

# **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

RFP Number: RFP 3180000481

To Provide: Food Services

Issue Date: 09/05/2018

## **CLOSING LOCATION**

State Veterans Affairs Board

3466 Highway 80 East

Pearl, Mississippi 39208

## **PROPOSAL COORDINATOR**

Kathy Caldwell, Attorney

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## **CLOSING DATE AND TIME**

Proposals must be received by 12:00 p.m. on October 9, 2018

## SECTION 1

### 1.1 Proposal Acceptance Period

The original and 3 copies of the proposal, 4 copies total in three-ring loose-leaf binder shall be signed and submitted in a sealed envelope or package to SVAB, 3466 Highway 80 East, Pearl, MS 39208 no later than the time and date specified for receipt of proposals. Timely submission is the responsibility of the respondent. **Proposals received after the specified time shall be rejected.** The envelope or package shall be marked with the proposal opening date and time, and the number of the request for proposals. The time and date of receipt shall be indicated on the envelope or package by Personnel Department. The front page, reference page and signature pages may have the Respondent's name. The rest of the proposal cannot have the name of the Respondent on the page or any identifiers. Modifications or additions to any portion of the procurement document may be cause for rejection of the proposal. The SVAB reserves the right to decide, on a case-by-case basis, whether to reject a proposal with modifications or additions as non-responsive. As a precondition to proposal acceptance, the SVAB may request the respondent to withdraw or modify those portions of the proposal deemed non-responsive that do not affect quality, quantity, price, or delivery of the service.

#### 1.1.1 Electronic Submission

Proposals may be submitted electronically. Please refer to the links below for the Vendor Registration website as well as tutorials. Please contact the MASH Help Desk (601-359-1343) if you require any assistance.

#### Registration and Submission link:

[www.dfa.ms.gov/dfa-offices/mmrs/mississippi-suppliers-vendors/](http://www.dfa.ms.gov/dfa-offices/mmrs/mississippi-suppliers-vendors/)

#### 1.1.2 Timeline

Request for Proposals Issue Date:	September 5, 2018
First Publication:	September 5, 2018
Second Publication:	September 12, 2018
Deadline for Submission of Questions:	September 21, 2018 at 12:00 p.m.
Anticipated Posting of Answers to Questions:	September 28, 2018
Proposal Packet Submission Deadline:	October 9, 2018 at 12:00 p.m.
Report of Award:	October 12, 2018
Anticipated Award Notification:	October 16, 2018
Anticipated Post Award Debriefing Request Deadline:	October 19, 2018 at 12:00 p.m.
Protests Due:	October 23, 2018 at 12:00 p.m.
Post-Award Debriefing Held by Date:	October 24, 2018
Projected Contract Date:	December 1, 2018

### **1.1.3 Rejection of Proposals**

Proposals which do not conform to the requirements set forth in this Request for Proposals may be rejected by SVAB. Proposals may be rejected for reasons which include, but are not limited to, the following:

- 1) The proposal contains unauthorized amendments to the requirements of the Request for Proposals.
- 2) The proposal is conditional.
- 3) The proposal is incomplete or contains irregularities which make the proposal indefinite or ambiguous.
- 4) The proposal is received late. Late proposals will be maintained unopen in the procurement file.
- 5) The proposal is not signed by an authorized representative of the party.
- 6) The proposal contains false or misleading statements or references.
- 7) The proposal does not offer to provide all services required by the Request for Proposal.
- 8) The proposal lists the name of the Respondent on pages other than the front page, references page or signature pages.

## **1.2 Expenses Incurred in Preparing Offers**

The SVAB accepts no responsibility for any expense incurred by the respondent in the preparation and presentation of an offer. Such expenses shall be borne exclusively by the respondent.

## **1.3 Proprietary Information**

The respondent should mark any and all pages of the proposal considered to be proprietary information which may remain confidential in accordance with Mississippi Code Annotated §§ 25-61-9 and 79-23-1 (1972, as amended). Any pages not marked accordingly will be subject to review by the general public after award of the contract. Requests to review the proprietary information will be handled in accordance with applicable legal procedures.

## **1.4 Registration with Mississippi Secretary of State**

By submitting a proposal, the respondent certifies that it is registered to do business in the State of Mississippi as prescribed by the Mississippi Secretary of State or, if not already registered, that it will do so within seven (7) business days of being offered an award.

## **1.5 Debarment**

By submitting a proposal, the respondent certifies that it is not currently debarred from submitting proposals for contracts issued by any political subdivision or agency of the State of Mississippi or Federal government and that it is not an agent of a person or entity that is currently debarred from submitting proposals for contracts issued by any political subdivision or agency of the State of Mississippi.

## **1.6 Competitive Proposals**

Discussions may be conducted with respondents who submit proposals determined to be reasonably susceptible of being selected for award, but proposals or qualifications may also be accepted without those discussions. For these reasons, all parties are advised to propose their most favorable terms initially.

## **1.7 Additional Information**

Questions about the contract portions of the procurement document must be submitted in writing to Kathy Caldwell at 3466 Highway 80 East, Pearl MS 39208/ fax: 601-576-4868/ kcaldwell@vab.ms.gov. Questions concerning the technical portions of the procurement document should be directed to Kathy Caldwell at 3466 Highway 80 East, Pearl MS 39208/ fax: 601-576-4868/ kcaldwell@vab.ms.gov. Respondents are cautioned that any statements made by contact persons that cause a material change to any portion of the procurement document shall not be relied upon unless subsequently ratified by a formal written amendment to the procurement document. Close of questions is at 12:00 p.m. on September 21, 2018. Anticipated posting of answers will be September 28, 2018, on the SVAB website.

## **1.8 Type of Contract**

Compensation for services will be in the form of a firm fixed price agreement.

## **1.9 Written Proposals**

All proposals shall be in writing.

# **SECTION 2**

## **2.1 Purpose**

The State Veterans Affairs Board (SVAB) is seeking to establish a contract for food services at State Veterans Homes in Collins, Jackson, Kosciusko and Oxford. These services are needed to provide food and nourishment for the Veteran Residents at each Home. Each Home is a 150 Bed skilled care veterans nursing home. Each home has an equipped kitchen. It is understood that any contract resulting from RFP 3180000481 requires approval by the Public Procurement Review Board. If any contract resulting from RFP 3180000481 is not approved by the Public Procurement Review Board, it is void and no payment shall be made.

## **2.2 Scope of Services, Specifications and Requirements**

The following services will be provided by the Offeror and its staff:

1. Regulations and Standards: The Contractor will adhere to all federal and state regulations and standards that govern SVAB and which are applicable to the State Veterans Homes:

A. The vendor will adhere to all regulations and standards that govern SVAB:

- (1) U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs;

- (2) Mississippi Department of Health, Division of Licensure and Certification  
Nursing Home Regulations;
- (3) Rules, Regulations, and Minimum Standards For Institutions  
For The Aged or Infirm
- (4) SVAB Policies and Procedures.

2. Nourishments

- A. Food and drink items will be requisitioned by SVAB Nursing Staff for feeding to residents between meals. Procedures will be agreed upon by vendor and SVAB.
- B. SVAB reserves the right to make additions and deletions to the nourishment list. Items to be available include, but are not limited to:
  - (1) Coffee and Decaffeinated Coffee;
  - (2) Tea;
  - (3) Sugar and artificial sweeteners;
  - (4) Fruit Juices;
  - (5) Soups;
  - (6) Cheese;
  - (7) Crackers;
  - (8) Cookies;
  - (9) Peanut Butter;
  - (10) Fresh fruit;
  - (11) Bread;
  - (12) Lunch meat and meat spreads;
  - (13) Cereals, dry and instant hot;
  - (14) Condiments;
  - (15) Ice Cream.

C. The vendor's dietitians will develop a weekly nourishment calendar appropriate for diets of residents in each nursing home.

3. Medication-Treatment Products

A. Food items used as medicine or to administer medications will be available for each home.

B. Items include, but are not limited to:

(1) Fruit Juices;

(2) Applesauce;

(3) Bran;

(4) Drink Mix.

4. Supplements

A. The vendor will establish a formulary of commercial dietary supplements with input from SVAB staff.

B. Supplements will be supplied based on physicians' orders and nutritional needs of residents,

5. Scope of Service

**A. Resident Meals**

1. The Respondent is responsible for the planning, preparation, service and delivery (carts taken to each wing) of all resident meals (3 times per day unless specified by physician orders) that meet or exceed the caloric intake required and in compliance with physician orders. For noon and evening meals, at least two entrée options and at least three side items will be available. Residents will select entree and sides items on the day prior to meal. Veterans Affairs Board staff will be responsible for recording selected meal items on a ticket (tickets/tablet service with meal options available will be supplied by Food Service Staff) for each residents for the noon and evening and submitting the ticket to Food Service staff the day prior to the meal being prepared. At least two dessert options will be available for the noon and evening meals.

2. Breakfast: Breakfast shall include, but not be limited to, a meat and biscuits and fresh fruit in addition to entrée and cereal, hot or cold, seven days a week.

3. Desserts: Desserts shall include pies and cakes and will be available for lunch and dinner seven days a week.

**B. Programmatic/Recreational Meals**

1. Vendor will provide meals for resident recreational activities based on a selection of set menus provided by the vendor. Examples: picnics, sack lunches, cookouts.
2. These meals will replace a meal on the seasonal three (3) month cycle menu.
3. These meals will include all paper goods, disposable utensils, etc. as well as food.
4. Vendor will provide special theme meals for all residents each month. Schedules shall be coordinated with the SVAB Activities Department.
5. Vendor will provide birthday cake, ice cream, disposable plates and utensils for all residents once per month. This will be coordinated with the SVAB Activities Department. The vendor will establish and publish a reasonable "cut-off" time for final changes before special events other than birthdays and theme meals.
6. These meals are to be included in the guaranteed meal price.
7. Vendor will provide sack lunches for residents as necessary for medical appointments.
8. Vendor will allow residents to set menu for one meal per month. Vendor will confer with the Resident's Council at each home to determine the menu.

**C. Cafeteria: Resident, Family Member, Employee and Guest Dining**

1. Meal service will be available in the cafeteria for all three meals.
2. Vendor must provide written explanation of service options and a fixed price for each meal pursuant to C1.
3. Employees of the Veterans Homes will be able to purchase a meal for a flat fee of \$2.00 including tax.
4. Non-employees or Residents may purchase a meal at cost plus tax.

**D. Catering**

1. Vendor will be notified by SVAB at least 5 days prior to the event to be catered.
2. Vendor will charge SVAB at cost for food, supplies and labor used.

3. Charges for catering events are to be billed on separate invoices referencing event and approved SVAB purchase order number.
4. Catered events will be conducted in an efficient, professional manner without adversely affecting the food service for residents.
5. Vendor has the right to establish a maximum number of events to be handled at one time.
6. Vendor will establish menus and fixed prices for SVAB to choose from for catered events.

**E. Additive Alternate:** In addition to the plan for performance and price for services specified in this RFP, Offerors should provide the price and plan for performance for the following proposed services. The SVAB reserves the right not to include the following services in the awarded contract.

1. Station for omelets and eggs cooked to order, for breakfast seven days a week.
2. Soup and Salad Station available with lunch and dinner seven days a week.
3. Short Order Meals- The Respondent will have qualified staff available from 7:00 am until 7:00 pm to prepare short order meals as requested by residents. Short order meals shall include those mutually agreed upon by both parties: i.e., Hamburgers, Hotdogs, Grilled Cheese Sandwiches, Ham and Cheese Sandwiches. Short Order Meal service for residents should be included in the Daily Charge per Resident per Meal.

6. Quality Management/Performance Improvement Requirements

- A. Performance standards as stated in the SVAB/Vendor contract may be measured through unannounced Environment of Care inspections conducted by SVAB staff.
  - (1) Compliance with sanitation, safety and acceptable levels of service will be monitored.
  - (2) If compliance is deficient, SVAB will notify the vendor. Penalties may be assessed if applicable as stated in Subsection 7 labeled Penalties.
- B. When compliance rates fall below the expected standard, the vendor must submit a written corrective action plan to SVAB within ten (10) days of notification of deficiency.
- C. The corrective action must include:
  - (1) Flow to correct the deficiency for residents affected.



- (2) Flow to identify those residents potentially affected by the same deficiency.
  - (3) How to prevent the deficiency from recurring.
  - (4) How the vendor will monitor and ensure compliance with the corrective action plan and prevent the same deficiency from recurring.
- D. Vendor shall develop and implement the plan of correction for survey deficiencies; SVAB must approve the plan of correction before implementation.
- E. SVAB and other regulatory agencies will at all times have access to the premises to inspect and ensure that property furnished is being maintained, used properly and accounted for.
- F. Audit of meal tickets and dietary orders monthly and upon request. Results of audit shall be reported promptly to the Home's Administrator.

7. Penalties

- A. If at any time SVAB assesses that performance standards are not being met, a penalty may be assessed.
- B. The penalty will be 1 ½ % of weekly billings until performance standards are met with a minimum penalty of 1 ½ % of billing for the week immediately following discovery of noncompliance by SVAB staff.
- C. If SVAB purchasing office and vendor do not agree, the matter will be referred to the SVAB Director for a final decision.
  - (1) If vendor is found to be out of compliance, penalty will be assessed as in item B above.
  - (2) If vendor is found to be in compliance, no penalty will be assessed.
- D. Penalty will be assessed for non-timely corrective action.
- E. If a citation from a MDH, VA or other survey results in monetary fine attributed to vendor, vendor will pay the fine.
- F. SVAB will not pay for any food items that are spoiled or unwholesome at the time of delivery, do not meet specifications for food components or menu items, or do not otherwise meet requirements of this contract.

- G. Vendor shall pay any claims due to vendor negligence or non-compliance with regulations for the 3 year period for which records are subject to review by the MDFI or USDA.
8. Sanitation and Safety
- A. Vendor is responsible for safety, sanitation and maintenance in the following areas:
    - (1) Physical plant of kitchen and dining room, including food service equipment, as well as dishes, dinnerware, serving platters and utensils.
    - (2) Food supply and storage, handling during preparation, transportation and service.
    - (3) Personal hygiene of food service employees.
9. Personnel
- A. SVAB reserves the right of final interview and approval for all management personnel. If at any time a vacancy occurs in the senior management team, the vacancy must be filled within a timely manner and the Contractor will have personnel available to handle or support the daily local activities of said home. Penalties assessed by MDH or VA resulting from failure to fill a vacancy in the senior management team within a timely manner shall be the contractors responsibility.
  - B. Vendor will furnish sufficient on-site qualified personnel to ensure that the food service program is operated according to MDH and VA quality food service standards and personal conduct standards acceptable to SVAB. This requirement includes, but is not limited to, a fulltime qualified registered dietitian that works 40 hours, Monday through Friday.
  - C. The vendor will pay these employees.
  - D. These employees are subject to the vendor's direct supervision and approval and are members of the vendor's staff.
  - E. Personnel policies will be those of the vendor.
  - F. In addition to on-site personnel, sufficient personnel must be employed by the contractors company to keep the food service operation current on new food products, menu ideas, appropriate research and new food production equipment and methods.

- G. Consultation with vendor's supervisory and technical staff may be requested and utilized by SVAB administration for proper functioning of the food service program.
  - H. The vendor must have access to qualified replacement personnel to ensure continuity of service in the event of a strike, resignation, dismissal or illness of on-site personnel.
  - I. The expense of temporary employees will be borne entirely by the Vendor.
  - J. Should labor problems arise to the extent that legal advice and assistance are necessary, such expense will be borne by the vendor.
  - K. Vendor agrees not to hire any SVAB employees without the express written approval of SVAB Director.
  - L. Vendor will employ a qualified food service director at each Home.
  - M. Vendor will be responsible for the cost of background checks on each employee. Each employee must submit fingerprints for submission to the MS State Board of Health. A copy of this report must be submitted to SVAB.
  - N. Vendor will be responsible for the Tuberculosis Skin Test of each employee. Results of Tuberculosis Skin Test should be submitted to VA Home Administrator prior to employment.
  - O. Registered Dietitians are required to attend and participate in weekly weight meetings. Registered Dietitians should report weight loss percentages in weekly weight meetings.
  - P. Vendor needs to complete the dietary section of Minimum Data Set.
  - Q. The Vendor will make sure that employees attend all mandatory in-service training of the Home.
  - R. Vendor will hire staff that are trained monthly on how to handle dementia Residents.
  - S. Vendor will provide uniforms for staff at Vendor's cost.
10. Billing
- A. Vendor will submit a weekly bill to SVAB within three (3) days after the end of each week.

- B. Vendor will submit final bills for the SVAB fiscal year (July 1 through June 30) by August 10 each year.
- C. Each bill will show a breakdown by homes of charges and an overall summary.
- D. Vendor will maintain documentation to support costs.

11. Financial Records/Monthly Report

- A. Vendor will utilize generally accepted accounting principles and practices in the maintenance of financial records for the food service operation.
- B. Vendor will permit SVAB or other regulatory agencies to:
  - (1) Audit its accounts
  - (2) Verify all reports, records and data
  - (3) Obtain other desired information by direct reference to ledgers, correspondence, memoranda and any other records pertinent to food service operation.
- C. Vendor will submit detailed information to SVAB as requested regarding the following:
  - (1) Nourishment;
  - (2) Medication;
  - (3) Special events;
  - (4) Catering;
  - (5) Commodity activity.

12. Food Service Facility, Equipment, Supplies, Services Provided by SVAB

- A. All food production and food service facilities, as equipped and ready to operate.
  - (1) Such fixtures and equipment must be maintained in a manner that is acceptable to regulatory agencies.
  - (2) Any replacement of equipment that wears out as a result of normal wear will be provided through negotiation between SVAB and vendor.
- B. Pest control

- C. Preventive maintenance, repair and replacement of existing equipment owned by SVAB.
  - D. All utilities
  - E. Local phone service
13. Equipment, Supplies, Service to be provided by Vendor.
- A. Routine cleaning of food preparation, service area and office areas occupied by vendor.
  - B. Cleaning of resident cafeteria tables, chairs, walls, draperies, blinds, windows and floors.
  - C. Supplies used in food production and service to residents and employees and for catered events,
  - D. Replacement of all small supply items due to wear and tear or damage due to negligence on the vendor's part.
  - E. Napkins and condiments for meal services.
  - F. Cleaning and fireproofing hoods and ducts.
  - G. Maintenance, repairs and replacement of equipment owned by vendor.
  - H. Building/facilities renovation to accommodate new systems or changes implemented by vendor upon review and approval by the SVAB Director.
  - I. Repair, replacement and/or payment for damage to SVAB property caused by vendor/contractor negligence.
  - J. Long distance telephone service/fax, computer lines.
  - K. Pumping out grease pit quarterly or as needed.
  - L. Provide for storage and disposal of used cooking oil.
  - M. If drain or disposal is clogged due to improper dumping of food, such as but not limited to: grains, then the cost of unclogging, including labor costs, will be accessed to the Vendor.
14. Communication and Computer Access
- A. Vendor will provide its own long distance/fax telephone service.

- B. SVAB will provide modem quality lines through the SVAB telephone switch for external electronic communication and connectivity.
- C. Vendor will provide their own PCs, printers, software and any other hardware/software necessary for connection and communication (e-mail, time, reports, etc.) to the vendor's home office.

15. Raw Food Specifications:

- A. The following specifications establish minimum qualities acceptable to SVAB in the procurement of raw foods by the successful vendor: Bidders must furnish with the bid a complete list of the grades and qualities of raw food to be used.
  - (1) Canned Fruits: USDA Grade A
  - (2) Dairy Products: USDA Grade A
  - (3) Eggs: USDA Grade A Large Whole Fresh Eggs. No additives are acceptable.
  - (4) Frozen fruits and frozen juices: USDA Grade A
  - (5) Frozen vegetables: USDA Grade A
  - (6) Canned vegetables: USDA Grade A
  - (7) Fresh Produce/Fruits: US or No. 1, USDA Grade A
  - (8) Spices and seasonings: Shall be prepared in accordance with best commercial practices, under strict sanitary conditions from clean, sound, true products and made from which no portion of any volatile or other flavoring principle has been removed, and shall be free from artificial coloring, adulterants and impurities.
- B. Meat and Poultry: All meat to be US Domestic and must have the official inspection mark of the USDA and/or MDAC.
  - (1) Beef for Dry Roasting: USDA Choice
  - (2) Beef for Pot Roasting/Braising: USDA Choice
  - (3) Ground Beef: Made from 80/20 USDA Choice beef not to exceed 20% trimmable fat. Prepared beef thoroughly blended prior to grinding. Initial grinding through a plate having 1/8 inch holes in diameter. Shall not contain organ meats. Ground beef packed immediately upon conclusion of grinding and quick frozen. USDA or MDAC official inspection mark

required.

- C. Textured Vegetable Protein: Not allowed or acceptable.
- D. USDA Foods donated by the US Department of Agriculture shall be used in accordance with standard menu practices based upon availability.

## **2.3 Term**

The term of the contract shall be for a period of two (2) years, starting December 1, 2018 through November 30, 2020. Upon written agreement of both parties at least 90 days prior to each contract anniversary date, the contract may be renewed by the SVAB for a period of one (1) successive one-year period(s) under the same prices, terms, and conditions as in the original contract subject to approval by PPRB. The total number of renewal years permitted shall not exceed one (1).

### **2.3.1.1 Requirements**

- a) A unit price shall be given for each service, and that unit price shall be the same throughout the contract.
- b) A multi-term contract will be canceled if funds are not appropriated or otherwise made available to support the continuation of performance in any fiscal period succeeding the first; however, this does not affect either the State's right or the vendor's rights under any termination clause in the contract.
- c) The Procurement Officer must notify the vendor on a timely basis that the funds are or are not available for the continuation of the contract for each succeeding fiscal period.

## **SECTION 3**

### **3.1 Insurance**

The successful vendor shall maintain at least the minimum level of workers' compensation insurance, comprehensive general liability or professional liability insurance, with minimum limits of \$1,000,000.00 per occurrence and fidelity bond insurance with minimum limits of \$500,000.00. All workers' compensation, comprehensive general liability, professional liability, and fidelity bond insurance will provide coverage to the SVAB as an additional insured. The SVAB reserves the right to request from carriers, certificates of insurance regarding the required coverage. Insurance carriers must be licensed or hold a Certificate of Authority from the Mississippi Department of Insurance. The vendor shall be prepared to provide evidence of required insurance upon request by the SVAB at any point during the contract period and should consult with legal counsel regarding its obligations. (Insurance is not a PPRB requirement. The agency has discretion when determining whether to require insurance in the procurement and should consult with its agency legal counsel regarding its obligations.)

## **SECTION 4**

### **4.1 Written Proposals Shall Contain the Following Minimum Information**

- 1) The name of the respondent, the location of the respondent's principal place of business and, if different, the place of performance of the proposed contract;
- 2) The age of the respondent's business and average number of employees over a previous period of time, as specified in the Request for Proposal;
- 3) The qualifications, including licenses, certifications, education, skills, and experience of all persons who would be assigned to provide the required services; and,
- 4) A listing of other contracts under which services similar in scope, size, or discipline to the required services were performed or undertaken within a previous period of time, as specified in the Request for Proposal; and,
- 5) A plan giving as many details as is practical explaining how the services will be performed.

### **4.2 Evaluation Procedure**

#### **4.2.1 Step One:**

Proposals will be reviewed to assure compliance with the minimum specifications. Proposals that do not comply with the minimum specifications will be rejected immediately, receiving no further consideration.

##### **4.2.1.1 Responsive Respondent**

Respondent must submit a proposal which conforms in all material respects to this Request for Proposals, RFP 3180000481, as determined by SVAB.

##### **4.2.1.2 Responsible Respondent**

Respondent must have capability in all respects to perform fully the contract requirements and the integrity and reliability which will assure good faith performance, as determined by SVAB.

#### **4.2.2 Step Two:**

Proposals that satisfactorily complete Step One will be reviewed and analyzed to determine if the proposal adequately meets the needs of SVAB. Factors to be considered are as follows:

Price – 35 points (35%)

**\*The percentage assigned is mandatory and should be objectively scored.**



**Technical factors** (Proposed methodology) – **20 points (20%)**

- Does the offeror's proposal or qualification demonstrate a clear understanding of the scope of work and related objectives? – **5 points (5%)**
- Is the offeror's proposal or qualification complete and responsive to the specific RFP or RFQ requirements? – **5 points (5%)**
- Has the past performance of the offeror's proposed methodology been documented? – **5 points (5%)**
- Does the offeror's proposal or qualification use innovative technology and techniques? – **5 points (5%)**

**\*The percentage assigned is at the Evaluation Committee's discretion.**

**Cost factors** (Factors must be submitted separately from other factors unless specifically approved by the Public Procurement Review Board) – **20 points (20%)**

- (a) Cost of goods to be provided or services to be performed: – **8 points (8%)**
  - a. Relative cost: How does the cost compare to other similarly scored proposals or qualifications? **4 points (4%)**
  - b. Full explanation: Is the price and its component charges, fees, etc. adequately explained or documented? **4 points (4%)**
- (b) Assurances of performance: – **8 points (8%)**
  - a. If required, are suitable bonds, warranties or guarantees provided? **4 points (4%)**
  - b. Does the proposal or qualification include quality control and assurance programs? **4 points (4%)**
- (c) Offeror's financial stability and strength: Does the offeror have sufficient financial resources to meet its obligations? – **4 points (4%)**

**\*The percentage assigned is at the Evaluation Committee's discretion.**

**Management factors** (Factors that will require the identity of the offeror to be revealed must be submitted separately from other factors) – **25 points (25%)**

- (a) Project management: **5 points (5%)**
  - a. How well does the proposed scheduling timeline meet the needs of the soliciting agency? **2.5 points (2.5%)**
  - b. Is there a project management plan? **2.5 points (2.5%)**
- (b) History and experience in performing the work: **10 points (10%)**
  - a. Does the offeror document a record of reliability of timely delivery and on-time and on-budget implementation? **2.5 points (2.5%)**
  - b. Does the offeror demonstrate a track record of service as evidenced by on-time, on-budget, and contract compliance performance? **2.5 points (2.5%)**
  - c. Does the offeror document industry or program experience? **2.5 points (2.5%)**

- d. Does the offeror have a record of poor business ethics? **2.5 points (2.5%)**
- (c) Availability of personnel, facilities, equipment and other resources: **5 points (5%)**
  - a. To what extent does the offeror rely on in-house resources vs. contracted resources? **2.5 points (2.5%)**
  - b. Are the availability of in-house and contract resources documented? **2.5 points (2.5%)**
- (d) Qualification and experience of personnel: **5 points (5%)**
  - a. Documentation of experience in performing similar work by employees and when appropriate, sub-contractors? **2.5 points (2.5%)**
  - b. Does the offeror demonstrate cultural sensitivity in hiring and training staff? **2.5 points (2.5%)**

**\*The percentage assigned is at the Evaluation Committee's discretion.**

#### **4.2.3 Step Three:**

The SVAB Executive Director or his/her designee will contact the respondent with the proposal which best meets SVAB needs (based on factors evaluated in Step Two) and **attempt to negotiate an agreement that is deemed acceptable** to both parties.

#### **4.3 The Following Response Format Shall Be Used for All Submitted Proposals:**

- 1) **Management Summary:** Provide a cover letter indicating the underlying philosophy of the firm in providing the service.
- 2) **Proposal:** Describe in detail how the service will be provided. Include a description of major tasks and subtasks. Proposal cannot have the company name or identifiers on the pages.
- 3) **Corporate experience and capacity:** Describe the experience of the firm in providing the service, give number of years that the service has been delivered, and provide a statement on the extent of any corporate expansion required to handle the service.
- 4) **Personnel:** Attach resumes' of all those who will be involved in the delivery of service (from principals to field technicians) that include their experience in this area of service delivery. Indicate the level of involvement by principals of the firm in the day-to-day operation of the contract.
- 5) **References:** Give at least three (3) references for contracts of similar size and scope, including at least two (2) references for current contracts or those awarded during the past three (3) years. Include the name of the organization, the length of the contract, a brief summary of the work, and the name and telephone number of a responsible contact person. References may be contacted by the Evaluation team. References will be used in Management Factors.
- 6) **Acceptance of conditions:** Indicate any exceptions to the general terms and conditions of the proposal document and to insurance, bonding, and any other requirements listed.

- 7) **Additional data:** Provide any additional information that will aid in evaluation of the response.
- 8) **Cost data:** Estimate the annual cost of the service. Cost data submitted at this stage is binding, but is subject to being negotiated down with the winning vendor. Include the number of personnel proposed to be assigned to the contract and the total estimated cost of the labor portion of the contract (include a sample staffing chart). Identify all non-labor costs and their estimated totals. Cost data cannot have the company name or identifiers in it.
- 9) The Proposal must be in a three-ring loose leaf binder.

#### **4.4 Nonconforming Terms and Conditions**

A proposal response that includes terms and conditions that do not conform to the terms and conditions in the proposal document is subject to rejection as non-responsive. The SVAB reserves the right to permit the respondent to withdraw nonconforming terms and conditions from its proposal response prior to a determination by the SVAB of non-responsiveness based on the submission of nonconforming terms and conditions.

#### **4.5 Conditioning Proposal Upon Other Awards**

Any proposal which is conditioned upon receiving award of both the particular contract being solicited and another Mississippi contract shall be deemed non-responsive and not acceptable.

#### **4.6 Award**

Award shall be made to the responsible respondent whose proposal is determined in writing, within 5 business days, to be the most advantageous to the State taking into consideration price and the evaluation factors set forth in the Request for Proposals. No other factors or criteria shall be used in the evaluation.

##### **4.6.1 Notification**

All participating vendors will be notified of the SVAB's intent to award a contract. In addition, the SVAB will identify the selected vendor. Notice of award is also made available to the public on website of SVAB.

#### **4.7 Acknowledgment of Amendments**

Bidders shall acknowledge receipt of any amendment to the solicitation by signing and returning the amendment with the bid, by identifying the amendment number and date in the space provided for this purpose on the bid form, or by letter. The acknowledgment must be received by the SVAB by the time and at the place specified for receipt of bids.

## **SECTION 5**

#### **5.1 Post-Award Vendor Debriefing**

A respondent, successful or unsuccessful, may request a post-award debriefing, in writing, by U.S. mail or electronic submission. The written request must be received by the Director of the SVAB within three (3) business days of notification of the contract award. Post-Award Debriefing requests are due by October 19, 2018, at 12:00 p.m. A post-award

debriefing is a meeting and not a hearing; therefore, legal representation is not required. A debriefing typically occurs within three (3) business days of receipt of the request. Post-Award Debriefing will be on October 24, 2018. If a respondent prefers to have legal representation present, the respondent must notify the Director of the SVAB in writing and identify its attorney by name, address, and telephone number. The SVAB will schedule and/or suspend and reschedule the meeting at a time when a Representative of the Office of the Mississippi Attorney General can be present.

## **5.2 Protest of Award**

Any actual or prospective respondent or vendor who is aggrieved in connection with this solicitation or the outcome of the Request for Proposals may file a protest with the Proposal Coordinator, Kathy Caldwell. The protest shall be submitted on or before 12:00 p.m. on October 15, 2018, in writing after such aggrieved person or entity knows or should have known of the facts giving rise thereto. All protests must be in writing, dated, signed by the respondent or an individual authorized to sign contracts on behalf of the protesting respondent, and contain a statement of the reason(s) for protest, citing the law(s), rule(s) or regulation(s), and/or procedure(s) on which the protest is based. The written protest letter shall contain an explanation of the specific basis for the protest. The protesting respondent must provide facts and evidence to support the protest. A protest is considered filed when received by the Proposal Coordinator, Kathy Caldwell, Attorney, via either U.S. mail, postage prepaid, or personal delivery. Protests filed after 12:00 p.m. on October 15, 2018, will not be considered.

## **5.3 Required Contract Terms and Conditions**

Any contract entered into between a Contracting Agency and a vendor/respondent shall include the required clauses found in **Attachment B** and those required by the *Public Procurement Review Board's Office of Personal Service Contract Review's Rules and Regulations* as updated.

## **5.4 Priority**

The Requests for Proposals, its amendments, AND the offerer's proposals shall constitute the contract.

## **5.5 Optional Contract Terms and Conditions**

Any contract entered into between a Contracting Agency and a vendor/respondent may have, at the discretion of the Contracting Agency, the optional clauses found in **Attachment C** and those within the *Public Procurement Review Board's Office of Personal Service Contract Review's Rules and Regulations* as updated.

## **5.6 Mississippi Contract/Procurement Opportunity Search Portal**

This Request for Proposals, and the questions and answers concerning this Request for Proposals, are posted on the Contract/Procurement Opportunity Search Portal.

## **5.7 Attachments**

The attachments to this Request for Proposals are made a part of this Request for Proposals as if copied herein in words and figures.

By signing below, the Company Representative certifies that he/she has authority to bind the company, and further acknowledges on behalf of the company:

1. That he/she has thoroughly read and understands this Request for Proposals, RFP 3180000481, all Amendments and the attachments herein;
2. That the company meets all requirements and acknowledges all certifications contained in this Request for Proposals, RFP 3180000481, all Amendments and the attachments herein;
3. That the company agrees to all provisions of this Request for Proposals, RFP 3180000481, all Amendments and the attachments herein;
4. That the company has, or will secure, at its own expense, applicable personnel who shall be qualified to perform the duties required to be performed under this Request for Proposals.

**Printed Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature/Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## ATTACHMENT A

### Certifications and Assurances

I/We make the following certifications and assurances as a required element of the offer to which it is attached, of the understanding that the truthfulness of the facts affirmed here and the continued compliance with these requirements are conditions precedent to the award or continuation of the related contract(s):

**1. REPRESENTATION REGARDING CONTINGENT FEES**

Vendor represents that it **has/has not** retained a person to solicit or secure a state contract upon an agreement or understanding for a commission, percentage, brokerage, or contingent fee, except as disclosed in Vendor's proposal.

**2. REPRESENTATION REGARDING GRATUITIES**

The Respondent or Vendor represents that it **has/has not** violated, is not violating, and promises that it will not violate the prohibition against gratuities set forth in Section 6-204 (Gratuities) of the Mississippi Public Procurement Review Board's Office of Personal Service Contract Review's Rules and Regulations.

**3. CERTIFICATION OF INDEPENDENT PRICE DETERMINATION**

The respondent certifies that the prices submitted in response to the solicitation **have/have not** been arrived at independently and without, for the purpose of restricting competition, any consultation, communication, or agreement with any other respondent or competitor relating to those prices, the intention to submit a proposal, or the methods or factors used to calculate price.

**4. PROSPECTIVE CONTRACTOR'S REPRESENTATION REGARDING CONTINGENT FEES**

The prospective Contractor represents as a part of such Contractor's proposal that such Contractor **has/has not** retained any person or agency on a percentage, commission, or other contingent arrangement to secure this contract.

Name/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature/Date: \_\_\_\_\_

***Note:** Please be sure to circle the applicable word or words provided above. Failure to circle the applicable word or words and/or to sign the proposal form may result in the proposal being rejected as nonresponsive. Modifications or additions to any portion of this proposal document may be cause for rejection of the proposal.*

## ATTACHMENT B

### Required Clauses for Service Contracts Resulting from this Request for Proposals

1. Applicable Law. The contract shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of the State of Mississippi, excluding its conflicts of laws, provisions, and any litigation with respect thereto shall be brought in the courts of the State. Contractor shall comply with applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations.
2. Availability of Funds. It is expressly understood and agreed that the obligation of the Agency to proceed under this agreement is conditioned upon the appropriation of funds by the Mississippi State Legislature and the receipt of state and/or federal funds. If the funds anticipated for the continuing fulfillment of the agreement are, at any time, not forthcoming or insufficient, either through the failure of the federal government to provide funds or of the State of Mississippi to appropriate funds or the discontinuance or material alteration of the program under which funds were provided or if funds are not otherwise available to the Agency, the Agency shall have the right upon ten (10) working days written notice to Contractor, to terminate this agreement without damage, penalty, cost or expenses to the Agency of any kind whatsoever. The effective date of termination shall be as specified in the notice of termination.
3. Compliance with Laws. Contractor understands that the Agency is an equal opportunity employer and therefore, maintains a policy which prohibits unlawful discrimination based on race, color, creed, sex, age, national origin, physical handicap, disability, genetic information, or any other consideration made unlawful by federal, state, or local laws. All such discrimination is unlawful and Contractor agrees during the term of the agreement that Contractor will strictly adhere to this policy in its employment practices and provision of services. Contractor shall comply with, and all activities under this agreement shall be subject to, all applicable federal, State of Mississippi, and local laws and regulations, as now existing and as may be amended or modified.
4. E-Payment. Contractor agrees to accept all payments in United States currency via the State of Mississippi's electronic payment and remittance vehicle. The agency agrees to make payment in accordance with Mississippi law on "Timely Payments for Purchases by Public Bodies," which generally provides for payment of undisputed amounts by the agency within forty-five (45) days of receipt of invoice. Mississippi Code Annotated § 31-7-305.
5. E-Verification. If applicable, Contractor represents and warrants that it will ensure its compliance with the Mississippi Employment Protection Act of 2008, and will register and participate in the status verification system for all newly hired employees. Mississippi Code Annotated §§ 71-11-1 *et seq.* The term "employee" as used herein means any person that is hired to perform work within the State of Mississippi. As used herein, "status verification system" means the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigration Responsibility Act of 1996 that is operated by the United States Department of Homeland Security, also known as the E-Verify Program, or any other successor electronic verification system replacing the E-

Verify Program. Contractor agrees to maintain records of such compliance. Upon request of the State and after approval of the Social Security Administration or Department of Homeland Security when required, Contractor agrees to provide a copy of each such verification. Contractor further represents and warrants that any person assigned to perform services hereafter meets the employment eligibility requirements of all immigration laws. The breach of this agreement may subject Contractor to the following:

- a. termination of this contract for services and ineligibility for any state or public contract in Mississippi for up to three (3) years with notice of such cancellation/termination being made public;
- b. the loss of any license, permit, certification or other document granted to Contractor by an agency, department or governmental entity for the right to do business in Mississippi for up to one (1) year; or,
- c. both.

In the event of such cancellation/termination, Contractor would also be liable for any additional costs incurred by the State due to Contract cancellation or loss of license or permit to do business in the State.

6. Paymode. Payments by state agencies using the State's accounting system shall be made and remittance information provided electronically as directed by the State. These payments shall be deposited into the bank account of Contractor's choice. The State may, at its sole discretion, require Contractor to electronically submit invoices and supporting documentation at any time during the term of this Agreement. Contractor understands and agrees that the State is exempt from the payment of taxes. All payments shall be in United States currency.
7. Procurement Regulations. The contract shall be governed by the applicable provisions of the *Mississippi Public Procurement Review Board's Office of Personal Service Contract Review's Rules and Regulations*, a copy of which is available at 501 North Woolfolk Street, Suite 1301, Jackson, Mississippi 39201 for inspection, or downloadable at <http://www.dfa.ms.gov>.
8. Representation Regarding Contingent Fees. Contractor represents that it has not retained a person to solicit or secure a state contract upon an agreement or understanding for a commission, percentage, brokerage, or contingent fee, except as disclosed in Contractor's proposal.
9. Representation Regarding Gratuities. Contractor represents that it has not violated, is not violating, and promises that it will not violate the prohibition against gratuities set forth in Section 6-204 (Gratuities) of the *Mississippi Public Procurement Review Board's Office of Personal Service Contract Review's Rules and Regulations*.
10. Stop Work Order.
  - a. *Order to Stop Work:* The Procurement Officer, may, by written order to Contractor at



any time, and without notice to any surety, require Contractor to stop all or any part of the work called for by this contract. This order shall be for a specified period not exceeding 90 days after the order is delivered to Contractor, unless the parties agree to any further period. Any such order shall be identified specifically as a stop work order issued pursuant to this clause. Upon receipt of such an order, Contractor shall forthwith comply with its terms and take all reasonable steps to minimize the occurrence of costs allocable to the work covered by the order during the period of work stoppage. Before the stop work order expires, or within any further period to which the parties shall have agreed, the Procurement Officer shall either:

- i. cancel the stop work order; or,
  - ii. terminate the work covered by such order as provided in the Termination for Default clause or the Termination for Convenience clause of this contract.
- b. *Cancellation or Expiration of the Order*: If a stop work order issued under this clause is canceled at any time during the period specified in the order, or if the period of the order or any extension thereof expires, Contractor shall have the right to resume work. An appropriate adjustment shall be made in the delivery schedule or Contractor price, or both, and the contract shall be modified in writing accordingly, if:
  - i. the stop work order results in an increase in the time required for, or in Contractor's cost properly allocable to, the performance of any part of this contract; and,
  - ii. Contractor asserts a claim for such an adjustment within 30 days after the end of the period of work stoppage; provided that, if the Procurement Officer decides that the facts justify such action, any such claim asserted may be received and acted upon at any time prior to final payment under this contract.
- c. *Termination of Stopped Work*: If a stop work order is not canceled and the work covered by such order is terminated for default or convenience, the reasonable costs resulting from the stop work order shall be allowed by adjustment or otherwise.

11. Termination for Convenience.

- a. *Termination*. The Agency Head or designee may, when the interests of the State so require, terminate this contract in whole or in part, for the convenience of the State. The Agency Head or designee shall give written notice of the termination to Contractor specifying the part of the contract terminated and when termination becomes effective.
- b. *Contractor's Obligations*. Contractor shall incur no further obligations in connection with the terminated work and on the date set in the notice of termination Contractor will stop work to the extent specified. Contractor shall also terminate outstanding orders and subcontracts as they relate to the terminated work. Contractor shall settle the liabilities and claims arising out of the termination of subcontracts and orders connected with the terminated work. The Agency Head or designee may direct Contractor to assign Contractor's right, title, and interest under terminated orders or subcontracts to the State. Contractor must still complete the work not terminated by the notice of termination and may incur obligations as are necessary to do so.

12. Termination for Default.

- a. *Default.* If Contractor refuses or fails to perform any of the provisions of this contract with such diligence as will ensure its completion within the time specified in this contract or any extension thereof, or otherwise fails to timely satisfy the contract provisions, or commits any other substantial breach of this contract, the Agency Head or designee may notify Contractor in writing of the delay or nonperformance and if not cured in ten (10) days or any longer time specified in writing by the Agency Head or designee, such officer may terminate Contractor's right to proceed with the contract or such part of the contract as to which there has been delay or a failure to properly perform. In the event of termination in whole or in part, the Agency Head or designee may procure similar supplies or services in a manner and upon terms deemed appropriate by the Agency Head or designee. Contractor shall continue performance of the contract to the extent it is not terminated and shall be liable for excess costs incurred in procuring similar goods or services.
- b. *Contractor's Duties.* Notwithstanding termination of the contract and subject to any directions from the procurement officer, Contractor shall take timely, reasonable, and necessary action to protect and preserve property in the possession of Contractor in which the State has an interest.
- c. *Compensation.* Payment for completed services delivered and accepted by the State shall be at the contract price. The State may withhold from amounts due Contractor such sums as the Agency Head or designee deems to be necessary to protect the State against loss because of outstanding liens or claims of former lien holders and to reimburse the State for the excess costs incurred in procuring similar goods and services.
- d. *Excuse for Nonperformance or Delayed Performance.* Except with respect to defaults of subcontractors, Contractor shall not be in default by reason of any failure in performance of this contract in accordance with its terms (including any failure by Contractor to make progress in the prosecution of the work hereunder which endangers such performance) if Contractor has notified the Agency Head or designee within 15 days after the cause of the delay and the failure arises out of causes such as: acts of God; acts of the public enemy; acts of the State and any other governmental entity in its sovereign or contractual capacity; fires; floods; epidemics; quarantine restrictions; strikes or other labor disputes; freight embargoes; or unusually severe weather. If the failure to perform is caused by the failure of a subcontractor to perform or to make progress, and if such failure arises out of causes similar to those set forth above, Contractor shall not be deemed to be in default, unless the services to be furnished by the subcontractor were reasonably obtainable from other sources in sufficient time to permit Contractor to meet the contract requirements. Upon request of Contractor, the Agency Head or designee shall ascertain the facts and extent of such failure, and, if such officer determines that any failure to perform was occasioned by any one or more of the excusable causes, and that, but for the excusable cause, Contractor's progress and performance would have met the terms of the contract, the delivery schedule shall be revised accordingly, subject to the rights of the State under the clause entitled in fixed-price contracts, "Termination for Convenience". (As used in this Paragraph of this clause, the term "subcontractor" means subcontractor at any tier).

- e. *Erroneous Termination for Default.* If, after notice of termination of Contractor's right to proceed under the provisions of this clause, it is determined for any reason that the contract was not in default under the provisions of this clause, or that the delay was excusable under the provisions of Paragraph (4) (Excuse for Nonperformance or Delayed Performance) of this clause, the rights and obligations of the parties shall, if the contract contains a clause providing for termination for convenience of the State, be the same as if the notice of termination had been issued pursuant to such clause.
  - f. *Additional Rights and Remedies.* The rights and remedies provided in this clause are in addition to any other rights and remedies provided by law or under this contract.
13. Termination Upon Bankruptcy. This contract may be terminated in whole or in part by Agency upon written notice to Contractor, if Contractor should become the subject of bankruptcy or receivership proceedings, whether voluntary or involuntary, or upon the execution by Contractor of an assignment for the benefit of its creditors. In the event of such termination, Contractor shall be entitled to recover just and equitable compensation for satisfactory work performed under this contract, but in no case shall said compensation exceed the total contract price.
14. Trade Secrets, Commercial and Financial Information. It is expressly understood that Mississippi law requires that the provisions of this contract which contain the commodities purchased or the personal or professional services provided, the price to be paid, and the term of the contract shall not be deemed to be a trade secret or confidential commercial or financial information and shall be available for examination, copying, or reproduction.
15. Transparency. This contract, including any accompanying exhibits, attachments, and appendices, is subject to the "Mississippi Public Records Act of 1983," and its exceptions. See Mississippi Code Annotated §§ 25-61-1 *et seq.* and Mississippi Code Annotated § 79-23-1. In addition, this contract is subject to the provisions of the Mississippi Accountability and Transparency Act of 2008. Mississippi Code Annotated §§ 27-104-151 *et seq.* Unless exempted from disclosure due to a court-issued protective order, a copy of this executed contract is required to be posted to the Department of Finance and Administration's independent agency contract website for public access at <http://www.transparency.mississippi.gov>. Information identified by Contractor as trade secrets, or other proprietary information, including confidential vendor information or any other information which is required confidential by state or federal law or outside the applicable freedom of information statutes, will be redacted.

## ATTACHMENT C

1. Anti-assignment/Subcontracting. Contractor acknowledges that it was selected by the State to perform the services required hereunder based, in part, upon Contractor's special skills and expertise. Contractor shall not assign, subcontract, or otherwise transfer this agreement, in whole or in part, without the prior written consent of the State, which the State may, in its sole discretion, approve or deny without reason. Any attempted assignment or transfer of its obligations without such consent shall be null and void. No such approval by the State of any subcontract shall be deemed in any way to provide for the incurrence of any obligation of the State in addition to the total fixed price agreed upon in this agreement. Subcontracts shall be subject to the terms and conditions of this agreement and to any conditions of approval that the State may deem necessary. Subject to the foregoing, this agreement shall be binding upon the respective successors and assigns of the parties.
2. Approval. It is understood that this contract requires approval by the Public Procurement Review Board. If this contract is not approved, it is void and no payment shall be made hereunder.
3. Attorney's Fees and Expenses. Subject to other terms and conditions of this agreement, in the event Contractor defaults in any obligations under this agreement, Contractor shall pay to the State all costs and expenses (including, without limitation, investigative fees, court costs, and attorney's fees) incurred by the State in enforcing this agreement or otherwise reasonably related thereto. Contractor agrees that under no circumstances shall the customer be obligated to pay any attorney's fees or costs of legal action to Contractor.
4. Authority to Contract. Contractor warrants: (a) that it is a validly organized business with valid authority to enter into this agreement; (b) that it is qualified to do business and in good standing in the State of Mississippi; (c) that entry into and performance under this agreement is not restricted or prohibited by any loan, security, financing, contractual, or other agreement of any kind; and, (d) notwithstanding any other provision of this agreement to the contrary, that there are no existing legal proceedings or prospective legal proceedings, either voluntary or otherwise, which may adversely affect its ability to perform its obligations under this agreement.
5. Information Designated by Contractor as Confidential. Any disclosure of those materials, documents, data, and other information which Contractor has designated in writing as proprietary and confidential shall be subject to the provisions of Mississippi Code Annotated §§ 25-61-9 and 79-23-1. As provided in the contract, the personal or professional services to be provided, the price to be paid, and the term of the contract shall not be deemed to be a trade secret, or confidential commercial or financial information.

Any liability resulting from the wrongful disclosure of confidential information on the part of Contractor or its subcontractor shall rest with Contractor. Disclosure of any confidential information by Contractor or its subcontractor without the express written approval of the Agency shall result in the immediate termination of this agreement.

6. Confidentiality. Notwithstanding any provision to the contrary contained herein, it is recognized that Agency is a public agency of the State of Mississippi and is subject to the Mississippi Public Records Act, Mississippi Code Annotated §§ 25-61-1 *et seq.* If a public records request is made for any information provided to Agency pursuant to the agreement and designated by the Contractor in writing as trade secrets or other proprietary confidential information, Agency shall follow the provisions of Mississippi Code Annotated §§ 25-61-9 and 79-23-1 before disclosing such information. The Agency shall not be liable to the Contractor for disclosure of information required by court order or required by law.
7. Contractor Personnel. The Agency shall, throughout the life of the contract, have the right of reasonable rejection and approval of staff or subcontractors assigned to the work by Contractor. If the Agency reasonably rejects staff or subcontractors, Contractor must provide replacement staff or subcontractors satisfactory to the Agency in a timely manner and at no additional cost to the Agency. The day-to-day supervision and control of Contractor's employees and subcontractors is the sole responsibility of Contractor.
8. Debarment and Suspension. Contractor certifies to the best of its knowledge and belief, that it:
  - (1) is not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from covered transaction by any federal department or agency or any political subdivision or agency of the State of Mississippi;
  - (2) has not, within a three-year period preceding this proposal, been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against it for commission of fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a public (federal, state, or local) transaction or contract under a public transaction;
  - (3) has not, within a three-year period preceding this proposal, been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against it for a violation of federal or state antitrust statutes or commission of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, or receiving stolen property;
  - (4) is not presently indicted for or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity (federal, state or local) with commission of any of these offenses enumerated in paragraphs two (2) and (3) of this certification; and,
  - (5) has not, within a three-year period preceding this proposal, had one or more public transactions (federal, state, or local) terminated for cause or default.
9. Disclosure of Confidential Information. In the event that either party to this agreement receives notice that a third party requests divulgence of confidential or otherwise protected information and/or has served upon it a subpoena or other validly issued administrative or judicial process ordering divulgence of confidential or otherwise protected information that party shall promptly inform the other party and thereafter respond in conformity with such subpoena to the extent mandated by law. This section shall survive the termination or completion of this agreement. The parties agree that this section is subject to and superseded by Mississippi Code Annotated §§ 25-61-1 *et seq.*

10. Exceptions to Confidential Information. Contractor and the State shall not be obligated to treat as confidential and proprietary any information disclosed by the other party ("disclosing party") which:
  - (1) is rightfully known to the recipient prior to negotiations leading to this agreement, other than information obtained in confidence under prior engagements;
  - (2) is generally known or easily ascertainable by nonparties of ordinary skill in the business of the customer;
  - (3) is released by the disclosing party to any other person, firm, or entity (including governmental agencies or bureaus) without restriction;
  - (4) is independently developed by the recipient without any reliance on confidential information;
  - (5) is or later becomes part of the public domain or may be lawfully obtained by the State or Contractor from any nonparty; or,
  - (6) is disclosed with the disclosing party's prior written consent
11. Errors in Extension. If the unit price and the extension price are at variance, the unit price shall prevail.
12. Failure to Deliver. In the event of failure of Contractor to deliver services in accordance with the contract terms and conditions, the Agency, after due oral or written notice, may procure the services from other sources and hold Contractor responsible for any resulting additional purchase and administrative costs. This remedy shall be in addition to any other remedies that the Agency may have.
13. Failure to Enforce. Failure by the Agency at any time to enforce the provisions of the contract shall not be construed as a waiver of any such provisions. Such failure to enforce shall not affect the validity of the contract or any part thereof or the right of the Agency to enforce any provision at any time in accordance with its terms.
14. Final Payment. Upon satisfactory completion of the work performed under this contract, as a condition before final payment under this contract, or as a termination settlement under this contract, Contractor shall execute and deliver to the Agency a release of all claims against the State arising under, or by virtue of, the contract, except claims which are specifically exempted by Contractor to be set forth therein. Unless otherwise provided in this contract, by state law, or otherwise expressly agreed to by the parties in this contract, final payment under the contract or settlement upon termination of this contract shall not constitute waiver of the State's claims against Contractor under this contract.
15. Force Majeure. Each party shall be excused from performance for any period and to the extent that it is prevented from performing any obligation or service, in whole or in part, as a result of causes beyond the reasonable control and without the fault or negligence of such party and/or its subcontractors. Such acts shall include without limitation acts of God, strikes, lockouts, riots, acts of war, epidemics, governmental regulations superimposed after the fact, fire, earthquakes, floods, or other natural disasters ("force majeure events"). When such a cause arises, Contractor shall notify the State immediately in writing of the cause of

its inability to perform, how it affects its performance, and the anticipated duration of the inability to perform. Delays in delivery or in meeting completion dates due to force majeure events shall automatically extend such dates for a period equal to the duration of the delay caused by such events, unless the State determines it to be in its best interest to terminate the agreement.

16. HIPAA Compliance. Contractor agrees to comply with the "Administrative Simplification" provisions of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, including electronic data interchange, code sets, identifiers, security, and privacy provisions, as may be applicable to the services under this contract.
17. Indemnification. To the fullest extent allowed by law, Contractor shall indemnify, defend, save and hold harmless, protect, and exonerate the agency, its commissioners, board members, officers, employees, agents, and representatives, and the State of Mississippi from and against all claims, demands, liabilities, suits, actions, damages, losses, and costs of every kind and nature whatsoever including, without limitation, court costs, investigative fees and expenses, and attorney's fees, arising out of or caused by Contractor and/or its partners, principals, agents, employees and/or subcontractors in the performance of or failure to perform this agreement. In the State's sole discretion, Contractor may be allowed to control the defense of any such claim, suit, etc. In the event Contractor defends said claim, suit, etc., Contractor shall use legal counsel acceptable to the State. Contractor shall be solely responsible for all costs and/or expenses associated with such defense, and the State shall be entitled to participate in said defense. Contractor shall not settle any claim, suit, etc. without the State's concurrence, which the State shall not unreasonably withhold.
18. Independent Contractor Status. Contractor shall, at all times, be regarded as and shall be legally considered an independent contractor and shall at no time act as an agent for the State. Nothing contained herein shall be deemed or construed by the State, Contractor, or any third party as creating the relationship of principal and agent, master and servant, partners, joint ventures, employer and employee, or any similar such relationship between the State and Contractor. Neither the method of computation of fees or other charges, nor any other provision contained herein, nor any acts of the State or Contractor hereunder creates, or shall be deemed to create a relationship other than the independent relationship of the State and Contractor. Contractor's personnel shall not be deemed in any way, directly or indirectly, expressly or by implication, to be employees of the State. Neither Contractor nor its employees shall, under any circumstances, be considered servants, agents, or employees of the Agency, and the Agency shall be at no time legally responsible for any negligence or other wrongdoing by Contractor, its servants, agents, or employees. The Agency shall not withhold from the contract payments to Contractor any federal or state unemployment taxes, federal or state income taxes, Social Security tax, or any other amounts for benefits to Contractor. Further, the Agency shall not provide to Contractor any insurance coverage or other benefits, including Worker's Compensation, normally provided by the State for its employees.
19. Integrated Agreement/Merger. This agreement, including all contract documents, represents the entire and integrated agreement between the parties hereto and supersedes all prior

negotiations, representations or agreements, irrespective of whether written or oral. This agreement may be altered, amended, or modified only by a written document executed by the State and Contractor. Contractor acknowledges that it has thoroughly read all contract documents and has had the opportunity to receive competent advice and counsel necessary for it to form a full and complete understanding of all rights and obligations herein. Accordingly, this agreement shall not be construed or interpreted in favor of or against the State or Contractor on the basis of draftsmanship or preparation hereof.

20. (Contract Modification means any written alteration in contract requirements, deliverables, delivery point, rate of delivery, period of performance, price, quantity, or other provisions of any contract accomplished by mutual action of the parties to the contract. Modifications must be approved by the PPRB pursuant to Section 7-111 (Modifications) of the Mississippi Public Procurement Review Board's Office of Personal Service Contract Review's Rules and Regulations. Modifications shall not grant extra compensation, fee, or allowance to any Contractor after service is rendered or contract is made, unless contemplated within the contract itself or unless the scope of services is increased.) Modification or Renegotiation. This agreement may be modified only by written agreement signed by the parties hereto. The parties agree to renegotiate the agreement if federal and/or state revisions of any applicable laws or regulations make changes in this agreement necessary.
21. No Limitation of Liability. Nothing in this agreement shall be interpreted as excluding or limiting any tort liability of Contractor for harm caused by the intentional or reckless conduct of Contractor or for damages incurred through the negligent performance of duties by Contractor or the delivery of products that are defective due to negligent construction.
22. Notices. All notices required or permitted to be given under this agreement must be in writing and personally delivered or sent by certified United States mail, postage prepaid, return receipt requested, to the party to whom the notice should be given at the address set forth below. Notice shall be deemed given when actually received or when refused. The parties agree to promptly notify each other in writing of any change of address.

For the Agency:	For Contractor:
Stacey E. Pickering, Executive Director	Name, Title
State Veterans Affairs Board	Contractor's Name
3466 Highway 80 East	Address
Pearl, MS 39208	City, State, Zip

23. Non-solicitation of Employees. Each party to this agreement agrees not to employ or to solicit for employment, directly or indirectly, any persons in the full-time or part-time employment of the other party until at least six (6) months after this agreement terminates unless mutually agreed to in writing by the State and Contractor.
24. Oral Statements. No oral statement of any person shall modify or otherwise affect the terms, conditions, or specifications stated in this contract. All modifications to the contract must be made in writing by the Agency and agreed to by Contractor.



25. Ownership of Documents and Work Papers. Agency shall own all documents, files, reports, work papers and working documentation, electronic or otherwise, created in connection with the project which is the subject of this agreement, except for Contractor's internal administrative and quality assurance files and internal project correspondence. Contractor shall deliver such documents and work papers to Agency upon termination or completion of the agreement. The foregoing notwithstanding, Contractor shall be entitled to retain a set of such work papers for its files. Contractor shall be entitled to use such work papers only after receiving written permission from Agency and subject to any copyright protections.
26. Quality Control. Contractor shall institute and maintain throughout the contract period a properly documented quality control program designed to ensure that the services are provided at all times and in all respects in accordance with the contract. The program shall include providing daily supervision and conducting frequent inspections of Contractor's staff and ensuring that accurate records are maintained describing the disposition of all complaints. The records so created shall be open to inspection by the Agency.
27. Record Retention and Access to Records. Provided Contractor is given reasonable advance written notice and such inspection is made during normal business hours of Contractor, the State or any duly authorized representatives shall have unimpeded, prompt access to any of Contractor's books, documents, papers, and/or records which are maintained or produced as a result of the project for the purpose of making audits, examinations, excerpts, and transcriptions. All records related to this agreement shall be retained by Contractor for three (3) years after final payment is made under this agreement and all pending matters are closed; however, if any audit, litigation or other action arising out of or related in any way to this project is commenced before the end of the three-year period, the records shall be retained for one (1) year after all issues arising out of the action are finally resolved or until the end of the three-year period, whichever is later.
28. Recovery of Money. Whenever, under the contract, any sum of money shall be recoverable from or payable by Contractor to the Agency, the same amount may be deducted from any sum due to Contractor under the contract or under any other contract between Contractor and the Agency. The rights of the Agency are in addition and without prejudice to any other right the Agency may have to claim the amount of any loss or damage suffered by the Agency on account of the acts or omissions of Contractor.
29. Right to Audit. Contractor shall maintain such financial records and other records as may be prescribed by the Agency or by applicable federal and state laws, rules, and regulations. Contractor shall retain these records for a period of three (3) years after final payment, or until they are audited by the Agency, whichever event occurs first. These records shall be made available during the term of the contract and the subsequent three-year period for examination, transcription, and audit by the Mississippi State Auditor's Office, its designees, or other authorized bodies.
30. Right to Inspect Facility. The State may, at reasonable times, inspect the place of business of a Contractor or any subcontractor which is related to the performance of any contract awarded by the State.

31. Severability. If any part of this agreement is declared to be invalid or unenforceable, such invalidity or unenforceability shall not affect any other provision of the agreement that can be given effect without the invalid or unenforceable provision, and to this end the provisions hereof are severable. In such event, the parties shall amend the agreement as necessary to reflect the original intent of the parties and to bring any invalid or unenforceable provisions in compliance with applicable law.
32. State Property. Contractor will be responsible for the proper custody and care of any state-owned property furnished for Contractor's use in connection with the performance of this agreement. Contractor will reimburse the State for any loss or damage, normal wear and tear excepted.
33. Third Party Action Notification. Contractor shall give the customer prompt notice in writing of any action or suit filed, and prompt notice of any claim made against Contractor by any entity that may result in litigation related in any way to this agreement.
34. Unsatisfactory Work. If, at any time during the contract term, the service performed or work done by Contractor is considered by the Agency to create a condition that threatens the health, safety, or welfare of the citizens and/or employees of the State of Mississippi, Contractor shall, on being notified by the Agency, immediately correct such deficient service or work. In the event Contractor fails, after notice, to correct the deficient service or work immediately, the Agency shall have the right to order the correction of the deficiency by separate contract or with its own resources at the expense of Contractor.
35. Waiver. No delay or omission by either party to this agreement in exercising any right, power, or remedy hereunder or otherwise afforded by contract, at law, or in equity shall constitute an acquiescence therein, impair any other right, power or remedy hereunder or otherwise afforded by any means, or operate as a waiver of such right, power, or remedy. No waiver by either party to this agreement shall be valid unless set forth in writing by the party making said waiver. No waiver of or modification to any term or condition of this agreement will void, waive, or change any other term or condition. No waiver by one party to this agreement of a default by the other party will imply, be construed as or require waiver of future or other defaults.
36. Requirements Contract. During the period of the contract, Contractor shall provide all the service described in the contract. Contractor understands and agrees that this is a requirements contract and that the Agency shall have no obligation to Contractor if no services are required. Any quantities that are included in the scope of work reflect the current expectations of the Agency for the period of the contract. The amount is only an estimate and Contractor understands and agrees that the Agency is under no obligation to Contractor to buy any amount of the services as a result of having provided this estimate or of having any typical or measurable requirement in the past. Contractor further understands and agrees that the Agency may require services in an amount less than or in excess of the estimated annual contract amount and that the quantity actually used, whether in excess of the estimate or less than the estimate, shall not give rise to any claim for compensation other than the total of the unit prices in the contract for the quantity actually used.

