**Addendum 2**

**State of Connecticut**
**Department of Social Services**
**Queuing System for Benefit Service Centers 9/26/2012**
**Request for Information**

The State of Connecticut, Department of Social Services is issuing Addendum 2 to the Queuing System for Benefit Service Centers 9/26/2012 Request for Information (RFI). All requirements of the original RFI except those requirements specifically changed by this addendum shall remain in effect. In the event of any inconsistency between information provided in the RFI and information in this addendum, the information in this addendum shall prevail.

Due to the effects of Hurricane Sandy, submissions must be received **no later than November 2, 2:00 p.m. Eastern Time**.

**Addendum 1**

**State of Connecticut**
**Department of Social Services**
**Queuing System for Benefit Service Centers 9/26/2012**
**Request for Information**

The State of Connecticut Department of Social Services is issuing Addendum 1 to the Queuing System for Benefit Service Centers 9/26/2012 Request for Information (RFI). All requirements of the original RFI except those requirements specifically changed by this addendum shall remain in effect. In the event of any inconsistency between information provided in the RFI and information in this addendum, the information in this addendum shall prevail.

This addendum clarifies Section V of the RFI.

This addendum also contains questions submitted by interested parties and the official responses from the Department of Social Services ("DSS" or "Department"). These responses shall clarify the requirements of the RFI.

Clarification to the RFI

**Section V. REQUIREMENTS** is amended as follows:

**V. REQUIREMENTS**

Responses to this RFI should describe an electronic queuing system that will assist DSS with automating service delivery and improving the overall level of customer satisfaction. The system may need to be customized for each Service Center due to factors such as the size of the office and when the office is scheduled to be redesigned as a Service Center. The system must also be adaptable to conform to technology changes and/or changing customer service needs. A responsive submission should include, at a minimum, the system's ability to:

A. Queue customers using names or numbers;
B. Record the reason for a customer visit;
C. Inform customers of estimated wait times;
D. Integrate appointment scheduling with Microsoft Outlook (preferred);
E. Display information regarding who is being served on some form of digital monitor (integrated with the DSS Information Network Monitor and/or the monitors at each Self-Service Station and Service Coordination Window, if possible);
F. Track customers during the entire visit;
G. Provide a means for customers to evaluate their experience;
H. Analyze statistical history including the reason for visit and the length of stay; and
I. Issue on-demand reports that monitor and track production, customer service satisfaction, individual staff performance, and ongoing staffing and resource allocation.

The submission should include the estimated cost of the system, as well as any other information, suggestions, and discussion that would be informative and appropriate.

At a later date, the information obtained from this RFI may be used by the Department to create a formal Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to procure an electronic queuing system.

Questions and Answers

1. *Question*: I was curious if budget information for the system was available?

   *Answer*: Budget information is not available at this time.

2. *Question*: Requirement H: Are you looking for the system to analyze all of the data and provide recommendations OR are you looking for reporting capabilities that will allow CT DSS to do analysis?

   *Answer*: The system should be equipped and formatted in a way that reports all relevant data, thus making it easier for DSS to complete analyses. However, DSS would be interested in what types of "recommendations" could be made available.

3. *Question*: Courtesy Phone: What PBX will you be using for your courtesy phones?

   *Answer*: Via a 6450 Gateway through a Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) network.

4. *Question*: Document Drop-Off: Is the cover letter a standard form where customer only needs to enter boxes of information OR is it a letter style individual written document.

   *Answer*: DSS forms currently are "letter style," meaning that applicants and clients need to write in answers or explanations for each section of an application, redetermination or related form.

5. *Question*: MyAccount Kiosk: Can you provide any specifications on the MyAccount Kiosks? (Manufacturer, OS, connection to network, etc.)

   *Answer*: Such decisions have not been made yet.

6. *Question*: Will you please provide additional clarification with appointments? Is DSS currently using an appointment system? If so, is it only used internally or are clients able to go online and book appointment times? If DSS is not currently using an online appointment system – are you requesting that the queuing vendor provide an online appointment scheduler?

*Answer*: Currently, DSS clients are sent automated notices for appointments or other program-related deadlines. Appointments are scheduled for DSS caseworkers within the DSS Eligibility Management System (EMS), which is a mainframe system that is also targeted for renovation and/or replacement.

The My Account feature of ConneCT will provide DSS clients with information on a wide range of program and eligibility related topics. It has not been determined whether online appointment scheduling will be included.

7. *Question*: What percentage of clients need assistance with filling out forms?

*Answer*: This question does not support the purpose of the Request for Information (RFI), which is solely to obtain a description of an electronic queuing system that will assist DSS with automating service delivery and improving the overall level of customer satisfaction.

8. *Question*: What percentage of clients use the drop-off box?

*Answer*: This question does not support the purpose of the Request for Information (RFI), which is solely to obtain a description of an electronic queuing system that will assist DSS with automating service delivery and improving the overall level of customer satisfaction.

9. *Question*: What is the ratio of DSS workers (broken down if possible) to clients for a particular office?

*Answer*: Staff to client ratios are largely dependent upon the benefit program, and time of month specific deadlines are required. This question does not support the purpose of the Request for Information (RFI), which is solely to obtain a description of an electronic queuing system that will assist DSS with automating service delivery and improving the overall level of customer satisfaction.

10. *Question*: What percentage of clients visit multiple offices, rather than using a single office?

*Answer*: At present, applicants and clients are assigned to a regional office based on their city or town of residence. Upon full implementation of ConneCT, applicants, clients, and the general public will be able to access information and/or assistance through any Service Center in the State.

11. *Question*: What is the age distribution of clients (as granular as possible).

    *Answer*: The age distribution of clients ranges, as it relates to programs that cover pre-natal medical needs to payment of burial expenses for deceased clients. As such, each Service Center can expect walk-in applications and/or requests for case maintenance assistance for all ages.

12. *Question*: Drop-off box: do clients have an option to mail in instead of drop-off? If so, are postage paid envelopes provided to clients?

    *Answer*: Yes.

13. *Question*: Photo copies: what do clients need to photo copy?

    *Answer*: Photocopying needs include, but are not limited to personal identification, income verification, asset verification, address verification, and rent/mortgage verification.

14. *Question*: What are the peak "walk-in hours"? Peak days of the week? Peak days of the month? What drives these peak periods- are the factors internal or external to DSS?

    *Answer*: Current daily peak hours might generally be defined as from office opening to several hours after opening, with a spike around midday, and another (less predictable) rise near closing. Monday and Friday are often busier than other weekdays. The first week and the last week of each month are the busiest.

    Internal factors that affect peak periods are driven by system dates that issue program benefits (usually the beginning of each month) and the month-end cut-offs that can result in benefit discontinuance if not met. Other system dates (deadlines are conveyed to clients throughout the month) constitute a strong component of monthly activity.

    External factors to DSS can include a number of situations as easily identifiable as pick-up and drop-off times of public transportation, local school hours, or the operating work hours of a major nearby business. Other external factors can include the issuance of Social Security Income, Unemployment Compensation, and Child Support benefits.

15. *Question*: How are DSS branch workers currently trained to handle caseloads? Are any specialized skills or knowledge required for live support?

    *Answer*: New DSS employees receive a comprehensive training package prior to beginning their full-time service in a regional office. This includes in-depth training in key DSS programs and policies, and customer service skills.

16. *Question*: Client self-service (Future State): will it available via the Internet (external to DSS office kiosk)?

    *Answer*: The My Account feature of ConneCT will be available to all DSS clients via a personal computer (PC) or other device with Internet capability.

17. *Question*: Where does the Queuing System RFI fit within the context of the larger ConneCT project?

    *Answer*: Refer to the presentation that is embedded as a hyperlink in Section IV of the RFI.

18. *Question*: Has DSS identified a gap in ConneCT initiative which necessitates the Queuing System RFI?

    *Answer*: No.

19. *Question*: What is the correct format for submission of RFI responses?

    *Answer*: Refer to Section I of the RFI.

20. *Question*: Joint Application Design is described as ongoing- can you expand on what this means? What kind of development would be considered in scope, what out of scope?

    *Answer*: Joint Application Design is an on-going process among a wide array of DSS practices and systems. This question does not support the purpose of the Request for Information (RFI), which is solely to obtain a description of an electronic queuing system that will assist DSS with automating service delivery and improving the overall level of customer satisfaction.

21. *Question*: Is a detailed description of the old EMS and the new ConneCT available? Descriptions of how each is used (or planned) to process client cases would be helpful, particularly as they relate to 'front office' (DSS service centers) operations.

    *Answer*: It is helpful to understand that EMS is a case processing system while ConneCT encompasses a much wider range of resources and platforms to communicate, process, update, and display client information.

    In DSS Service Centers it is anticipated that applicants and clients will be able to access their own case/benefit information via kiosks, apply for benefits via kiosks, and/or speak with DSS staff via direct line to the staff of a DSS Benefit Center. However, these same options will (upon full implementation) be available to applicants, clients, and the general public via the DSS web site, My Account, and Integrated Voice Response (IVR) system.

22. *Question*: What elements of ConneCT have been implemented at DSS service centers?

    *Answer*: Based on local conditions such as staffing, client walk-in volume, and the configuration of each Service Center, regional offices have moved forward in any areas that seek to address and/or comply with the operational objectives of ConneCT.

23. *Question*: Metrics that drive quality are described as "inoperable"- please clarify what is meant. Are the wrong metrics being collected, or the metrics not valid?

*Answer*: For the purposes of this RFI, metrics are needed to accurately track and monitor client interaction in each Service Center. The current configuration (both physical and operational) of each DSS office is such that accurate metrics to capture and analyze the client experience in terms of logging what needs are requested, lengths of time needed to meet those needs, and deployment of staff required to quickly respond to surges or declines in client flow, etc., are not available.

24. *Question*: Slide 20 if the ConneCT slide deck (dated 7/2012) show that Joint Application Design, Testing, ConneCT implementation are "ongoing". What are the target dates?

*Answer*: The anticipated implementation dates are as follows:

| Key Milestone | Date |
|---|---|
| Pre-screening | 11/13/2012 |
| My Account | 11/13/2012 |
| Interactive Voice Response (IVR) Phase 1 | 12/10/2012 |
| Benefit Center (includes IVR Phase 2): Bridgeport, New Britain, and Waterbury | 2/11/2013 |
| Document Management and Workflow (includes My Account Phase 2 and IVR Phase 3): | |
| Bridgeport | 2/12/2013 |
| New Britain and Waterbury | 3/8/2013 |
| Remaining regional offices | 4/5/2013 |
| Web Applications, Changes, and Redeterminations | 5/13/2013 |

Note well: these dates are subject to change at the discretion of the Department.

# State of Connecticut
## Department of Social Services

# Request for Information

# for

# Queuing System for Benefit Service Centers

**RFI Released: September 26, 2012**

**Deadline for Questions: October 10, 2012, 2:00 p.m. Eastern Time**

**Answers Released (tentative): October 17, 2012**

**Submissions Due: October 31, 2012, 2:00 p.m. Eastern Time**

**Issued by:**

**State of Connecticut, Department of Social Services**
**25 Sigourney Street**
**Hartford, CT 06106**
**Telephone: 860-424-5661**
**TDD: 1-800-842-4524**

## I. INTRODUCTION AND DEADLINES FOR QUESTIONS AND SUBMISSIONS

The Connecticut Department of Social Services ("DSS" or "the Department") is seeking information from private provider organizations concerning electronic wait room queuing system products that have the ability to catalog customer service needs, manage wait room traffic, direct customers to the appropriate service areas, and provide the Department with tracking data that will assist in the allocation of service resources within all 12 of the Department's Regional Service Centers.

This RFI outlines the information being sought and includes guidelines for the content and format of submissions.

All questions must be e-mailed to:

linda.burns@ct.gov

Questions must be received **no later than October 10, 2012, 2:00 p.m. Eastern Time.**

Answers to questions will be posted as an addendum to this RFI by October 17, 2012, on the State Contracting Portal, which is embedded as a hyperlink, and on the Department's RFP Web Page, which is also embedded as a hyperlink**.**

Responses to this RFI must be submitted in writing, including: one (1) original submission; two (2) conforming copies of the original submission; and one (1) conforming electronic copy of the original submission. The Department suggests the respondent use certified or registered mail, or a delivery service such as United Parcel Service (UPS) to deliver the submission. Hand-delivered proposals must be delivered to the loading dock located on the north side of the building, at 555 Capitol Avenue. Upon arriving at the loading dock, the respondent or courier must ring the buzzer by the door.

Responses to this RFI must be submitted in sealed envelopes or packages and be addressed to:

Linda Burns, Contract Administration and Procurement Unit
Department of Social Services
25 Sigourney Street, 9th Floor
Hartford, CT 06016

The Legal Name and Address of the respondent must appear in the upper left corner of the envelope or package. The RFI Name must be clearly displayed on the envelope or package: ***Queuing System RFI***.

The electronic copy of the original submission must be submitted as an e-mail attachment to:

linda.burns@ct.gov

To be reviewed by the Department, submissions must be received **no later than October 31, 2012, 2:00 p.m. Eastern Time**. Late submissions will not be considered.

## II. DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

The Department of Social Services provides a broad range of services to the elderly, persons with disabilities, families, and individuals who need assistance in maintaining or achieving their full potential for self-direction, self-reliance, and independent living. It administers more than 90 legislatively authorized programs and one third of the State budget. By statute, it is the State agency responsible for administering a number of programs under federal legislation, including the Rehabilitation Act, 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. There is a regional administrator responsible for each of three service regions. By statute, there is a statewide advisory council to the Commissioner and each region must have a regional advisory council.

The Department administers most of its programs through 12 offices located in the three service regions, with central office support 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 applications and funds Healthy Start sites, which can accept applications for Medicaid for pregnant women and young children. Many of the services provided by the Department are available via mail or telephone call.

There are two entities attached to the Department for administrative purposes only. They are the Child Day Care Council and the Department of Rehabilitation Services. The Department of Rehabilitation Services is comprised of the former DSS Bureau of Rehabilitation Services; Board of Education and Services for the Blind; Commission on the Deaf and Hearing Impaired; Workers' Rehabilitation Program; and Driver Training Program for People with Disabilities.

### 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 Department 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.

## III. OVERVIEW OF CURRENT SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL

Currently, each DSS office has at least one receptionist in the waiting room/reception area. The number of receptionists varies based on the size of the office. For example, smaller offices such as Stamford and Torrington normally have one receptionist on duty. The larger offices (for example, Bridgeport and New Haven) normally have at least two receptionists on duty with additional reception staff during peak walk-in hours.

All offices have a locked drop-off box where clients are able to leave completed forms or verifications. Some of the larger offices (for example, Bridgeport and New Haven) have a self-service photocopier in the lobby so that clients are able to make their own copies.

The larger offices also have an Information Desk, which is staffed by Eligibility Workers and a Customer Services Representative (CSR). The Information Desk allows clients who have questions about their cases to speak with an Eligibility Worker who can look up the client's case on the Department's Eligibility Management System (EMS) and assist the client. The CSR is available to assist clients who have developmental disabilities with completing forms or understanding verification requirements, notices, etc.

When clients enter the reception area of a larger DSS office, they first stand in line to speak with the receptionist. The receptionist then routes the client to the appropriate person or area. If the client is in the office to apply for DSS benefits, the receptionist would contact an Eligibility Worker to interview the person. If the client needs information about an active or recently closed case, the receptionist would refer the client to the person at the Information Desk. If the client needs to make copies and drop off verifications, the receptionist would refer the client to the self-service photocopier and drop-off box.

In the smaller offices without the Information Desk or CSR, the receptionist contacts an Eligibility Worker if the person is in the office to apply for Cash Assistance or the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or needs assistance with completing forms. The receptionist makes copies for the client. If the client has questions regarding his/her case and does not have an appointment with an Eligibility Worker, the receptionist instructs the client to call the eligibility staff.

There are displays in the reception areas with application forms. Clients can fill out the forms in the reception area and put them in the drop-off box, or take the forms with them and return by mail.

In larger offices during peak walk-in hours, clerical and/or eligibility staff will "work the line" to assist in routing people to the various areas such as the Information Desk or drop-off box. This is so that the line to speak with the receptionist contains only those clients who are in the office to apply for Cash Assistance or SNAP, and need to speak with an Eligibility Worker.

This service delivery model has been used in all DSS regional offices for essentially the past 23 years. Given that the number of administered programs has grown substantially, that staffing priorities have evolved, and that caseload sizes have risen dramatically, this service model has long been woefully inadequate to meet client expectations and federal performance standards.

Smaller offices serve approximately 2,300 to 2,700 clients per month on average, while the larger offices average approximately 3,200 to 4,500 clients per month.

## IV. QUEUING SYSTEM OVERVIEW

To address the aforementioned inadequacy of the current service delivery model (and other related performance issues), the Department is currently implementing a full modernization initiative. Known officially as ConneCT, this effort looks to improve virtually all areas of customer service and service delivery. For more information on ConneCT, see the presentation that is embedded in this section as a hyperlink.

The Department is planning to redesign the regional offices as Service Centers, utilizing the principles of Universal Design:

- Electronic queuing;
- Accessible interview booths;
- Noise reduction surfaces;
- Open aisles; and
- Accessible seating.

A person will be able to receive services at any Service Center in the State, regardless of where the person lives.

The proposed wait room design will include at least three (3) stations or options for client self-service with an additional two (2)service coordinator stations to which clients can be queued for specific services.

### A. Self-Service Stations

1. Document Drop-off Station - Clients coming into a Service Center may drop off various documents to be processed. Once they sign in at the reception kiosk, they will be queued to see a customer service coordinator, if they do not have a cover letter indicating the client identification (ID) number and other identifying information. The customer service coordinator will assist them in printing a cover letter. Clients that have a cover letter may drop off their documents without being queued.

2. Courtesy Phones – Clients declaring at the reception kiosk that their reason for office visit is to inquire about their active or pending case will be queued to access a Courtesy Phone, which will link them directly to a benefit center representative who has the authority and ability to resolve most active or pending client questions. Clients will be returned to queue only if the benefit center representative determines that the issue is beyond his/her scope and has contacted the Service Center to indicate that a particular client must have a face-to-face interview. The client will be expedited for service in this situation.

3. Application/MyAccount Kiosks – Clients coming into the Service Center and declaring that the reason for their visit is to apply for benefits will be queued for an Application/MyAccount self-service kiosk. These kiosks will allow clients the ability to access the Department's self-service website to complete an online application for benefits. Clients will also be able to copy, fax or scan documents and verifications at these stations. Roving navigators will monitor this area and provide general access, support, and informational assistance regarding use of the kiosks and the online application process.

### B. Service Coordination Windows

Clients will be queued or called by the Service Coordinator for such things as scheduled appointments, unresolved benefit center/courtesy phone inquiries, assistance to complete online applications, or any need that cannot be met by the self-service features of the service center.

## V. REQUIREMENTS

Responses to this RFI should describe an electronic queuing system that will assist DSS with automating service delivery and improving the overall level of customer satisfaction. The system may need to be customized for each Service Center due to factors such as the size of the office and when the office is scheduled to be redesigned as a Service Center. The system must also be adaptable to conform to technology changes and/or changing customer service needs. A responsive submission should include, at a minimum, the system's ability to:

A. Queue customers using names or numbers;
B. Record the reason for a customer visit;
C. Inform customers of estimated wait times;
D. Integrate appointment scheduling with Microsoft Outlook (preferred);
E. Display information regarding who is being served on some form of digital monitor (integrated with the DSS Information Network Monitor and/or the monitors at each Self-Service Station and Service Coordination Window, if possible);
F. Track customers during the entire visit;
G. Provide a means for customers to evaluate their experience;
H. Analyze statistical history including the reason for visit and the length of stay; and
I. Issue on-demand reports that monitor and track production, customer service satisfaction, individual staff performance, and ongoing staffing and resource allocation.

The submission should include any other information, suggestions, and discussion that would be informative and appropriate.

At a later date, the information obtained from this RFI may be used by the Department to create a formal Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to procure an electronic queuing system.

## VI. SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

The Department may ask a respondent to give demonstrations, interviews, oral presentations or further explanations to clarify information contained in a submission. 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.

## VII. DISCLAIMER

This RFI is issued solely for information and planning purposes and does not constitute a procurement request. Responding to this RFI will not enhance any organization's chances of receiving future work from the Department. Similarly, not responding to this RFI will not be a detriment to any organization when competing for future work. Responses to this RFI are not an offer and cannot be accepted to form a binding contract. This RFI should not be considered an opportunity to "market" to the Department or to any entity for the State of Connecticut.

All responses to this RFI will become the property of the State of Connecticut. Responses to the RFI will not be returned. In addition, the Department will not be providing feedback regarding the quality or suitability of the respondent's submission to any subsequent Request for Qualifications (RFQ).

Due regard will be given for protection of proprietary information contained in all responses received; however, respondents should be aware that all materials associated with the RFI are subject to the terms of the Connecticut Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (§1-210 of the Connecticut General Statutes) and all rules, regulations, and interpretations resulting therefrom. It will not be sufficient for respondents to merely state in general terms that the response is proprietary in nature and, therefore, not subject to release to third parties. Any response that makes such a general or overarching claim may not be reviewed. Those particular sentences, paragraphs, pages or sections that a respondent believes to be exempt from disclosure under FOIA must be specifically identified as such.

Respondents are solely responsible for all expenses associated with responding to this RFI.