

**New York State Division of Housing and Community Renewal
Request for Proposals for Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Technology Solution
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: Round 7 - Dated, March 22, 2019**

	QUESTION	AGENCY RESPONSE
1	Can you please state the total number of unique users that will be using the new system? We recognize that the system will be required to handle 1,000 concurrent users, however it would be helpful to know the total number of unique users.	1000 users across multiple locations: Beaver St. Office (NYC); Hampton Plaza Office (Albany) and at Local Administrator offices- https://hcr.ny.gov/section-8-housing-choice-voucher-hcv-program
2	Do you have a large training facility, or facilities, in which we can host larger in person training sessions for your staff members? Also, will users have access to computers that would allow them to follow along with the training sessions? (computer lab setting)	No.
3	Can you please advise of the geographic locations and number of users that you have at each of your Local Administrators for purposes of evaluating the best possible training approach for all users?	1000 users across multiple locations: Beaver St. Office (NYC); Hampton Plaza Office (Albany) and at Local Administrator offices- https://hcr.ny.gov/section-8-housing-choice-voucher-hcv-program
4	Is all of the necessary data to be converted from the legacy software system contained in the central SHCV System database (aggregated data from all 42 LA's), or will the selected vendor have to convert data from each individual LA database into the new software system?	We are merging multiple statewide technology systems as part of this RFP, but not systems from individual LAs.
5	Is HTFC planning on applying for Moving to Work status, or any other specialty programs in the near future?	Not in the immediate future.
6	Due to the specialized nature of our software implementation projects, we do not typically sub contract with any other vendors, including MWBE and SDVOB businesses. For this project, is this a hard requirement to subcontract with a MWBE and/or SDVOB business? What options might be available in this situation?	Yes. For assistance, contact HTFC's Office of Economic Opportunity and Partnership Development. Please contact Veronica Flanders and Tameika Edwards, via email, with a carbon copy to Lisa Pagnozzi. See contact information below. Veronica Flanders at Veronica.Flanders@nyshcr.org Tameika Edwards at Tameika.Edwards@nyshcr.org Lisa Pagnozzi at Lisa.Pagnozzi@nyshcr.org

7	<p>Please elaborate on what types of lockbox submission files (transaction types within the software) will need to be imported into the new system?</p>	<p>The current process entails downloading .TXT files from Bank of America's B2Bi Portal. Those files are then placed in a shared drive in order to process the documented transactions in our current solution. Corresponding PDF files containing the scanned documents that were submitted to the lockbox are pulled from Bank of America's CashPro Online site. These PDF files are also stored in our shared drive.</p> <p>The inclusion of payment slips allow for digital processing that automatically links transactions to established repayment agreements between the PHA and participants; landlord/tenant combinations when the payment is submitted by landlords for HAP overpayments; and landlord/tenant combinations when an initial PHA is submitting portability payments. Unidentified payments are compiled in a separate screen, allowing for statewide staff to link those repayments to either existing repayment agreements or applicable landlord/tenant combinations.</p> <p>Information captured in the payment slips includes the reason for the submitted payment (i.e., repayment agreement, FSS escrow, HAP overpayment, and portability), the local administrator, the participant's name, the participant's log # or unique identifier, the landlord ID or unique identifier, the landlord name, and the amount owed. Repayment agreement slips forego landlord information, but include a repayment agreement number and the amount owed for that specific period. The number of repayment agreement slips issued to a participant corresponds to the number of payments established in the agreement with the PHA. All slips contain unique identifying numbers that are based on the aforementioned information, thereby allowing payments to be applied to either the correct repayment agreement or tenant/landlord combination. General transaction information to be captured in the solution includes an internally generated payment number, the check or money order number, the amount submitted, the bank ID, and the deposit date. The solution should allow for the splitting of payments in the event that the submission applies to multiple participants, counties, etc.</p>
8	<p>Will all of the LA's have similar policy and configuration settings (standardized settings across the entire program), or will each LA have the ability to customize their own policies and workflows?</p>	<p>Policies and workflows will be similar across all LAs.</p>
9	<p>What accounting system does HTFC currently use? Will any type of integration or data sharing between the systems be required?</p>	<p>No, there will not need to be integration or data sharing between the systems because the Section 8 team makes the payments directly through the current system and does not use an accounting system through finance for this activity.</p>
10	<p>What is the current process to determine the appropriate amount of HAP funds that are distributed from the main office to each LA for their monthly HAP payments?</p>	<p>Payments are made directly from HTFC to the landlords.</p>
11	<p>Who from the HTFC staff will be the Change Management Owner/Team?</p>	<p>Not yet determined.</p>

12	Does HTFC currently use any third-party software or services, outside of the custom developed SHCV System, that you would like integrated with the new system?	We do not anticipate integrating any other third-party systems, but reserve the right to request or require the awardee to consider other subcontractors, as per the terms of this RFP, at a future date.
13	Do you have an estimate of the possible expected growth of the Section 8 program? As referenced in Section 1.4 Capacity/Scalability: SNF-016.	As referenced in Section 1.4 Capacity/Scalability: SNF-016. No.
14	Can you please clarify your solution uptime/downtime requirements? As there are multiple levels referenced in Section 1.5 Availability: SNF-017, SNF-018 & SNF-019.	The system should be up all of the time unless there is an unforeseen issue or a planned maintenance outage. If either is going to last longer than 4 hours, the Section 8 team must be notified. Please reference the SLA Tables (SR1, SR2, SR3) for specific timeframes related to uptime service.
15	Per Section 1.8 Auditing, SNF – 024, will capturing all system record changes as well as user authentication attempts/sign ins suffice for the audit log requirement, or is HTFC also requiring an audit log to show all records that were clicked on or viewed by a particular user?	The audit log should show all record changes, but not everything that was clicked or viewed.
16	Can you please clarify what type of information that you would like displayed/represented as part of this executive dashboard? (GPS SVR – 10)	Information that we would like to see displayed may include: voucher utilization and HAP expenditures on a county-by-county basis with corresponding per-unit-costs in each county; geographic breakdowns that provide the UMLs and HAP expenditures by definable areas such as political districts; attrition rates, lease-up times, and numbers pertaining to special purpose programs such as FSS, VASH, Mainstream, Homeownership, etc.; the breakdown of allocation and utilization of project-based vouchers (with RAD units separated out), enhanced vouchers, and tenant protection vouchers; if Small Area Fair Market Rents (SAFMRs) are adopted, we would like to be able to easily break down the numbers by the ZIP codes in which SAFMRs have been implemented; Demographic information should also be captured in the dashboard, including, but not limited to, veteran status, homelessness prior to joining the program, elderly and disabled households, gender, nationality, and citizenship.
17	How many users would you like to participate in the UAT process?	Between 10 to 30 participants.
18	In regards to the Non Functional Requirement Questions in the document named HTFC Section 8 Requirements Attachment 2 of which we partially satisfy a requirement, how can we denote that we're proposing an alternative solution, similar to what you have outlined in Amendment 17 for the Functional Requirements portion of Attachment 2?	This would be done in the narrative. It could be noted in the non-functional Word Table. Instead of Yes or No, it could be answered, "alternative".

New York State Division of Housing and Community Renewal
Request for Proposals for Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Technology Solution
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: Round 6 - Dated, March 15, 2019

QUESTION	AGENCY RESPONSE	SECTION
Can you provide a sample Canvas Letter?	The canvassing letter is a letter that is sent to current waiting list applicants to let them know about a PBV development with a site-specific waiting list that is accepting applications. The solution should allow for us to develop and modify the language as we see fit.	Attachment 2, Table 1, Solution Functional Requirements, page 3, Req. ID AIE-014.
Can you provide further clarification/explanation on the desired functionality for withholding percentages related to B-Notices?	We are seeking functionality within the solution that addresses the mandatory withholding (currently 24%) that the IRS requires we apply to landlords who the IRS has flagged as having a discrepancy between the tax identification number and legal name that we provide. The solution should allow for withholding to be placed on a batch of landlords when needed, and for it to be removed from each individual landlord as situations dictate. When enabled, the total HAP payment issued to landlords each month shall be reduced by the 24% until withholding has been removed for adherence to the instructions contained in the B-Notice the landlord has received. The total amount withheld each year shall be tracked and included in the 1099-MISCs that are generated and sent to the applicable landlords. The generation of 1099-MISCs and B-Notices will require information sharing between the solution and Bank of America. Information sharing will also need to occur with the IRS to allow them to flag those landlords with information that does not match their records.	Attachment 2, Table 1, Solution Functional Requirements, page 3, Req. ID PGA-019.

	<p>Regarding Document Imaging and Content Management; please describe any Document Imaging and Content Management products or systems that HTFC is currently using or has access to today.</p>	<p>HTFC has been in the process of eliminating paper records, and recently utilized a third-party contractor to scan records collected in past years. In our New York City program, applicants currently provide paper documents which are then scanned and stored on a Content Server. A SharePoint system generates in-house letters and other documents. Each Local Administrator is presently responsible for providing their own document storage system, and must comply with all federal rules</p>	
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New York State Division of Housing and Community Renewal
Request for Proposals for Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Technology Solution
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: Round 5 - Dated, March 8, 2019

	QUESTION	AGENCY RESPONSE	SECTION
1	<p>You mentioned that we should plan on training 1,000 users. To assist us with scoping, can you provide an approximate number of users for each of the functions below (these roughly correspond to your Functional Areas in section 8.1.1 on page 10 of the RFP)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Waitlist and applicant management users b. Intake/lease-up users c. HCV - Recertifications/HCV program management Users d. Inspectors and inspection support users e. Accounting (posting of HAP, check writing, GL management) users f. FSS Program management users g. Homeownership Program users h. Portability users i. Rent comparison users j. Application portal users k. Participant/recertification portal users l. Owner portal users m. Financial transactions management (managing payments (AP) to the Local Administrators) users 	<p>The Agency declines to respond to this question.</p>	<p>RFP 10.2 TAB 2: Technical Proposal, Table 6, Pg 18, Service Approach</p>
2	<p>In which table does the State want offerors to list the hosted software costs? Should software cost be in Table 7 or Table 8?</p>	<p>The initial installation of the software is included in Table 7. Any ongoing costs for the continued use of the software, including annual licensing fees, hosting fees, etc., should be included in Table 8</p>	<p>RFP Attachment 3, Cost Proposal TAB 3, Page 33, Table 7, <i>Fee Schedule A- DDI Fixed Price</i></p>

3	For Table 8, what is the purpose of the User Bands? Is this to provide software cost, or is this to show Operations & Maintenance services by user band?	This is to illustrate the total cost of operating and maintaining the solution, once installed. The user bands indicate the cost per user. Depending on what methodology the proposer uses to bill for services, the cost may decrease as the number of users increases.	RFP Attachment 3, Cost Proposal TAB 3, Page 33, Table 8, <i>Fee Schedule B – Operations & Maintenance Fixed Fee</i>
4	<i>Systems Change Management Fixed Hourly Rate</i> , the table hourly blended rate indicates a combined “Total” amount. Whereas we can provide the hourly blended rate for each box (year) of the table, can you clarify what is expected for the “Total” box. Should this “Total” box be completed with the average blended rate over the 10 years?	See the Amended instructions of Section 10.3: Cost Proposal, in Addenda 12.	RFP Attachment 3, Cost Proposal TAB 3, Page 34, Table 9, <i>Fee Schedule C, Systems Change Management Fixed Hourly Rate</i>
5	<i>Total Contract Value</i> has a section for the total of Fee Schedule C, however based on the question above it does not appear a specific total dollar amount can be provided?	See the Amended instructions of Section 10.3: Cost Proposal, in Addenda 12.	RFP Attachment 3, Cost Proposal TAB 3, Page 34, Table 10, <i>Total Contract Value</i>

**New York State Division of Housing and Community Renewal
Request for Proposals for Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Technology Solution
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: Round 4 - Dated, March 1, 2019**

	QUESTION	AGENCY RESPONSE	SECTION
1	For system development, will the workflow process for key tasks such as application, recertification, inspection etc.be uniform or the same for all local administrators or is there an expectation of workflow variations being available for each local administrator?	The workflow should be the same among the LAs, with standardized user roles. The LAs will have discretion to assign the roles as they see fit, depending on their agency's level of staffing, but must maintain proper separation of duties and internal controls.	

**New York State Division of Housing and Community Renewal
Request for Proposals for Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Technology Solution
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: Round 3 - Dated, February 22, 2019**

	QUESTION	AGENCY RESPONSE	SECTION
1	Regarding NYS Dept of Taxation & Finance managing HAP payments through Banking Partner, will HFTC consider an alternative HAP and/or FSS escrow payment methodology that directly generates the payments from the proposed solution?	No	RFP Pg 10.
2	Regarding the Document Imaging and Content Management (DCM) functional area, does your current IT infrastructure include an implementation and licensing of Office 365/SharePoint (for document management)?	If the implementation of the proposed solution requires a common platform, operating system, or other minimum hardware or software technology specifications, the proposer should specify what type and the estimated cost as part of their technical proposal.	RFP Pg 12.
3	Concerning the Requirements section in the Technical Proposal (RFP Attachment 2), we may have comments to explain our answers to columns 3 through 6. Is it acceptable for the vendor to add a column to the right to add comments? If we are not allowed to change the table, do you want us to put the comments in the Technical Approach section?	Comments are not permitted in Attachment 2, and should be included in your Technical Approach.	RFP Pg 18.
4	If the Master Services Agreement is not be published before questions are due, will you accept questions about the MSA after it is published?	Yes. Please keep in mind the MSA will be in draft form only, and is subject to change once a vendor is selected.	RFP Pg 36.
5	Wholesale Lockbox Standards and Options. Will HTFC consider an alternative lockbox operation that is integrated with the proposed solution and provides equivalent or better functionality?	Please see the amendment recently posted regarding proposing alternative requirements.	RFP Exhibit E
6	Amendment Number 13 – Resumes should be limited to no more than three pages in length. Can you confirm this is referring to three pages per staff resume, not 3 pages total for all resumes?	Yes, this is to confirm that the page limit for resumes refers to the limit per staff resume, and <u>not</u> the total submission of resumes in the proposal being limited to three pages.	Addendum 9, Amendment 13

Housing Trust Fund Corporation
Request for Proposals for Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Technology Solution
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: Round 2 - Dated, January 25, 2019

	QUESTION	AGENCY RESPONSE	SECTION
1	<p>It appears HTFC is seeking a COTS housing solution that is to be customized to meet the agency specific needs. Given industry experience and the expense to implement such, will HTFC consider a proposal for a custom build solution?</p>	<p>Among other factors, HTFC may consider any reasonably priced solution that (i) meets the technical requirements as specified, (ii) can be implemented within 24 months as described in the RFP, and (iii) includes an acceptable plan for maintenance and training for which the proposer will be responsible.</p>	RFP 8.2
2	<p>Page 7, Section 7, states “cite at least three current or recent engagements involving both the implementation and maintenance of a technology solution on behalf of a government entity or PHA and involving a Section 8 HCV program...”</p> <p>a) Will HCR consider the development and implementation of other Section 8 housing program development and implementation?</p> <p>b) If the system must be specific to HCV, must the system be a comprehensive – all components of the HCV program or will program specific technology developed and implemented that supports a significant portion of the HCV program be acceptable?</p>	<p>To count as a past engagement, the previous/current solution must be (i) with another PHA/government entity and (ii) specific to HCV. However, the past engagement does not need to involve the implementation of a solution that is comprehensive of all the components described in this RFP. Function-specific, program-related engagements, such as the design and implementation of a solution that was utilized by the client in HCV case management, inspections, payments, etc., may also be considered as relevant past experience at HTFC’s discretion.</p>	RFP 7.7
3	<p>Do you guys already have an incumbent who developed this solution, or will this be a ground up bespoke solution?</p>	<p>The current solution was developed by in-house State staff.</p>	
4	<p>You mention that “ideally utilizing proven technology already in use by other PHAs elsewhere in the United States” which our applications are not, however we are workflow specialist and can give the agency their desired result by customization.</p> <p>Please let us know how much points does the criteria above receives in the review process.</p>	<p>Scoring will be a combination of product fit, vendor experience, price, and service, among other factors. The technical portion will be 65%, the cost will be 25%, and the Diversity portion will be 10%</p>	

Housing Trust Fund Corporation
Request for Proposals for Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Technology Solution
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: Round 1 - Dated, January 17, 2018

	QUESTION	AGENCY RESPONSE	SECTION
1	Has the Department allocated funding for the project to date? If so, through which source (budget, CIP, state/federal grant etc)?	Yes. This project is included in HTFC's administrative budget for the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program.	
2	Would it be possible to name the three greatest challenges the Department is having with the current solution?	The limitations of the current system were discussed in the 2017 Request for Information additional documentation can be found here .	
3	Which system does the department currently use? Or how is this need currently met?	We currently use a system built in-house using Powerbuilder.	RFP: 1.2
4	What is the number of users anticipated?	The solution shall support 1,000 concurrent users, at a minimum.	Attachment 2; REQ-ID: SNF-015
5	We have attached our capability statement for your review.	HTFC requires vendors to review the RFP and decide for themselves if they would better fit the needs of the Agency in fulfilling the RFP as a Primary Contractor or Subcontractor.	