

Request for Proposals

CALL CENTER/CONTACT CENTER SERVICES



PROJECT NO. 050R4800165

Department of Budget and Management

Telecommunications

Issue Date: December 10, 2003

NOTICE

Prospective Offerors who have received this document from the Department of Budget and Management web site or eMarylandMarketplace.com, or who have received this document from a source other than the Procurement Officer, and who wish to assure receipt of any changes or additional materials related to this RFP, should immediately contact the Procurement Officer and provide their name and mailing address so that amendments to the RFP or other communications can be sent to them.

Minority Business Enterprises are Encouraged to Respond to this Solicitation

STATE OF MARYLAND
NOTICE TO OFFERORS/CONTRACTORS

In order to help us improve the quality of State proposals solicitations, and to make our procurement process more responsive and business friendly, we ask that you take a few minutes and provide comments and suggestions regarding the enclosed solicitation. Please return your comments with your proposals. If you have chosen not to submit a proposal on this contract, please fax this completed form to: 410-974-3274 to the attention of Gisela Blades.

Title: CALL CENTER/CONTACT CENTER SERVICES
Project No: 050R4800165

If you have responded with a "no bid", please indicate the reason(s) below:

- Other commitments preclude our participation at this time.
- The subject of the solicitation is not something we ordinarily provide.
- We are inexperienced in the work/commodities required.
- Specifications are unclear, too restrictive, etc. (Explain in REMARKS section.)
- The scope of work is beyond our present capacity.
- Doing business with Maryland Government is simply too complicated. (Explain in REMARKS section.)
- We cannot be competitive. (Explain in REMARKS section.)
- Time allotted for completion of the bid/proposals is insufficient.
- Start-up time is insufficient.
- Bonding/Insurance requirements are restrictive. (Explain in REMARKS section.)
- Bid/Proposals requirements (other than specifications) are unreasonable or too risky.
(Explain in REMARKS section.)
- MBE requirements. (Explain in REMARKS section.)
- Prior State of Maryland contract experience was unprofitable or otherwise unsatisfactory.
(Explain in REMARKS section.)
- Payment schedule too slow.
- Other: _____

2. If you have submitted a bid or proposal, but wish to offer suggestions or express concerns, please use the Remarks section below. (Use reverse or attach additional pages as needed.)

REMARKS: _____

Offeror's Name: _____ Date _____

Contact Person: _____ Phone (____) _____ - _____

Address: _____

KEY INFORMATION SUMMARY SHEET

STATE OF MARYLAND

Request For Proposals

PROJECT TITLE CALL CENTER/CONTACT CENTER SERVICES

PROJECT NUMBER 050R4800165

RFP Issue Date: December 10, 2003

RFP Issuing Office: Department of Budget and Management
Office of Information Technology

Procurement Officer: Gisela Blades
Office Phone: (410) 260-7678
Fax: (410) 974-3274
e-mail: gblades@dbm.state.md.us

Procurement Method: Competitive Sealed Proposals (COMAR 21.05.03)

Contract Term: On or About March 1, 2004 through February 28, 2007
With two (2) one (1) year renewal options

Pre-Proposal Conference: December 16, 2003, 10:00 AM (Local Time)
Department of Budget and Management
45 Calvert Street, Room 427
Annapolis, MD 21401
For directions, call Gisela Blades at 410-260-7678

Proposals are to be sent to: Department of Budget and Management
45 Calvert St. Room 119
Annapolis, MD 21401
Attention: Gisela Blades

Closing Date and Time: January 15, 2004 at 2:00 PM (Local Time)

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SECTION 1 - GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1 Summary Statement

The Department of Budget and Management, Division of Telecommunications, is issuing this Request for Proposals (RFP) to procure Full Service Call Center Services for eight (8) existing Call Center Programs and any other potential future Call Centers.

There are two Functional Areas: Functional Area One General Call Center Services, and Functional Area Two for Reservations/Cancellation/Credit Card Payment etc Services. Offerors may submit proposals for one or both functional areas. This solicitation may, therefore, result in multiple contract awards.

The State makes no guarantee that it will purchase any service from any resulting contract. This contract will not be construed to require the State to procure exclusively from the contractor. The State reserves the right to procure services from other sources when it is in the best interest of the State to do so and without notice to the contractor.

1.2 Abbreviations and Definitions

For the purposes of this RFP, the following abbreviations or terms have the meanings indicated below:

- a. Abandoned Call – A call which has been offered unto a communications network or telephone system, but which is terminated by the person originating the call before it is answered by the person being called.
- b. ACD – Automatic Call Distributor – A specialized phone system designed to route Incoming calls to all available personnel so that calls are evenly distributed.
- c. Agency – Any State or other agency authorized to use the contract resulting from this RFP
- d. Agency Program Managers - The State representative that serves as the manager for a specific Call Center program. The Agency Program Manager monitors the daily activities of the Call Center program and provides technical guidance to the Contractor.
- e. CARES – Client Automated Resources Eligibility System. CARES supports eligibility determination and financial assistance for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Food Stamps (FS) and Foster Care (FC) programs and eligibility determination for the Medical Assistance (MA) program.
- f. CDB – Client Database. CDB provides demographic information on Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Food Stamps (FS), Medical Assistance (MA), Child Support Enforcement (CSE) and Foster Care (FC) cases.

- g. CIS – Client Information System is an interactive database system comprised of three (3) component systems, Client Database (CDB), Client Automated Resources and Eligibility System (CARES) and Child Support Enforcement System (CSES).
- h. COMAR – Code of Maryland Regulations.
- i. Contract – The document attached to this RFP known as Attachment A.
- j. Contractor – The offeror selected under the procedures contained in this RFP that is awarded and signs a Contract with the State.
- k. CSEA – Child Support Enforcement Administration. The unit of the Department of Human Resources that administers the child support program for the State.
- l. CSES – Child Support Enforcement System. CSES is used for tracking intrastate and interstate case processing and account information. CSES also generates data for Federal reports.
- m. DBM – Department of Budget and Management. .
- n. DHMH – Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.
- o. DHR – Maryland Department of Human Resources.
- p. DNR – Maryland Department of Natural Resources.
- q. FCC – The Federal Communications Commission.
- r. I&R – Information and Referral.
- s. IVR – Interactive Voice Response.
- t. Local Time –Eastern Standard Time.
- u. MBE – Minority Business Enterprise.
- v. MTA – Maryland Transit Administration.
- w. Offeror – An entity that submits a proposal in response to this RFP.
- x. OPD – Maryland Office of the Public Defender.
- y. OTHS – Office of Technology for Human Services.
- z. PO – Purchase Order issued by DBM’s Division of Telecommunications.

- aa. Procurement Officer – The State representative responsible for this RFP for determination of contract scope issues, and the only State representative who can authorize changes to the contract.
- bb. PSC – Maryland Public Service Commission.
- cc. RFP – Request for Proposals Project No. 050R4800165, dated December 2, 2003
- dd. State Contract Manager – The State representative that serves as the technical manager for the resulting contract.
- rr. SFPS – Maryland Department of Natural Resources State Forest and Park Service.
- ss. TIC – Transit Information Center.
- tt. TTY – A text device used for telephone communication for the deaf and hard of hearing.
- vv. Work Hours – The State of Maryland’s normal operating hours are 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., EST, Monday through Friday, excluding State Holidays.

1.3 Contract Type

The contract resulting from this RFP shall be an Indefinite Quantity Contract with Fixed Unit Prices, with CPI price adjustments, in accordance with COMAR 21.06.03.02 and 21.06.03.06.

1.4 Contract Price Adjustments

Price Adjustment: If the State elects to exercise contract renewal options after the base period, this section describes the mechanism to be used to make price adjustments. Price adjustments may be made for each two 1-year renewal period to the contracted prices for services proposed in Attachment E. The sequence of actions to implement a price adjustment is as follows:

- At least ninety (90) calendar days prior to the contract or term expiration date, the State’s Contract Manager shall advise the Contractor of the allowable percentage adjustment to be applied for each service rate. The adjustment shall be based on the change in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) as calculated below. The maximum renewal option period increase allowed shall be limited to five percent (5%) of the current proposed prices (or subsequently adjusted prices beyond the first renewal option).
- Within fifteen (15) calendar days of the receipt of the State’s notice of adjustment, the Contractor shall submit a schedule of revised rates to the Contract Manager and all agencies with installed circuits. In the event the CPI for the measured period is negative, the Contractor shall reduce prices accordingly. In the event the CPI for the measured period is positive, the Contractor shall have the option of keeping existing prices or changing to any price up to the maximum allowable percentage increase.

- The adjustment will be calculated as a percentage resulting from the change in the index for the most recent twenty-four (24) months beginning four (4) months prior to the renewal month of the Contract.
- The revised rate schedule shall be used for billing effective the first day of the Contract option renewal period.

Consumer Price Index Information:

- The adjustment shall be calculated by reference to the annual change in the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), Consumer Price Index (CPI)—All Urban Consumers for:
 - Area: U.S. City Average
 - Item: Telephone Services
 - Series ID: CUUR0000SEED
 - December 1997 = 100

- The following example illustrates the computation of percent change:

| | |
|--------------------------------|-------------|
| CPI for current period | 136.0 |
| Less CPI for previous period | 129.9 |
| Equals index point change | 6.1 |
| Divided by previous period CPI | 129.9 |
| Equals | .047 |
| Result multiplied by 100 | 0.047 x 100 |
| Equals percent change | 4.7 |

- In the event that the BLS discontinues the use of the index described above, adjustments shall be based upon the most comparable successor index to the CPI. The determination as to which index is most comparable shall be within the sole discretion of the State.

1.5 Contract Duration

The term of this Contract is for a period of three (3) years commencing on the date that the Department executes this contract. The State, at its sole option, shall have the unilateral right to extend the contract for up to two (2) additional, successive one-year terms. Services may not be ordered unless services can be completed prior to the end of the contract.

1.6 Procurement Officer

The sole point of contact in the State for purposes of this RFP prior to the award of any contract is the Procurement Officer at the address listed below:

Gisela Blades, Procurement Officer
 Department of Budget and Management
 Division of Policy Analysis

45 Calvert St., Room 119
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
Telephone #: 410-260-7678
Fax #: 410-974-3274
E-mail: gblades@dbm.state.md.us

DBM may change the Procurement Officer at any time by written notice to the Contractors.

1.7 Contract/Program Managers

State Contract Manager – Monitors the daily activities of the contract and provides technical guidance to the contractor. The State Contract Manager is:

Sandra M. Smith
Department of Budget and Management
Telecommunications Division
301 West Preston Street, Suite 1304
Baltimore, Maryland 21201
Telephone: 410-767-4649
Fax: 410-333-5163
E-mail: ssmith@dbm.state.md.us

DBM may change the State Contract Manager at any time by written notice to the Contractor. Individual Agency Contract Managers will be assigned.

1.8 Pre-Proposal Conference

A Pre-Proposal Conference will be held on December 16, 2003, beginning at 10:00 AM, at 45 Calvert Street, Annapolis, MD 21401, Room 427. Attendance at the Pre-Proposal Conference is not mandatory, but all interested Offerors are encouraged to attend in order to facilitate better preparation of their proposals. In addition, attendance may facilitate the Offeror's understanding of RFP requirements.

The Conference will be transcribed. A copy of the transcript of the Pre-Proposal Conference will be made available to potential Offerors at a nominal charge directly from the transcription company. The identity of the company and details of how to obtain a transcript copy will be provided at the conference. In addition, as promptly as is feasible subsequent to the Conference, a summary of the Pre-Proposal Conference and all questions and answers known at that time will be distributed, free of charge, to all prospective Offerors known to have received a copy of this RFP.

In order to assure adequate seating and other accommodations at the Pre-Proposal Conference, it is requested that by 4:00 PM December 15, 2003 all potential Offerors planning to attend return the Pre-Proposal Conference Response Form (Attachment E) or call Gisela Blades at 410-260-7678 with such notice. If there is a need for sign language interpretation and/or other special accommodations due to a disability, it is requested that at least five days advance notice be provided. DBM will make reasonable efforts to provide such special accommodation.

1.9 Use of “e-Maryland Marketplace”

“e-Maryland Marketplace” is an electronic commerce system administered by the Maryland Department of General Services. In addition to using the DBM web site (<http://www.dbm.state.md.us>) and other means for transmitting the RFP and associated materials, the solicitation and minutes of the Pre-Proposal Conference, Offeror questions and DBM responses, addenda, and other solicitation related information will be provided via e-Maryland Marketplace.

This means that all such information is immediately available to subscribers to e-Maryland Marketplace. Because of the instant access afforded by e-Maryland Marketplace, it is recommended that all Offerors interested in doing business with Maryland State agencies subscribe to e-Maryland Marketplace.

1.10 Questions

The Procurement Officer, prior to the Pre-Proposal Conference, will accept written questions from prospective Offerors. If possible and appropriate, such questions will be answered at the Pre-Proposal Conference. (No substantive question will be answered prior to the Pre-Proposal Conference.) Questions may be submitted by mail, facsimile, or preferably, by e-mail to the Procurement Officer. Questions, both oral and written, will also be accepted from prospective Offerors attending the Pre-Proposal Conference. If possible and appropriate, these questions will be answered at the Pre-Proposal Conference.

Questions will also be accepted subsequent to the Pre-Proposal Conference. All post-conference questions should be submitted in a timely manner to the Procurement Officer only. The Procurement Officer shall, based on the availability of time to research and communicate an answer, decide whether an answer can be given before the proposal due date. Answers to all substantive questions that have not previously been answered, and are not clearly specific only to the requestor, will be distributed to all vendors who are known to have received a copy of the RFP.

1.11 Proposals Due (Closing) Date

An unbound original and eight (8) bound copies of each proposal (technical and financial) must be received by the Procurement Officer, at the address listed in Section 1.6, **no later than 2:00 P.M. (local time) on January 15, 2004**, in order to be considered. An electronic version (diskette or CD) of the Technical Proposal in MS Word format shall be enclosed with the original Technical Proposal. An electronic version (diskette or CD) of the Financial Proposal in MS Excel format shall be enclosed with the original financial proposal. Diskettes are to be labeled with the Date, RFP title, RFP number, Offeror’s name and packaged with the original copy of the appropriate proposal (Technical or Financial).

Requests for extension of this date or time will not be granted. Offerors mailing proposals should allow sufficient mail delivery time to ensure timely receipt by the Procurement Officer. Except as provided in COMAR 21.05.02.10, proposals received by the Procurement Officer after

the due date, January 15, 2004 at 2:00 PM (local time) will not be considered. Proposals may not be submitted by e-mail or facsimile.

1.12 Duration of Offer

Proposals submitted in response to this RFP are irrevocable for 120 days following the closing date of proposals or of Best and Final Offers (BAFOs), if requested. This period may be extended at the Procurement Officer's request only with the Offeror's written agreement.

1.13 Revisions to the RFP

If it becomes necessary to revise this RFP before the due date, amendments will be provided to all prospective Offerors who were sent this RFP or otherwise are known by the Procurement Officer to have obtained this RFP. Amendments made after the due date for proposals will be sent only to those Offerors who submitted a timely proposal.

Acknowledgment of the receipt of all amendments to this RFP issued before the proposal due date must accompany the Offeror's proposal in the Transmittal Letter accompanying the Technical Proposal submittal. Acknowledgement of the receipt of amendments to the RFP issued after the proposal due date shall be in the manner specified in the amendment notice. Failure to acknowledge receipt of amendments does not relieve the Offeror from complying with all terms of any such amendment.

1.14 Cancellations; Discussions

The State reserves the right to cancel this RFP, accept or reject any and all proposals, in whole or in part, received in response to this RFP, to waive or permit cure of minor irregularities, and to conduct discussions with all qualified or potentially qualified Offerors in any manner necessary to serve the best interests of the State of Maryland. The State also reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to award a contract based upon the written proposals received without prior discussions or negotiations.

1.15 Oral Presentation

Offerors may be required to make oral presentations to State representatives. Significant representations made by an Offeror during the oral presentation must be reduced to writing. All such representations will become part of the Offeror's proposal and are binding if the contract is awarded. The Procurement Officer will notify Offerors of the time and place of oral presentations. Typically oral presentations occur approximately 2 weeks after the proposal due date.

1.16 Incurred Expenses

The State will not be responsible for any costs incurred by an Offeror in preparing and submitting a proposal, in making an oral presentation, in providing a demonstration, or in performing any other activities relative to this solicitation.

1.17 Economy of Preparation

Proposals should be prepared simply and economically, providing a straightforward, concise description of the Offeror's proposals to meet the requirements of this RFP.

1.18 Protests/Disputes

Any protest or dispute related respectively to this solicitation or the resulting contract shall be subject to the provisions of COMAR 21.10 (Administrative and Civil Remedies).

1.19 Multiple or Alternate Proposals

Neither multiple nor alternate proposals will be accepted. Submitting an offer for more than one functional area is not considered a multiple proposal.

1.20 Access to Public Records Act Notice

An Offeror should give specific attention to the clear identification of those portions of its proposal that it considers confidential, proprietary commercial information or trade secrets, and provide justification why such materials, upon request, should not be disclosed by the State under the Access to Public Records Act, Title 10, Subtitle 6, of the State Government Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland.

Offerors are advised that, upon request for this information from a third party, the Procurement Officer is required to make an independent determination whether the information can be disclosed. (See COMAR 21.05.08.01)

1.21 Offeror Responsibilities

The selected Offeror shall be responsible for all services required by this RFP. Subcontractors must be identified and a complete description of their role relative to the proposals must be included in the Offeror's proposal.

1.22 Mandatory Contractual Terms

By submitting an offer in response to this RFP, an Offeror, if selected for award, shall be deemed to have accepted the terms of this RFP and the Contract, attached as Attachment A. **Any**

exceptions to this RFP or the Contract must be clearly identified in the Executive Summary of the Technical Proposal. A proposal that takes exception to these terms may be rejected.

1.23 Proposal Affidavit

An Offeror must submit with its proposal a completed Bid/Proposal Affidavit. A copy of this Affidavit is included as Attachment B of this RFP.

1.24 Contract Affidavit

All Offerors are advised that if a contract is awarded as a result of this solicitation, the successful Offeror will be required to complete a Contract Affidavit. A copy of this Affidavit is included for informational purposes as Attachment C of this RFP. This Affidavit must be provided within five (5) business days of notification of proposed contract award.

1.25 Minority Business Enterprises

A minority business enterprise subcontractor participation goal of 5% has been established for each functional area of this solicitation. The contractor shall structure its awards of subcontracts under the contract in a good faith effort to achieve the goals in such subcontract awards by businesses certified by the State of Maryland as minority owned and controlled. MBE requirements are specified in Attachment D of this RFP.

A current directory of MBEs is available through the Maryland State Department of Transportation, Office of Minority Business Enterprise, 7201 Corporate Center Drive, Hanover, MD 21076. The phone number is 410-865-1244. The directory is also available at <http://www.mdot.state.md.us>. Select the MBE Program label. The most current and up-to-date information on MBEs is available via the web site.

1.26 Arrearages

By submitting a response to this solicitation, each Offeror represents that it is not in arrears in the payment of any obligations due and owing the State of Maryland, including the payment of taxes and employee benefits, and that it shall not become so in arrears during the term of the contract if selected for contract award.

1.27 Procurement Method

This contract will be awarded in accordance with the Competitive Sealed Proposals process under COMAR 21.05.03.

1.28 Verification of Registration and Tax Payment

Before a corporation can do business in the State of Maryland it must be registered with the Department of Assessments and Taxation, State Office Building, Room 803, 301 West Preston Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21201. It is strongly recommended that any potential Offeror complete registration prior to the due date for receipt of proposals. An Offeror's failure to complete registration with the Department of Assessments and Taxation may disqualify an otherwise successful Offeror from final consideration and recommendation for contract award.

1.29 False Statements

Offerors are advised that Section 11-205.1 of the State Finance and Procurement Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland provides as follows:

In connection with a procurement contract a person may not willfully:

- Falsify, conceal, or suppress a material fact by any scheme or device;
- Make a false or fraudulent statement or representation of a material fact; or
- Use a false writing or document that contains a false or fraudulent statement or entry of a material fact.

A person may not aid or conspire with another person to commit an act under subsection (a) of this section.

A person who violates any provision of this section is guilty of a felony and on conviction is subject to a fine not exceeding \$20,000 or imprisonment not exceeding 5 years or both.

1.30 Contract Extended to Include Other Non-State Governments or Agencies

For the purposes of an information technology or telecommunications procurements, pursuant to §3-702(b) of the State Finance and Procurement Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland, county, municipal, and other non-state governments or agencies may purchase from the Contractor's services covered by this Contract at the same prices chargeable to the State. All such purchases by non-State governments or agencies:

- Shall constitute contracts between the Contractor and that government or agency;
- Shall not constitute purchases by the State or State agencies under this Contract;
- Shall not be binding or enforceable against the State, and
- May be subject to other terms and conditions agreed to by the Contractor and the purchaser. Contractor bears the risk of determining whether or not a government or agency with which the Contractor is dealing is a State agency.

1.31 Non-Visual Access

The bidder or offeror warrants that the information technology offered under this bid or proposal (1) provides equivalent access for effective use by both visual and non-visual means; (2) will present information, including prompts used for interactive communications, in formats intended for both visual and non-visual use; (3) if intended for use in a network, can be integrated into networks for obtaining, retrieving, and disseminating information used by individuals who are not blind or visually impaired; and (4) is available, whenever possible, without modification for compatibility with software and hardware for non-visual access. The bidder or offeror further warrants that the cost, if any, of modifying the information technology for compatibility with software and hardware used for non-visual access will not increase the cost of the information technology by more than five percent. For purposes of this regulation, the phrase “equivalent access” means the ability to receive, use and manipulate information and operate controls necessary to access and use information technology by non-visual means. Examples of equivalent access include keyboard controls used for input and synthesized speech, Braille, or other audible or tactile means used for output.

1.32 Bid Bond

A bid bond or other suitable security in the amount of \$1,000,000 must be submitted with the Offeror’s technical proposal. Acceptable security shall be as described below, identified within and excerpted from COMAR 21.06.07:

"Acceptable security for bid, performance, and payment bonds is limited to:

- (1) A bond in a form satisfactory to the State underwritten by a surety company authorized to do business in this State;
- (2) A bank certified check, bank cashier's check, bank treasurer's check, cash, or trust account;
- (3) Pledge of securities backed by the full faith and credit of the United States government or bonds issued by the State;
- (4) An irrevocable letter of credit in a form satisfactory to the Attorney General and issued by a financial institution approved by the State Treasurer”

The cost of this bond, or other suitable security, is to be included in the total prices proposed and is not to be proposed and will not be recoverable as a separate cost item. **Attachment H I is the bid bond required for this solicitation.**

1.33 Performance Bond

The successful Offeror must submit a Performance Bond (see Attachment F), or other suitable security in the amount of \$2,000,000 for Functional Area One, and/or \$100,000 for Functional Area Two for the duration of the contract. Acceptable security shall be as described below, identified within and excerpted from COMAR 21.06.07:

"Acceptable security for bid, performance, and payment bonds is limited to:

- (1) A bond in a form satisfactory to the State underwritten by a surety company authorized to do business in this State;
- (2) A bank certified check, bank cashier's check, bank treasurer's check, cash, or trust account;
- (3) Pledge of securities backed by the full faith and credit of the United States government or bonds issued by the State;
- (4) An irrevocable letter of credit in a form satisfactory to the Attorney General and issued by a financial institution approved by the State Treasurer"

The cost of this bond, or other suitable security, is to be included in the total prices proposed and is not to be proposed and will not be recoverable as a separate cost item. The successful Offeror shall deliver the Performance Bond, or other suitable security, to the State within 5 working days after being notified of the proposed contract award.

1.34 Security Bond Assistance Program

Assistance in obtaining a bid, performance and payment bonds may be available to qualifying small businesses through the Maryland Small Business Development Financing Authority (MSBDFDA). MSBDFDA can directly issue bid, performance or payment bonds up to \$750,000. MSBDFDA may also guarantee up to 90% of a surety's losses as a result of a Contractor's breach of contract; MSBDFDA exposure on any bond guaranteed may not, however, exceed \$900,000. Bonds issued directly by the program will remain in effect for the duration of the Contract, and those surety bonds that are guaranteed by the program will remain in effect for the duration of the surety's exposure under the Contract. To be eligible for bonding assistance, a business must first be denied bonding by at least one (1) surety on both the standard and specialty markets within ninety (90) days of submitting a bonding application to MSBDFDA. The applicant must employ fewer than 500 full-time employees or have gross sales of less than \$50 million annually, have its principal place of business in Maryland or be a Maryland resident, must not subcontract more than 75 percent of the work, and the business or its principals must have a reputation of good moral character and financial responsibility. Finally, it must be demonstrated that the bonding or guarantee will have a measurable economic impact, through job creation and expansion of the State's tax base. Applications are required to work through their respective bonding agents in applying for assistance under the program. Questions regarding the bonding assistance program should be referred to:

Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development
Maryland Small Business Development Financing Authority
217 E. Redwood Street, 22nd Floor
Baltimore, Maryland 21202
Phone: 410-333-4270
Fax: 410-333-6931

1.35 Indemnity Insurance

a. The Contractor shall, at its own expense, procure and maintain during the entire performance period of this contract, insurance of at least the kinds set forth below in the minimum amount specified herein or in writing by the Procurement Officer.

(i) Worker's Compensation Insurance, in accordance with Maryland Statute.

(ii) Public Liability Insurance, covering Comprehensive basis, including Contingent Liability, in an amount of not less than \$1,000,000.00 combined single limit.

(iii) Automobile Liability Insurance, covering all owned, non-owned, and hired vehicles used in connection with the work, in the amounts indicated in (ii) above.

(iv) Owner's Protective Liability Insurance, in the amounts indicated in (ii) above. Notwithstanding the requirement of the Contractor to furnish certificates of insurance evidencing insurance coverage, the Contractor shall furnish a policy of Owner's Protective Liability Insurance set forth herein. This policy must be endorsed to indicate that any premium, whether deposit or final, will be the sole obligation of the Contractor.

b. The Public Liability Insurance coverage required in paragraph (ii) above should include those classifications listed in Standard Liability Insurance Manuals, which are applicable to the operations of the Contractor in the performance of this contract.

c. All insurance policies required above shall be issued by companies authorized to do business under the laws of the State of Maryland, with the following qualifications as to management and financial strength. The Company shall be rated no less than "A" as to management, and no less than "AAA" as to strength, by the latest edition of Best's Insurance Guide, published by Alfred M. Best Co., Inc.

d. The Contractor shall furnish Certificates of Insurance to the Procurement Officer prior to commencing any operations under this contract. The Certificates shall clearly indicate the classifications, as required for strict compliance with this Article. The said Certificates must provide that in the event of any material change in or cancellation of the policies reflecting the required coverage, the Department will be given thirty (30) days advance notice thereof.

e. Compliance with the foregoing requirements as to the carrying of insurance shall not relieve the Contractor from its liability under any other portions of this Contract.

f. The Contractor shall indemnify and defend the Department its officers, employees and agents, from any and all claims, liability, losses, damages, cost and expenses, and causes of actions which may arise out of or relate to the performance or non-performance by the Contractor, its employees or agents, of the contract. This provision shall not be construed as a waiver by the Department or its employees and agents of sovereign or any other immunity.

SECTION 2 – SCOPE OF WORK

2.1 Purpose and Background

2.1.1 This RFP defines the requirements for Call Center services to include, but not restricted to providing all necessary facilities, equipment, software development, software, circuits, telephone service, staff, training, setup, testing, and reporting in the following functional areas:

2.1.2 Functional Area One: General Call Center Services

For individual hours of operation, see Attachment H.

This functional area presently includes the following agencies:

- Maryland General Information Number – DBM maintains a toll free number, 1-800-MDINFO1, that is answered daily by the Call Center between 8:00 A.M. and 8:00 P.M. Citizens are provided information and/or transferred to the appropriate agency thus reducing multiple calls to contact a specific agency for services.
- DBM-Central Collections – Provides information to Maryland citizens about their delinquent debts owed to the State and process for payment/disputes of those debts.
- DHMH (Health/Bioterrorism/West Nile Virus/Other Health Related Information/Waivers) – DHMH maintains toll free hotline numbers to provide the citizens of Maryland with health care information on specific hot issues such as influenza, West Nile Virus, Bio-terrorism (anthrax, smallpox, plague, etc.) and other health related links as the situation may require. In addition, information is also provided regarding waivers related to Medicaid Home and Community Based Service Programs (see 2.26.18).
- DHR Constituent Services –Call Center handles phone calls for general information and referral, welfare fraud, child abuse and neglect, adoption, temporary cash assistance, food stamps, foster care, adult abuse and neglect, energy assistance, customer complaints/concerns, appeals, crisis management and other DHR services/programs (see 2.26.1).
- DHR Child Support –Call Center provides local child support offices with telephone services staff to answer initial calls for general information and referrals (see 2.26.8).
- Maryland Transportation Authority –Contractor is to provide only overflow support of telephone calls for the Transit Information Center (TIC) in the event of a major transportation crisis.
- Office of the Public Defender – Maintains a toll free number that the citizens of Maryland can utilize to obtain information about Public Defenders office locations and the process for obtaining their services.

- 2.1.3 Functional Area Two: Reservation System; Department of Natural Resources –
- DNR Campsite Reservations – State Forest and Park Service (SFPS) of the Maryland DNR utilizes a Call Center to take reservations for campsites, cabins and picnic shelters. This requires an existing, proven system complete with design, development, delivery and support of a computerized centralized Forest/Park Reservation/Registration (see 2.27).

2.2 General Requirements – Functional Area One and Two

- 2.2.1 Contractor shall be located within a 100 mile radius requiring no more than two (2) hours driving time from zip code 21201, to facilitate routine on-site visits and training for Contractor’s representatives.
- 2.2.2 Contractor shall operate the call center system in accordance with the federal and state laws and regulations during the contract period.
- 2.2.3 Contractor shall provide a turn-key, full service operation to include, but not be limited to, staff, work space, equipment, software, and phones, all computer and telephone related lines and cable. The Contractor is responsible for the installation of the cable/wire at the Call Center facilities.
- 2.2.4 Contractor shall have the capability to provide call center services on a 24 x 7 basis, 365 days per year using both IVR and live Customer Service Representatives. Normal call center business hours are 8:00 am – 8:00 pm Monday – Friday and 9:30 am – 6:00 pm on Saturday and Sunday, except Holidays. Reference Attachment H for specific hour for each Call Center Program and reference the DBM web site for the 2003 Holiday Schedule at <http://www.dbm.maryland.gov/DBM%20Taxonomy/Employee%20Services/holidays2003.html>.
- 2.2.5 Contractor must staff a problem reporting toll free number 365 days per year 24 hours per day to accept trouble reports from the State. For escalation purposes, a supervisor shall also be available on a 365-day/24-hour basis.
- 2.2.6 The Contractor shall be responsible for all work performed by subcontractors.

2.3 Key Criteria: Role, Function and Responsibility: CONTRACTOR - Functional Area One and Two

- 2.3.1 The Contractor shall provide the following types of Call Center Services including but not limited to:
- Inbound and Outbound Live Operator services,
 - Service or Product Information,

- Scripted Information Dissemination,
- Mailing of Literature and Information Requests;
- Collection of Applications (and Checks/Money Orders FA 2 only),
- Data Entry of Application/Form Information into State or Contractor Database,
- Bilingual Service (Spanish/English),
- Voice Mail,
- Automatic Call Distributor (ACD),
- Interactive Voice Response (IVR),
- Email Correspondence,
- Call Center Overflow Capabilities;
- Handling Surveys and Questionnaires.

2.4 Call Center Operations - Functional Area One and Two

2.4.1 Contractor shall conduct call handling, and work with Agency to develop effective call scripts for various projects.

2.4.2 The Contractor shall provide, at a minimum, the following types of services :

- Order Calls – this includes the processing of all order calls (except credit card order calls).
- Information Calls – this includes all calls when information is referred to and information is captured from the caller, but an order is not made.
- Voicemail Calls/Interactive Voice Response (IVR) – this includes all calls (including order calls and information calls) that are retrieved from the voicemail or IVR system by the Information Specialists and recorded into the call system.
- Callback Calls – a callback occurs when the Information Specialist cannot readily answer or provide the requested information while speaking with the customer; therefore will arrange a callback at a later date and time with the caller.
- Repeat Calls – a repeat call occurs when a customer calls back to check the status of a previous request and additional information is referred, or a new request/order is placed.
- Call Transfer – this occurs when a caller must be transferred to an Agency to receive more specific information not currently provided by the Contractor.
- Out-bound call center/telemarketing – this service includes conducting telephone surveys to consumer and any other business deemed appropriate.
- Mailing Forms – includes obtaining customer name and address and mailing form to customers.
- Collection of Applications and Checks/Money Orders (Functional Area ONE only)– receiving applications in the mail and checks/money orders from applicants. Checks and money orders will be forwarded to another vendor working for the State to process the money collected.
- Data Entry – keying the data of information received into the State’s database
- Web transactions – this includes, at a minimum: receive and respond to e-mail messages, text chat sessions, and instant messaging, co-browsing and online forums.
- Provide data content and order input of calls, products and services into Agency database.

- Provide real-time information processing and on-line reporting
- Provide on-going training to in-bound Information Specialists and out-bound Telesales Specialists.

2.4.3 Contractor must have the ability to handle mail services, such as application forms, financial affidavits, and informational brochures. The Contractor shall establish a post office box, with State right to access, to receive all mail from customers and maintain a file of all correspondence received and sent for one (1) year.

- Credit Card Order Calls (Functional Area Two Only)– this includes answering and processing calls when an order is placed and the credit card number is received and processed

2.5 System Requirements – Functional Area One and Two

- 2.5.1 To optimize speed and decrease costs for data transfer, the System must use commonly acceptable industry-wide compression protocols to transfer all data between the central computer and the remote location computers. The System must provide a function that ensures that all data transferred between the call center computer and a remote location computer is processed entirely with the proper security measures as identified in the Security Policy – Attachment G.
- 2.5.2 The Contractor must provide information on the server used for the centralized database, including the type of storage (for example RAID 5), provisions for controller redundancy, and mean times between failures of the processors and the disk subsystem. At a minimum, the centralized database should be able to continue operations if any single disk fails.
- 2.5.3 The system will support the archiving, retrieval with it's graphic user interface, and purging of all appropriate data. The database(s) residing on the central computer should be kept in an online mode for the length of the contract, except for archiving and retrieval purposes.
- 2.5.4 The System must be able to transition from current vendor's platforms (see Attachment J).
- 2.5.5 The Call Center System must be compatible with TTY service for the hearing impaired.
- 2.5.6 The System must prevent duplication of customer records. The Offeror must describe how this will be accomplished.
- 2.5.7 Contractor's interactive voice response (IVR) system shall, at a minimum, include processing calls in accordance with Agency approved scripts and routing paths, application maintenance and monitoring of the Call Center's IVR system, IVR answering capabilities, providing multi-language (English and Spanish) service capability.

2.6 Performance Standards - Functional Area One and Two

- 2.6.1 The Contractor shall present itself to all customers as a unit of the appropriate agency, not as a private contractor. The Contractor's role must not be apparent. Only State Agency

names and logos will be permitted on information distributed to Call Center customers.

- 2.6.2 The Contractor shall provide staff exclusively dedicated to fulfilling the State's/Agency's stated requirements.
- 2.6.3 The Contractor shall have the ability to add/divert trained staff to handle increasing/decreasing call volume during peak/off periods in compliance of performance standards.
- 2.6.4 Established performance standards for call center/telemarketing services that must be maintained throughout the term of the contract in order to provide acceptable customer service and satisfy the scope of work under the contract. These performance standards are calculated monthly and listed below:
- Acceptable minimum rate for capturing information on “order calls” and “information calls” is 90% of all such calls.
 - The Contractor must answer at least ninety-percent (90%) of all incoming calls, one hundred-percent (100%) if not dropped in IVR.
 - Maximum abandoned call rate for Agencies' toll free lines is ten percent (10%) **per day**. The State will not pay for abandoned calls.
 - Calls are to be answered within two (2) rings.
 - The number of incoming calls that receive a busy signal must not exceed five percent (5%).
 - Callers must not be placed on hold longer than one hundred twenty (120) seconds.
 - Calls must not remain in the queue for more than two (2) minutes waiting for the next available Information Specialist representative.
 - Requested mailings must be postmarked within 48 hours of the request.
 - The number of caller complaints about the Call Center service must be one percent or less of all incoming calls. Copies of all complaints and their resolution will be sent to the State Contractor Manager and Call Center Program Manager within one week of the day the complaint was made.
 - Contractor must evaluate monthly the sufficiency of the number of telephone lines installed and the number of persons answering the lines and provide a report to the State Contractor Manager and Call Center Program Managers. As call volumes increases, the Contractor(s) shall install additional lines and/or equipment and add staff in order to meet contract call responses timeliness requirements (at the contractor's expense).
- 2.6.5 The State Contract Manager will monitor and review performance standards on a monthly basis. If any of the performance standards are not met, the State Contract Manager will notify Contractor of the standard that is not in compliance, and, if necessary and so directed, Contractor shall submit a revised monthly invoice to the State to reflect any liquidated damages.

2.7 Foreign Language – Functional Area One and Two

Contractor must be able to handle calls in at least two languages, English and Spanish. A minimum of 10% of the Call Center staff dedicated to the State under the contract must have Spanish reading and speaking abilities.

2.8 Monitoring – Functional Area One

Agency reserves the right and shall be entitled to “On Site” as well as “On-Line” monitoring of Information Specialists and call center operations at contractor’s location. Timing and frequency of such monitoring shall be determined by the State/Agency Project Manager.

2.9 Data Entry Service (Non-live phone calls) – Functional Area One and Two

Contractor will, by request, input (non live phone calls) names, addresses, etc. into a database from applications, forms, mailing lists, or from voicemail (IVR), internet, or other sources. Contractor will update certain Call Records in the database

2.10 Call Scripts/Screens - Functional Area One and Two

- 2.10.1 Agency shall develop all scripts and shall approve materials used in all projects.
- 2.10.2 Agency database and call database will be accessible to the Information Specialists and Agency to provide and receive pertinent information to address inquiries received via Internet, office mail and telephone calls to the Agency business office.

2.11 Telefax Capabilities – Functional Area One and Two

Contractor must incorporate telefax capabilities as a means to respond to the consumer.

2.12 Outbound Call center/telemarketing – Functional Area One and Two

- 2.12.1 At the direction of Agency, Contractor shall conduct telephone surveys of customers, consumers, and any other businesses deemed appropriate by Agency.
- 2.12.2 Agency shall develop the questions for each survey.
- 2.12.3 Contractor shall conduct all telephone surveys and electronically transmit the responses to the surveys and/or other information to Agency. Contractor is to provide results of the telephone surveys on computer disks or CDs. Disks or CDs must be IBM compatible and submitted in delimited, blank-delimited, or fixed field-length (SDF) ASCII text formats.

2.13 Web Transaction – Functional Area One

At the request and direction of Agency, Contractor shall make available live chat representatives with the knowledge and skills to respond professionally to a variety of interactions including, at a minimum, e-mail messages, text chat sessions, instant messaging, co-browsing and online forums.

2.14 Meetings - Functional Area One

The Contractor is required to meet monthly with the State Contract Manager. During transition or other critical periods of the contracts, more frequent meetings will be required. Meetings are normally face-to-face and are held in Baltimore, Maryland. In addition, there are annual, semi-annual, and quarterly meetings for Agency programs that the Contractor shall also be expected to attend (at their own expense) held at various Maryland locations.

2.15 Disaster Recovery – Functional Area One and Two

- 2.15.1 Contractor shall have a disaster recovery plan to protect against possible service interruption due to an emergency event such as fire, floods, hurricanes, etc. Call center operations are to be up and running within forty-eight (48) hours of the emergency event (Cold Site). Hot Site capability may be included in the plan only if it is part of Offeror's standard existing operating procedure.
- 2.15.2 Contractor shall have in place process and procedures for restoring service for situations where a reported service interruption cannot be resolved within four (4) hours and for services that cannot be restored within 48 hours. Service transfer capabilities and the lag time to implement must be described for both type of service outage scenario.
- 2.15.3 The plans must address how work orders will be submitted to State Agencies if the electronic system is down.

2.16 Staffing – Functional Area One

- 2.16.1 Contractor shall provide and adjust staff levels to service the volume of calls as anticipated by Agencies based on projections and schedules provided.
- 2.16.2 Staffing shall consist of, at a minimum, the following labor categories:
 - 1. Account Manager – shall be the chief point of contact during the entire term of the contract. Responsibilities include managing Agency programs on a regular basis by interfacing with internal staff, and technical staff to ensure responsiveness and program objectives are met. In developing new projects/campaigns, Agency relies upon the Account Manager to provide input and recommendations where applicable and maintain quality assurance. Account Manager must have a minimum of three years experience in Telemarketing and must proactively analyze Agency programs on an on-going basis to determine current and future requirements.

2. Supervisor/Information Specialist Trainer – responsibilities include, at a minimum, floor supervision, ongoing training, debriefing on projects, daily monitoring and quality performance of the Information and Outbound Telesales Specialists. Supervisor must have hands-on telephone experience, a minimum of three years supervisory experience and work directly with the Account Manager to ensure success of Agency program.
3. Inbound Information Specialists - shall represent Agency by answering its toll free lines, obtaining and giving information regarding Agency programs and provide quality customer service. The personnel hired as Information Specialists shall be first screened by the Contractor for diction, grammar, voice quality and articulation, proficiency with computer and customer service skills and experience. The skill level of this position is program/product knowledge intense, and Contractor shall provide measurable and predictable tools to this function. Inbound Specialists must be able to work on multiple programs simultaneously such as web-based application functions, out-bound activity, data entry, and/or assigned special projects. Information Specialists must have at least one (1) year of customer service experience
4. Outbound Telesales Specialists - shall possess professional telephone etiquette, voice quality and interact spontaneously with mental agility, enthusiasm and ability to “close the sale”. Outbound calls are not a daily occurrence, but may be required at times by Agency bound Specialists should be able to work on multiple programs simultaneously such as web-based application functions, out-bound activity, data entry, and/or assigned special projects.
5. Live Chat Representatives - must have knowledge and skills to respond professionally to a variety of interactions including but not limited to e-mail messages, text chat sessions, instant messaging, co-browsing and online forums.
6. IT Specialist Function – responsibilities include, but are not limited to, troubleshooting and resolving any issues or concerns that arise regarding the connectivity between the call center and the database system. The IT Specialist will also provide general troubleshooting of the call module in the areas of call center user accounts and call reports both of which are key functionality of the call module.
 - a. Telecommunications Specialist Function– responsibilities include, but not limited to, interface with telecommunication vendor to obtain toll free 800 numbers, assign DNIS numbers for specific campaigns and/or transfer toll free 800 numbers where applicable on behalf of the Agency. Telecommunications Specialists should have a minimum of three years experience working with Telecommunications vendors.

2.16.3 Throughout the life of the contract, Contractor shall provide a Project Management Team to implement the State Agency’s Call Center program and guidelines. The Project Management Team will consist of the Contractor’s Account Manager and the Supervisor/Information Specialist Trainer

- 2.16.4 The Contractor's Project Management Team is considered key personnel. The Contractor shall not divert such personnel to other projects without:
- Notifying the State Contract Manager thirty (30) days in advance
 - Providing information demonstrating that the proposed replacement candidate(s) possess comparable qualifications and experience.
 - Obtaining the State Contract Manager's written approval of the replacement candidates.

- 2.16.5 In the event that any of the personnel in the above positions leave the Contractor's employment, the Contractor shall:
- Notify the State Contract Manager and submit within five business days following the Contractor's receipt of the employees resignation notice, a recruitment plan that provides for filling the vacancy within thirty (30) days of the employee's resignation notice and how the position will be covered by existing staff pending the completion of recruitment.
 - Provide information demonstrating that the proposed replacement candidate possesses comparable qualifications and experience and obtain the State Contract Manager's written approval of the replacement candidate.

2.17 Training - Functional Area One

- 2.17.1 ALL TRAINING COSTS ARE THE CONTRACTOR'S RESPONSIBILITY. The State will not accept any separate invoicing for training and/or associated expenses, unless specifically authorized and agreed to by each Agency IN ADVANCE and in writing.
- 2.17.2 Information Specialists are required to receive product knowledge training. In addition, training will be provided for special event-based requirements. Contractor's Supervisor/Trainer shall work with the State Contract Manager to review Agency's current training manual.
- 2.17.3 Upon award of the Contract, Agency trainer shall conduct an initial up to two- week training program where indicated and needed, which will consist of product knowledge system training for the Call Center Supervisor/Trainer and Information Specialists before answering calls. Once the Supervisor/Trainer has completed initial training, ongoing training will be Contractor responsibility to provide all training for any new Information Specialists hired during the term of the contract.
- 2.17.4 The Contractor shall train and manage staff assigned to the Call Center as follows:
- Develop, conduct and maintain a comprehensive and continuous training program providing Information Specialists with the appropriate knowledge and current information to perform services required by the State Agency.
 - Ensure that all staff is trained in federal, state and local policies, procedures and State Agency operations, with approval/agreement by the State Agency.
 - Develop and update training manuals and training records for the State Agency's review approval.

- Provide copies of all training materials to the State Agency on an ongoing basis.
- Implement a procedure and schedule for ongoing training, refresher training and has a dedicated trainer onsite to conduct training that will be monitored by the State Agency.
- Conduct training that would include (but not be limited to):
 - Sensitivity awareness training
 - Projecting positive and helpful attitude
 - Communicating with confidence and competence
 - Adhere to confidentiality policies and procedures
 - Customer Service Enhancement

2.17.5 Contractor(s) must provide training to their staff to maintain continued effective operation of the Call Center replacement staff and refresher or update training as needed.

2.17.6 The State Agency shall update the Supervisor/Trainer on an as needed basis concerning policy updates. The State Agency will provide current desk reference guide material and other reference information as needed.

2.17.7 Any training required for new projects, new subject matters and certain familiarization throughout the term of the contract shall be at the cost and responsibility of Agency. Whenever new projects are introduced, the Account Manager and the Supervisor/Trainer shall evaluate the quality standards and time required to train the Information Specialists. Training can be formal in terms of an actual “classroom setting” or “on-the-job” training as part of the Supervisor/Trainer’s responsibility. Training shall consist of, at a minimum:

- Introduction and purpose of the project
- History or project background information
- Product familiarity, Call content/project knowledge
- Script familiarity
- Role-play activities
- Production and Quality measurement criteria
- Oral Quiz
- Written test
- Review

2.17.8 Training will be conducted at Contractor’s location, Agency offices, or at other locations within Maryland as designated by Agency.

2.18 System Troubleshooting – Functional Area One and Two

2.18.1 The Contractor(s) shall correct all system problems and application problems under its control within (4) hours of detection. Any problems related to system functionality (i.e., hardware, lines, etc.), which are not under Contractor control, must be reported to the State Contract Manager immediately upon detection.

2.18.2 Contractor is required to provide troubleshooting and connectivity issue resolution between the call center and database systems. The Contractor shall provide general

troubleshooting of the call module in the areas of call center user accounts and call reports both of which are key functionality of the call module.

- 2.18.3 The Contractor(s) shall notify the State Contract Manager two calendar weeks in advance, by confirmed e-mail, phone or fax of any planned service outages that may affect the State's services provided, or describe alternate plans.

2.19 Quality Control – Functional Area One and Two

- 2.19.1 Contractor line supervisors will monitor a minimum of ten-percent (10%) of all calls received by information specialists for quality control. A monthly report of recorded results will be submitted to the State Contractor Manager
- 2.19.2 The Contractor shall facilitate and allow the State Contract Manager and Agency Call Center Program Manager access to Contractor's screen data displaying real time call center telephone activities (all volume, number of calls in queue, waiting time, available staff, etc.) This screen availability system shall be available on equipment housed at the State Contractor Manager and Agency Call Center Program Manager's offices.
- 2.19.3 The Contractor shall verify credentials of authorized State audit personnel prior to any quality control audit. These audit reviews will incorporate but are not limited to the following:
- Review the Contractor's compliance with contract terms, system specifications, pertinent federal, state, and local laws and regulations, and administrative and program documentation.
 - Review invoices for accuracy.

The Contractor shall be notified in writing, through the State Contract Manager, of the results of any audits. The Contractor shall respond in writing and correct any deficiencies noted by the auditor as specified in this RFP.

2.20 Transition – Functional Area One

The incumbent contract terms expires on May 31, 2004. The new contract will begin in February 2004. Therefore, "transition-in" of services shall begin at contract award and be completed by May 31, 2004, to include transfer of all data and services. Describe transition-in plan in detail in technical proposal.

- 2.20.1 The Transition Plans must include, but not be limited to the following:
- Address all legal regulations and requirements
 - Listing/obtaining of office space, furniture, equipment, telephone and data lines
 - Installation of any furniture, equipment, telephone and data lines
 - System Security and Security aspects related to a safe environment for staff and customers
 - Transfer and organization of documentation
 - Transfer of electronic data

- Coordination of enabling or disabling of logon IDs
- Establishing or terminating contracts for other services
- Implementation of standard operating procedures, generally accepted accounting procedures, generally accepted audit standards, and security over the computer system
- Training of staff
- Risk analyses and their proposed solution(s), and their assessment for the transition
- Transfer of services including cutover dates
- The End-To-End Performance Testing Period*
- Staffing
- Hardware and/or Software Tools
- Hardware and Software platforms utilized

2.20.2 **End-To-End Performance Test Period:** The end-to-end performance test period will begin during the transition period. The end-to-end performance test period shall be to test complete business processes as required for the utmost reliability of the Call Center, and shall include at a minimum:

- a. Testing with existing system applications and services as appropriate;
- b. Validate system set-up for transactions and user access;
- c. Confirm use of system in performing business processes;
- d. Verify performance of business critical functions;
- e. Confirm integrity of business process, data, services, security, and end-products;
- f. Verify all requirements of the RFP have been met;
- g. Speed of performance;
- h. Rate of errors or failures;

If it is determined that the scheduled End-To-End Performance Test Period does not allow for all business processes to be tested (i.e. rounds, inspections, audits), then the Contractor will, at no charge to the State, provide all resources necessary to correct the problems of the system and services for an additional period, until the system is free from performance problems and meets all specifications as defined in this RFP. If performance problems or specification problems continue, liquidated damages may be assessed.

2.20.3 The Contractor is also required to provide a "Transition-Out" plan as an end-of-contract transition prior to the conclusion of the contract awarded as a result of this RFP. This Plan shall document and demonstrate how the call center services and operations will be transferred to a potential new contractor. In addition to this Transition-Out Plan, the Contractor shall be required to document all hardware and software platforms, scripts,

business processes, databases, hardware architecture, tools, etc., used in their operations. The Contractor shall provide technical support to ensure a smooth, effective, reliable transition.

2.21 Ownership of Data – Functional Area One and Two

- 2.21.1 All State of Maryland data stored on Contractor’s servers or other equipment is owned by the State of Maryland and must be provided to the State and/or a designated future Contractor upon request by the State Contract Manager. The State reserves the right to determine the format in which the data is transferred.
- 2.21.2 All data provided to the Contractor remains the property of the State. All data generated during the performance of the contract are the property of State. All State owned data must be used only for the purposes of administering the Call Center System. The data will not be utilized for any other purpose, commercial or otherwise, unless specifically authorized by the State.

2.22 Order Process - Functional Area One and Two

- 2.22.1 The State Contract Manager will process the Agency service request and fax or electronically submit the request to the Contractor.
- 2.22.2 The Contractor shall respond to the request by email or fax with all pertinent order information within ten (10) business days.
- 2.22.3 The State Contract Manager will fax or electronically submit a purchase order to the Contractor. This P.O. will serve the Contractor as a notice to proceed for specific services.
- 2.22.4 The Contractor shall respond to the Purchase Order by email or fax with all pertinent order information within three (3) business days. Each Purchase Order will include the name, telephone number and e-mail address of the State Contract Manager who should receive the order information.

2.23 Billing Information – Functional Area One

- 2.23.1 The Contractor shall provide and send separate monthly invoices to each individual Agency/entity that procures services under the contract. A copy of the invoice shall be submitted to the State Contract Manager. The invoices shall be dated the first of the month. In addition, one invoice will be submitted electronically on a CD to the State Contract Manager on a monthly basis for the previous month’s service by the 15th calendar day of the following month, i.e., a copy of June’s bill will be submitted by the 15th of July. The monthly invoice shall include at a minimum the following:
- Name and Address of the vendor
 - Account Number
 - Invoice number and date
 - Billing period
 - State Purchase Order Number

- Type of Service Provided
 - Quantity of Service Units (Minutes of Service, Hours Worked, etc.)
 - Discounts (if applicable)
 - Unit Price (Per Minute, Hourly wage, etc.)
 - Total current charges
 - Past due charges
 - Balance to date
 - Date due
 - Remittance address
 - Toll Free telephone number for billing inquiries
 - Federal Identification Number
- 2.23.2 The Contractor(s) shall provide with the monthly invoice a call detail report. (See Reports Section for details).
- 2.23.3 Contractor will provide:
- One single Master State Account Number for all services activated under the contract
 - The Master State Account is necessary to allow the Department of Budget and Management State Contract Manager to manage the contract as a whole
 - Sub-Accounts for all State Agencies
 - The sub-accounts are necessary to allow the Agencies of the State to manage the billing under the contract
 - Further sub-divided account numbers for units within State Agencies
 - Further sub-divided accounts are necessary to allow units within an agency to monitor employee usage.
- 2.23.4 Charges for late payment of invoices, other than as prescribed by Title 15, Subtitle 1, of the State Finance and Procurement Article, Annotated Code of Maryland, are prohibited. The final payment under the contract will not be made until after certification is received from the Comptroller of the State that all taxes have been paid.
- 2.23.5 The contractor will designate a Billing Point of Contract (BPOC) and a Backup Billing Point of Contact (BBPOC) to the State Contract Manager for routine billing issues.
- 2.23.6 Invoices shall not contain any charges over 90 days old for services or equipment delivered.
- 2.23.7 The contractor(s) will provide an Internet website to review and eventually pay invoices electronically. Contractor shall provide its' website URL as part of its' technical proposal. Each individual account will only be accessible to the authorized account holder, which will be each state agency point of contact. The State Contract Manager shall have electronic access to all State accounts.
- 2.23.8 Contractor is to archive a copy of all monthly invoices by agency retained on an individual CD and will be accessible to the State Contract Manager on demand.
- 2.23.9 Electronic Invoicing Format: The State seeks to implement electronic invoicing and payment. Some of the State agencies currently have this capability, as well as Internet capability, other State agencies do not. For the purposes of this RFP, the State is specifically seeking vendor capability for prompt, efficient and accurate invoicing only.

Electronic payment capability by the State is not yet established. When applicable and where security measures are enforced both on the State and Contractor's sides as noted below in Section 2.24 Security, the Contractor shall submit invoicing and provide for invoice reporting using secure electronic transmission and secure logon capability. If the State agency that is being invoiced does not have Internet capability and secure transmission capability per the standards noted below, all invoices must be submitted to the individual agencies by hard copy and CD format per the schedule noted in Section 2.23.1 above.

It is the responsibility of the Contractor to contact the individual agency representative noted on the Purchase Order (state agency contact) and determine if secure electronic transmission protocol and encryption is appropriate for invoicing. The final determination must be recorded in a memo with a copy to the State Contract Manager. The security of transmission and encryption must be tested on a semi-annual basis, or more often as necessary given emergency or other special events. If at any time, secure transmission protocol and/or encryption is not upheld, subsequent invoicing must be by hard copy and CD format until such time the secure transmission protocol and/or encryption can be demonstrated. The Contractor will document to the individual State agency Point of Contact and the State Contract Manager both nonconformance and return to conformance.

The vendors responding to this RFP must describe in detail their invoicing procedures and format for both hard copy, CD, electronic invoicing/payment, electronic transmission protocol methods and standards, encryption methods and standards, and secure logon access and standards.

2.24 Security – Functional Area One and Two

- 2.24.1 The Contractor will comply with the State of Maryland Security Policy and Standards of Security and Privacy:(Attachment G). Primary objectives are:
- To establish a secure environment for the processing of data
 - To reduce information security risk
 - To communicate the responsibilities for the protection of information
- 2.24.2 All Contractor personnel is responsible for:
- Being aware of their responsibilities for protecting IT assets of State agencies and the State;
 - Exercising due diligence in carrying out the State's IT Security Policy;
 - Being accountable for their actions relating to their use of all State IT Systems and Internet Access; Using IT resources and Internet Access only for intended purposes as defined by policies, laws and regulations of the State.
- 2.24.3 With this in mind, the vendors shall include in their methodology requested above for electronic invoicing capability the following:
- Access control to provide documents to authorized people
 - Appropriate levels of access, without compromising confidentiality, privacy or security
 - Broad availability and comprehensive security

- Search, retrieve and view documents with any web browser
- Printing of viewed documents
- System of access control, function rights, redaction level security, audit trails
- System administration of security controls to folders and documents, including redacted documents
- Hardware independence
- Ensures integrity, reliability, and accuracy
- The ability to integrate with Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) or digital signature software.
- Secure Access in compliance with State Security Policy (Attachment G)
- The Contractor shall comply with the Federal Guidelines for Web Accessibility, available at www.section508.gov (Attachment K)

2.25 Reports – Functional Area One

- 2.25.1 The Contractor will have in place a comprehensive call flow and intelligent routing process. The System must have the capability of generating customized reports. This customized report generator must be Windows based. The reporting software must have real-time access to all of the System's data
- 2.25.2 Contractor shall generate reports to evaluate Agency programs and services system effectiveness. Such reports shall be produced individually or combined and shall be provided on a daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, semi-annual, annual basis and/or by special request. Reports shall be submitted on-line to the State Contract Manager and Agency Program Managers. Reports monitoring call traffic and other reports must also be available for Agency Program Managers via on-line, electronic transmission, modem, on diskette or CD, etc. Diskettes or CDs must be IBM compatible and submitted in delimited, blank-delimited, or fixed field-length (SDF) ASCII text formats. Reports shall include, at a minimum:
- ACD Reports – average number of agents, total calls accepted, total calls answered, ACD calls referred, average answered, average abandoned, ACD down time, average ACD talk time (seconds), maximum answered, total ACD talk time (seconds), total not ready time, total down time, total wait time, total staff time, customer service staffing level per hour
 - Call volume reports - number of calls during each hour, number of abandoned calls, number of incomplete calls, busy signals and rollovers, length of calls, percentage of calls answered and serviced vs. total calls received, etc.
 - Performance Reports – system down time, monthly turnover rate, average time in queue, average call duration per agency, number of calls handled per hour, number of staff on duty daily, number of calls transferred to agencies, problem/complaint resolution log
 - Abandoned rate reports
 - Trouble (Maintenance) Report
 - Other information the State Contract Manager and Agency Program Managers may request to monitor and control this contract.

2.26 Liquidated Damages

2.26.1 It is critical to the success of the State's programs that services be maintained in accordance with the schedules agreed upon by the State. It is also critical to the success of the State's programs that the Contractor operates in an extremely reliable manner.

2.26.2 It would be impracticable and extremely difficult to fix the actual damage sustained by the State in the event of delays in service, reporting, and contacting key Contractor personnel on scheduled work and provision of services to the citizens of the State. The State and the Contractor, therefore, presume that in the event of any such delay, the amount of damage which will be sustained from a delay will be the amount set forth in the paragraphs below, and the Contractor agrees that in the event of any such delay, the Contractor shall pay such amount as liquidated damages and not as a penalty. The State, at its option for amount due the State as liquidated damages, may deduct such from any money payable to the Contractor or may bill the Contractor as a separate item

2.26.3 Liquidated Damages for Unsuccessful or Delayed Transition-In versus representation in the Offeror's Plan will be addressed by the State Contract Manager commensurate with severity of problem and may result in forfeiture of bonds and contract.

2.26.4 Liquidated Damages for interruption of Service:

Reliability of the service of the Contractor network is of the essence. Downtime on any part of the contracted service must be minimized by prompt response and corrective action within four clock hours of the detection of a loss of service of the network by either the DBM Contract Manager or the Contractor. If the Contractor fails to return service of the network within the four hours, then the State may assess liquidated damages in the following amounts:

Beginning with the fifth hour and for any successive hour or portion thereof without service of the network, an assessment of \$100.00 per hour or portion thereof will be made against the Contractor.

2.26.5 Liquidated Damages for failure to deliver reports:

Beginning with the first business day and for any successive day or portion thereof a report is past due, an assessment of \$100.00 per day or portion thereof will be made against the Contractor.

2.26.6 Liquidated Damages for failure to keep contact information up to date or meet contact times:

Beginning with the first hour and for any successive hour or portion thereof the Contractor fails to be in contact with the DBM Contract Manager for all emergencies, an assessment of \$100.00 per hour or portion thereof will be made against the Contractor.

Beginning with the first business day and for any successive day or portion thereof the Contractor fails to be in contact with DBM Contract Manager concerning questions and resolutions of billing issues, an assessment of \$100.00 per day or portion thereof will be made against the Contractor.

Beginning with the first business day and for any successive day or portion thereof the Contractor fails to be in contact with the DBM Contract Manager concerning routine service ordering, an assessment of \$100.00 per day or portion thereof will be made against the Contractor.

- 2.26.7 Liquidated Damages for performance standard failures:
\$100.00/day per infraction
- 2.26.8 When liquidated damages are assessed against the Contractor, the State Contract Manager will provide written notice of the reason and how the liquidated damages were calculated.
- 2.26.9 The Contractor will not be assessed liquidated damages when the interruption of service or failure to perform described in this Section 2.26 arises out of causes beyond the control and without the fault or negligence of the Contractor. Such causes may include, but are not restricted to, acts of God or of the public enemy, acts of the State in either its sovereign or contractual capacity, fires, floods, epidemics, quarantine restrictions, strikes, freight embargoes, and unusually severe weather; but in every case the failure to perform shall be beyond the control and without the fault or negligence of the Contractor. If the failure to perform is caused by the default of a subcontractor, and if the default arises out of causes beyond the control of both the Contractor and subcontractor, and without the fault or negligence of either of them, the Contractor shall not be liable for any excess costs for failure to perform unless substitute performance for the subcontractor was obtainable from another source in sufficient time to permit the Contractor to meet the performance schedule.

2.27 AGENCY SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS (Functional Area One)

This section addresses Agency specific needs as they are known that may vary from or be more demanding than conventional call center services as described before. Unless otherwise noted (MTA), these needs are in addition to all other traditional services. This section is designed to help establish the basis for pricing in the financial proposal.

1. DHR Constituent Services

- 2.27.1 The Call Center handles a high volume of short to medium duration telephone calls. The type of calls include: General information and referral, welfare fraud, child abuse and neglect adoption, temporary cash assistance, food stamps, foster care, adult abuse and neglect, energy assistance, customer/complaints/concerns, appeals, crisis management and all other DHR services/programs.
- 2.27.2 The Call Center will capture the following information:
- Jurisdiction of service needed and zip code.
 - When appropriate, caller's full name, address, telephone number, type of service, purpose of call, general information and where caller is linked when needed.
- 2.27.3 The Call Center will determine the resource information needed by caller, through a comprehensive interview and assessment process. When services are required, the Call Center will link the caller directly to the appropriate service.
- 2.27.4 The Contractor must develop and maintain an access link from DHR to the Contractor, which will support the transfer of screen data to the Constituent Services Office.
- 2.27.5 The Call Center's Workstation computer system must connect with DHR's Client Automated Resource Eligibility System (CARES) mainframe database. The workstation computers will be configured to boot up in Windows mode. CARES needs to be available, in order for the Customer Service Representative to review and screen case information.
- 2.27.6 Customer complaints regarding DHR programs and services will be screened by the Call Center and when appropriate, callers will be linked to the DHR Constituent Services Office to a Customer Advocate for further processing.
- 2.27.7 Reports – These reports must be supplied to the DHR Constituent Services Call Center Project Manager via email every Monday on a weekly basis.
- 1) Total number of calls received per day by jurisdiction (23 counties and Baltimore City)
 - 2) Local department contact linkage (call, refer and transfer) information
 - 3) Number of calls received by language and call type per day
 - 4) A daily report of literature request(s) with name, mailing address and type of information requested.

2. DHR Child Support

2.27.8 The Maryland Department of Human Resources, Child Support Enforcement Administration (CSEA) administers a statewide child support enforcement program intended to ensure that non-custodial parents fulfill their obligations to provide financial and medical support for their children. The program is currently serving 312,872 cases and is offered through state and county funded agencies in 24 jurisdictions (see Attachment I for current statistics).

2.27.9 CSEA currently administers a number of programs that facilitate the location of parents, establishment of paternity, collection and disbursement of child support obligations. The contractor shall adhere to CSEA policy and procedures in complying with these and any future programs.

2.27.10 Client Information System (CIS)

CIS is an interactive database system comprised of three component systems, the Client Database (CDB), the Client Automated Resources and Eligibility System (CARES) and the Child Support Enforcement System (CSES). CIS is a multi-tiered architecture. The client tier is Internet Explorer 5.5 and Microsoft Word with a customized Word document template (used for Document Generation). The CIS currently links Child Support Enforcement Administration, Family Investment Administration and Social Services offices in all Maryland jurisdictions. Data communications are accomplished via a frame relay network that uses Cisco routers to transport the System Network Architecture (SNA) packets under IP. CSES equipment in local child support agencies consists of IBM and DELL Pentium II and IV processing personal computers (PCs) running Windows NT; the CSES program runs in Windows under NT. CIS maintains the following data: custodial and non-custodial parent and child(ren) demographic data and social security numbers; custodial and non-custodial parent information; non-custodial parent employment information and payment history; and court related data, such as docket numbers and case action logs. Inquiry only access to CARES is available to CSES users.

Software enhancements and modifications are migrated on a monthly or as needed basis. The contractor shall ensure that all workstations are updated with the complete current version of CSES software within 48 hours after the completion of each migration.

The CSES is unavailable during month begin and month end processing from 7:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. The CIS 2004 Production Operations Schedule will be provided to the Contractor after the contract has been awarded. DHR will notify Contractor of any changes in the schedule.

2.27.11 Voice Response System

DHR's OTHS operates and supports the child support interactive voice response system (IVRS). The IVRS provides the following case level and general child support information for customers:

- A. amounts and dates of collection;
- B. amount of support order and date the payment is due;
- C. total balance of the case;
- D. arrearage amount for each account;
- E. court hearing date; and, case status.

The IVRS is accessible via a local telephone number for callers in the Baltimore metropolitan area and via an 800 number elsewhere. The IVRS also features voice recognition for those individuals who do not have access to a touch-tone telephone.

2.27.12 Agency Specific Tasks:

1. When a customer calls, the call is filtered through the Customer Service Call Center. The caller is greeted by an interactive voice response (IVR) that will transfer the caller to a Child Support Call Center representative, who will address the caller's concerns. Generally, the caller is provided with the current status of their case, an explanation of what action has been taken in the past and when appropriate, that work order has been generated and the local office will be in contact with them within 20 days.
2. The Contractor shall coordinate its publicity activities with the CSEA Contract Manager as it relates to the child support customer service call center operation.
3. The Contractor will mail CSEA forms (CSEA supplies the forms) upon request such as:
 - Application for Services
 - Review for Modification to Child Support Order
 - Tax and Lottery Intercept Appeal
 - Application to the Cash Pay, Direct Deposit Programs
 - Universal Credit Reporting Form
4. If the Contractor receives information from the customer for change of employment of Absent/Non-Custodial Parent, the Contractor must take action to verify employment and, once the employment is verified, update CSES system to initiate AEW/EWO process.
5. If Contractor receives information from customer to change address of Absent/Non-Custodial Parent, the Contractor must verify the address and update the CSES system with the verified address.
6. Upon receiving an inquiry requesting enforcement action on interstate cases, the Contractor must mail completed interstate transmittal to the appropriate state.
7. The Contractor must create explanatory case notes on the appropriate CSES screen for each call handled for which there is a CSES case. A case note shall be created for each CSES case related call, even if the call is transferred to a CSEA local office or another entity.
8. The Contractor must establish and maintain a procedures for responding to the following types of inquires:
 - Payment Receipt and Distribution
 - Disbursement

- Case Status
- Tax Refund Offset
- Address Updates
- License Revocation
- Asset Seizure
- Employee/Employment Data Updates
- Order Modification
- System Inquiries
- General Child Support Questions
- Direct Deposit/Cash Pay

2.27.13 Agency Specific Performance Standard:

1. The Contractor shall handle and process at least 100% of all calls answered with no more than 20% referral of work orders to local child support offices daily for follow-up resolution.
2. The Contractor shall ensure work orders error rate does not exceed 1%.
3. The Contractor shall ensure that a line supervisor review at least 10% of all work orders completed by each operator and the results are recorded and submitted to the CSEA Contract Manager on a monthly report.
4. The Contractor must ensure that all work orders are referred within the same day that the inquiry is received.
5. The Contractor shall ensure that every answered call is documented in the case action logs of the Child Support Enforcement System (CSES).
6. The Contractor must document all case action logs in accordance with the Customer Service Call Center Desk Reference Guide with the appropriate case information.
7. The Contractor must transfer “Hot Calls” to the local child support office in accordance with instructions to be provided by DHR.

2.27.14 Agency Specific Support:

1. The Contractor shall furnish the PC workstations and DHR shall support the child support software for the contract term, and provide support as follows:
 - Level I of the Office of Technology for Human Services (OTHS) System Support Center handles all calls that come to the OTHS for services. The person who answers the phone will either resolve some of the issues (such as a logon ID that needs to be reset) or will create a work order that is assigned to the appropriate unit.
 - Level II of System Support is assigned by the Client Automated Resources and Eligibility System (CARES), the Child Support Enforcement System (CSES) and Service problems in the Client Information Systems (CIS). The analysts in Level II pull work orders from a database system that houses work orders. The work orders

are pulled in order of receipt and are separated into three groups, CARES, CSES and Services.

The Contractor must provide access to the OTHS staff to set up hardware operations and to perform software installation and upgrades on PC workstations and communications.

The Contractor shall not relocate controllers. The Contractor shall not relocate workstations and printers that have been installed by the Department without prior approval and assistance from OTHS. In addition, the contractor shall not make any changes or modifications to the system hardware or software without written approval from OTHS.

2.27.15 Confidentiality

Except in accordance with a court order, neither party shall use or disclose any information concerning a recipient of the services provided under this agreement for any purposes not directly connected with the administration of such services, except upon written consent of the Party providing the information and the recipient of his or her responsible parent, guardian, or legal representative or as required under 10-611 et.seq., State Government Article, and Article 88A-6 and 6A Maryland Annotated Code and Comar 07.01.07.

Nothing in this agreement shall prevent the Parties from using and disclosing statistical data derived from information concerning a recipient of the services provided under this Agreement so long as that statistical data does not identify any recipient of such services.

Any contractor employee who breaches confidentiality requirements will be terminated. Contractor breach of confidentiality with regard to data or information it has access to through the CSES system or Customer Service Unit will be cause for contract termination for cause and prosecution to the full extent of the law.

2.27.16 Agency Specific Project Management

The Contractor shall provide project management. Specifically, the Contractor shall:

- Provide procedures and controls to manage the project resources.
- Utilize an automated support tool(s) to plan, track and report project status, including the status of all Scope of Work requirements.
- Attend meetings with Department personnel and provide project status as requested by the CSEA Contract Manager.

The Contractor shall provide procedures and controls to manage the project resources. The Contractor shall utilize automated support tool(s) to plan, track and report project status, and the status of all Scope of Work requirements. The Contractor shall establish procedures, with the concurrence of the CSEA Contract Manager, for obtaining State approvals of deliverables, including requested turn-around time for State review, acceptance, or rejection of deliverables.

The Contractor's Project Manager shall meet with the CSEA's Project Manager every two weeks and meet monthly with other entities providing child support services.

2.27.17 Agency Specific Training

- a) The Contractor shall develop, implement and train staff to maintain internal operating procedures for every phase of the child support service call center delivery. Such procedures must include standard operating procedures, desk guides, and other written documentation or work processes. The Contractor shall submit to the CSEA Project Manager a copy of the internal procedures 15 calendar days after the contract start date.
- b) Periodic training may be necessary to all appropriate child support staff (including the Contractor's staff) statewide when new policy is being implemented. At the inception of the project, CSEA will provide a five-day initial training that will include:
 - Program Training
 - Systems Training
 - Desk Guide Training
 - Role Play
 - Telephone Techniques

CSEA will provide future training for Contractor's supervisors and CSEA will train the trainer regarding new policy and system modification training. The Contractor will be responsible for training all remaining staff.

2.27.18 Federal Regulations

Federal regulations contain detailed performance requirements and time frames. The Contractor shall comply with all aspects of the child support program as defined in federal regulations at 45 CFR 303 and CSEA policy. Failure to provide comprehensive documentation may result in contract termination for non-compliance.

Contractor will maintain at a minimum the following documentation in CSES:

- Contacts with the custodial parent and non-custodial parent, including date, reason, and result.
- Documentation of entries and updates on CSES at the time of the call with the custodial parent, non-custodial parent, local child support office, central CSEA office staff, etc. (Note: CSES will automatically generate some selective case action logs.)
 - Each step of case actions
 - Result of actions and conversations
 - Person taking the action (CSES will automatically update the system with the logon ID that is used to identify who is completing the system update)
 - Use only those abbreviations listed in the Call Center Guide Glossary.

2.27.19 Agency Specific Reports:

- a) Monthly Invoice – This report must include the following columns: Calls Received, Calls Answered, Calls Abandoned, Abandon Rate (%), Number of Work Orders (Enforcement/Establishment), Number of Hot Calls. Statistics will be sorted and sub-totaled by jurisdictions.
- b) Fiscal Year Report
- c) Monthly Trend Indicator

3. MTA

2.27.20 The Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) in-house Transit Information Center (TIC), which is a division of Customer Information, handles 12,000-15,000 calls a day through its Interactive Voice Response System and its in-house telephone agents. A major transportation crisis could cause a serious hardship on Transit Information to adequately respond to its customers' information requests. There will be occasions where an instant backup call center group will be needed to support TIC. Offeror will address only this need as part of the Comprehensive Plan.

4. DHMH

- 2.27.21 The Home and Community – Based Waiver Programs Waiver Services Registry requires information to be collected from the callers and entered into a database to create a registry of requesters. There are approximately 5,000 to 6,000 requesters in the current database.
- 2.27.22 As State funding becomes available, Contractor will do mailings of documents developed by DHMH to confirm/activate callers recorded in the registry.
- 2.27.23 Over the course of the year, the Contractor will confirm activation of the requestor by mail and telephone. If there is no response from the requester after 15 days, a second letter will be mailed. If there is no response within 7 more days, the requester will be removed from the registry. Volume of this program depends totally on funding, and may vary from 50 to 500 per year.

2.28 Department of Natural Resources - FUNCTIONAL AREA TWO

2.28.1 Overview

The State Forest and Park Service (SFPS) of the Maryland DNR requires a full service call center with a system that takes reservations, makes cancellations (and issues credit) for campsites, cabins and picnic shelters. DNR also requires the Contractor to provide the software to support the call center operation, reservation check-in and same day registration for walk-in customers at each Forest and Park and the capability to make reservations using the Internet.

2.28.2 Requirements

1. The proposed reservation system must currently be used in the same capacity either by the Federal government, other state governments, local governments or private sector enterprises.
2. Two complete copies of System documentation of all facets of the System must be furnished as a part of the proposal. (i.e. Table descriptions, System limitations, etc.)

2.28.3 System Demonstration

In support and part of the proposal, Offeror will present a complete system demonstration at DNR Headquarters in Annapolis.

A suggested scenario might use three computers with modem capability. One computer will simulate the call center computer with call center operator access. The other two computers will simulate two separate remote location computers. The Offeror will enter inventory specific to the separate remote locations into the respective remote location computer. DNR will provide the Offeror with a list of customers for the database. DNR will simulate calls to a call center for the purpose of making reservations.

In lieu of the above demonstration, the State will accept a demonstration of a current application of another state or federal park reservation system. Demonstration of that system's capabilities and performance certification and endorsements from those users are acceptable.

Features to be demonstrated will include the following functions to be performed by the Contractor:

- Call Center searches for Forest/Park locations and available sites
- Ability to query a customer from the customer database
- Ability to take a reservation for campsites, cabins, and picnic shelters
- Automated transmission of data between the call center computer and a remote location computer
- Check-in of customers with reservations
- Searches for available sites by remote location operators
- Registration of walk-in customers

- Changing the length of a stay, resulting in a refund and recalculation of service charges
- Check-out function
- Printing of reports, to include at least the following: Arrival, Departure, Unsatisfied Calls, Status Chart, Revenue, Summary of Receipts, Occupancy, Operator Activity, and Customer History.
- Point-of-Sale handling capability
- Ad Hoc reporting capability
- Ability to use computer maps to check on site availability and to select sites for a registration.

2.28.4 **Coordination With DNR**

The DNR System Administrator (DNRSA) will be the liaison between DNR and the Contractor. Management issues, such as coordination, problem resolution, and database changes will go through the DNRSA. Offeror will demonstrate that proposed system supports the following minimum functions:

Using the DNRSA' computer, the DNRSA must be able to:

- Have access to statewide information and reservation data.
- Quickly and easily update the Forest/Park Special Events listing for use in alerts and confirmation vouchers.
- Put Forest/Parks, Forest/Park areas, loops or sites on hold for management purposes for any range of dates. A reason for the hold should be given and logged (Example: Maintenance, Gratis, Administrative). The DNRSA must have the ability to hold sites up to 12 months in advance.
- Maintain and update rate tables, service charge schedules, and any constants used by the System. These items must not be hard coded into the programming.
- Enter a temporary site alert (problems with sites such as a tree down in the area, showers not working).
- Make "site use service charge" waiver (i.e., Fee Waiver) reservations
- Print "canned" reports and create ad-hoc reports.

A Contractor Representative must participate annually if requested in the Fall DNR Manager's Meeting to report on the System, and to receive input and critique. Within 30 days after the annual meeting, the Contractor must submit a response to concern/issues brought up by DNR. The response will be used by DNR and the Contractor to mutually develop solutions.

At the annual Fall DNR Manager's Meeting, the Contractor will supply site inventory reports for each remote location (2,600 sites within Maryland). DNR personnel will then review and submit changes for all site inventory data. The Contractor will enter these changes into the DNR database at no cost to DNR.

2.28.5 **Hardware/Software Information**

The remote location software must be compatible with the existing DNR hardware and software platform.

Hardware specifications:

Gateway Deskpro 2000
800 MHZ PENTIUM
192 MB RAM
20 GIG HD
16 MB VIDEO
3 1/4" floppy drive
Internal modem 56K Gateway VX700 16" color monitor

Software specifications:

Microsoft NT 4.0 Server-1copy
Microsoft NT 4.0 Media-1copy
Microsoft SQL 6.5 Server-1 copy
Microsoft SQL 6.5Client- 40 copies
Windows 98- 40 copies/Windows 2000 for systems on DNR Wide Area Network

The System must be convertible to Microsoft SQL Server and accessible by associated software used to access the database and generate reports.

The system must be able to process and retain an average of individual 75,000 reservations/registrations per year, for the life of the contract.

The system must be able to process and retain at least 50,000 customer records annually for the life of the contract.

The system must provide audit trail, archiving, retrieval and purging function.

2.28.6 **Service Charges – Payments**

The System must have the capability to allow for update of service charges by site . DNR must have the ability to annually submit to the Vendor updated site use service charges. The Contractor will enter these changes at no cost to DNR.

The System must have the ability to allow updates to the discounts DNR occasionally extends to the public. DNR must have the ability to annually submit to the Contractor revised discounts. The Contractor will enter these revisions at no cost to DNR.

The System must accept a deferred payment reservation as long as the reservation is made at least 21 days prior to arrival. If payment has not been received within 15 days of making the reservation, the reservation must be revoked and the System must print and send a notice of revocation to the customer. The Contractor will not bill DNR for automatic revocation.

Upon request, the System must print an invoice to be mailed or faxed to a group that requires documentation before they can mail a check for a deferred payment. The invoice must be mailed or faxed by the Contractor on the day the reservation is made. In this situation, the caller should be given 21 days for his check to be received. If these checks are not received within 21 days of making the reservation, the System must revoke the reservation following the same procedure as above.

2.28.7 **Credit/Debit Card Transactions**

At remote locations, Contractor's system must support the function to immediately confirm the validity of a credit/debit card

Contractor will mail confirmation vouchers to card customers only after the State's card service provider has approved the card

2.28.8 **Service Charge Changes/Cancellations Reservation Change/Cancellation**

Change is any alteration in a reservation including the alteration of the arrival and departure date, Forest/Park, or site. A change also refers to shortening or extending a reservation. Updating customer information is not a change. One free change per customer allowed without charge.

Cancellation occurs when, by customer request, an entire reservation is removed from the System and the customer is no longer using DNR inventory.

Proposed system must be able to address the following and similar scenarios germane to Park Service Reservation System (Offeror to describe in plan):

If the customer requests a change while still on the original phone call, the operator must provide the change. This action will not be considered as the one free change allowed or a chargeable change. Once the customer hangs up the phone, the reservation is final.

After a customer has arrived for their stay and the DNR staff performs a customer-initiated change of site number or length of stay, no transaction service charges will apply.

If a customer shortens their stay below the minimum stay requirements for the time period, they must not be refunded for the days within the minimum stay requirement. (Example: 3 nights for camping on a holiday weekend, 7 nights for a cabin in the summer).

DNR remote location operators will not process customer initiated reservation cancellations except for day of arrival or after day of arrival. Customers who want to cancel will be directed to contact the Call Center during business hours.

The Contractor must not charge the customer for reservation changes or cancellations that are initiated by either DNR or the Contractor. In these cases, the Contractor must make every effort to rebook the customer. If rebooking is not possible, then a full refund must be made.

The System must not allow a change or cancellation of a reservation when the scheduled check-out date has already passed. Example: a no-show customer attempts to cancel a reservation to get their money back..

The System must allow operators to update customer information at the Call Center or Remote Location at no charge (Example: Name, address, phone numbers).

2.28.9 **Refund Processing:**

Offeror's proposal will address how the following functions are accomplished by vendor's system:

1. At the Call Center, refunds to customers will be by: a) crediting a customer's credit/debit card account, or b) by check issued by the Contractor.
2. At the remote locations refunds to customers should be by: a) crediting a customer's credit/debit card account, b) request for check issued by Contractor, or c) cash.
3. To facilitate the refund process, the System must calculate and display all transaction service charges, site use service charges, and the amount of the refund to be issued.
4. Whenever possible, the System should provide refunds by the same method of payment as the original payment (**Examples:** Same credit/debit card, cash at remote locations)
5. For refunds, the System must take into consideration DNR's cancellation policy, which has three tiers of penalties for picnic shelters and two tiers of penalties for cabins and camping. Example: One tier would be that for campsites, cancellations occurring one day or more prior to arrival, results in the customer forfeiting the cancellation service charge.

2.28.10 **Audit Requirements**

Offeror's proposal will confirm system compliance with the following:

All financial transactions must be recorded and assigned a unique sequential transaction number

The System must maintain a record for each location that indicates the date and time when the last revenue receipts cash-drawer close-out process was completed. This process may be done more than once a day depending on the cash flow for the day. The required reports must be printed at each close out.

The System must provide a permanent journal for posting all monies received or distributed by the System. Journal postings will include an explanation of the posting, as well as all necessary account and audit information.

The system must have the capability to identify the Operator who performed the transaction and the Terminal ID in which the transaction was entered.

Financial transaction records must include information necessary to comply with Maryland State audit requirements.

Transactions must not be altered, except to note that the transaction has been voided.

All transactions must be moved to an archive.

The State's credit/debit card service provider may only post Credit/debit card payments at the time of approval. All other payments must only be posted at the time of their receipt by DNR. The System must maintain a separate function for tracking and reporting on any unpaid service charges due to DNR.

The System must utilize controls to ensure that the debits and credits for each customer transaction balance.

The System must be capable of producing documents to be uploaded to FMIS/R*STARS (Cobol) (a statewide financial and accounting system operated by the State Department of Budget and Management). The Reservation/Registration System must electronically transfer the information. The FMIS interface requires a printed and electronic summary of daily activities by Forest/Park codes and revenue source codes (Example: camping supplies, timber, seasonal pass), amount, and receipt type (cash, check).

2.28.11 **Training**

As part of the proposal, Offeror must provide concept, outlines and samples of current training material for:

1. Call center operators (both initial training and refresher training), and
2. DNRSA and DNR park management staff.

Contractor shall submit the finalized training curriculum and all training material to the DNR project manager for final approval.

Contractor will provide annual training sessions at three different locations across the state of Maryland at no additional cost to DNR. There will be approximately 15 people per session. Contractor will supply all necessary manuals and training materials. At a minimum, training will include the following:

1. How to access the System and Logging on
2. How to navigate through the System
3. How to edit fields
4. How to conduct searches
5. How to do a check-in of a customer with a reservation
6. How to do a walk-in registration for a customer
7. How to manually check-out a customer
8. How to extend a customer's stay
9. How to change a customer's reservation/ registration at a remote location
10. How to enter payments into the System
11. How to use the "help" screens
12. How to access the Vendor "Help Desk"
13. Basic Troubleshooting

14. How to access, print, and interpret System Reports
15. Credit/Debit Card Processing
16. How to enter the customer's payment and calculate the amount due
17. How to refund service charges
18. How to void a check-in or registration
19. How to use the Point-Of-Sale Function
20. How to enter alerts or notes about a customer
21. How to use the software-based tutorial

The Contractor is required to provide a one time training session for DNRSA(s) and Management Staff (Maximum eight people) at no additional cost to DNR. The training will take place in Maryland and will include all of the information covered in the training sessions as well as Security procedures, Financial reports, Problem Resolution, and other topics mutually agreed upon by the Contractor and DNR.

The Contractor is required to attend an annual DNRSA(s) and Management Staff meeting to review the past year and discuss updates on procedures, new materials, new technology, software changes, and software upgrades. This meeting will take place in Maryland at no cost to DNR and at the Contractor's expense.

In addition to written materials handed out at the training sessions described above, the Contractor is required to supply the following two types of printed manuals:

- 1) 45 copies: Remote location operator Manual- (To be used at remote locations as an on-site reference)
- 2) 5 copies: System Administrator Manual: It should include remote location operator materials plus advanced Systems information

The manuals must be comprehensive and user-friendly. They must contain operating procedures screen samples, preventive maintenance instructions, hints and suggestions, and a table of contents. They must be in unbound format to allow for documentation updates and easy copying.

The Contractor is required to provide a software-based tutorial that will be used by DNR staff for in-house training and familiarization with the Reservation/Registration System. The "tutorial" must provide guidance for someone learning to use the System. It must include the ability to practice taking reservation check-ins and registrations without an instructor and without affecting the reservation/customer information stored in the System database.

DNR reserves the right to copy and modify any and all training materials for future use.

2.28.12 **Vendor Compensation PRICING**

Cost per reservation (as defined) and cost per cancellation (as defined) will be the only means of compensation for the Contractor for this functional area.

Offeror shall enter each charge on the bid sheet as and where indicated. All other transactions will not result in Vendor compensation and are to be included in the referenced two charges.

DNR will set the reservation and cancellation rate the customer is charged. Any difference between Contractor rates and DNR rate remains with DNR. Neither the State nor the customer will be assessed any cancellation charges if the cancellations was the result of an "Act of God" occurrence. (Hurricane, Flood, Snowstorm, etc.)

DNR provides a limited number of "site use service charge waivers" (fee waivers) for camping, picnic shelters, and cabins. The Contractor will enter these reservations, and no reservation service charge or site use service charge will be collected. The Contractor must not bill DNR for these transactions. The DNRSA must be able to print confirmation vouchers for these reservations on the DNRSA computer printer.

Information phone calls that do not result in a chargeable transaction may not be billed to the customer or DNR.

The Contractor will not receive compensation for "fee waiver" reservations entered by the DNRSA or site holds entered by any DNR staff.

The Contractor will not collect a change service charge when DNR staff make any of the following customer initiated changes after the customer has arrived at the Forest/Park: 1) subtract one or more days for an early departure, 2) add one or more days for an extension of the customer's stay, 3) move the customer to a different site.

DNR will be responsible for the credit/debit card service provider service charge for the site use service charge portion of the money that the Contractor collects

When a Credit Voucher is issued due to Contractor's problem with a reservation, the Contractor will not charge the customer or DNR when the customer makes a new reservation (Example: double booking). When a Credit Voucher is issued due to a problem with DNR facilities, DNR will reimburse the Contractor their fee unless the action is because of an "act of God". If the reason the Credit Voucher was issued is not due to a reservation or facility problem, the customer will be responsible for the new reservation service charge (Example: the customer shortens the visit for personal reasons).

In order to be reimbursed by DNR for the customer transactions processed by the Contractor, the Contractor shall submit a "Request for Reimbursement" to DNR by the 10th working day of each month for the previous month's services. The Request for Reimbursement should detail how the reimbursement to the Contractor was computed

2.28.13 **Vendor Support and Maintenance**

The Contractor shall respond to all service calls for remote location problems within eight hours.

The Contractor is responsible for determining the cause of problems, (software, hardware, communication links). The Contractor will not be responsible for fixing any Remote Location hardware problems.

The Contractor shall resolve critical problems within two calendar days. Critical problems are:

- The remote location computer is unable to take walk-in registrations
- The remote location computer is unable to process reservation check-ins
- The remote location computer is unable to access Arrival Reports due to software problems
- The remote location computer is unable to connect to the central computer

The Contractor shall resolve non-critical software problems within seven calendar days.

The Contractor shall provide dial up support capabilities via a modem for the purpose of performing System support and maintenance. No open modems are allowed. Offeror is to submit solution in total compliance with State Security Document (Attachment H) as part of the proposal.

For the duration of the contract, the Contractor shall provide, at no additional charge, fixes for bugs, which occur in the System.

2.28.14 **Transition Plan**

Prior to full implementation, the Contractor shall load all facility information and reservations that have been taken by current contractor for the period of June 1, 2004 – September 30, 2004. The Contractor shall include in his proposal a detailed transition plan that guarantees accurate transfer of these reservations. The Contractor shall not bill the customer or DNR for entering these reservations. It is estimated that 12,000 reservations will need to be entered.

Customers must be able to make Internet reservations and not be affected by a transition between vendors.

2.28.15 **Deposits**

The Call Center shall transfer all funds collected with credit cards to the account identified by the State no later than the end of each working day. The system shall allow for the creation of a paper trail identifying the source of these funds.

The Call Center shall deposit any funds collected by check the next working day after the checks are received. A daily log of these deposits shall be provided to the DNRSA weekly.

If the bank utilized by the Contractor is different from the bank used by the State, then the Contractor must call the State's bank by the end of the day following the day the deposit is made to ensure these funds are transferred to the State's account in a timely fashion.

At the end of each month the Contractor will provide the State a report that summarizes the revenues from the prior month by park and revenue type (camping, pavilions, cabins, mini-cabins, etc) for all revenue collected by the call center and Internet.

2.28.16 **System Requirements**

The Remote Location software should be a Windows-based application.

The Contractor at no cost must provide all software at the remote locations to DNR.

No later than June 1, 2004, the Contractor must have installed the remote location software in each remote location computer. The Contractor must ensure that the system functions properly at each Remote Location.

The System must contain a credit/debit card-processing program. Prior to implementation, the State's card service provider, Unified Merchants Services, should certify the card-processing program. The Contractor must also specify the United Merchants Services certified card swipe reader that interacts with the Offeror's program and is compatible with the remote location computers. DNR will then purchase or lease this equipment.

Remote location operators must be able to query site availability and reserve sites for same day arrival only at other Forests/Parks. In these cases, a reservation service charge will be collected by DNR on the Contractor's behalf and reimbursed to the Contractor as part of the monthly invoicing. Therefore, the Contractor must be able to track and report on the number of reservations taken at remote locations.

2.28.17 **Internet Requirements**

Customers must have the ability to make reservations over the Internet only during Call Center hours. Any new inventory shall only become available on line at the same time the call center opens. This will insure that individuals have an equal opportunity to reserve new inventory either by web or call center for the first 12 hours.

The Offeror's proposal must include a preliminary design demonstrating the flow of the Internet reservation process. Ease of customer use and a logical flow are important aspects of the design.

Proposed system will provide immediate online confirmation to customers who provide all necessary information to finalize a reservation

The proposed system must make open inventory available to Internet customers at the same time as the opening hour of the Call Center. All customers must have equal access to new inventory, regardless of the means used to access the System.

The System must have proper security and encryption in place to protect personal information, the database from being compromised or accessed by unauthorized persons and to provide for secure credit/debit card transactions.

The System must provide a financial synopsis of all charges and credits that will be applied to the customer's credit or debit card. After the customer supplies the card number, the system must obtain card authorization from the State's credit/debit card service provider. If credit/debit card authorization is obtained, the reservation must be confirmed. The customer must be provided an online confirmation.

There must be an Internet interface with the Reservation System database. The DNR website must link to the Interface directly from the home page, the category section, individual online park brochures and other sites designated by DNR (**Example:** Office of Tourism).

A prototype website must be available for DNR review and approve one month prior to the contract start date. The final product must be demonstrated to DNR for final approval two week prior to the contract start date.

After the website is operational, any changes in functionality and design must be approved by DNR prior to implementation. Changes necessitated by functionality, performance and security problems may be done immediately.

The Contractor must provide a plan for promoting the website through listings in indexes and search services and hot links from other sites of interest. DNR must have approval of all links.

No advertising will be allowed on the Maryland reservation website without prior written approval by DNR.

At the termination of the contract, all references to the Maryland Forest and Park Service Reservation System should be removed from the Contractor's web pages.

2.28.18 **General Reporting and Output**

1. The Contractor's canned reports will incorporate the reports requested below. The Contractor must provide sample reports with their proposal.
2. After the contract award, the Contractor will meet with DNR for the purpose of developing reports. Detailed specifications of reports listed in the RFP will be provided at that time. DNR must have a signature line to approve the Contractor's design of all output documents.
3. Reports are to be subdivided into several headings as follows:

a. Operational Reports - Reports necessary for the DNRSA and DNR Headquarters Staff to monitor the operation and efficiency of the system.

b. Financial Reports - Reports necessary for tracking income and expenses, refunds, and other auditing requirements. These reports must also provide statistical information on revenue attainment. This will include reports necessary to comply with FMIS, State Auditors, and the reconciling of bank accounts.

- Operator Activity Report
- Revenue Report
- List of Revenue Accounts
- Credit/Debit Card Report
- Use Permit Report
- Refund Report
- Vendor Report
- Summary of Receipts

- c. Statistical Reports - Reports on site usage or program activity, including such things as occupancy, attendance, and how customers heard about us.
- d. Call Center Operations Reports - Reports that are necessary for DNR to evaluate the Vendor's compliance with the LOSS of the call center.
- e. Statistical Data - Data gathered to use for planning and evaluation purposes.

The Call Center Operation Report, which is necessary for DNRSA to determine if the Level of Service Standards were met, should be received by the DNRSA within three working days of the end of the monthly reporting period.

SECTION 3 – PROPOSAL FORMAT

3.1 Two Part Submission

Offerors must submit proposals in two separate volumes for each type of service proposed:

- Volume I - TECHNICAL PROPOSAL
- Volume II - FINANCIAL PROPOSAL

Offerors must submit separate Technical and Financial proposals in response to RFP requirements.

3.2 Proposals

Volume I-Technical Proposal, must be sealed separately from Volume II-Financial Proposal, but submitted simultaneously to the Procurement Officer (address listed in Section 1.6 of this RFP). An unbound original, so identified, and six (6) copies of each volume are to be submitted. An electronic version of both the Volume I- Technical Proposal in MS Word format and the Volume II- Financial Proposal in MS Excel format must also be submitted with the unbound originals technical or financial volumes, as appropriate. Electronic media may be 3-1/2” diskette or CD and shall bear the RFP number and name, name of the offeror and the volume number.

3.3 Submission

Each Offeror is required to submit a separate sealed package for each "Volume", which is to be labeled Volume I-Technical Proposal and Volume II-Financial Proposa, each marked according to the Functional Area proposed. Separate technical and financial proposals must be received for each Functional Area proposed as follows:

- Functional Area One – General
- Functional Area Two – DNR

Each sealed package must bear the RFP title and number, name and address of the Offeror, the volume number (I or II), and the closing date and time for receipt of the proposals on the outside of the package. All pages of both proposal volumes must be consecutively numbered from beginning (Page 1) to end (Page “x”).

3.4 Volume I – Technical Proposal

3.4.1 Transmittal Letter: A transmittal letter must accompany each technical proposal. The purpose of this letter is to transmit the proposal and acknowledge the receipt of any addenda. The transmittal letter should be brief and signed by an individual who is

authorized to commit the Offeror to the services and requirements as stated in this RFP. Only one transmittal letter is needed and it does not need to be bound with the technical proposal.

- 3.4.2 Format of Technical Proposal: Inside the sealed package described in Section 4.3, above, an unbound original, to be so labeled, eight (8) paper copies and one electronic version shall be enclosed. Sections 3 and 4 of this RFP provide requirements and reply instructions and the paragraphs in these RFP sections are numbered for ease of reference. In addition to the instructions below, Offeror's technical proposals should be structured and numbered in the same order as this RFP. This proposal organization will allow State officials and the Evaluation Committee to "map" offeror responses directly to RFP requirements by paragraph number. The technical proposal shall include:

3.4.2.1 Title and Table of Contents: The technical proposal should begin with a title page bearing the name and address of the Offeror and the name and number of this RFP. A table of contents for the technical proposal should follow the title page. Information that is claimed to be confidential is to be placed after the Title Page and before the Table of Contents in the Offeror's Technical Proposal, and if applicable, also in its Financial Proposal. Unless there is a compelling case, an entire proposal should not be labeled confidential but just those portions that can reasonably be shown to be proprietary or confidential.

3.4.2.2 Executive Summary: The Offeror shall condense and highlight the contents of the technical proposal in a separate section titled "Executive Summary". The summary shall also identify any exceptions the offeror has taken to the requirements of this RFP, the Contract (Attachment A), or any other attachments.

3.4.2.3 Offeror Technical Response to RFP Requirements –

a. Comprehensive Plan:

This section shall provide a detailed discussion of the Offeror's service capabilities demonstrating the Offeror's approaches to address the requirements outlined in Section 2 of this RFP. The Comprehensive Plan shall fully explain how the proposed services will satisfy each requirement listed in this RFP (Section 2 Scope of Work). It should indicate all significant capabilities or issues that will be examined to fulfill the scope of work. This demonstration should be presented in the same numbered order in which the requirements appear in Section 2.

Offerors shall include, as part of their Comprehensive Plan, any representatives whom will be assigned to the State account. Identify the specific individuals, the area of responsibility envisioned, their expertise in the assigned area and resumes for each representative.

Offerors shall include, as part of their Comprehensive Plan, a description of the facilities that the Offeror will use to provide the services under this solicitation. The description shall detail how the Offeror will meet all facility requirements, to include provision of telephone and data lines and detailed description of the telephone system, delineated in Section 2.2. In addition, the addresses and floor plan layouts of the sites shall be included.

Offerors shall include, as part of the Comprehensive Plan, a description of all equipment, to include PC workstations and printers to access the applicable State Agencies' automated systems, and any technology enhancement it will make available to facilitate the quality and efficiency of services to be rendered.

Offerors shall include, as part of their Comprehensive Plan, printouts of sample reports (Section 2.23 and 2.25). In addition to the required reports, Contractor will accumulate data on a project basis and provide cumulative project reports with monthly invoice. Monthly billing invoice must summarize the month's activity for each project, price category, etc., and must match other required reports.

The Offeror shall also describe their Call Tracking System including data elements, workflow capabilities, security features and other related elements.

- 3.4.2.4 The Offeror must address each criterion in the technical proposal and describe how the Offeror will meet the requirements as described in Section 2. If the State is seeking Offeror agreement to a requirement, the Offeror shall state agreement or disagreement. As stated above, any exception to a term or condition may result in having the proposal deemed unacceptable or classified as not reasonably susceptible of being selected for award. Any paragraph that represents a work requirement shall include an explanation of how the work will be done.
- 3.4.2.5 Offeror's Disaster Recovery: This section will contain the disaster recovery plan describing in detail, how services will be resumed within twenty-four (24) hours of a disaster (Section 2.14).
- 3.4.2.6 Offeror Proposed Organization Structure and Staffing: The Offeror shall describe the structure of the organization to be used for this project and the relationship of the contract organization to the company's corporate structure. The description should identify the labor categories within the company's planned structure and the anticipated number of employees in each position. If applicable, differentiate between transition organization and the final organization structure. Also, describe the organization structure of any subcontractors, the reporting relationship to the Offeror and procedures the Offeror will use to ensure the services are delivered in accord with the requirements of the contract. Also include the position descriptions for each labor category and plan for recruiting and hiring vacant positions. (Reference Section 2.15)
- 3.4.2.7 Offeror Key Personnel: This section shall include job descriptions and individual resumes for the key personnel who are to be assigned to this project. Indicate the role or assignment based on the labor categories described in Section 3.12. The key personnel identified in the Offeror's proposal are considered to be essential to the work being performed under this RFP. In addition, the Offeror shall acknowledge their understanding, should the Offeror be awarded the contract, of the Offeror's responsibilities related to diversion of personnel and personnel who leave the Offeror's employ. (Reference Section 2.15)
- 3.4.2.8 Offeror Training Plan: This section shall contain a description of the Offeror's training plan for meeting the minimum requirements as defined in Section 2.19.

3.4.2.9 Offeror System Troubleshooting Procedure: This section shall contain a narrative describing their System Troubleshooting escalation procedures, process for providing status of problems to the State, location of maintenance center(s) and timetables (Section 2.18).

3.4.2.10 Offeror Performance Standards: This section shall include a description of the Offeror's plan to implement processes and procedures for meeting the minimum performance measures as defined in Section 2.19.

3.4.2.11 Offeror Quality Control with Escalation Plan: This section shall include the Offeror's quality control plan along with a detailed escalation plan. The Offeror will include in their Quality Assurance plan how the information being provided to or collected from the Public is accurate and in accordance with Agency's standards.

This section shall also include Offeror's procedures for establishing and maintaining Internal Audit functions and responding to monitoring and audit findings as described in Section 2.20.

3.4.2.12 Offeror's Transition Plan This section shall include a detailed description of the Offeror's plan for executing the transition operations from the incumbent contractor to the Offeror's organization by June 1. The effectiveness of the transition plan is of paramount importance. Offeror shall provide a detailed plan explaining the steps necessary to change from one Call Center to another Call Center. Offeror shall include any previous transition experience. The plan must include the processes for transitioning services from the current State of Maryland Call Center Services contractor at the beginning of the new contract. For current vendor platforms and related technical information, see Attachment J. Offeror will include a description how the End-to-End Test Period will be conducted. The plan must contain milestones, personnel commitment and firm time tables. Offeror shall also submit a transition-out plan describing the transfer of operations from the Offeror's organization to a potential new vendor at the end of the contract (See section 2.20).

3.4.2.13 Offeror Experience and Capabilities:

a. Experience and Capabilities

Offerors must include information on past experience with similar projects and pertinent corporate resources and must include the following sections:

1) Company Profile

Offerors must list their firm's organizational and functional structure, the number of full-time employees assigned to each department and the job functions of each organizational structure and function.

Offerors must submit resumes for the principals of their firm and state their proposed relationship to the State account.

3) Offerors must provide an overview of experience rendering services similar to those included in Section 3 of this RFP. This description must include a summary of the services offered, the number of years the Offeror has provided these services, the number of clients and geographic locations the Offeror currently serves, and gross annual revenue by type of account, etc. Include a summary of an experience you have had in supporting the promotion of tourism development.

4) Offerors must provide references for three contracts comparable in scope and complexity to any resulting contract. If the Offeror does not have experience in supplying and maintaining services at the level anticipated by this RFP, then the Offeror should provide references for three projects or contracts which best evidence the ability to perform at the required level. References are to include descriptions of:

- (a) The Offeror's ability to manage contracts of comparable size and complexity.
- (b) The quality and breadth of services provided by the Offeror.
- (c) Each client reference is to include the following information:
 - Name of client organization; Name, title, and telephone number of Point of Contact for client organization;
 - Value, type, of contract(s) supporting the client organization, the date the work was performed or the duration of contract(s) supporting the client organization, and the service location.
- (d) If the Offeror is no longer serving this client, provide an explanation of why the Offeror is no longer providing the services to the client organization.

The State shall have the right to contact any reference as part of the evaluation and selection process.

a. Legal Actions Summary

The Offeror(s) must include the following:

- (1) A statement as to whether there are any outstanding legal actions against the Offeror, and a brief description of any such action.
- (2) A brief description of any settled or closed legal actions against the Offeror over the past five (5) years.

2) Financial Capabilities and Statements

Offerors must demonstrate financial stability. Technical proposals must include:

- a. Evidence that the Offeror has financial capacity to provide the services.
- b. Copies of the last two (2) year end audited (preferred) financial statements or best available equivalent report.
- c. An analysis of those financial statements/reports.

3.4.2.14 Offerors shall include information on past experience with similar requirements. Offerors shall describe their experience and capabilities through a response to the following:

- An overview of the Offeror's experience providing equipment and services similar to those included in this RFP. This description shall include:
 - A summary of the services offered
 - The number of years the Offeror has provided these services
 - The number of clients and geographic locations the Offeror currently serves
 - The offeror must describe their proposed services that meet the requirements of Section 3.
- An organization chart of the Offeror showing all major component units, which component(s) will perform the requirements of this contract, where the management of this contract will fall within the organization, and what corporate resources will be available to support this contract in both primary and secondary, or back-up roles.

3.4.2.15 References. References of up to three of its customers who are capable of documenting:

- The Offeror's ability to manage projects of comparable size and complexity
- The quality and breadth of services provided by the Offeror
- Each client reference must include the following information:
 - Name of client organization
 - Name, title, and telephone number of Point of Contact for client organization
 - Value, type, and duration of contract(s) supporting client organization
 - The services provided, scope of the contract, geographic area being supported, and performance objectives satisfied, and improvements made to client systems (e.g. reduction in operation/maintenance costs while maintaining or improving current performance levels).
 - An explanation of why the Offeror is no longer providing the services to the client organization, should that be the case.

Note: The State shall have the right to contact any reference as part of the evaluation and selection process. The State also reserves the right to request site visits to the Offeror's offices for the purpose of evaluating proposals.

3.2.4.16 Economic Benefit Factors

- The Offeror shall describe the benefits that will accrue to the State of Maryland economy as a direct or indirect result of the Offeror's performance of the contract resulting from this RFP. The Offeror will take into

consideration the following elements. (Do not include any detail of the financial proposals with this technical information):

- The estimated percentage of contract dollars to be recycled into Maryland's economy in support of the contract, through the use of Maryland subcontractors, suppliers and joint venture partners. Offerors should be as specific as possible and provide a percentage breakdown of expenditures in this category.
 - The estimated number and types of jobs for Maryland residents resulting from this contract. Indicate job classifications, number of employees in each classification, and the aggregate Maryland payroll percentages to which the contractor has committed at both prime and, if applicable, subcontract levels.
 - Tax revenues to be generated for Maryland and its political subdivisions as a result of this contract. Indicate tax category (sales tax, inventory taxes and estimated personal income taxes for new employees). Provide a forecast of the total tax revenues resulting from the contract.
 - The estimated percentage of subcontract dollars committed to Maryland small businesses and MBEs.
- In addition to the factors listed above, the Offeror should explain any other economic benefit to the State of Maryland that would result from the Offeror's proposal.

NOTE: Because there is no guarantee of any level of usage under this contract, in providing the information required in this section, the Offeror should state its level of commitment per \$1,000 of contract value. In other words, for each \$1,000 of contract value, how many Maryland jobs will be created, what Maryland tax revenue will be generated, how much will be paid to Maryland subcontractors, etc.

3.4.2.17 Subcontractors: Offerors must identify subcontractors, if any, and the role these subcontractors will have in the performance of the contract.

3.4.2.18 Required Submissions to be Submitted by Offeror: Completed Bid/Proposal Affidavit (Attachment B – with original of Technical Proposal).

3.5 Volume II - Financial Proposal

3.5.1 Under separate sealed cover from the Technical Proposal and clearly identified with the same information noted on the Technical Proposal, the Offeror must submit an unbound original, 6 copies, and an electronic version in MS Excel of the Financial Proposal. The Financial Proposal must contain all cost information in the format specified below and the Proposal Price Form must be submitted and completely filled in (no blanks or omissions) for each functional area proposed.

3.5.1.1 Do not change or alter this form. Alterations will cause the proposal to be rejected.

- 3.5.1.2 Proposal Price Form is to be signed and dated by an individual who is authorized to bind the firm to the prices offered. Enter the title of the individual and the company name in the spaces provided.
- 3.5.1.3 All criteria included in the Proposal Price Form, i.e., the estimated quantity of various services, etc., shown on these forms are for price evaluation purposes. The State reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to purchase services in different quantities than those referenced in these Proposal Price Forms.
- 3.5.1.4 Vendors are required to record the Unit Price they are proposing for each element, calculate the Extended Price, and compute a total for each Proposal Price Form. All Unit and Extended Prices must be clearly typed with dollars and cents, e.g., \$24.15.
- All Unit Prices must be the actual price the State will pay for the proposed item price per this RFP and may not be contingent on any other factor or condition in any manner.
 - All services required or requested by the State and prices offered by the vendor at No Cost to the State must be clearly typed in the Unit and Extended Price with N/C.
 - Nothing shall be entered on these Proposal Price Form that alters or proposes conditions or contingencies on the proposal response.
 - Recording \$0.00 or any variation will be treated and considered as No Cost to the State for that good or service.
- 3.5.1.5 For purposes of this solicitation, there is one Proposal Price Form.
- Proposal Price Form reflects the fixed unit prices and a total price proposed for each service category related to this procurement. The form is provided for the vendor to price each item that meets all of the requirements as specified in this RFP. These prices must include all costs associated (FULLY LOADED) for the services proposed.
- 3.5.1.6 It is imperative that the prices included on Proposal Price Form page have been entered correctly and calculated accurately by the vendor and that the respective total prices agree with the entries on Proposal Price Form. Any incorrect entries or inaccurate calculations by the vendor will be treated as provided in COMAR 21.05.03E and 21.05.02.12.

SECTION 4 – EVALUATION CRITERIA AND SELECTION PROCEDURE

4.1 Evaluation Criteria

Evaluation of the proposals will be performed by a committee that is organized for that purpose. Evaluations will be based on the criteria set forth below. The Contract resulting from this RFP will be awarded to the Offeror that is most advantageous to the State, considering price and the evaluation factors set forth herein. In making this determination, technical factors will receive greater weight than price.

4.2 Technical Criteria

The criteria to be applied to each technical proposal are listed in descending order of importance:

- Offeror’s Past Work Performance, Experience/References and Stability.
Offeror provided information regarding experience and capabilities that illustrate the Offeror’s ability to successfully meet the requirements of this RFP. Past experience, especially transition plan and execution, with similar requirements will also be evaluated.
- Comprehensive Plan - Offeror’s demonstrated ability to meet the scope of work and requirements for service as outlined in RFP Section 2. Offeror’s response to service requirements in the RFP that illustrates a comprehensive understanding of the requirements that include an explanation of how the service and/or process will be done. Responses such as “concur” or “will comply” will receive a lower evaluation ranking than those Offerors who demonstrate they understand service requirements and have a plan to meet or exceed them.
- Project Management Team
- Financial stability and capability
- Benefits to Maryland Economy.

4.3 Financial Criteria

All qualified Offerors will be ranked from the lowest to the highest price based on their total price proposed.

4.4 Reciprocal Preference

Although Maryland law does not authorize procuring agencies to favor resident Offerors in awarding procurement contracts, many other states do grant their resident businesses preferences

over Maryland contractors. Therefore, as described in COMAR 21.05.01.04, a resident business preference will be given if: a responsible Offeror whose headquarters, principal base of operations, or principal site that will primarily provide the services required under this RFP is in another state submits the most advantageous offer; the other state gives a preference to its residents through law, policy, or practice; and, the preference does not conflict with a Federal law or grant affecting the procurement contract. The preference given shall be identical to the preference that the other state, through law, policy or practice gives to its residents.

