY AND REGULATORY COMPLIANCE

By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, the respondent implicitly agrees to comply with all applicable State and federal laws and regulations, including, but not limited to, the following:

- 1. Freedom of Information, C.G.S. § 1-210(b).** The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) generally requires the disclosure of documents in the possession of the State upon request of any citizen, unless the content of the document falls within certain categories of exemption, as defined by C.G.S. § 1-210(b). Respondents are generally advised not to include in their proposals any confidential information. If the respondent indicates that certain documentation, as required by this RFP, is submitted in confidence, the State will endeavor to keep said information confidential to the extent permitted by law. The State has no obligation to initiate, prosecute, or defend any legal proceeding or to seek a protective order or other similar relief to prevent disclosure of any information pursuant to a FOIA request. The respondent has the burden of establishing the availability of any FOIA exemption in any proceeding where it is an issue. While a respondent may claim an exemption to the State's FOIA, the final administrative authority to release or exempt any or all material so identified rests with the State. In no event shall the State or any of its employees have any liability for disclosure of documents or information in the possession of the State and which the State or its employees believe(s) to be required pursuant to the FOIA or other requirements of law.
- 2. Contract Compliance, C.G.S. § 4a-60 and Regulations of CT State Agencies § 46a-68j-21 thru 43, inclusive.** Connecticut statute and regulations impose certain obligations on State agencies (as well as contractors and subcontractors doing business with the State) to ensure that State agencies do not enter into contracts with organizations or businesses that discriminate against protected class persons. Detailed information is available on CHRO's web site at [Contract Compliance](#).
IMPORTANT NOTE: The respondent and each proposed subcontractor/partner must upload the Workplace Analysis Affirmative Action Report into the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) on-line data vault, called BizNet, prior to submitting a proposal in response to this RFP. More information about [uploading standard contract documents](#) is embedded in this section as a hyperlink.

- 3. Consulting Agreements, C.G.S. § 4a-81.** Proposals for State contracts with a value of \$50,000 or more in a calendar or fiscal year, excluding leases and licensing agreements of any value, shall include a consulting agreement affidavit attesting to whether any consulting agreement has been entered into in connection with the proposal. As used herein "consulting agreement" means any written or oral agreement to retain the services, for a fee, of a consultant for the purposes of (A) providing counsel to a contractor, vendor, consultant or other entity seeking to conduct, or conducting, business with the State, (B) contacting, whether in writing or orally, any executive, judicial, or administrative office of the State, including any department, institution, bureau, board, commission, authority, official or employee for the purpose of solicitation, dispute resolution, introduction, requests for information or (C) any other similar activity related to such contract. Consulting agreement does not include any agreements entered into with a consultant who is registered under the provisions of C.G.S. Chapter 10 as of the date such affidavit is submitted in accordance with the provisions of C.G.S. § 4a-81. The Consulting Agreement Affidavit (OPM Ethics Form 5) is available on OPM's website at [OPM: Ethics Forms](#).

IMPORTANT NOTE: The respondent must upload the Consulting Agreement Affidavit (OPM Ethics Form 5) into the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) on-line data vault, called BizNet, prior to submitting a proposal in response to this RFP. More information about [uploading standard contract documents](#) is embedded in this section as a hyperlink.

- 4. Limitation on Use of Appropriated Funds to Influence Certain Federal Contracting and Financial Transactions, 31 USC § 1352.** A responsive proposal shall include a [Certification Regarding Lobbying form](#), which is embedded in this section as a hyperlink, attesting to the fact that none of the funds appropriated by any Act may be expended by the recipient of a Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement to pay any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the: (A) awarding of any Federal contract; (B) making of any Federal grant; (C) making of any Federal loan; (D) entering into of any cooperative agreement; or (E) extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

- 5. Gift and Campaign Contributions, C.G.S. §§ 4-250 and 4-252(c). Governor M. Jodi Rell's Executive Orders No. 1, Para. 8 and No. 7C, Para. 10; C.G.S. § 9-612(g)(2).** If a respondent is offered an opportunity to negotiate a contract with an anticipated value of \$50,000 or more in a calendar or fiscal year, the respondent must fully disclose any gifts or lawful contributions made to campaigns of candidates for statewide public office or the General Assembly. Municipalities and Connecticut State agencies are exempt from this requirement. The gift and campaign contributions certification (OPM Ethics Form 1) is available on OPM's website at [OPM: Ethics Forms](#).

IMPORTANT NOTE: The successful respondent must upload the Gift and Campaign Contributions Certification (OPM Ethics Form 1) into the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) on-line data vault, called BizNet, prior to contract execution. More information about [uploading standard contract documents](#) is embedded in this section as a hyperlink.

6. Nondiscrimination Certification, C.G.S. §§ 4a-60(a)(1) and 4a-60a(a)(1). If a respondent is offered an opportunity to negotiate a contract, the respondent must provide the Department with *written representation or documentation* that certifies the respondent complies with the State's nondiscrimination agreements and warranties. A nondiscrimination certification is required for all State contracts – regardless of type, term, cost, or value. Municipalities and Connecticut State agencies are exempt from this requirement. The nondiscrimination certification forms are available on OPM's website at [OPM: Nondiscrimination Certification](#).

IMPORTANT NOTE: The selected respondent must upload the Nondiscrimination Certification into the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) on-line data vault, called BizNet, prior to contract execution. More information about [uploading standard contract documents](#) is embedded in this section as a hyperlink.

III. PROGRAM INFORMATION

A. DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

The Department of Social Services delivers a broad variety of services to children, families, adults, people with disabilities, and the elderly, including health care coverage, child care, child support enforcement, independent living services, energy assistance, food and nutrition aid, and program grants. DSS administers more than 90 legislatively authorized programs and one third of the State budget, currently serving more than 700,000 individuals in nearly 450,000 households (June 2012 data).

By statute, DSS is the State agency responsible for administering a number of programs under federal legislation, including the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, the Older Americans Act, and the Social Security Act. The Department is also designated as a public housing agency for the purpose of administering the Section 8 program under the federal Housing Act.

The Department is headed by the Commissioner of Social Services and there are two Deputy Commissioners -- a Deputy Commissioner for Programs and a Deputy Commissioner for Health Services, Finance, and Administration. The Department administers most of its programs through 12 field offices throughout the State, with central administrative offices located in Hartford. In addition, many services funded by the Department are available through community-based agencies, including the 156 senior centers throughout Connecticut. The Department has out-stationed employees at hospitals to expedite Medicaid/HUSKY applications, and also works with community service providers to facilitate program applications.

Attached to the Department for administrative purposes only are the Department of Rehabilitative Services, encompassing vocational rehabilitation services, services for the blind and visually-impaired, services for the deaf and hearing-impaired, and disability determination services; the Commission on Aging; and the Child Day Care Council.

Department Mission

The Connecticut Department of Social Services provides a continuum of core services to:

- Meet basic needs of food, shelter, economic support, and health care
- Promote and support the choice to live with dignity in one's own home and community
- Promote and support the achievement of economic viability in the workforce

We gain strength from our diverse environment to promote equal access to all DSS programs and services.

Department Vision

The Connecticut Department of Social Services is people working together to support individuals and families to reach their full potential and live better lives. We do this with humanity and integrity.

B. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

1. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Overview

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is a nutrition program funded and administered by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS). The program helps low-income individuals and households to buy food and provides nutrition education to help recipients choose foods that enhance their health and well-being. The current program was set up in 1971, and underwent a name change from Food Stamps to SNAP in October 2008. The Connecticut Department of Social Services operates the program at the state level following rules from the USDA.

As of January 2013, the Department provided federal SNAP benefits to 220,516 households. Those households were comprised of 404,159 individuals. The average monthly benefit for January 2013 was \$246. The Department also serves 485 people under the State-funded SNAP.

2. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) 100% Employment and Training (E&T) Reimbursement Program Overview

Each year, the USDA Food and Nutrition Service provides grant allocations to state agencies to carry out SNAP employment and training operations. The purpose of the 100% E&T Reimbursement Program is to assist members of SNAP households in gaining skills, training, work experience, and employment that will increase their ability to become self-reliant. In Connecticut, the goal of the program is that all working age residents have jobs that provide financial self-sufficiency. More information about SNAP Employment and Training is available on FNS' web site at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/rules/memo/support/employment-training.htm>.

Pursuant to the federal Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) of 1996, SNAP recipients between the ages of 18 and 50 who are Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWDs) must participate in a "qualifying activity," as defined in Section III.C.2.c of this Request for Proposals, for a minimum of 20 hours per week in order to maintain eligibility for SNAP benefits, unless they live in a town for which the State has received a waiver or exemption from the work requirement. Only certain SNAP 100% E&T Reimbursement Program components as described in Section III.C.2.c of this Request for Proposals meet the definition of "qualifying activity."

NOTE: The State's waiver of the work requirement is currently scheduled to expire on September 30, 2013 and it is unknown at this time whether the waiver will be extended.

ABAWDs who are not exempt from the work requirement remain eligible for SNAP benefits for only three full months in a 36-month period unless they:

- Work an average of 80 hours per month; or
- Participate in an FNS-approved employment and training program for an average of 80 hours per month; or
- Participate in a work experience program for the number of hours that, when multiplied by the State minimum wage rate, equals their monthly SNAP benefit.

The Department focuses its SNAP 100% E&T Reimbursement Program on the following targeted eligible populations:

- Initially, ABAWDs in danger of losing eligibility for SNAP benefits due to the work requirement;
- Then, ABAWDs who are not subject to the work requirement; and
- Once all eligible ABAWDs have been offered services, non ABAWDs and families whose eligibility for Temporary Family Assistance (TFA) has expired due to the time limit (typically 21 months).

C. MAIN PROPOSAL COMPONENTS

The respondent's proposed SNAP 100% E&T Reimbursement program must be led by a qualified organization, which will act as respondent, contractor, and fiduciary agent, and which will assume primary responsibility for the success of the program. The contractor shall be responsible for ensuring that the delivery system for contracted SNAP E&T services is organized to meet the Department's requirements.

The contractor's responsibilities as fiduciary agent shall include but not be limited to the following:

- Developing and implementing a system to coordinate and deliver the required SNAP E&T services;
- Entering into written agreements with subcontractors/partners to provide the required SNAP E&T services;
- Identifying a staff position to be responsible for contract compliance by subcontractors/partners;
- Serving as a fiscal conduit for SNAP 100% E&T Reimbursement Program funds including but not limited to issuing payments to subcontractors/partners in a timely manner;
- Managing the service delivery system and analyzing performance; and
- Ensuring collection and submission of required data.

Respondents are required to provide the information requested about each subcontractor/partner proposed to provide direct services to clients where indicated throughout this section of the RFP. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in the immediate disqualification of the proposal.

1. Organizational Requirements *(Page Limit: 10 pages per the respondent and each subcontractor/partner)*

Private provider organizations (defined as nonstate entities that are 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporations or partnerships) with an administrative office in Connecticut, Connecticut State agencies, and municipalities are eligible to submit proposals in response to this RFP. Organizations currently being reimbursed with SNAP 50% E&T Reimbursement Program funds are ineligible to participate in this procurement. Individuals who are not a duly formed business entity are ineligible to participate in this procurement.

Any organization proposed to provide direct services to clients must meet the following qualifications: a) a minimum of three years' demonstrated experience providing employment and training services; and b) the ability to serve multicultural, multilingual populations who may have barriers to employment. Respondents that have acted solely as fiduciary agents or funding "pass through" agencies do not meet the minimum qualifications.

The Department reserves the right to reject the submission of any respondent in default of any current or prior contract.

A responsive proposal must include the following information about the administrative and operational capabilities of the respondent, and each proposed subcontractor/partner where indicated throughout this section of the RFP.

- a. *Mission / Vision / Years in Operation / Current Range of Services.* Provide a brief overview of the respondent's and each proposed subcontractor's/partner's organization including the mission, vision, years in operation, and current range of services. Describe how the SNAP 100% E&T Reimbursement Program fits within **the respondent's and each proposed subcontractor's/partner's** mission, vision, and current range of services.
- b. *Entity Type.* Provide proof of the respondent's 501(c)(3) nonprofit status such as a copy of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) determination letter, in Section IV.G. Appendices.
- c. *Functional Organization.* Provide an organization chart showing the hierarchical structure of functions and positions within **the respondent's and each proposed subcontractor's/partner's** organization, and the respondent's hierarchical and programmatic relationships with **each proposed subcontractor/partner**, in Section IV.G. Appendices. Indicate on the chart(s) where the following functions related to this program will be located: Program Manager; contract management; administrative support; and other functions and positions associated with the performance of the required SNAP 100% E&T Reimbursement Program activities. See Section III.C.3, Staffing Requirements, for more information about the Program Manager function.
- d. *Qualifications.* Describe how each organization proposed to provide direct services to clients meets the required minimum qualifications of this RFP: i) a minimum of three years' demonstrated experience providing employment and training services; and ii) the ability to serve multicultural, multilingual populations who may have barriers to employment. Organizations that have acted solely as fiduciary agents or funding "pass through" agencies do not meet the minimum qualifications.
- e. *Relevant Experience.* Describe **the respondent's and each proposed subcontractor's/partner's** experience providing the services required by this RFP. Provide evidence of **the respondent's and each proposed subcontractor's/partner's** ability to manage public (city, state, and/or federal) grants and contracts.

- f. *Governance – Disclosure.* Provide the following information about **the respondent’s and each proposed subcontractor’s/partner’s** organization:
- i. The name, business address, residence address, and percentage of time to be allocated to the resulting contract by members of the Board of Directors;
 - ii. The role of the Board of Directors in the organization’s governance and policy-making;
 - iii. A current organization chart defining the levels of governance and management in Section IV.G. Appendices;
 - iv. A complete description of any and all related party relationships and transactions including full disclosure of any anticipated payments to a related party (such payments are non-allowable unless the respondent provides sufficient data to satisfy the Department that the payments are necessary and reasonable); and
 - v. An overview of how organization policies and procedures are reviewed and updated whenever there are federal and State regulation changes and/or operational changes, or as requested by the Department.
- g. *Ownership – Disclosure.* Provide the following information about **the respondent’s and each proposed subcontractor’s/partner’s** organization:
- i. The name, business address, and residence address of the principals of the organization;
 - ii. Whether any principal of the organization is also a principal of any related business entity including but not limited to subcontracting entity, parent entity or wholly owned entity, and if so the name of the related entity;
 - iii. Whether any principal of the organization has been convicted of a criminal offense related to that person’s involvement in any federal or State program(s), since the inception of such program(s);
 - iv. The name, business address, and residence address of any agent or employee of the organization who has been convicted of a criminal offense related to that person’s involvement in any federal or State program(s), since the inception of such program(s);
 - v. Whether any person identified in subsections (i) through (iv) above has been terminated, suspended, barred or otherwise excluded from participation, or has voluntarily withdrawn as the result of a settlement agreement, from any federal or State program(s), or has within the past five years been reinstated to participation in any federal or State program(s), and prior to said reinstatement had been terminated, suspended, barred or otherwise excluded from participation, or has voluntarily withdrawn as the result of a settlement agreement, in such program(s); and

- vi. A description of the organization's relationship with other business entities including whether the organization is an independent entity or a subsidiary or division of another entity (if the organization is not an independent entity, the proposal shall describe the organization linkages and the degree of integration/collaboration between the organizations including but not limited to the roles of the organizations' principals).
- h. *Audit Compliance.* Describe **the respondent's and each proposed subcontractor's/partner's** success with contract compliance requirements during the past three (3) years. Identify any deficiencies in program audits and, if applicable, detail what steps the organization has taken to address any recommendations. List all sanctions, fines, penalties or letters of noncompliance issued against the organization by any funding source (public and/or private). Describe the circumstances eliciting the sanction, fine, penalty or letter of noncompliance and the corrective action or resolution to the sanction, fine, penalty or letter of noncompliance. If no sanctions, fines, penalties or letters of noncompliance were issued, a statement that attests that no sanction, fine, penalty or compliance action has been imposed on the organization within the past three (3) years must be submitted.
- i. *References.* Include three (3) letters of reference for **the respondent and each proposed subcontractor/partner**, from individuals or business entities familiar with the organization's ability to perform the services specified in this RFP, in Section IV.G. Appendices. References cannot be the organization's current employees. If the organization has provided services to the State of Connecticut within the past three years, directly or indirectly through a subcontract, the organization must include a State of Connecticut reference. The organization may include current DSS staff as references; however, the individual may have to refuse if s/he will be involved in the evaluation of proposals received in response to this RFP. The organization may also include former DSS staff as references.

2. **Service Requirements** (Page Limit: 20 pages total)

The Department shall provide the contractor with a monthly electronic file of SNAP recipients who are appropriate for participation in the SNAP 100% E&T Reimbursement Program. The file will be sorted by town of residence and will contain demographic information such as name, address, telephone number, and Department client identification number.

The Department shall notify each SNAP household about the SNAP 100% E&T Reimbursement Program and the opportunity for the adult members of the household who are active SNAP recipients to participate in the program. Such notification shall be provided when SNAP benefits are granted, and again when SNAP benefits are recertified. The notice shall include a list of the SNAP 100% E&T Reimbursement Program contractors including their locations and telephone numbers.

The contractor shall provide the following specific services for the SNAP 100% E&T Reimbursement Program:

- a. **Client Assessments** shall be conducted for all eligible SNAP recipients. Such assessments shall include, but not be limited to: collecting information from recipients such as employment history, education history, and personal strengths and barriers toward obtaining employment or education; a job-readiness evaluation; employability and vocational skills level testing; and language comprehension assessment or testing.
- b. A **Client Service Plan** shall be developed for each Program participant based on the participant's Client Assessment. The Client Service Plan shall identify the specific Program component(s) to which the contractor shall assign the participant. The Client Service Plan and any other participant information related to the Program including, but not limited to office visits and referrals shall be maintained in a confidential file for each participant and available for review by Department staff.
- c. If a program participant is an ABAWD who is subject to the work requirement, the contractor shall assign the participant to one or more Program components that meet the definition of a "qualifying activity." These qualifying activities are designed to improve the participant's ability to obtain regular employment, increase earnings, and reduce dependency on public assistance. Participation in such Program components will also assist participants who are ABAWDs to meet the work requirement established by PRWORA. "Qualifying activity" is defined as:
 - i. **Education:** This component provides participants with basic educational skills including, but not limited to: Adult Basic Education (ABE); General Educational Development (GED); instruction in English as a second language (ESL); and post-secondary education.
 - ii. **Vocational/Occupational Skills Training:** This component provides participants with training in various trades and other occupational skills including, but not limited to: culinary arts; certified nurse aide (CNA); medical office assistant; computer skills; electronics; and mechanic skills. On-the-Job Training (OJT) provides vocation-specific training at an actual job site and is a part of the Vocational/Occupational Skills Training Services component.
 - iii. **Work Experience in Community Service Programs:** This component provides participants with work experience while providing a service to the community. Work experience opportunities may be at locations including, but not limited to nonprofit community service organizations including municipal work sites. Participants are supervised by employees of community service organizations who may be used as references for potential employers. Participants may not displace an employee of the organization providing the community service component.

The contractor shall contact each client at least once per month to determine whether the client is participating in the Program in accordance with the Client Service Plan. The contractor must document the following, in writing, in the participant's confidential file:

- The date of each contact;
 - The reason for the contact;
 - Type of qualifying activity the participant is performing;
 - Name and location of the agency or organization where the participant is performing the activity;
 - Number of hours the participant is required to perform the activity each month (monthly SNAP benefit divided by the State minimum wage rate);
 - Number of hours the participant performed the activity each month; and
 - Name and telephone number of the contact person who will verify that the participant performed the activity for the required number of hours.
- d. The contractor may also assign Program participants to **Structured Job Search Skills Training**, a Program component that does not meet the definition of a "qualifying activity." This component provides group training as well as individual assistance in methods of finding and contacting employers, networking in the labor market, resume preparation, interview strategies, and supervised job search activity. The contractor must make at least one follow-up telephone call or letter to the participant during the first month. Participants in this component alone shall be supported for one training session per contract year.
- e. The contractor shall coordinate its Program services and resources with the local Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs), which are responsible for the coordination of employment and training in Connecticut and providing advice and assistance to the Department, in accordance with the federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA).

A responsive proposal must include the following information about how the respondent intends to provide the services required by this RFP including the use of any subcontractors/partners. The contractor shall perform without subcontracting the Client Assessment and Client Service Plan described in Section III.C.2.a-b above. Only those direct client services the contractor lacks the ability to provide shall be subcontracted. Organizations currently being reimbursed with SNAP E&T 50% Reimbursement Program funds shall not be considered subcontractors/partners and costs for services provided by such organizations shall not be reimbursable.

- a. *Catchment Area / Documentation of Community Needs / Resources.* Describe the proposed service area and identify the cities and towns where services will be provided. Include documentation to support the need for a SNAP 100% E&T Reimbursement program within the proposed service area. The description should include information on the relevant characteristics of the population that will be served. Cite sources used to obtain data such as a federal governmental agency data set or other recognized authoritative source. Provide a rationale explaining why **the respondent and each proposed subcontractor/partner** is well suited to provide services in the proposed area.

- b. *Location of Offices / Facilities.* Specify the location of all client service sites, the days and times all sites will be open for service, and the services to be provided at each site. Demonstrate compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act regarding handicapped access. NOTE WELL: Program staff must be available at times when critical communication can take place with the target population including evenings and weekends. Program staff must be willing to travel throughout the proposed service area.
- c. *Target Population.* The population to be served is adult members of SNAP households who are active SNAP recipients. Identify the number of anticipated individuals that will be served on a monthly basis by town. The number of potential eligible [ABAWDs by town](#) is embedded in this section as a hyperlink.
- d. *Service Capacity / Delivery Plan / Systems / Processes / Protocols.* Describe a comprehensive, multifaceted plan to meet eligible SNAP recipients' employment and training needs through the provision of direct services while ensuring compliance with the service requirements detailed above. The proposed plan must focus on ABAWDs in danger of losing their eligibility for SNAP benefits. Describe how the plan will ensure that eligible SNAP recipients will utilize services. Note any barriers anticipated and how the plan will overcome such barriers.
- e. *Program Collaboration / Community Relationships.* Describe how employment and training services and resources will be coordinated with the local Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) and other entities to improve service delivery and reduce barriers to employability.
- f. *Quality Assurance Protocols.* Describe **the respondent's and each proposed subcontractor's/partner's** internal process to assure the quality and appropriateness of the services to be provided. If an external quality assurance process is used, describe the process.
- g. *Department Responsibilities.* Identify specific support the respondent requires from the Department to perform the activities required by the resulting contract. If the respondent does not require any specific support from the Department, a responsive proposal must state such. The Department retains the ultimate decision-making authority required to ensure program activities are completed. Specific Department responsibilities shall include the following.
 - i. Program management -- A program director will be assigned by the Department. This individual will be responsible for monitoring program progress and will have final authority to approve or disapprove deliverables.
 - ii. Staff coordination -- The program director will coordinate all necessary contacts between the contractor and Department staff.
 - iii. Approval of deliverables -- The program director will review, evaluate, and approve all deliverables prior to the contractor's being released from further responsibility.
 - iv. Provide the contractor with a monthly electronic file of SNAP recipients who are appropriate for participation in the SNAP 100% E&T Reimbursement Program.
 - v. Notify each SNAP household about the SNAP 100% E&T Reimbursement Program and the opportunity for the adult members of the household who are active SNAP recipients to participate in the program.
 - vi. Issue additional program guidance as necessary.

3. Staffing Requirements *(Page Limit: 10 pages total)*

Program staff shall include but not be limited to a Program Manager who shall implement and manage daily program activities. Program Manager responsibilities shall include, but not be limited to day-to-day oversight of the program, attending all program meetings at the request of the Department, and responding to the Department's requests for program status updates and ad hoc and interim reports.

A responsive proposal must include the following information about all staff that **the respondent and proposed subcontractors/partners** intend to employ to deliver the services required by this RFP.

- a. *Position Title*, for example, Program Manager, Educator, etc.. If the staff that will be assigned to this program are currently employed by the organization, identify their names and position titles. If the staff that will be assigned to this program are not currently employed by the organization, present a strategy to recruit and hire staff that possess the qualifications specified in the job descriptions requested below. SNAP 100% E&T Reimbursement Program funds may NOT be utilized for expenditures associated with staff that will be assigned to this program.

NOTE WELL: The Department must be notified in writing and in advance regarding the departure of any staff from the program.

- b. *Job Descriptions*. Attach a current job description for each position, in Section IV.G. Appendices. The job descriptions must outline the specific duties associated with the SNAP 100% E&T Reimbursement Program, and minimum credential, license, education, training, and experience requirements. This should clearly show how the position supports the delivery of planned SNAP 100% E&T Reimbursement Program activities.
- c. *Resumes*. Provide resumes, not exceeding two pages per resume, for all staff that are currently employed by the organization, in Section IV.G. Appendices. Resumes must reflect staff qualifications including credentials, licenses, education, training, experience with the respondent (or the respondent's proposed subcontractor/partner), experience with government-funded projects, and other relevant experience.
- d. *Multilingual and Multicultural Competency*. Describe the ability of all program staff to respond to various language and cultural situations in a culturally sensitive and linguistically competent way.

4. Data and Technology Requirements *(Page Limit: Five pages per the respondent and each proposed subcontractor/partner)*

A responsive proposal must include the following information about the information management and performance measurement systems of **the respondent and each proposed subcontractor/partner**.

- a. *E-Mail / Internet Capabilities*. Indicate the organization's capability to access the Internet and send/receive secure outside e-mail.
- b. *Equipment*. Indicate the organization's capability for supplying all equipment necessary to perform under any resulting contract including but not limited to laptops, cell phones, printers/copiers, and fax machines.

- c. *Data Collection / Reporting.* The contractor shall submit a monthly program report to the Department's designated SNAP 100% E&T Reimbursement Program representative, in a format provided by the Department. The monthly report shall include but not be limited to: participant name (first and last), address, client identification number, and ABAWD status; program component(s); number of hours; the amount that is reimbursable to the contractor by the Department; and performance incentive status.

Describe the organization's ability to comply with these data collection/reporting requirements.

- d. *Assessment of Client Satisfaction.* Describe the organization's current client satisfaction process (surveys, etc.). Summarize feedback (number and percent of returned surveys, summary of concerns expressed by clients, etc.). Provide a brief narrative of follow-up actions or plans regarding concerns raised by clients.
- e. *Evaluation / Outcome Measures.* The proposal must include:
- i. Specific and quantifiable annual performance measure(s) for funded activities;
 - ii. How the organization will monitor service delivery to ensure performance measures are met;
 - iii. The organization's experience tracking performance and adjusting service delivery to ensure performance measures are met;
 - iv. The organization's method for collecting and analyzing data to ensure credible documentation of service delivery; and
 - v. Historical evidence of the organization's ability to meet the performance measures.
- f. *Disclosure Policy.* Case file information on SNAP recipients, including names of recipients, Social Security Numbers, and other sensitive information is considered confidential and may not be released. Disclosure of information obtained from recipients may be made only to persons directly connected with the administration of SNAP or to others provided that the program recipient signs a release form documenting the program recipient's agreement to the specific release. Such an agreement shall not be a condition of receipt of benefits (7 CFR Section 272.1(c); and Section 11(e)(8) of The Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, as amended).

The contractor and each subcontractor/partner must protect confidential and private information gained from SNAP recipients. Appropriate physical and computer security policies should be in place to protect sensitive information.

Describe the organization's ability to comply with this disclosure policy.

5. Subcontractors/Partners

If the respondent is proposing the use of any subcontractors/partners to provide any of the services required by this RFP, each subcontractor/partner must be identified in the proposal. All subcontractors/partners are subject to the Department's prior approval.

A responsive proposal must include the following information about **each proposed subcontractor/partner**.

- a. A [Subcontractor Profile](#), which is embedded in this section as a hyperlink, shall be included in Section IV.G. Appendices. The Subcontractor Profile must be signed by an authorized official of the proposed subcontractor/partner.
- b. A draft written agreement between the respondent and **each proposed subcontractor/partner** shall be included in Section IV.G. Appendices. The selected respondent shall be required to submit a copy of a final written agreement with **each subcontractor/partner** prior to contract execution.

6. Work Plan

A responsive proposal must include a comprehensive and realistic work plan **for each federal fiscal year** (October 1 to September 30). The work plan must demonstrate the flow of program activities in a logical and sequential manner with each year building upon the previous year. The proposed work plan must include the following.

- a. *Tasks and Deliverables.* Describe **what** activities, actions, tasks, and deliverables the respondent and any proposed subcontractors/partners will accomplish to implement the required employment and training services in the proposed service area, as well as the staff **who** will be responsible for accomplishing each task and deliverable.
- b. *Methodologies.* Describe **how** each task and deliverable will be accomplished, providing a detailed explanation of the procedures or processes that will be used to attain the expected outcomes.
- c. *Timetable / Schedule.* Include a proposed timetable indicating **when** each task and deliverable will be accomplished. Identify any significant milestones or deadlines including when the program will be fully operational.

D. COST PROPOSAL COMPONENTS

1. Audited Financial Statements

A responsive proposal must include one copy each of **the respondent's and each proposed subcontractor's/partner's** two most recent annual financial statements prepared by an independent Certified Public Accountant, and reviewed or audited in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) (USA). The copies shall include all applicable financial statements, auditor's reports, management letters and any corresponding reissued components. One copy only shall be included with the original proposal in Section IV.G. Appendices.

2. Payment Information

The contractor shall be reimbursed for all allowable costs in accordance with the following all-inclusive fixed rate schedule, up to 95 percent of the maximum contract amount. Administrative costs are NOT allowable costs.

- a. The Department will pay \$100 for one Client Assessment per eligible SNAP recipient per contract year (October 1 to September 30).
- b. The Department will pay for a “filled” slot in one or more of the following four Program components once per participant per contract year (October 1 to September 30).
 - i. \$250 per participant per month for Education. Five month limit per participant.
 - ii. \$250 per participant per month for Vocational/Occupational Skills Training. Five month limit per participant.
 - iii. \$100 per participant per month for Work Experience. No time limit.
 - iv. \$150 per participant for Structured Job Search Skills Training. One month limit per participant.
- c. The contractor may request reimbursement from the Department for Program participant expenses. Such expenses shall include transportation, dependent care, books and training manuals, uniforms or other special equipment that a participant must have for participation in the Program. Reimbursement for any other necessary and reasonable cost that a participant incurs is subject to prior Department approval.

The Department will pay a performance incentive at the rate of \$100 for each participant who, within 90 days of beginning to participate in the Program, acquires a job working at least 20 hours per week and stays in the job at least 30 days. The participant’s salary must meet or exceed the then current Connecticut minimum wage rate. The contractor must obtain documentation of employment from the participant in the form of pay stubs or a letter from the employer and provide such documentation to the Department. The Department will pay the performance incentive once per participant per contract year (October 1 to September 30). The maximum amount available to pay the contractor for this performance benchmark for all participants shall not exceed 5 percent of the maximum contract amount per contract year (October 1 to September 30).

All program costs are subject to federal financial and cost policy guidance, and the standards developed by the State Office of Policy and Management for determining the costs of contracts, grants, and other agreements with organizations that receive funding from the State. In the event of any inconsistency, the federal financial and cost policy guidance shall supersede the OPM cost standards.

Federal financial and cost policy guidance on allowable costs is noted in Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circulars A-87, A-21, A-110 and A-122; Departmental rules 7 CFR 3016; SNAP rules 7 CFR 277; and FNS policy statements.

More information about the OPM cost standards is available on OPM’s web site: [Cost Standards](#).

Requests for payment shall be submitted by the contractor in a format provided by the Department.

Specific terms and conditions pertaining to the payment process shall be set forth in the terms of the resulting contract.

IV. PROPOSAL OUTLINE

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- b. Consulting Agreement Affidavit (OPM Ethics Form 5) ²

¹ **The respondent and each proposed subcontractor/partner** must upload this report into the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) on-line data vault, called BizNet, prior to submitting a proposal in response to this RFP. More information is embedded in Section II.E.2 of this RFP as a hyperlink.

² Required when the contract resulting from this RFP has an anticipated value of \$50,000 or more in a calendar or fiscal year. The respondent must upload this certification into the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) on-line data vault, called BizNet, prior to submitting a proposal in response to this RFP. More information is embedded in Section II.E.3 of this RFP as a hyperlink.