



**Ohio Department of Job and Family Services
Request for Letterhead Bids (RLB) #R-89-11-0470 for
OAKS Cognos Report Net Development**

I. Purpose

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS), is soliciting letterhead bids from vendors with valid State Term Schedules (STS) authorizing them to provide Cognos Reportnet development and consulting services. Vendors submitting responses to this RLB must demonstrate an appropriate STS that will be valid for the time period in State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2008 in which the work described in this RLB is to be performed. Vendor responses that fail to demonstrate compliance with this requirement will not be considered for this project.

ODJFS will select one or more vendors to provide the services of Cognos report writing professionals for performance of the work described in this RLB. The selected vendor(s) will be responsible for delivering Cognos Reportnet reports to ODJFS end users as part of the Ohio Administrative Knowledge System (OAKS) enterprise resource planning system. OAKS is a State of Ohio project which is transforming the way the State conducts business.

II. Issuing Office

This Request is released by and the subsequent agreement will be with the ODJFS. The Office of Fiscal Services (OFS) will be responsible for on-going direction and supervision of the selected report-writing professionals, who will be physically located in OFS throughout the engagement. This work is expected to begin in early July 2007 and be completed by the end of September 2007. The engagement may be terminated earlier at the discretion of ODJFS based upon the needs of the agency, vendor performance, or, with appropriate notification to the selected vendor, for other reasons.

III. Anticipated Procurement Time Frames

DATE	EVENT/ACTIVITY
June 13, 2007	ODJFS Releases RLB to Potential Vendors on ODJFS Web Site.
June 29, 2007	Deadline for Vendors to Submit Letterhead Bids to ODJFS (3 p.m.) - This is the bid opening date, beginning the ODJFS process of bid review.

July 9, 2007	ODJFS Announces Vendor(s) Selection (estimated) - Vendors that submitted bids in response to this RLB will be notified of whether their bid was selected for award.
July 16, 2007	Implementation* (<i>estimated</i> – following notification of all purchase and funding approvals) - ODJFS contracts and other purchases of services are not valid and effective until the state Office of Budget Management approves the purchase order.
September 30, 2007	Project Completion - All work must be completed and approved by ODJFS Contract Manager

According to requirements of ORC 126.07, ODJFS contracts and other purchase agreements are not valid and enforceable until the Office of Budget and Management (OBM) certifies the availability of appropriate funding, as indicated by the approval of the Purchase Order (P.O.). The selected vendor may neither perform work nor submit an invoice for payment for work performed for this project for any time period prior to the P.O. approval date. The ODJFS Contract Manager will notify the selected vendor when the requirements of ORC Section 126.07 have been met.

IV. Bid Submission Instructions

ODJFS requires vendor bid submissions (or “proposals”) in both paper and electronic (CD-ROM) format. The proposal must be prepared and submitted in accordance with instructions found in this Section. The submitted bid package must be comprised of four paper copies (one signed original and three copies) and one CD-ROM copy of the vendor’s complete proposal package. Vendors’ bid submissions must be received by ODJFS, *complete*, no later than **3:00 p.m. on Friday, June 29, 2007**. Faxes or e-mailed submissions will not be accepted. Bids must be addressed to:

**Office of Contracts & Acquisitions
Ohio Department of Job and Family Services
30 East Broad Street, 31st Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215-3414
ATTN: RFP/RLB Unit**

For hand delivery on the due date, vendors are to allow sufficient time for downtown parking considerations, as well as for security checks in the Rhodes State Office Tower (address as stated above). All proposals delivered on the due date must be received by the Office of Contracts & Acquisitions, on the 31st Floor of the Rhodes Tower. **ODJFS is not responsible for any proposals delivered to any address other than the address provided above.**

All copies (both paper and CD-ROM) of the original proposal must include copies of ALL information, documents, and pages in the original proposal.

Vendor bid packets must be submitted in an envelope or package labeled: **“PROPOSAL ENCLOSED FOR OAKS COGNOS REPORT NET DEVELOPMENT SERVICES RLB #: R-89-11-0470 SUBMITTED BY [VENDOR’S NAME HERE].”**

The CD-ROM copy must be labeled with the vendor’s name, the RLB number, and the proposal submission date or proposal due-date, at minimum. The requested CDs will be used by ODJFS for archiving purposes and

for fulfillment of Public Records Requests, and failure to include them or to properly label them may, at ODJFS discretion, result in the rejection of the vendor from any consideration.

All proposal submissions must be received, complete, at the above address, via mail or hand delivery by the above date and time. Materials received after the date and time as stated above will not be included in any previous submissions, nor will they be considered. No confirmation of mailed proposals can be provided.

Submission of a proposal indicates acceptance by the vendor of the conditions contained in this RLB, unless clearly and specifically noted in the proposal submitted, and confirmed in the agreement between ODJFS and the selected vendor. All terms established in the governing STS apply.

V. Scope of Work

ODJFS is seeking Cognos reporting needs analysis, reporting design and documentation, report development, report training, and ODJFS job aid creation services and expects to use the services of between one to four Cognos report development professionals for completion of the work described in this RLB. The work will likely require each of the contracted professionals for 40 hours per week from July through September 30, 2007, up to a maximum of 480 hours per person.

ODJFS expects that the vendors' professional staff will gain an in-depth knowledge of the OAKS Data Warehouse and JFS Fiscal reporting needs in which they will be working by interfacing with the OAKS Project Management Office (PMO) staff and OFS staff, as well as by working in/on the OAKS Cognos report development environment. The vendor's professionals will have access to the ODJFS staff as resources for historical data regarding the ODJFS reporting and limited access to OAKS PMO staff. Specific requirements, tasks, and activities will include:

1. **Reporting Needs Analysis:** Under the supervision of OFS, the vendor staff will identify and prioritize reports and develop an approach to creating reports to meet the financial management needs of each ODJFS office in response to the planned July 1, 2007 OAKS Financial Management release. Appendix A to this RLB provides a partial list of reports of the sort that may be considered for this portion of the project.
2. **Reporting Design and Documentation:** The vendor staff will document all reporting requirements and designs. Documentation templates will be proposed by the vendor and approved by ODJFS OFS. The vendor will also prepare end-user documentation which will describe the report in detail.
3. **Report Development:** The vendor staff will develop the reports in COGNOS using the OAKS Data warehouse as its data source. The vendor team will also build custom reports, as necessary using both OAKS and internal ODJFS data sources, as needed.
4. **Report Training:** The vendor will train ODJFS Fiscal staff (estimated at 10 to 20 persons) on running all developed reports and making report modifications as appropriate, and will help users understand the data structure behind each report.
5. **ODJFS Job Aids.** ODJFS will have a need for report-specific job aids to assist end-users in running reports on a daily basis. The vendor shall work with ODJFS to identify such user report-related aides and will then create them as directed by ODJFS. Such job aids may include such things as step-by-step instructions on how to log into the system and how to select and run a report.

The vendor team will be responsible for providing written weekly progress and status reports.

All documentation, reports, and supporting material created and/or used by the vendor team must be submitted to ODJFS for approval.

VI. Work Day

The normal work schedule for the individuals selected under this request will be Monday through Friday 8:00 am to 5:00 pm with a one-hour lunch. Each selected vendor professional will work approximately eight hours per business day, commencing upon approval of a State Purchase Order (the “PO”), and upon direction by ODJFS. While this RLB outlines anticipated work volume and numbers of hours of service needed, these hours are estimates only and may not be construed as a guarantee of work to be assigned to the selected vendor(s) and/or any of their offered, and ODJFS-accepted, vendor professionals.

VII. Qualifications

A. Vendor Organizational Qualifications

Each interested vendor’s proposal must contain a cover letter, expressing the vendor’s commitment to performing the work described in this RLB, and clearly specifying the vendor’s current STS covering IT Professional Services. The vendor’s cover letter must address all points described in items 1. and 2., of this Section A., below.

Mandatory Qualifications:

1. Interested vendors must have a current and valid STS authorizing them to perform IT professional services-related consultation for the period of time this work is to be performed. **Vendors not meeting this requirement will not be considered and their proposals will be disqualified.**
2. **The vendor should have performed similar work for at least three projects** (other than ODJFS projects) within the past five years. Vendors must demonstrate that they meet this requirement by including a list of at least three references from current or past customers, other than ODJFS, served in the past five years for whom the vendor performed similar work. The list must contain current contact persons and contact information for those work engagements. **Vendors not meeting this requirement to the satisfaction of ODJFS may be disqualified.** The proposal must contain a brief summary of each of those work engagements, how they are similar in size, scope, and purpose, to the project described in this RLB, and the level of success attained.

B. Candidate Qualifications

For each vendor candidate offered, vendor proposals **must** contain: 1.) **a resume or curriculum vitae** demonstrating that the candidate has the necessary professional experience and education, and 2.) **a written document** explaining how, and the degree to which, the candidate’s characteristics, experience, education, etc., are applicable to the work described in this RLB.

Mandatory Minimum Candidate Qualifications:

Vendor bid packets **must** demonstrate that each offered candidate has:

1. at minimum an Associate Degree in a field related to information technology;
2. at minimum three (3) years experience in data centric and report development, specifically engaging business intelligence, data warehouse projects, business intelligence tools such as COGNOS,

understanding of dimensional data models, analytics and reporting, business analysis, data analysis, logical data modeling;

3. at minimum two (2) years experience working with large scale, complex systems (data structure and usage, reporting requirements, interfaces with other systems) in a government and/or corporate setting;
4. at minimum one (1) year experience with the COGNOS ReportNet tool in the areas of Metadata, Portal, and user management and administration, and creating simple and complex reports using data from a data warehouse;
5. completed formal Cognos Report Net training;
6. at minimum two (2) years experience performing work projects which require sound analytical, verbal, and written skills;
7. at minimum two (2) years experience communicating with management, application users, and technical staff.

ODJFS may, at its option, disqualify any candidates for whom any of the above requirements are not adequately documented in the vendor's proposal.

Desirable Qualifications for Individual Candidates:

In addition to the above mandatory qualifications, each candidate offered will be evaluated on the degree to which the following qualifications are demonstrated in the proposal.

1. At least one year of experience with enterprise resource planning systems (such as PeopleSoft Financials);
2. Certification as a Cognos Report Net Authoring Product Professional;
3. State of Ohio experience in report development;
4. Experience with State of Ohio fiscal services reporting;
5. The ability to deliver guidance and coaching to others.

Note: While ODJFS expects to require the services of up to four report development professionals, vendor bids may, at the vendor's option, offer the services of fewer than all four professionals (or more than four). ODJFS anticipates the possibility of using the services of more than one vendor to fulfill its projected needs in order to obtain the optimal mixture of qualified staff available at reasonable cost to the agency.

ODJFS will require the selected vendor(s) to provide the candidates offered (and accepted by ODJFS) throughout the term of this project. Vendor personnel may not be removed from the project without reasonable notice to ODJFS, and replacements will not be made without prior ODJFS approval.

All candidates must pass a background check. Upon selection and before project initiation, representatives of the selected vendor(s) and their personnel assigned to this ODJFS project will be required to sign and abide by the ODJFS Security and Confidentiality Agreement.

VIII. Vendor's Quote and Quote Format

Vendors must provide their quote for the work described in this RLB on their company letterhead in the following format:

Vendor's STS Number _____
STS Effective dates (from/to) _____
All Offered Candidate's rate per hour of service \$ _____ **, fixed and all-inclusive**
Signed by : _____ **(authorized vendor representative)**
Representative's written name and position: _____

Each responding vendor may submit only one hourly rate that would be charged for ALL candidates offered by that vendor. Vendor quotes may only include this single rate. All costs and expenses related to the successful performance of the work described in this RLB must be contained in that rate. No separate expenses for travel or any other purpose will be considered by ODJFS. The rate offered must not exceed the vendor's established STS rate for that service, but may be lower. The vendor's quote must contain a statement affirming that the rate offered is firm and fixed, and will be in effect for the entire period of the engagement. Quotes must be signed by an appropriate representative of the vendor's organization.

Reimbursement to the selected vendor will be for the actual numbers of hours of work performed, in accordance with ODJFS direction, per professional, up to the maximum of 480 hours per person.

IX. Format of Submission

Interested vendors must submit bid packages containing the following components, in the following order:

- 1.) A Bid Cover Letter** (as described in Section VII, A.)
- 2.) Report Professionals' Qualifications** (as described in Section VII, B.)
- 3.) Vendor's Quote** (as described in Section VIII)
- 4.) Forms and Attachments:**
 - A completed and signed Vendor Required Information and Certifications Form (provided as Attachment A. to this RLB);
 - A completed and signed Request for Taxpayer/Employer Identification Number W-9 Form (provided as Attachment B. to this RLB); and,
 - A completed and signed Declaration of Material Assistance to Terrorists Organizations Form (provided as Attachment C. to this RLB).

Note: Should any selected vendor not include, or properly complete, these attachments listed in item 4.) of this Section IX, the approval of a PO necessary to engage that vendor's services will be delayed, which may result in a decision by ODJFS to utilize the services of another qualified vendor.

X. Scoring and Selection Process

Vendor bid submissions must be received (via hand-delivery, mail, or commercial courier service) at the ODJFS location, by the date and time specified in Section IV, Bid Submission Instructions, in order to be considered for this project. Additionally, the vendor must have a current and valid STS authorizing them to perform IT Professional Services-related consultation for the period of time this work is to be performed. Vendors whose bid cover letters and quotes fail to demonstrate the correct STS status, or whose STS status cannot be confirmed, will be eliminated from consideration. Bids accepted for consideration will be evaluated for this work according to the standards and process established in the Technical Proposal Score Sheet, which is

provided as **Attachment D** to this RLB. Vendors are strongly encouraged to use this score sheet to evaluate their own proposals for completeness and quality before submitting them for ODJFS review.

ODJFS will select vendors based on higher scores. Even if the vendor earning the highest total score could offer all candidates needed for this work, ODJFS may, at its sole discretion for any administrative reasons, offer portions of the work to more than one vendor. However, if selections of multiple vendors' candidates are made, the candidates will be the successively highest scoring individuals.

XI. Caveats

In scoring vendor bids, ODJFS reserves the right to waive minor defects, errors, or omissions in a vendor's submissions if those items do not unreasonably obscure the meaning of the information in the bids. ODJFS further reserves the right to contact vendors to request clarification of any information or materials in the bid packet. Any such communication initiated by ODJFS is not considered a violation of the Communication Prohibition Section of this RLB (Section XVII.).

Additionally, ODJFS is under no obligation to select any vendor as a result of this solicitation if, in the opinion of ODJFS and the proposal review team, none of the proposals are responsive to the objectives and needs of the Department. ODJFS reserves the right to not select any vendor should ODJFS decide not to proceed with the project.

XII. Internet Question & Answer (Q&A) Period; RLB Clarification Opportunity

There is no question and answer opportunity for this RLB.

XIII. RLB Process Information and Other Contractual Requirements:

A. Interview

Vendors submitting proposals may be requested to participate in an in-depth interview as part of the evaluation process. The interview, if necessary, may include participants from ODJFS and any representatives it may appoint. ODJFS reserves the right to select from responding vendors for interviews and may not interview all vendors submitting proposals. The vendor shall bear all costs of any scheduled interview.

B. Start Work Date

The selected vendor must be able to begin work no later than seven (7) working days after the time funds are encumbered and approved by the Office of Budget & Management. The selected vendor will be notified by the ODJFS contract manager when work may begin. **Any work begun by a contractor prior to this notification will NOT be reimbursable by ODJFS.**

C. Proposal Costs

Costs incurred in the preparation of this proposal are to be borne by the vendor, and ODJFS will not contribute in any way to the costs of the preparation. Any costs associated with interviews will be borne by the vendor and will not be ODJFS' responsibility (see Section XIII, A.).

D. Trade Secrets Prohibition; Public Information Disclaimer

Vendors are prohibited from including any trade secret information as defined in Ohio Revised Code (ORC) 1333.61 in their proposals in response to any ODJFS RFP, Requests for Letterhead Bids (RLB) or other procurement efforts. ODJFS shall consider all proposals or similar responses voluntarily submitted in response to any ODJFS RFP, RFA, RLB, or other procurement document, to be free of trade secrets and such proposals shall, in their entirety, be made a part of the public record.

All proposals and any other documents submitted to ODJFS in response to any RFP, RLB, etc., shall become the property of ODJFS. This RLB and, after the selection of a vendor for award, any proposals submitted in response to an RFP/RLB are deemed to be public records pursuant to R.C. 149.43. For purposes of this section, the term “proposal” shall mean both the technical proposal (or application or other response documentation) and the cost proposal, if opened, submitted by the selected vendor/applicant, and any attachments, addenda, appendices, or sample products.

Any proposals submitted in response to any ODJFS RFP, RLB, etc. which make claims of trade secret information shall be disqualified from consideration immediately upon the discovery of such unallowable claim.

E. Contractual Requirements

Any purchase resulting from the issuance of this solicitation is subject to the terms and conditions as provided in the applicable State term Schedule.

F. Travel and Parking Expense Reimbursement

No travel or parking expenses, nor any other expenses, will be covered.

G. Public Release of Records

Public release of any evaluation or monitoring reports funded under this agreement will be made only by ODJFS. Prior to public release of such reports, ODJFS must have at least a 30-day period for review and comment.

H. Confidentiality

All contracts or other business agreements will require that the contractor, its directors, officers, employees, and any subcontractors, maintain the confidentiality of information and records which state and federal laws, rules, and regulations require to be kept confidential.

I. Ethical & Conflict of Interest Requirements

1. No contractor or individual, company or organization seeking a contract or other business agreement shall promise or give to any ODJFS employee anything of value that is of such character as to manifest a substantial and improper influence upon the employee with respect to his or her duties;
2. No contractor or individual, company or organization seeking a contract or other business agreement shall solicit any ODJFS employee to violate any of the conduct requirements for employees;

3. Any contractor acting on behalf of ODJFS shall refrain from activities which could result in violations of ethics and/or in conflicts of interest. Any contractor or potential contractor who violates the requirements and prohibitions defined here or of Section 102.04 of the ORC is subject to termination of the agreement or refusal by ODJFS to enter into a one; and
4. ODJFS employees and contractors who violate Sections 102.03, 102.04 2921.42 or 2921.43 of the ORC may be prosecuted for criminal violations.

J. Unresolved Findings for Recovery (R.C. 9.24)

Ohio Revised Code Section 9.24 prohibits ODJFS from awarding a contract to any entity against whom the Auditor of State has issued a finding for recovery if the finding for recovery is “unresolved” at the time of award. By submitting a proposal, the vendor warrants that it is not now, and will not become, subject to an “unresolved” finding for recovery under R.C. 9.24 prior to the award of any contract or business agreement arising out of this RLB, without notifying ODJFS of such finding. ODJFS will review the Auditor of State’s website prior to the evaluations of any proposal submitted pursuant to this RLB. ODJFS will not evaluate a proposal from any vendor whose name, or the name of any of the subcontractors proposed by the vendor, appears on the website of the Auditor of the State of Ohio as having an “unresolved” finding for recovery.

K. Mandatory Contract Performance Disclosure

Each proposal must disclose whether the vendor’s performance, or the performance of any of the proposed subcontractor(s), under contracts for the provision of services that are the same or similar to those described in this RLB, has resulted in any “formal claims” for breach of those contracts. For purposes of this disclosure, “formal claims” means any claims for breach that have been filed as a lawsuit in any court, submitted for arbitration (whether voluntary or involuntary, binding or not), or assigned to mediation. If any such claims are disclosed, vendor shall fully explain the details of those claims, including the allegations regarding all alleged breaches, any written or legal action resulting from those allegations, and the results of any litigation, arbitration or mediation regarding those claims, including terms of any settlement. While disclosure of any formal claims in response to this section will not automatically disqualify a vendor from consideration, at the sole discretion of ODJFS, such claims and a review of the background details may result in a rejection of the vendor’s proposal. ODJFS will make this decision based on its determination of the seriousness of the claims, the potential that the behavior that led to the claims could negatively impact vendor’s performance of the work, and the best interests of ODJFS.

L. Mandatory Disclosures of Governmental Investigations

Each proposal must indicate whether the vendor and any of the proposed subcontractor(s) has been the subject of any adverse regulatory or adverse administrative governmental action (federal, state, or local) with respect to vendor’s performance of services similar to those described in this RLB. If any such instances are disclosed, vendor must fully explain, in detail, the nature of the governmental action, the allegations that led to the governmental action, and the results of the governmental action including any legal action that was taken against vendor by the governmental agency. While disclosure of any governmental action in response to this section will not automatically disqualify a vendor from consideration, such governmental action and a review of the background details may result in a rejection of the vendor’s proposal at the sole discretion of ODJFS. The decision by ODJFS on this issue will be based on a determination of the seriousness of the matter, the matter’s potential impact on the vendor’s performance of the work, and the best interests of ODJFS.

M. Vendor Selection Restriction

Any vendor deemed not responsible, or submitting a proposal deemed not to be responsive to the terms of this RLB, shall not be selected for this project.

N. Waiver of Minor Proposal Errors

ODJFS may, at its sole discretion, waive minor errors or omissions in proposals, bids, and/or forms when those errors do not unreasonably obscure the meaning of the content. Additionally, ODJFS reserves the right to request clarifications or completions from vendors to any information in their proposals, bids, and/or forms, and may request such clarification as it deems necessary at any point in the proposal/bid review process.

XIV. Health Insurance Portability & Accessibility Act (HIPAA) Requirements

As a condition of receiving a contract from ODJFS, the contractor, and any subcontractor(s), will be required to comply with 42 U.S.C. Sections 1320d through 1320d-8, and to implement regulations at 45 C.F.R. Section 164.502 (e) and Sections 164.504 (e) regarding disclosure of protected health information under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996. Protected Health Information (PHI) is information received by the contractor from or on behalf of ODJFS that meets the definition of PHI as defined by HIPAA and the regulations promulgated by the United States Department of Health & Human Services, specifically 45 CFR164.501 and any amendments thereto.

HIPAA compliance requires, at minimum, that the contractor:

- shall not use or disclose PHI except as specifically required under the terms of the contract with ODJFS, or as otherwise required under the HIPAA regulations or other applicable law.
- shall use appropriate safeguards to protect against use or disclosure not provided for by this Agreement.
- shall promptly report to ODJFS any knowledge of uses or disclosures of PHI that are not in accordance with the contract or applicable law. In addition, the CONTRACTOR shall mitigate any adverse effects of such a breach to the extent possible.
- shall ensure that all its agents and subcontractors that receive PHI from or on behalf of the contractor and/or ODJFS agree to the same restrictions and conditions that apply to contractor with respect to the use or disclosure of PHI.
- shall make available to ODJFS such information as ODJFS may require to fulfill its obligations to provide access to, provide a copy of, and account for disclosures with respect to PHI pursuant to HIPAA and related regulations.
- shall make PHI available to ODJFS in order for ODJFS to fulfill its obligations pursuant to HIPAA to amend the information and shall, as directed by ODJFS, incorporate any amendments into the information held by the contractor and ensure incorporation of any such amendments into information held by its agents or subcontractors.
- shall make available its internal practices, books and records relating to the use and disclosure of PHI received from ODJFS, or created and received by the contractor on behalf of ODJFS, to

ODJFS and to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services for the purpose of determining ODJFS compliance with HIPAA and the regulations promulgated by the United States Department of Health & Human Services and any amendment thereto.

- shall, upon termination of this Agreement, at the option of ODJFS, return to ODJFS, or destroy, all PHI in its possession, and keep no copies of the information except as requested by ODJFS or required by law. If the contractor or its agent or subcontractor destroys any PHI, then the contractor will provide ODJFS with documentation evidencing such destruction. Any PHI maintained by the contractor shall continue to be extended the same as required by HIPAA and ODJFS for as long as it is maintained.

In the event of a material breach of contractor obligations under this section, ODJFS may at its option terminate the contract according to provisions within the contract for termination.

XV. Ethical and Conflict of Interest Requirements

1. No contractor or individual, company or organization seeking a contract shall promise or give to any ODJFS employee of value that is of such character as to manifest a substantial and improper influence upon the employee with respect to his or her duties.
2. No contractor or individual, company or organization seeking a contract shall solicit any ODJFS employee to violate any of the conduct requirements for employees.
3. Any contractor acting on behalf of ODJFS shall refrain from activities which could result in violations of ethics and/or conflicts of interest. Any contractor or potential contractor who violates the requirements and prohibitions defined here or of Section 102.04 of the Ohio Revised Code is subject to termination of the contract or refusal by ODJFS to enter into a contract.
4. ODJFS employees and contractors who violate Sections 102.03, 102.04 2921.42 or 2921.43 of the Ohio Revised Code may be prosecuted for criminal violations.

XVI. Other Requirements

ODJFS is under no obligation to issue a contract as a result of this solicitation if, in the opinion of ODJFS and the proposal review team, none of the proposals are responsive to the objectives and needs of the Department. ODJFS reserves the right to not select any vendor should ODJFS decide not to proceed with the project.

Costs incurred in the preparation of this proposal are to be borne by the bidder, and ODJFS will not contribute in any way to the costs of the preparation.

All contracts will require that the contractor maintain the confidentiality of information and records which state and federal laws, rules, and regulations require to be kept confidential.

Public release of any evaluation or monitoring reports funded under this agreement will be made only by ODJFS. Prior to public release of such reports, ODJFS must have at least a 30-day period for review and comment.

XVII. Communications Prohibited

From the issuance date of the RLB, until an actual contract is awarded to a contractor, there may be no communications concerning the RLB between any interested potential vendor and any employee of ODJFS in

the issuing office, or any other ODJFS employee, or any other individual regardless of their employment status, who is in any way involved in the development of the RLB or the decision with a formal procurement.

The only exceptions to this prohibition are as follows:

- A. As necessary in the case of any pre-existing business relationship between ODJFS and a vendor which could potentially respond to this RLB, in order to conduct that business;
- B. As part of an interview necessary for ODJFS to make a decision regarding further procurement activities;
- C. If it becomes necessary to revise any part of this RLB, revisions will be posted on the ODJFS web page established for this RLB; and
- D. If it becomes necessary to revise any part of this RLB, revisions will be posted on the ODJFS web page: <http://www.state.oh.us/odjfs> and notices of such will be sent to vendors on the original mailing list and to anyone participating in the clarification process conducted pursuant to Section V. above; and
- E. Any Public Records Request (PRR) made through the ODJFS Office of Legal Services:

Requests from potential vendors or contractors for copies of previous RFPs, past vendor proposals, score sheets or contracts for this or similar past projects, are Public Records Requests (PIRs), and are not clarification questions regarding the present RFP. PRRs, submitted in accordance with directions provided in this Section XX, Communications Prohibited, will be honored. The posted time frames for ODJFS responses to Internet or faxed questions for RFP clarification do not apply to PIRs. The PRR must comply with the following guidelines:

- 1. A PRR may be filed by a potential vendor or contractor and must be submitted in writing via mail or fax and shall contain the following information:
 - a. The name, organization (if applicable), address, telephone and fax number of the requester;
 - b. The specific name and/or number of the past RFP/RLB, proposal or contract being requested;
- 2. All requests must be filed at the following location:

Chief Legal Counsel
Office of Legal Services
Ohio Department of Job and Family Services
30 East Broad Street, 31st Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215-3414

XVIII. Protests

Any potential, or actual, vendor objecting to the award of a contract resulting from the issuance of this solicitation may file a protest of the award of the contract, or any other matter relating to the process of soliciting the proposals. Such a protest must comply with the following guidelines:

1. A protest may be filed by a prospective or actual bidder objecting to the award of a contract resulting from this solicitation. The protest shall be in writing and shall contain the following information:
 - a. The name, address, and telephone number of the protestor;
 - b. The name and number of the solicitation being protested;
 - c. A detailed statement of the legal and factual grounds for the protest, including copies of any relevant documents;
 - d. A request for a ruling by ODJFS;
 - e. A statement as to the form of relief requested from ODJFS; and
 - f. Any other information the protestor believes to be essential to the determination of the factual and legal questions at issue in the written protest.
2. A timely protest shall be considered by ODJFS, if it is received by ODJFS' Office of Legal Services, within the following periods:
 - a. A protest based on alleged improprieties in the issuance of the RFP or any other event preceding the closing date for receipt of proposals which are apparent or should be apparent prior to the closing date for receipt of proposals shall be filed no later than 3:00 p.m. of the closing date for receipt of proposals as specified in Section III., Anticipated Procurement Timeline.
 - b. If the protest relates to the announced intent to award a contract, the protest shall be filed no later than 3:00 p.m. of the seventh (7th) calendar day after the issuance of the letter announcing the selected vendor(s).
3. An untimely protest may be considered by ODJFS if ODJFS determines that the protest raises issues significant to the department's procurement system. An untimely protest is one received by ODJFS' Office of Legal Services after the time periods set forth in Item #2 of this section.
4. All protests must be filed at the following location:

Chief Legal Counsel, Office of Legal Services
Ohio Department of Job and Family Services
30 East Broad Street, 31st Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215-3414
5. When a timely protest is filed, a contract award shall not proceed until a decision on the protest is issued or the matter is otherwise resolved, unless the Director of ODJFS determines that a delay will severely disadvantage the Department. The vendor(s) who would have been awarded the contract shall be notified of the receipt of the protest.
6. ODJFS' Office of Legal Services shall issue written decisions on all timely protests and shall notify any vendor who filed an untimely protest as to whether or not the protest will be considered.

