



State of Connecticut Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services
Request for Proposals – Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)
(Adapted from the Office of Policy and Management’s Procurement Standards)

1. What does Request for Proposals (RFP) mean? RFP is a form of competitive procurement used by a State agency to purchase or acquire services through an open and fair process whereby all responsible sources have an equal opportunity to pursue, and possibly win, a contract to provide the agency with the desired services.

2. How does the RFP process work? Using a RFP, a State agency publicly communicates (to the market) information about what the agency wishes to procure. Interested parties submit written proposals in response to the agency’s solicitation. The submitted proposals are evaluated and rated according to an agency’s predetermined criteria. The agency selects the proposal that best meets the interests of the State and offers the selected proposer an opportunity to negotiate a contract. The resulting contract must not differ substantially from the agency’s original requirements, as presented in the RFP.

3. What is the benefit of using a RFP? The competitive procurement process is designed to foster an impartial and comprehensive evaluation of multiple proposals, leading to the selection of the most responsible proposer who can provide the best value to the State. This procurement method also eliminates improprieties, favoritism, and unethical practices, or the appearance of such, in the State’s contracting practice. No RFP shall specify or contain any feature that discriminates, either directly or indirectly, against any prospective proposer.

4. What information will be contained in the RFP? A State agency must develop an outline of work that describes in detail what the agency wants the future contractor to do, provide, or accomplish. At a minimum, the outline of work shall include information about the contract’s purpose, scope, activities, deliverables, outcomes, and timeline. A State agency must also develop the estimated cost and term of the future contract. The RFP must include instructions about the agency’s required format and deadline for proposals.

5. What are the submission requirements for the RFP? The agency must determine the minimum submission requirements for an “acceptable” proposal. Only acceptable proposals are eligible for review by the RFP review committee. Examples of such requirements include, but are not limited to: meeting the submission deadline, meeting the packaging and labeling requirements, submitted a complete proposal, following the required format, and submitting any required forms, certification, affidavits, or attachments.

6. What criteria will be used to evaluate the RFP? Evaluation criteria are the standards by which the RFP review committee judge the merits of the proposals submitted in response to the RFP. According to State statutes, the RFP must include the criteria that will be used to evaluate proposals. Only the criteria in the RFP shall be used to evaluate proposals.

7. How are RFPs advertised? Once issued, RFPs are available on the DMHAS website, www.ct.gov/dmhas/rfp, as well as on the Department of Administrative Services website, www.das.state.ct.us, under procurement.

8. What if there are questions about the RFP? To ensure the equal treatment of all prospective proposers, all must have access to the same, accurate, and authorized information throughout the RFP process – no more, no less. Prospective proposers must submit their questions in writing by the deadline established in the RFP. Ex parte communication is prohibited during the RFP process and includes information that is not part of the public record and is not available or shared with all participants of the RFP process.

9. Who will review the proposals? The evaluation of proposals must be done by a RFP review committee composed of three or more individuals from the state agency or other agency partners. All members must sign an Ethics and Confidentiality Agreement.

10. How will prospective contractors be selected? Following the evaluation process, the RFP review committee will report the names of the top ranking proposers to the agency head for selection. After the agency head makes a selection, the selected proposer is notified and given the opportunity to negotiate a contract with the agency. Once negotiations begin, the proposers who were not selected will also be notified about the outcome and thanked for their interest and participation.