



Department of
Job and Family Services

John R. Kasich, Governor
Cynthia C. Dungey, Director

November 9, 2015

Dear Vendor:

This letter is to announce the re-release of the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services' (ODJFS) Request for Information (RFI) Number JFSR1617068103R, Adoption Loan Assistance Project, for the purpose of obtaining information from licensed and FDIC-insured financial institutions that have the ability to manage all monies appropriated for the state adoption assistance loan fund. ODJFS is seeking suggestions and comments from firms, individuals, or organizations that offer services for loan processing, specifically related to the project as described in Section III of this RFI. If there are alternatives which fall outside of the parameters listed, but could achieve the stated goals of the project, ODJFS would be interested in those as well.

Any information submitted in response to this RFI would be used to assess whether improvements in efficacy, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness would be realized by use of methods other than those currently employed. While no contract for the purchase of any services or products will result directly from this RFI, a formal competitive procurement will be developed and released in order to identify the vendor most capable of fulfilling the State's specific needs at the most reasonable cost. Also, whether any vendor decides to respond to this RFI will neither increase nor decrease that vendor's chances of being awarded a contract from any competitive solicitation, if any is subsequently made.

If you are interested in submitting a response to this RFI, please obtain the RFI through the ODJFS web site at <http://www.jfs.ohio.gov/rfp/>. If you experience problems opening this ODJFS URL, please contact the RFP/RLB Unit at the following:

ODJFS, Office of Legal and Acquisition Services
30 East Broad Street, 31st Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215
PH: (614) 728-5693

We ask that responses be prepared and submitted in accordance with the directions and time frames given in the RFI. Thank you for your attention to this request.

Sincerely,



Jay Easterling
Deputy Director
Contracts and Acquisitions

30 East Broad Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215
jfs.ohio.gov

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Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS)

Request for Information Re-release

Number JFSR1617068103R

Adoption Loan Assistance Project

Section I – General Information

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) re-releases this Request for Information (RFI) for the purpose of obtaining information from licensed and FDIC-insured financial institutions that have the ability to manage all monies appropriated for the state adoption assistance loan fund. ODJFS has the responsibility of assisting families approved for adoption in obtaining funds to defray some of the upfront costs of the adoption process. Having this information will assist the state with helping Individuals and families who are approved by a child welfare agency to adopt a child and who have been matched to a child available for adoption, obtain a loan from a financial institution. Accordingly, ODJFS is releasing this RFI to financial organizations and/or companies that offer determinations of the financial eligibility of a loan applicant in accordance with eligibility criteria established in rule.

ODJFS would like to review and consider available options from licensed and FDIC-insured financial institutions to provide funding and collect the interest while the State provides security to the financial institution should a default occur. The State will also pay \$150.00 per loan application approved by the financial institution for administrative costs. Under section 3107.018 of the Ohio Revised Code (ORC), this fund was created so that adoption assistance loans could be made available to assist qualifying prospective adoptive parents with some of the expense involved in the adoption process. The fund shall consist of all money appropriated or transferred to it. ODJFS also seeks specific information on what changes (if any) would be necessary to have this program be more appealing to lending institutions.

Suggestions and comments from firms, individuals, or organizations (referred to collectively in this RFI as ‘vendors’) that offer services for loan processing, specifically related to the project as described in Section III of this RFI are invited. The objective of this RFI is to gather feedback from vendors that provide financial services that would meet ODJFS specifications. ODJFS would then consider those comments for the possibility of making necessary improvements to its current processes for adoption loan assistance.

If there are alternatives which fall outside of the parameters listed, but could achieve the stated goals of the project, ODJFS would be interested in those as well. ODJFS recognizes the depth of knowledge and experience present in the vendor community and understands that it could

provide valuable information that would help in the State's assessment of its current processes for verifying applicant eligibility, and to decide upon the nature and extent of any revisions to its current methods and policies. This RFI is an effort to draw on that expertise.

If ODJFS learns of the existence and availability of multiple cost-effective methods and technologies for enhancing its ability to determine the financial eligibility of the loan applicant in accordance with eligibility criteria, provide the loan using funding provided by the State as security for default, collect repayment to include interest and penalties, and provide monthly/quarterly/annual reports to ODJFS, and decides to acquire such services, a formal competitive procurement will be developed and released in order to identify the vendor most capable of fulfilling the State's specific needs at the most reasonable cost. In that event, the competitive opportunity would be open to any vendor that meets the requirements that would be defined in that procurement, and participation in this RFI process would NOT be a requirement. Also, whether any vendor decides to respond to this RFI will neither increase nor decrease that vendor's chances of being awarded a contract from any competitive solicitation, if any is subsequently made.

However, if ODJFS determines that inadequate competition among vendors offering such technology, methods, and/or services currently exists to warrant an open competitive opportunity, but a single solution is identified, ODJFS may decide to negotiate a contract with the vendor offering that solution.

IMPORTANT: Vendors are NOT to include ANY trade secret information as the contents of their response to this RFI will be considered public information and will be made available upon request. Responses to this RFI are to contain general descriptions of methods, technological solutions, or services that would serve the State's needs; ODJFS seeks nothing as detailed as the sort of information that might be considered proprietary in nature!

RFI Clarification Process – Questions and Answers

Interested parties may ask clarifying questions regarding this RFI, using the following Internet process:

- * Access the ODJFS Web Page at <http://jfs.ohio.gov/>
- * Select "Doing Business with ODJFS" from the bottom of the page;
- * Select "RFP's" from the left side column;
- * Select JFSR1617068103 from the list of competitive opportunities;
- * Follow the link to the dedicated web page;
- * Select "Submit Inquiry" near the bottom of the web page;
- * Follow instructions there for submitting questions; or, to view posted questions and answers, select the "View Q and A" near the bottom of the web page.

In submitting a question, please provide the contact person’s name, the organization’s name, email address, and business phone number. ODJFS will not respond to questions submitted after 8:00 a.m. on the date the Q&A period closes (as identified in the following section).

Questions will be answered only if they are submitted using this process, and are received before the close of the Q&A period. All ODJFS answers will be posted for reference by all interested parties; answers will be posted on the Internet website dedicated to this RFI and may be accessed by following the instructions provided above.

Questions will only be answered within this forum.

In the event of any technical difficulties with this Q&A process, vendors may seek assistance by contacting the ODJFS, Office of Contracts and Acquisitions, RFP/RLB Unit at PH: (614) 728-5693. This number is provided exclusively to assist with technical difficulties accessing the Q&A process; no content questions will be accepted.

Anticipated Timetable

| DATE | EVENT/ACTIVITY |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Monday November 9, 2015 | ODJFS releases the RFI to the Vendor Community on the internet: Q&A period opens -RFI becomes active -Interested Parties may submit inquiries. |
| Wednesday November 18, 2015 | Q&A period closes; 8 a.m. (for inquiries for RFI clarification) -No further inquiries will be accepted -ODJFS will provide answers to the inquiries as they come in that will make up the Final Q&A Document |
| Friday November 20, 2015 | ODJFS posts “Q&A Document” |
| Wednesday, December 2, 2016 | Deadline for Interested Parties to submit responses to ODJFS (3 p.m.) |

Section II – Project Background

The Adoption Assistance Loan Program was created under 3107.018, 317.055 and 5101.143 of the Ohio Revised Code (ORC). The purpose of the adoption loan program is to assist families approved for adoption in obtaining funds to defray some of the upfront costs of the adoption process.

Individuals and families who are approved by a child welfare agency to adopt a child and who have been matched to a child available for adoption may seek a loan from the financial institution. The financial institution will determine the financial eligibility of the loan applicant in accord with eligibility criteria established in rule. Based on the applicant's financial and programmatic eligibility, the financial institution will provide the loan, using funding provided by the State as security for default, collect repayment to include interest and penalties, and provide monthly/quarterly/annual reports to ODJFS.

Section III – Outline of ODJFS Needs, Specifications, and Assumptions

The purpose of this RFI is to gather information on the range of vendor solutions for processing loan applications made by eligible prospective adoptive parents. ODJFS is particularly interested in potential solutions which would:

- Determine the prospective adoptive parents' programmatic eligibility to receive a loan.
- Process the loan and loan payment to the prospective adoptive parent(s) utilizing the lending institutions own assets.
- Collect the repayment for the loan.
- Track all loan program accounting activities, including, but not limited to, arrearages, monetary penalties and interest.
- Provide a written process of how adoption loans will be prioritized for Ohio's Special Needs Children.
- Provide monthly, quarterly, and annual reports to identify the number of applicants, the number of applicants approved, the number of applicants denied and why, the amount of each approved loan, the amount of repayments and fund balance, the number and amount of loans defaulted upon.

Vendors that respond to this RFI are encouraged to identify any additional duties and responsibilities that would be required of the financial institution. If vendors could suggest alternatives beyond the parameters given in this RFI, but could achieve the general goals behind the release of this RFI, ODJFS would be interested in those as well.

Section IV - Content and Format of Response

General Response Guidelines:

- Responses should be limited to 10 pages in length, including any charts, graphs or information display tools.
- Responses should briefly describe the vendor's organization, including its products and services and its industries and customers.
- Responses should briefly describe how its' suggested approach would be better for Ohio than another possible solution.
- Responses should briefly describe the services it could provide or develop in order to meet the ODJFS needs referenced in Section III, and provide a description of the proposed approach to meeting the State's need.
- Responses should provide an estimate of the implementation or start-up time needed.
- Responses should include any suggestions to changes that would benefit or could improve the program including possible revisions to the statute governing this program.
- Responses should include a status reporting procedure for reporting work completed, and resolution of unanticipated problems.
- Responses should include any other information the vendor deems beneficial to this project.

Responses to this RFI are to be submitted electronically (in a secure .PDF document format) to the following e-mail address: [ODJFS RFP RLB UNIT@jfs.ohio.gov](mailto:ODJFS_RFP_RLB_UNIT@jfs.ohio.gov)

Thank you for your efforts to provide ODJFS with your suggestions, comments and relevant information to assist with this project.