

PERSONAL SERVICE CONTRACT

This Personal Service Contract is made by and between the Department of Finance and Administration, a state agency (the "DFA"), whose address is 501 North West Street, Suite 1301A Woolfolk Building, Jackson, Mississippi 39201 and Focus Group, Inc., (the "Contractor"), whose address is 727 Howard Avenue, Suite 401, Biloxi, Mississippi 39530 on the 10th day of February, 2020, under the following terms and conditions:

1. **Scope of Services:** The Contractor will provide services as specified in the Mississippi 2020 Census Marketing Plan (hereinafter referred to and attached as Exhibit "A").
2. **Contract Term:** The term of the contract shall begin on the date Senate Bill 2149 (Regular Session 2020) is effective, February 10, 2020, and end on June 30, 2020.
3. **Consideration:** In accordance with Senate Bill 2149 (Regular Session 2020), the total not to exceed amount of the contract, including all fees and expenses, shall be \$400,000.00, with fees more particularly described in "Option A" of Exhibit A. Contractor shall invoice the DFA monthly for services provided according to the categories defined in Option A. No invoice may include services rendered after expiration of the term. Invoices for services rendered in June 2020 must be received by the DFA no later than August 15, 2020.

The DFA shall provide the invoices to one or all of the three (3) executive members of the Mississippi Complete Count Committee for the 2020 Census for review and approval of the services and amounts prior to payment by the DFA.

4. **E-Payment:** The Contractor agrees to accept all payments in United States currency via the State of Mississippi's electronic payment and remittance vehicle. The DFA 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 the invoice. Miss. Code Ann. § 31-7-301, *et seq.*, as amended.
5. **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 the Contractor's choice. The State, may at its sole discretion, require the Contractor to electronically submit invoices and supporting documentation at any time during the term of this Agreement. The Contractor understands and agrees that the State is exempt from the payment of taxes. All payments shall be in United States currency.
6. **Availability of Funds:** It is expressly understood and agreed that the obligation of the DFA 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 DFA, the DFA shall have the right upon ten (10) working days written notice to the Contractor, to terminate this Agreement without damage, penalty, cost or expenses to the DFA of any kind whatsoever. The effective date of termination shall be as specified in the notice of termination.

7. **Record Retention and Access to Records:** Provided the Contractor is given reasonable advance written notice and such inspection is made during normal business hours of the Contractor, the DFA or any duly authorized representatives shall have unimpeded, prompt access to any of the 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 the Contractor for a period of 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 (3) 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 (3) year period, whichever is later.
8. **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 said State. The Contractor shall comply with applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations.
9. **Anti-Assignment/Subcontracting:** The Contractor acknowledges that it was selected by the State to perform the services required hereunder based, in part, upon the Contractor's special skills and expertise. The Contractor shall not assign, subcontract or otherwise transfer this Agreement, in whole or in part, without the prior written consent of the DFA, which the DFA may, in its sole discretion, approve or deny without reason. Any attempted assignment or transfer of its obligations, without said consent, shall be null and void. No such approval by the DFA of any subcontract shall be deemed in any way to provide for the incurrence of any obligation of the DFA 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.

10. **Compliance with Laws:** The Contractor understands that the DFA 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 the Contractor agrees during the term of the Agreement that the Contractor will strictly adhere to this policy in its employment practices and provision of services. The 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.

11. **Transparency:** This Contract, including any accompanying exhibits, attachments, and appendices, is subject to the "Mississippi Public Records Act of 1983," and its exceptions. See Miss. Code Ann. §§ 25-61-1 *et seq.* and Miss. Code Ann. § 79-23-1. In addition, this Contract is subject to provisions of the Mississippi Accountability and Transparency Act of 2008. Miss. Code Ann. §§ 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 the 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.

12. **E-Verification:** If applicable, the 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. Miss. Code Ann. § 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. The Contractor agrees to maintain records of such compliance. Upon request of the State and approval of the Social Security Administration or Department of Homeland Security when required, the Contractor agrees to provide a copy of each such verification. The 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 the Contractor to the following:

(1) 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;

(2) the loss of any license, permit, certification or other document granted to the Contractor by an agency, department or governmental entity for the right to do business in Mississippi for up to one (1) year; or,

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

13. **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. No act performed or representation made, whether oral or written, by the Contractor with respect to third parties shall be binding on the DFA. Neither Contractor nor its employees shall, under any circumstances, be considered servants, agents, or employees of the DFA, and the DFA shall be at no time legally responsible for any negligence or other wrongdoing by Contractor, its servants, agents, or employees. The DFA 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 DFA shall not provide to Contractor any insurance coverage or other benefits, including Worker's Compensation, normally provided by the State for its employees.
14. **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 the State revisions of any applicable laws or regulations make changes in this Agreement necessary.
15. **Procurement Regulations:** Pursuant to Senate Bill 2149 (Regular Session 2020), the selection of the Contractor shall be exempt from the provisions of law otherwise applicable to such contracts. The Contractor is being engaged by the DFA to continue work on the 2020 Census first established under contract with the Mississippi Secretary of State's Office on December 2, 2019.
16. **Representation Regarding Contingent Fees:** The Contractor represents that it has not retained a person to solicit or secure a DFA contract upon an agreement or understanding for a commission, percentage, brokerage, or contingent fee, except as disclosed in the Contractor's bid, proposal or qualifications.

17. **Representation Regarding Gratuities:** The Bidder, Offeror, or the 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 Office of Personal Service Contract Review Rules and Regulations*.

18. **Termination for Convenience:**

(1) **Termination.** The DFA may, when the interests of the DFA so require, terminate this Contract in whole or in part, for the convenience of the DFA. The DFA shall give written notification of the termination to the Contractor specifying the part of the Contract terminated and when the termination becomes effective.

(2) **Contractor's Obligations.** The Contractor shall incur no further obligations in connection with the terminated work and on the date set in the notice of termination the Contractor will stop work to the extent specified. The Contractor shall also terminate outstanding orders and subcontracts as they relate to the terminated work. The Contractor shall settle the liabilities and claims arising out of the termination of subcontracts and orders connected with the terminated work. The DFA may direct the Contractor to assign the Contractor's right, title, and interest under terminated orders or subcontracts to the DFA. The Contractor must still complete the work not terminated by the notice of termination and may incur obligations as are necessary to do so.

19. **Termination for Default:**

(1) **Default.** If the 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 DFA may notify the 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 DFA, the DFA may terminate the Contractor's right to proceed with the Contract or such part of the Contract as to which there has been delay or failure to properly perform. In the event of termination in whole or in part, the DFA may procure similar supplies or services in a manner and upon terms deemed appropriate by the DFA. The 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.

(2) **Contractor's Duties.** Notwithstanding termination of the Contract and subject to any directions from the Chief Procurement Officer, the

Contractor shall take timely, reasonable, and necessary action to protect and preserve property in the possession of the Contractor in which the DFA has an interest.

- (3) *Compensation.* Payment for completed services delivered and accepted by the DFA shall be at the contract price. The DFA may withhold from amounts due the Contractor such sums as the DFA deems to be necessary to protect the DFA against loss because of outstanding liens or claims of former lien holders and to reimburse the DFA for the excess costs incurred in procuring similar goods and services.
- (4) *Excuse for Nonperformance or Delayed Performance.* Except with respect to defaults of subcontractors, the 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 the Contractor to make progress in the prosecution of the work hereunder which endangers such performance) if the Contractor has notified the DFA within fifteen (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 make progress, and if such failure arises out of causes similar to those set forth above, the 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 the Contractor to meet the Contract requirements. Upon request of the Contractor, the DFA shall ascertain the facts and extent of such failure, and, if DFA determines that any failure to perform was occasioned by any one or more of the excusable causes, and that, but for the excusable cause, the 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 DFA under the clause entitled (in fixed-price contracts, "Termination for Convenience," in cost-reimbursement contracts, "Termination"). (As used in this Paragraph of this clause, the term "subcontractor" means subcontractor at any tier).
- (5) *Erroneous Termination for Default:* If, after notice of termination of the 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 DFA, be the same as if the notice of termination had been issued pursuant to such clause.

- (6) *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.

20. **Stop Work Order:**

- (1) *Order to stop work.* The Chief Procurement Officer, may by written order to the Contractor at any time, and without notice to any surety, require the 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 ninety (90) days after the order is delivered to the 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, the Contractor shall forthwith comply with its terms and take all reasonable steps to minimize the occurrence of costs allocable to 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 Chief Procurement Officer shall either:
- (a) cancel the stop work order; or,
 - (b) terminate the work covered by such order as provided in the "Termination for Default" clause or the "Termination for Convenience" clause of this Contract.
- (2) *Cancellation or Expiration of the Order.* If a stop work order issued under this clause is cancelled at any time during the period specified in the order, or if the period of the order or any extension thereof expires, the Contractor shall have the right to resume work. An appropriate adjustment shall be made in the delivery schedule or the Contractor price, or both, and the Contract shall be modified in writing accordingly, if:
- (a) the stop work order results in an increase in the time required for, or in the Contractor's cost properly allocable to, the performance of any part of this Contract; and,
 - (b) the Contractor asserts a claim for such an adjustment within thirty (30) days after the end of the period of work stoppage; provided that, if the Chief 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.
- (3) *Termination of Stopped Work.* If a stop work order is not cancelled 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.

- (4) *Adjustments of Price.* Any adjustment in contract price made pursuant to this clause shall be determined in accordance with the "Price Adjustment" clause of this Contract.

21. **Price Adjustment:**

- (1) *Price Adjustment Methods.* Any adjustment in contract price, pursuant to a clause in this Contract, shall be made in one or more of the following ways:
- (a) by agreement on a fixed price adjustment before commencement of the additional performance;
 - (b) by unit prices specified in the contract;
 - (c) by the costs attributable to the event or situation covered by the clause, plus appropriate profit or fee, all as specified in the Contract; or,
 - (d) by the price escalation clause.
- (2) *Submission of Cost or Pricing Data.* The Contractor shall provide cost or pricing data for any price adjustments subject to the provisions of Section 3-403 (Cost or Pricing Data) of the *Mississippi Public Procurement Review Board Office of Personal Service Contract Review Rules and Regulations*.

22. **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 DFA and agreed to by the Contractor.

23. **Ownership of Documents and Work Papers:** The DFA 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 the Contractor's internal administrative and quality assurance files and internal project correspondence. The Contractor shall deliver such documents and work papers to the DFA upon termination or completion of the Agreement. The foregoing notwithstanding, the Contractor shall be entitled to retain a set of such work papers for its files. The Contractor shall be entitled to use such work papers only after receiving written permission from the DFA and subject to any copyright protections.

24. **Indemnification:** To the fullest extent allowed by law, the Contractor shall indemnify, defend, save and hold harmless, protect, and exonerate the DFA, 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 attorneys' fees, arising out of or caused by the 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, the Contractor may be allowed to control the defense of any such claim, suit, etc. In the event the Contractor defends said claim, suit, etc., the Contractor shall use legal counsel acceptable to the State. The 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. The Contractor shall not settle any claim, suit, etc., without the State's concurrence, which the State shall not unreasonably withhold.

25. **Third-Party Action Notification:** The Contractor shall give the DFA prompt notice in writing of any action or suit filed, and prompt notice of any claim made against the Contractor by any entity that may result in litigation related in any way to this Agreement.
26. **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 Contractor:

Allison B. Buchanan
CEO
727 Howard Avenue
Biloxi, MS 39530

With copy to:
Gina Tompkins, Esq.
Counsel for Contractor
P.O. Drawer 3269
Gulfport, MS 39505

For the DFA:

Liz Welch
Interim Executive Director
Post Office Box 267
Jackson, MS 39205-0267

For the Complete Count Committee:

Senator Giles Ward
Chairman
Gilesward1948@gmail.com

27. **Priority:** The Contract consists of this Agreement and the Mississippi 2020 Census Marketing Plan attached as Exhibit A. Any ambiguities, conflicts or questions of interpretation of this Contract shall be resolved by first, reference to this Agreement and, if still unresolved, by reference to Exhibit A. Omission of any term or obligation from this Agreement or attached Exhibit A shall not be deemed an omission from this Contract if such term or obligation is provided for elsewhere in this contract.

28. **Change in Scope of Work:** The DFA may order changes in the work consisting of additions, deletions, or other revisions within the general scope of the Contract. No claims may be made by the Contractor that the scope of the project or of the Contractor's services has been changed, requiring changes to the amount of compensation to the Contractor or other adjustments to the Contract, unless such changes or adjustments have been made by written amendment to the Contract signed by the DFA and the Contractor.

If the Contractor believes that any particular work is not within the scope of the project, is a material change, or will otherwise require more compensation to the Contractor, the Contractor must immediately notify the DFA in writing of this belief. If the DFA believes that the particular work is within the scope of the Contract as written, the Contractor will be ordered to and shall continue with the work as changed and at the cost stated for the work within the Contract.

29. **Contractor Personnel:** The DFA shall, throughout the life of the contract, have the right of reasonable rejection and approval of staff or subcontractors assigned to the work by the Contractor. If the DFA reasonably rejects staff or subcontractors, the Contractor must provide replacement staff or subcontractors satisfactory to the DFA in a timely manner and at no additional cost to the DFA. The day-to-day supervision and control of the Contractor's employees and subcontractors is the sole responsibility of the Contractor.
30. **Recovery of Money:** Whenever, under the contract, any sum of money shall be recoverable from or payable by the Contractor to the DFA, the same amount may be deducted from any sum due to the Contractor under the Contract or under any other contract between the Contractor and the DFA. The rights of the DFA are in addition and without prejudice to any other right the DFA may have to claim the amount of any loss or damage suffered by the DFA on account of the acts or omissions of the Contractor.
31. **Failure to Enforce:** Failure by the DFA 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 DFA to enforce any provision at any time in accordance with its terms.
32. **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.

33. **Termination Upon Bankruptcy:** This Contract may be terminated in whole or in part by the DFA upon written notice to the Contractor, if the Contractor should become the subject of bankruptcy or receivership proceedings, whether voluntary or involuntary, or upon the execution by the Contractor of an assignment for the benefit of its creditors. In the event of such termination, the 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.
34. **Confidentiality:** Notwithstanding any provision to the contrary contained herein, it is recognized that DFA 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 the DFA pursuant to the agreement and designated by the Contractor in writing as trade secrets or other proprietary confidential information, the DFA shall follow the provisions of Mississippi Code Annotated §§ 25-61-9 and 79-23-1 before disclosing such information. The DFA shall not be liable to the Contractor for disclosure of information required by court order or required by law.

Witness our signatures, on the date first written.

Focus Group, Inc.

Department of Finance and Administration

By: 

Allison B. Buchanan
CEO

By: 

Liz Welch
Interim Executive Director