

Invitation for Bid
Tax Year 2015, 2016, and 2017
Tax Form 1095-C Production

Specifications

The Department of Finance and Administration (DFA) is seeking proposals for the production printing and mailing of the State of Mississippi 1095-C (Employer-Provided Health Insurance Offer and Coverage) tax forms for tax years 2015, 2016, and 2017 and the placement of the 1095-C print images on a searchable CD-ROM. **This is for a three (3) year engagement.**

DFA is seeking a three-year commitment for the production of 1095-C forms. Responding bidders must propose for tax years 2015, 2016, and 2017 in order to be considered.

For purposes of estimating postage costs, responding vendors must use current First Class Postage Rates in their estimates. The State of Mississippi acknowledges the State will be charged the actual cost of First Class Postage at the time of the mailings for each tax year. DFA will pay first class postage to ensure the employee address information is not altered in any form. This requirement includes no alteration of Street address (including room or suite no.), City or town, State or providence, Country and ZIP or foreign postal code as well as no alteration of other components of the mailing address.

For purposes of the IFB, DFA estimates all of its 42,000 employee population will receive a 1095-C form. Bidders should use an estimate of 42,000 1095-C forms to be printed, mailed, and placed on a searchable CD-ROM for each tax year. Vendors should provide detailed cost per form for any forms processed above this number.

The vendor awarded the contract will be responsible for the end-to-end processing requirements of this IFB. The use of address correction software or any other software that alters address information is not permissible. The winning vendor may choose to subcontract portions of this project; however, the winning vendor will be held responsible for meeting all objectives and dates. Since the resulting agreement will be with a single vendor, any winning vendor choosing to subcontract will be responsible for paying their subcontractors.

Dates for mailing of 1095-C forms are set by federal statute and are not negotiable.

DFA agrees to make payment, to the awarded vendor, **electronically** of undisputed amounts within forty-five (45) days of receipt of the invoice.

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Vendor's Proposal

To be considered for award the following must be included in the vendor's proposal:

- Vendor must respond to all required entries in the Item Specification List including cost for every requirement.
- Vendor must complete the attached IFB checklist.
- Vendor must include terms of modification and not to exceed rates of increase for any cost of services (other than postage).
- Vendor must include first class postage costs in the proposal and detail whether it must be prepaid and if prepaid how any prepaid overage will be applied.
 - If postage must be pre-paid, the vendor must acknowledge that they will **invoice** DFA **electronically** for the estimated postage cost of mailing 1095-C forms no later than:
 - **December 18, 2015 for tax year 2015**
 - **December 1, 2016 for tax year 2016**
 - **December 1, 2017 for tax year 2017**
 - If the vendor fails to submit the electronic invoice for postage by the date specified, the vendor must acknowledge that they are still responsible for mailing the 1095-C forms by the designated deadline.
- Vendor must acknowledge their agreement to be paid electronically via PayMode®, the State's current e-payment and remittance vehicle.
- Vendor must acknowledge their agreement to invoice the state electronically via PayMode®, the State's current e-invoicing vehicle.
- Vendor must acknowledge they understand that pricing is for a **three (3)** year engagement.
- Vendor must acknowledge they understand that the award will be based on printing the 1095-C information; in addition, to providing the information via CD ROM as outlined in the item specification list.

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- Listed below are the specifications regarding the files to be printed:
 - Vendor must acknowledge they will print the 1095-C information using the file layouts and mapping provided by DFA.
 - Vendor must acknowledge they can accept XML and text files.
 - Vendor must acknowledge that because of Federal Regulations each file size can only be 100 mega-bytes; therefore, the vendor will receive multiple files for processing.
 - The State is not aware of the number of files at this time.
 - Vendor must acknowledge that there is a file scheme and mapping for Form 1094-C and a separate scheme and mapping for Form 1095-C.
 - Vendor must acknowledge that each separate file to be printed will contain one 1094-C record and one or more 1095-C records to be printed.
 - Vendor must acknowledge that they are only responsible for printing Form 1095-C; however, there is information from the 1094-C file scheme that must be included in the printing of the 1095-C form.
 - Vendor must acknowledge the information that needs to be pulled from the 1094-C scheme into each 1095-C printed form is listed below:

1094-C		1095-C
Box Number	Scheme Element	Box Number
1	BusinessNameLine1Txt, BusinessNameLine2Txt	7
2	EmployerEIN	8
3	AddressLine1Txt, AddressLine2Txt	9
4	CityNm	11
5	USStateCd	12
6	USZIPCd – USZIPExtensionCd	13
8	ContactPhoneNum	10

- Vendor must acknowledge that they understand depending on the number of covered individuals that need to be reported for an employee; there may not be enough lines on Part III of page 1. If additional lines are needed, page 3 of the 1095-C form must be used.
 - The State is not aware of the number of employees that will need page 3 at this time.
- Vendor must acknowledge that if page 3 is used it must be included in the sealed mailing envelope with page 1 and 2 for that employee and only the address will be visible when the envelope is sealed.
- Vendor must acknowledge that if page 3 is not needed a blank page 3 will NOT be included in that employees sealed mailing envelope.

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- Vendor must acknowledge the following paper size guidelines:
 - All forms must be printed on 8 ½ X 14 paper.
 - The bottom 8 ½ X 11 inches of the paper should be used to print the actual front and back side of the 1095-C forms. These areas must adhere to the established mapping.
 - The top three inches of the 8 ½ X 14 printing should be used for the return and mail address flap.
 - There is no specific mapping for this section.
 - As stated in the Item Specification List, the information must appear through a windowed envelope.
 - The vendor may adjust the font size to allow it to fit through the window; however, the vendor must receive final approval from DFA before the production files are processed.
 - **NO** information (other than the address information) can be visible when the envelope is sealed.
 - The following rules must be used for all 1095-C forms return and mailing address information:

Return Address
Should be the information EXACTLY as it appears in box 7, 9, 11, 12, and 13 of the 1095-C.
The information should be in this format:
Name of Employer
Street address (including room or suite no.)
City or town, State or providence, Country and ZIP or foreign postal code

Mailing Address
Should be the information EXACTLY as it appears in box 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6 of the 1095-C.
The information should be in this format:
Name of employee
Street address (including room or suite no.)
City or town, State or providence, Country and ZIP or foreign postal code

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- Vendor must acknowledge that they will fold all 1095-C forms to ensure that **NO** information (other than the address information) is visible when the envelope is sealed.
- Vendor must acknowledge that they will ensure the 1095-C forms are post marked by the federal statute guidelines and the timelines established by DFA. DFA acknowledges they will provide the final production files to the awarded vendor on or before the established deadlines in the “Production Timeline” of this document.
- Vendor must acknowledge that if all 1095-C forms are not post marked by the federal statute guidelines that they will be required to pay the penalties established by the federal statute and will not invoice DFA for such penalties. DFA acknowledges they will provide the final production files to the awarded vendor on or before the established deadlines in the “Production Timeline” of this document.
- Vendor must acknowledge all employees and subcontractors involved in any aspect of the project will be required to execute the attached signed confidentiality form(s) and that the form(s) will be part of the contract with the winning vendor. The confidentiality form guarantees that all the data and information will be safeguarded and will not be shared with any entity or person without the written consent of DFA.
- Vendor must supply three (3) verifiable references for printing tax forms. The references must include the company name, contact person name, contact person phone number and email address.
- If awarded the contract, the vendors must acknowledge they will be available for regularly scheduled status meetings via conference calls.
- Vendors must submit a sample printing (front and back) of:
 - 1095-C forms using the attached format.

DFA will **ONLY** accept samples from the test file(s) sent to the vendor by DFA.

To request test file(s), using the IRS specified layout for electronic submission and/or modified version, please send an email to mash@dfa.ms.gov. The subject of the email must be “1095-C Tax Form IFB.”

All sample, test, and production printing must be of the highest quality with accurate registration, uniform ink coverage and no bleed through.

DFA reserves the right to reject any bid that does not submit a sample printing that meets the printing specifications.

Failure to meet the bid specifications may be considered breach of contract with the State and may be cause for removal from State of Mississippi bidders list for a period of 24 months.

To aid in the printing, DFA will also provide a copy of the IRS regulations upon request.

- DFA reserves the right to reject any or all bids.

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Recycled Materials

Mississippi law requires that specifications be written as to promote the use of products made from recovered materials. Therefore, bidders are asked to consider bidding on a product made from recovered materials; provided, however, that any product bid must be equal in quality, weight, texture, and color to the product required by these specifications. For the purpose of this specification, a product made from recovered materials must be at least 20% post consumer waste as defined by EPA and ASTM. Products made from recovered materials will be given a preference in the award procedure as follows:

- (1) The low bid that meets specifications will be determined.
- (2) If the low bid meeting specifications is made from recovered materials, then the award will be made to the vendor offering the low bid.
- (3) If the low bid is not made from recovered materials, the award will be made to the low bid meeting specifications that is made from recovered materials; provided, however that the price paid may not be more than 10% higher than the lowest bid received.
- (4) If there are no bids for recycled products within 10% of the lowest bid, then the award will be made to the vendor offering the lowest bid.

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Production Timeline

The vendor must acknowledge the following dates and timelines for processing.

DFA will:

- Supply **Test** 1095-C files by:
 - January 11, 2016 for tax year 2015
 - January 10, 2017 for tax year 2016
 - January 10, 2018 for tax year 2017
- Approve Test prints of 1095-C forms and mailers from the winning vendor prior to DFA's submission of the final production files to the vendor for the printing of original tax forms for mailing.
- DFA will provide the actual **Production** 1095-C files no later than:
 - January 25, 2016 for tax year 2015;
 - January 25, 2017 for tax year 2016
 - January 25, 2018 for tax year 2017
- All files, including test files, must be transmitted via a secure connection (password protected) such as SSL or VPN, or they may be transmitted via FTP over the internet if they are PKI encrypted.

The awarded vendor will:

- Adhere to the requirements listed in vendor's proposal section of this document.
- Process and provide DFA the results of each test file within 2 days.
- To receive final approval before printing and mailing the production file(s), the vendor must send DFA ten (10) printed, folded, and sealed 1095-C forms from at least two (2) separate production files for review.
 - The 1095-C forms must be printed from the production file(s) sent by DFA.
 - The processed forms must be sent via overnight mail, at the vendor's expense, in a single non-descriptive envelope to the address of DFA's choosing.
 - DFA will provide this address when the production file is created.
 - **NO** information (other than the DFA address) can visible when the processed forms are sealed in the single envelope.
 - Once received and reviewed, DFA will provide the vendor approval to process the production files.
 - DFA reserves the right to conduct another test if the production files samples are not acceptable.
 - The 1095-C forms sent to DFA must be re-processed and mailed with the complete production file(s).
- Ensure that production files are processed by the date established by DFA and the federal statute.
- All files, including test files, must be transmitted via a secure connection (password protected) such as SSL or VPN, or they may be transmitted via FTP over the internet if they are PKI encrypted.

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- Provide the CD ROM Reader and CD ROM(s) of production data to DFA by the established DFA date.

IFB Vendor Questions

All questions regarding this IFB must be submitted in writing, via email, to DFA by 5:00 PM Central Standard Time (CST) Tuesday, November 24, 2015 to mash@dfa.ms.gov. No questions will be accepted after this deadline. The subject of the email must be "1095-C Tax Form IFB."

DFA will provide written responses to all questions to all vendors by 5:00 PM CST Tuesday, December 1, 2015. Specific references to a vendor will be removed from the questions and answers. The questions and answers will be loaded as an exhibit to this IFB within MAGIC. Also, any addendums to the IFB will be loaded as an exhibit by 5:00 PM CST Tuesday, December 1, 2015.

It is the vendor's responsibility to review the answers to the questions and/or any addendums. DFA will NOT notify the vendor's when the information is published.

Proposal Submission Deadline

Proposals can be submitted electronically in MAGIC no later than 12:00 AM Central Standard Time (CST) on Tuesday, December 8, 2015. DFA/MMRS is not responsible for proposals submitted after the deadline. The proposal packet submitted must contain all items on the IFB checklist.

Proposals can also be sent in via **overnight** mail to the address below. The proposals must be post marked no later than 12:00 AM Central Standard Time (CST) on Tuesday, December 8, 2015. The proposals packet must include a printed copy of each of the proposal items on the IFB checklist and a CD or flash drive with a soft copy of all items.

Mississippi Department of Finance and Administration
Mississippi Management Reporting System
Attn: David Pitcock
210 East Capitol Street
Suite 1400
Jackson, Mississippi 39201

Note: If vendors need help submitting their proposal within MAGIC, please contact the MMRS Call Center at 601-359-1343 or via email at mash@dfa.ms.gov. The call center hours of operation are Monday – Friday; 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM CST. As the deadline for submission is 12:00 AM, if you need assistance in submitting in MAGIC, you will need to be sure to contact the call center during its hours of operation. **No Assistance will be provided after 4:30 PM CST and proposals will not be accepted after the submission deadline.**