



Department of
Job and Family Services

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

January 21, 2014

Dear Vendor:

This letter is to announce the release of the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) Request for Information (RFI) Number JFSR1415118072, for the purpose of obtaining information on effective, secure, and innovative methods and technologies that currently exist for researching various public records from a single Internet resource. ODJFS is seeking this input from individuals, businesses or other organizations with demonstrated expertise in such methods in order to investigate possible revisions to methodologies currently used for researching the eligibility of applicants for the State's benefit programs. We would appreciate your thoughts on any alternatives for achieving the objectives of the work as described in this RFI.

Any information submitted in response to this RFI would be used to assess whether improvements in effectiveness, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness would be realized by use of methods other than those currently employed. To do so, ODJFS wishes also review specific information on costs associated with use of such methods, and the pricing structures used by firms that can provide those improvements to government agencies. While no contract for the purchase of any services or products will result directly from this RFI, it is possible that the information collected will result in revisions to certain ODJFS methods and practices, necessitating a subsequent competitive procurement.

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,

(Signature on File)

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
Number JFSR1415118072**

Statewide Public Records Data Collection

Section I – General Information

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) releases this Request for Information (RFI) for the purpose of obtaining information on effective, secure, and innovative methods and technologies currently available for researching a variety of public records from a single Internet resource. ODJFS would like to review this information for the purpose of determining whether improvements in effectiveness, efficiency, thoroughness, and cost-effectiveness could be realized by utilizing new or different methods than it currently employs for researching public records. In addition to learning about any possible improvements in methods, approaches, and technologies in public records research, ODJFS must also obtain specific information on costs associated with use of such methods, and pricing structures used by firms that can provide those improvements to government agencies.

ODJFS holds responsibilities to confirm the eligibility of applicants for, and recipients of, multiple public assistance program benefits in Ohio. Having reliable, secure, cost-effective, and efficient access to a variety of public records is essential in those efforts. Accordingly, ODJFS is releasing this call for information from organizations that offer any such current alternative products, methods, and services for the State's consideration in its process of determining whether an investment in new methods of public records research may be warranted.

Suggestions and comments from firms, individuals, or organizations that offer products or services for public records research, specifically related to the project as described in Section II of this RFI are invited. The objective of this RFI is to gather feedback from technology-based background check providers regarding the best approaches, technologies, architectures and products to meet our specifications. ODJFS would then consider those comments for the possibility of making cost-effective improvements to its processes for program eligibility determinations.

If there are alternatives which fall outside of the parameters listed, but could achieve the stated goals of the project, we would be interested in those as well. We at ODJFS recognize the depth

of knowledge and experience present in the vendor community and understand that it could provide us with valuable information that would help us assess our 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.

Please note that no contract will be awarded as a direct result of this RFI or any responses to it. Also, whether any firm decides to respond to this RFI will neither increase nor decrease that firm's chances of being awarded a contract from any competitive solicitation, if any is subsequently made. If as a result of the information received through this RFI, ODJFS decides to revise its methods of researching public records, and must purchase services and/or products to do so, a formal competitive procurement will be developed and released in order to decide upon a vendor to fill that need. Please be advised as well that the contents or any response to this RFI will be considered public information and will be made available upon request by interested parties.

RFI Clarification Process – Questions and Answers

Interested parties may ask clarifying questions regarding this RFI. To ask questions use 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 RFP Number JFSR1415118072 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 “View Q and A” near the bottom of the web page.**

In submitting a question, please reference the relevant part of this RFI and the page number of the RFI where the provision can be found. The contact name for an organization asking the question(s), as well as the organization's name, email address and business phone number should also be included. 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).

The answers provided by ODJFS may also be accessed by following the instructions above, once the Q&A period closes and ODJFS posts the Q&A Document.

ODJFS responses to all questions asked via the Internet will be posted on the Internet website dedicated to this RFI, for reference by any interested parties. Questions will only be answered within this forum.

Anticipated Timetable

DATE	EVENT/ACTIVITY
Thursday, January 23, 2014	ODJFS releases the RFI to the Vendor Community on the internet: Q&A period opens -RFI becomes active -Interested Parties may submit inquiries.
Friday, February 14, 2014	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
Wednesday, February 19, 2014	ODJFS posts "Q&A Document"
Monday, March 3, 2014	Deadline for Interested Parties to submit responses to ODJFS (3 p.m.)
TBD	Interested Party interviews (potentially; only at ODJFS discretion)

Section II – Background

The ODJFS Office of Fiscal and Monitoring Services (OFMS), Bureau of Program Integrity seeks vendor responses to this RFI as part of its mission to improve program compliance and quality through program monitoring and fraud control, and the development, analysis and exchange of resulting data.

Currently the State of Ohio uses a state supervised and county administered approach to managing many of its public assistance programs such as Food Assistance (known as the Supplementary Nutrition Assistance Program or SNAP), Medicaid, and Ohio Works First. Each program has specific eligibility requirements for participants. Eligibility workers at a County Department of Job and Family Services (CDJFS) must verify the accuracy of information provided by applicants and those who recertify information for ongoing participation in qualified programs. The Fraud Control Section and county investigative staff require access to a wide range of data sources to confirm reported information and locate missing members of households. Certain elements of the data are considered public records.

The purpose of this RFI is to gather information on whether it would be feasible and cost effective to provide three to five staff members per county (approximately 250 to 450 in total) plus approximately ten to twenty state employees with access to a single Internet source that contains various types of public records. ODJFS estimates that these employees would make a total of 4,500 to 5,000 inquiries per month. Each program has specific eligibility requirements for participants, and workers at the CDJFS must verify the accuracy of information provided by applicants and to those who apply for recertification in qualified programs. As part of the process of verifying information submitted by persons who have applied for public assistance benefits, state and/or county agency staff must access certain data elements to:

- Perform electronic identification verification (EIV) that conforms to ODJFS policy
- Perform a search for contact information, such as:
 - Phone numbers
 - Relatives
 - Neighbors
- Review current address and address history
- Perform background checks using aliases and former names of participants
- Search all available public records to search for home mortgages, car loans and liens
- Verify current employment and employment history
- Review information on marriage and divorce records
- Obtain information on utility records
- Review information on household composition
- Perform a complete and thorough search of available criminal records.
- Conduct a search to confirm any professional licenses

This list is not all-inclusive; respondents to this RFI are encouraged to identify any additional public records not noted in this list but which may be relevant, and for which they could suggest access methods for ODJFS. Further, while a single service or product that would provide access to all needed records would be most advantageous for ODJFS, through this RFI, we are looking

for as much information as we can gather, and that may include information on a variety of approaches to filling our research needs.

Section III - Content and Format of Response

General Guidelines:

- Please limit your response to no more than 10 pages in length, including any charts, graphs or other similar items. This will facilitate a more rapid review of the comments and allow for a timely follow-up with specific responders as needed, and at ODJFS discretion.
- Please briefly describe your organization, including the products and services you provide and the industries and customers to whom you provide those products and services.
- Please indicate why you believe one approach to meeting Ohio's needs for statewide public data collection would be better for Ohio than another.
- Describe the product or services you could provide or develop in order to deliver the components referenced in Section II; include a detailed description of your proposed approach.
- Discuss how your product and/or services would meet the needs of ODJFS as described in this Statewide Public Records Data Collection RFI.
- Provide an estimation of the implementation or start-up timeline for the proposed product/service for any new customers.
- If the suggested solution or approach is technology-based, describe any technological requirements, contingencies, and prerequisites for ODJFS for the solution's implementation.
- Describe the relationship with any secondary vendors, including the services or products to be provided by any secondary vendor, the duration of the relationship, and a summary of past projects completed together.
- Describe any training that would be needed by ODJFS or CDJFS staff, as well as the possible length, mode, and location of the training.

- Provide an all-inclusive costs estimate. It should contain all costs associated with the proposed implementation plan and any other costs necessary to effect a successful implementation and ongoing operation for the project. The price quotation must be discretely priced, that is, the costs should be individually identified to allow for analysis by ODJFS.

ODJFS intends to use the comments and suggestions received to inform and guide the next steps in this process. No contract will result from this RFI. If ODJFS determines the need to acquire any Internet-based resource or other related product or service for eligibility-related data as described in this RFI, some process of competitive competition will be used to obtain those services.

If you are interested in submitting a response to this RFI, please submit it in paper format (please include three paper copies and one CD-ROM copy) to:

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

Alternately, your response may be submitted electronically to the following e-mail address (please send it in a secure .PDF document format): [ODJFS Procurement Inquiries@jfs.ohio.gov](mailto:ODJFS_Procurement_Inquiries@jfs.ohio.gov).

We ask that responses be prepared and submitted in accordance with the directions and time frames given in the RFI.

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