

Questions and Answers for the IFB for Background Screening Services

NOTE: Bids must be received no later than May 6, 2013 at 1:00 PM CST. Bid opening is May 6, 2013 at 1:15 PM CST. All Addenda must be executed and returned with the Bid.

Question 1: Does the Board have a current or recent contract for these services?

Answer: This is the first Invitation for Bid for Background Screening Services issued by the Mississippi Personal Service Contract Review Board (hereafter “PSCRB”). Accordingly, there are no current contracts for this job or charges being administered. Please note that the IFB for Background Screening Services is to establish a preapproved list of vendors for use by state agencies and other entities under the purview of the PSCRB (hereafter “agencies”). The PSCRB will not contract with the vendors; contracts will be between the vendors and the agencies using the preapproved list. Information regarding state agency contracts may be found at www.transparency.mississippi.gov.

Question 2: For Item Description – National, state, county and municipal criminal records. Are you looking a national criminal database product that houses all these types of criminal records, or are you looking for multiple criminal records through the use of:

1. County and municipal criminal products (onsite at the courts)
2. National criminal database product
3. State criminal database product
4. State criminal repository product

Do you want a-la-carte pricing for each search listed above, or all searches bundled together?

Answer: The request is for multiple criminal records, not solely a national criminal database product that houses all types of records. Database information is acceptable if it complies with the Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) (as amended). A-la-carte pricing is required for each category. The only pricing that should be bundled are the rates provided for each of the packages listed on the bid form. For further clarification regarding a-la-carte and package pricing, please see Addendum Number Two, the amended Bid Form. Please note that **bids will only be accepted from vendors who (1) submit bids on “Attachment D-Modified” and (2) submit executed acknowledgement forms for each Addendum.**

It is the bidder’s responsibility to check the website prior to submitting a bid to ascertain if any Addenda have been issued, to obtain all such Addenda, and return all executed Addenda with the bid. Failure to return all executed Addenda will result in the bidder being found nonresponsive and not eligible for consideration for the Preapproved Vendor List for Background Screening Services.

Question 3: I was reading over the RFP for background screening this morning and came across the section below, and am a bit confused. Are you looking for background screening firms to provide these payroll and unemployment services to agencies that choose to contract with them?

7.1.5 Contractors shall also:

- 7.1.5.1 Administer and maintain all employment and payroll records, payroll processing, and payment of payroll checks and taxes, including the deductions required by State, Federal and local laws such as social security and withholding taxes.
- 7.1.5.2 Make all unemployment compensation contributions as required by Federal and State law(s) and process claims as required.
- 7.1.5.3 Perform all services provided in the contract between the bidder/vendor and the Agency in accordance with customary and reasonable industry standards.

Answer: No. Contractors are expected to maintain the payroll and unemployment services for their business and employees, not for state agencies or their employees. This section is included to inform the contractor that the state agency will not provide these services for the contractor's employees.

Question 4: If possible, we would like further clarification on the types of agencies that will be using our services. May we have examples of the agencies that would be using services and an estimated number of checks ran annually?

Answer: A list of the state agencies and entities under the purview of the PSCRB, and therefore eligible to use the preapproved vendor lists, can be found in Appendix A of the PSCRB Rules and Regulations located on the PSCRB page of the Mississippi State Personnel Board (MSPB) website at www.mspb.ms.gov. The PSCRB is not privy to information regarding the number of background checks run annually by the various agencies and entities under PSCRB purview. Information regarding state agency contracts may be found at www.transparency.mississippi.gov.

Question 5: Are there any colleges and/or universities that would have access to our services such as University of Mississippi employees or other similar institutions?

Answer: The state colleges and universities are not under PSCRB purview. A list of the state agencies and entities under the purview of the PSCRB, and therefore eligible to use the preapproved vendor lists, can be found in Appendix A of the PSCRB Rules and Regulations located on the PSCRB page of the Mississippi State Personnel Board (MSPB) website at www.mspb.ms.gov.

Question 6: In section 7.1.5. it's mentioned that we would have to take on the payroll duties of employees. Would we need to include pricing and service terms of this item requested? If so, where does it need to be submitted in the RFP?

Answer: No. Contractors are expected to maintain the payroll and unemployment services for their business and employees, not for state agencies or their employees. This section is included to inform the contractor that the state agency will not provide these services for the contractor's employees.

Question 7: What information is needed from our billing department in order to comply with the E-payment requirement? Do we have to register or create an account in order to receive payment?

Answer: Information regarding business registration for E-Payment will be provided by the agency contracting with the vendor for the services.

Question 8: Section 7.1.5 notes that contractors will need to administer and maintain employment and payroll records, payroll processing, etc. Are the winning bidders required to provide both payroll management and background screening services?

Answer: No. Contractors are expected to maintain the payroll and unemployment services for their business and employees, not for state agencies or their employees. This section is included to inform the contractor that the state agency will not provide these services for the contractor's employees.

Question 9: Section 7.1.3.1 provides the breakdown of the Base Package and notes "national/state/county/municipality criminal records check" as one of the services. Are you seeking the national criminal database search, or more specifically searching direct at the county courthouse and/or state repository, as well as the national criminal database search? Breaking down what you are seeking with this would be helpful.

Answer: The request is for multiple criminal records, not solely a national criminal database product that houses all types of records. Database information is acceptable if it complies with the Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) (as amended). A-la-carte pricing is required for each category. The only pricing that should be bundled are the rates provided for each of the packages listed on the bid form. For further clarification regarding a-la-carte and package pricing, please see Addendum Number Two, the amended Bid Form. Please note that **bids will only be accepted from vendors who (1) submit bids on "Attachment D-Modified" and (2) submit executed acknowledgement forms for each Addendum.**

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Question 10: Can you indicate who are the current vendors?

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Question 11: Understanding that there is no guarantee, can you provide an estimation of how many applicants per year your regions process?

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