

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS FOR

KINSHIP NAVIGATOR PROGRAM

ISSUING OFFICE

**Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Department of Human Services
Bureau of Procurement and Contract Management
Room 528 Health and Welfare Building
625 Forster Street
Harrisburg, PA 17120**

RFA NUMBER

25-RFA-14207

DATE OF ISSUANCE

July 7, 2025

**REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS FOR
25-RFA-14207**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CALENDAR OF EVENTS	iv
Part I - GENERAL INFORMATION	1
Part II - CRITERIA FOR SELECTION	10
Part III - TECHNICAL SUBMITTAL	13
Part IV – COST SUBMITTAL	35

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A, APPLICATION COVER SHEET

**APPENDIX B, TRADE SECRET CONFIDENTIAL PROPRIETARY INFORMATION
NOTICE FORM**

APPENDIX C, COST SUBMITTAL WORKSHEET

APPENDIX D, KNAC CHARTER

APPENDIX E, LOBBYING CERTIFICATION AND DISCLOSURE

**APPENDIX F, FEDERAL FUNDING ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY
ACT SUB-RECIPIENT DATA SHEET**

**APPENDIX G, WORKER PROTECTION AND INVESTMENT CERTIFICATION
FORM**

**APPENDIX H, IT CONTRACT TERMS AND CONDITIONS, DHS ADDENDUM TO
TERMS AND CONDITIONS AND AUDIT CLAUSE**

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

The Commonwealth will make every effort to adhere to the following schedule:

Activity	Responsibility	Date
Deadline to submit questions via email to RA-PWRFAQUESTIONS@PA.GOV	Potential Applicants	July 18, 2025 12:00 PM EST
Answers to Potential Applicant questions posted to the Department of General Services website at http://www.emarketplace.state.pa.us/Search.aspx no later than this date.	DHS	August 1, 2025
Please monitor this website for all communications regarding this Request for Applications.	Potential Applicants	Ongoing
Application must be received by the Issuing Office at RA-PWRFAQUESTIONS@PA.GOV as provided in Part I, Sections I-10 and I-11.	Applicants	August 15, 2025 12:00 PM EST

PART I

GENERAL INFORMATION

- I-1. Purpose.** This Request for Applications (“RFA”) provides to those interested in submitting applications for the subject procurement (“Applicants”) sufficient information to enable them to prepare and submit applications for the Department of Human Services’ (“Department” or “DHS”) consideration on behalf of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania (“Commonwealth”) to satisfy a need for **Kinship Navigator Program** (“Project”). This RFA contains instructions governing the requested applications, including the requirements for the information and material to be included; a description of the service to be provided; requirements that Applicants must meet to be eligible for consideration; general evaluation criteria; and other requirements specific to this RFA.
- I-2. Issuing Office.** The Department’s Office of Administration, Bureau of Procurement and Contract Management (“Issuing Office”) has issued this RFA on behalf of the Commonwealth. The sole point of contact in the Commonwealth for this RFA shall be Teresa Allen, RA-PWRFAQUESTIONS@PA.GOV, the Issuing Officer for this RFA. Please refer all inquiries to the Issuing Officer.
- I-3. Overview of Project.** The Department’s, Office of Children, Youth and Families (“OCYF”) is responsible for the management and administration of the Kinship Navigator Program in accordance with federal requirements for Kinship Navigator Programs, including 42 U.S.C. §§ 627(a)(1), 671(e)(4)(C), and 674(a), the Commonwealth’s Family Finding and Kinship Care Law at Title 67 § 75 ([Title 67 – PA General Assembly \(state.pa.us\)](https://legis.pa.gov/General-Assembly/bills/2019/Title-67-PA-General-Assembly)), and any laws, regulations, directives, reviews, policies, and procedures promulgated by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Administration (“DSSH/ACF”) and OCYF. All services provided must be compliant with the most current applicable federal, state, and local standards, laws, and regulations. Kinship Navigator Programs assist relatives and kin throughout the state of Pennsylvania who assume the primary responsibility for the care of children who are in need of a safe and stable home. The Kinship Caregiver Navigator Program Act (Act 89 of 2018), requires the Commonwealth to operate a Kinship Navigator Program and the program set forth in this RFA is a component of the Department’s plan to meet the statutory requirements outlined in the Kinship Caregiver Navigator Program Act ([2018 Act 89 - PA General Assembly \(state.pa.us\)](https://legis.pa.gov/General-Assembly/bills/2018/Act-89-PA-General-Assembly)).

The number of children being raised by relatives and kin is increasing nationally, and in the Commonwealth, with some of these kinship families being supported by the child welfare system. As of September 30, 2022, 40.6 percent of children in foster care were placed with relatives, compared to 31.5 percent in 2015.

Many families opt to provide care for relative children without the involvement of the child welfare system. These families often have difficulty locating and accessing the services and supports needed to adequately provide for the child or children in their care.

In its 2024 State of the Grandfamilies and Kinship Care Report, Generations United estimated that for every one child in foster care with kin, nineteen children are being raised by grandparents or other kin outside of the foster care system. [2024GrandfamiliesReport-FullReport-FINAL-WEB.pdf](#) In addition, based on the Generations United data, an estimated 2.5 million children are being raised by relatives or kin, whether or not the children are involved in the child welfare system.

The Department has developed a Kinship Navigator Program that incorporates the following: A Kinship Navigator Advisory Committee (“KNAC”), a Kinship Support Center which includes a toll-free information and referral helpline, a Kinship Navigator Website, In addition, the selected Applicant of this

RFA shall establish additional direct client supports that are needed by kinship caregivers including, but not limited to, the distribution of concrete goods such as gift cards, backpacks, books and diapers. The Kinship Navigator Program also includes outreach, and activities for National Kinship Care Month. The selected Applicant shall also meet with OCYF for discussion with OCYF on the implementation of approved recommendations to meet the requirements set forth by the Family First Prevention Services Act (Public Law 115-123).

I-4. Objectives.

A. General. The Department is seeking an Applicant to work with OCYF in the management and administration of the Kinship Navigator Program. To ensure all kinship families are supported and have the necessary resources to help care for the children they are raising, the Department developed a Kinship Navigator Program, KinConnector. This statewide Kinship Navigator Program is designed to assist all relative and kinship caregivers who are raising children, both formal kinship involved with the child welfare system and informal kinship families who are not involved with the child welfare system. Under this program kinship caregivers are referred to services they need to safely maintain children in their home which is expected to reduce the need for those children to enter foster care.

B. Specific. The selected Applicant shall promote the Kinship Navigator Program that assists kinship caregivers in learning about, locating and obtaining services and supports to meet the needs of the children in their care as well as their own needs, and to promote effective partnerships among public and private agencies to ensure that kinship caregivers are served through the following tasks:

1. KNAC
2. Kinship Support Center which consists of Kinship Navigators, Kinship Navigator Helpline, Kinship Navigator Website, and Direct Client Supports.
3. Outreach Campaign
4. National Kinship Care Month Activities
5. Coordination and Collaboration with OCYF

I-5. Type of Agreement. The Department intends to award one grant agreement as the result of this RFA. If the Department enters into an agreement, it will be a **Cost Reimbursement** agreement containing the IT Contract Terms and Conditions as shown in **Appendix H** of this RFA. All references to the term “Contractor” shall refer to the selected Applicant and all references to the term “Contract” shall refer to the Grant Agreement. The Department, in its sole discretion, may undertake negotiations with Applicants whose applications, in the judgment of the Department, show them to be qualified, responsible and capable of performing the Project.

I-6. Rejection of Applications. The Department, in its sole and complete discretion, may reject any application received as a result of this RFA.

I-7. Incurring Costs. The Commonwealth and the Department are not liable for any costs an Applicant incurs in the preparation and submission of its application, in participating in the RFA process, or in anticipation of agreement award.

I-8. Questions & Answers. If an Applicant has questions regarding this RFA, the Applicant must submit the questions by email (**with the subject line “25-RFA-14207 Question”**) to the Issuing Officer named in **Part I, Section I-2** of this RFA. If the Applicant has questions, they must be submitted as they arise via email but **no later than** the date stated in the Calendar of Events. The Applicant shall not attempt to contact the Issuing Officer by any other means.

When questions are submitted after the date specified in the Calendar of Events, the Issuing Officer *may* respond to questions of an administrative nature by directing the questioning Applicant to specific provisions in the RFA. If the Department decides to respond to a non-administrative question *after* the date for receipt of questions, DHS will provide the answer to all Applicants through an addendum.

All questions and responses will be posted on the Department of General Services (“DGS”) website and are considered as an addendum to, and part of, this RFA in accordance with RFA **Part I, Section I-9** of this RFA.

- I-9. Addenda to the RFA.** If the Department deems it necessary to revise any part of this RFA before the application response date, the Department will post an addendum to eMarketplace at <http://www.emarketplace.state.pa.us/Search.aspx>. It is the Applicant’s responsibility to periodically check the website for any new information or addenda to the RFA. The Department shall not be bound by any verbal information nor shall it be bound by any written information that is not either contained within the RFA or formally issues as an addendum.
- I-10. Response Date.** To be considered for selection, Applicants must submit electronic copies of their applications to the Issuing Office and the Issuing Office must receive the applications **no later than** the date and time specified in the Calendar of Events. Electronic copies of applications must be submitted to RA-PWRFAQUESTIONS@PA.GOV. Applicants should allow sufficient time for electronic submission and receipt of their applications. The Department will **not** accept hard copy applications or applications via facsimile transmission. **The Department will reject late applications or portions of applications.** “Late” includes, but is not limited to, applications which are received within a minute or less after the due date and time, as well as, applications that are received several hours or days after the due date and time.
- I-11. Application Requirements.**
- A. Application Submission:** To be considered, Applicants should submit a complete response to this RFA to the Issuing Office, using the format provided in **Part I, Section I-11.B**, providing **one copy of the Technical Submittal** via email to RA-PWRFAQUESTIONS@PA.GOV. The subject line of the email must specify “25-RFA-14207 Application”. Email attachments are limited to 10 MB, cumulatively, per email, and files may not be sent in any compressed format. Any part of the application or its attachments over that limit must be sent via separate emails, with each labeled “25-RFA-14207 Application Part X of Y” (total number of emails).

The electronic response must be in Microsoft Office or Microsoft Office-compatible format; and any spreadsheets must be in Microsoft Excel. If an Applicant designates information as confidential or proprietary or trade secret protected in accordance with **Part I, Section I-17**, the Applicant must also include one redacted version of the Technical Submittal, also excluding financial capability information, if applicable. Applicants may not lock or protect any cells or tabs. Applicants shall make no other distribution of its application to any other Applicant or Commonwealth official or Commonwealth consultant. Each application page should be numbered for ease of reference. An official authorized to bind the Applicant to its provisions must sign the application. If the official signs the **Application Cover Sheet (Appendix A** to this RFA) and the Application Cover Sheet is attached to the Applicant’s application, the requirement will be met. For this RFA, the application must remain valid for 120 days or until an agreement is fully executed. If the Department selects the Applicant’s application for award, the contents of the selected Applicant’s application will become, except to the extent the contents are changed through Best and Final Offers or negotiations, contractual obligations.

Each Applicant submitting an application specifically waives the ability to withdraw or modify it, except that the Applicant may withdraw its application by written notice and submitting it to RA-PWRFAQUESTIONS@PA.GOV prior to the date and time specified in the Calendar of Events of when applications are due. An Applicant may modify its submitted application prior to the exact hour and date set for application receipt only by submitting a new application or modification that complies with the RFA requirements.

B. Application Format: Applicants should submit their applications in the format, including heading descriptions, outlined below. To be considered, the application should respond to all application requirements. Applicants should provide any other information thought to be relevant, but not applicable to the enumerated categories, as an appendix to the application.. Each application shall consist of one sealed submittal:

1. Technical Submittal:

- a. Applicants should format their responses as outlined below. The Technical Submittal shall include the following sections:
 - i. Table of Contents
 - ii. Statement of the Project
 - iii. Management Summary
 - iv. Qualifications
 - v. Financial Capability
 - vi. Work Plan
 - vii. Requirements
 - viii. Reports & Project Control
 - ix. Performance Standards
 - x. Cost Submittal
- b. Complete, sign and include **Appendix E - Lobbying Certification** and if applicable, the **Disclosure of Lobbying Activities**.
- c. Complete and include **Appendix F, Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act Sub-Recipient Data Sheet**.
- d. Complete and include **Appendix G, Worker Protection and Investment Certification Form**.

Technical Submittals must adhere to the following format:

- a. Pages must be 8.5 by 11 inches with right and left margins of one inch.
- b. Must use Arial or Times New Roman font with a type size of 12.
- c. Section headings, shown in this **Part I, Section I-11**, should be used.
- d. Include a page number and identification of the Applicant in the page footer of each page.
- e. Specifically reference materials provided in any appendix by page numbers in the body of the application.
- f. Exceptions for paper and font size are permissible for project schedule (Microsoft Project) or for graphical exhibits and material in appendices.

The Department may request additional information which, in the Department's opinion, is necessary to verify that the Applicant's competence, number of qualified employees, business organization, and financial resources are adequate to perform according to the RFA.

The Department may make investigations as deemed necessary to determine the ability of the Applicant to perform the Project, and the Applicant shall furnish to the Issuing Office all requested information and data. The Department may reject any application if the evidence submitted by, or investigation of, such Applicant fails to satisfy the Department that such Applicant is properly qualified to carry out the obligations of the RFA and to complete the Project as specified.

- I-12. Economy of Preparation.** Applicants should prepare applications simply and economically, providing a straightforward, concise description of the Applicant's ability to meet the requirements of the RFA.
- I-13. Alternate Applications.** The Department has identified the basic approach to meeting its requirements, allowing Applicants to be creative and propose their best solution to meeting these requirements. The Department will not accept alternate applications.
- I-14. Discussions for Clarifications and Negotiations.** Applicants may be required to make an oral or written clarification of their applications, or both, to the Department to ensure thorough mutual understanding and Applicant responsiveness to the solicitation requirements. The Department will initiate requests for clarifications. Clarifications may occur at any stage of the evaluation and selection process prior to the award of an agreement.

The Department, in its sole discretion, may undertake negotiations with Applicants whose applications, shown them to be qualified, responsible, and capable of performing the Project. Negotiations may occur at any stage of the evaluation and selection process prior to the award of an agreement.

- I-15. Oral or Written Presentations.** Applicants may be required to make an oral or written presentation of their applications to the Department to demonstrate an Applicant's capabilities and ability to provide the services required in the RFA. The Department will initiate requests for presentations; and for oral presentations, may include a request that key personnel be present. The oral presentation will be held in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Presentations may be requested at any stage of the evaluation and selection process prior to the award of the grant agreement.
- I-16. Prime Applicant Responsibilities.** The selected Applicant must perform services valued at least at 50% of the total agreement cost. Nevertheless, the Department will require the Applicant assume responsibility for all services offered in its application whether it produces them itself or by sub-contract. The Department will consider the selected Applicant to be the sole point of contact for all agreement matters.
- I-17. Application Contents.**

- A. Confidential Information.** The Commonwealth does not require, confidential proprietary information or trade secrets be included as part of Applicants' submissions. Except as provided, Applicants should not label applications as confidential or proprietary or trade secret protected. Any Applicant who determines that it must divulge such information as part of its application must submit the signed written statement described in Subsection C below and must provide a redacted version of its application in accordance with **Part I, Section I-11.A**, which removes only the confidential proprietary information and trade secrets, for required public disclosure purposes.
 - B. Commonwealth Use.** All material submitted with the application shall be the property of the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth has the right to use any or all ideas not protected by intellectual property rights that are presented in any application regardless of whether the application becomes part of an agreement. Notwithstanding any Applicant copyright designations contained on applications, the Commonwealth shall have the right to make copies and distribute applications

internally and to comply with public record or other disclosure requirements under the provisions of any Commonwealth or United States statute or regulation, or rule or order of any court of competent jurisdiction.

- C. **Public Disclosure.** After the award of a grant, all applications are subject to disclosure in response to a request for public records made under the Pennsylvania Right-to-Know-Law, 65 P.S. § 67.101, et seq. If an application contains confidential proprietary information or trade secrets, the Applicant must provide a signed written statement to this effect with the submission in accordance with 65 P.S. § 67.707(b) for the information to be considered exempt under 65 P.S. § 67.708(b)(11) from public records requests. Refer to **Appendix B** of the RFA for a **Trade Secret Confidential Proprietary Information Notice Form** that may be utilized as the signed written statement. If financial capability information is submitted in response to **Part III, Section III-4** such financial capability information is exempt from public records disclosure under 65 P.S. § 67.708(b)(26).

I-18. Best and Final Offers (“BAFO”).

- A. While not required, the Department may conduct discussions with Applicants for the purpose of obtaining BAFOs. To obtain BAFOs, the Department may do one or more of the following, in any combination and order:
1. Schedule oral presentations;
 2. Request revised applications; and
 3. Enter into pre-selection negotiations.
- B. The following Applicants will **not** be invited by the Department to submit a BAFO:
1. Those Applicants, which the Department has determined to be not responsible or whose applications the Department has determined to be not responsive.
 2. Those Applicants, which the Department has determined from the submitted and gathered financial and other information, do not possess the financial capability, experience or qualifications to ensure good faith performance of the grant agreement.
 3. Those Applicants whose raw score for their Technical Submittal is less than 75% of the total amount of raw technical points allotted to the technical criterion.

The Department may further limit participation in the BAFO process to those remaining responsible Applicants that the Department has, within its discretion, determined to be within the top competitive range of responsive applications.

- C. The Evaluation Criteria found in **Part II, Section II-4**, shall also be used to evaluate the BAFOs.
- D. Price reductions offered shall have no effect upon the Applicant’s Technical Submittal.
- E. The Department, in its sole discretion, also may undertake negotiations with Applicants whose applications, in the judgement of DHS, show them to be qualified, responsible, and capable of performing the Project.

- I-19. News Releases.** Applicants shall not issue news releases, Internet postings, advertisements or any other public communications pertaining to this Project without prior written approval of the Department, and then only in coordination with the Department.

- I-20. Restriction of Contact.** From the issue date of this RFA until the Department selects an application for award, the Issuing Officer is the sole point of contact concerning this RFA. Any violation of this condition may be cause for the Department to reject the offending Applicant's application. If the Department later discovers that the Applicant has engaged in any violations of this condition, the Department may reject the offending Applicant's application or rescind its grant agreement. Applicants shall not distribute any part of their applications beyond the Issuing Office. An Applicant who shares information contained in its application with other Commonwealth personnel or consultants or competing Applicant personnel may be disqualified.
- I-21. Department Participation.** The selected Applicant shall provide all services, supplies, facilities, and other support necessary to complete the identified work, except as otherwise provided in **Part I, Section I-21**. The Department will assign a DHS, OCYF staff member as the Department's Grant Administrator. The Department's Grant Administrator will monitor the implementation of the Kinship Navigator Program in collaboration with the selected Applicant. At a minimum, the Department's Grant Administrator will meet virtually with the selected Applicant monthly. The Department will not provide any training, clerical support, programming support, office space, reproduction facilities or other logistical support.
- I-22. Term of Agreement.** The term of the agreement will commence on the Effective Date and will end **one year** after the Effective Date. Subject to the performance of the selected Applicant and other considerations, the Department may renew the agreement on the same terms and conditions for up to four additional one-year periods. The Department will fix the Effective Date after the agreement has been fully executed by the selected Applicant and by the Commonwealth and all approvals required by the Commonwealth have been obtained. The selected Applicant shall not start the performance of any work prior to the Effective Date of the agreement and the Commonwealth shall not be liable to pay for any service or work performed or expenses incurred before the Effective Date.
- I-23. Applicant's Representations and Authorizations.** By submitting its application, each Applicant understands, represents, and acknowledges that:
- A.** All Applicant's information and representations in the application are material and important, and the Department will rely upon its contents in awarding the agreement. The Commonwealth may treat any misstatement, omission or misrepresentation as fraudulent concealment of the true facts relating to the application, punishable pursuant to 18 Pa. C.S. § 4904.
 - B.** The Applicant has arrived at the price(s) and amounts in its application independently and without consultation, communication, or agreement with any other Applicant or potential Applicant.
 - C.** The Applicant has not disclosed the price(s), the amount of the application, nor the approximate price(s) or amount(s) of its application to any other firm or person who is an Applicant or potential applicant, and the Applicant shall not disclose any of these items on or before the application submission deadline specified in the Calendar of Events.
 - D.** The Applicant has not attempted, nor will it attempt, to induce any firm or person to refrain from submitting an application, or to submit an application higher than its application, or to submit any intentionally high or noncompetitive application or other form of complementary application.
 - E.** The Applicant makes its application in good faith and not pursuant to any agreement or discussion with, or inducement from, any firm or person to submit a complementary or other noncompetitive application.

- F. To the best knowledge of the person signing the application for the Applicant, the Applicant, its affiliates, subsidiaries, officers, directors, and employees are not currently under investigation by any governmental agency and have not in the last **four** years been convicted or found liable for any act prohibited by State or Federal law in any jurisdiction, involving conspiracy or collusion with respect to bidding or proposing on any public contract, except as the Applicant has disclosed in its application.
- G. To the best of the knowledge of the person signing the application for the Applicant and except as the Applicant has otherwise disclosed in its application, the Applicant has no outstanding, delinquent obligations to the Commonwealth including, but not limited to, any state tax liability not being contested on appeal.
- H. The Applicant is not currently under suspension or debarment by the Commonwealth, and has not been precluded from participation in any federally funded health care program by any other state or the federal government, and if the Applicant cannot so certify, then it shall submit along with its application a written explanation of why it cannot make such certification.
- I. The Applicant has not made, under separate agreement with the Department, any recommendations to the Department concerning the need for the services or the specifications for the services described in the application.
- J. Each Applicant, by submitting its application, authorizes Commonwealth agencies to release to the Department information concerning the Applicant's Pennsylvania taxes, unemployment compensation and workers' compensation liabilities.
- K. Until the selected Applicant receives a fully executed and approved written agreement from the Issuing Office, no legal and valid agreement exists, in law or in equity, and the Applicant shall not begin to perform.
- L. The Applicant is not currently engaged and will not during the duration of the agreement engage, in a boycott of a person or an entity based in or doing business with a jurisdiction that the Commonwealth is not prohibited by Congressional statute from engaging in trade or commerce.

I-24. Notification of Selection.

- A. **Negotiations.** The Department will notify all Applicants in writing of the Applicant selected for negotiations after the Department has determined, taking into consideration all evaluation factors, the application that is the most advantageous to the Department.
- B. **Award.** Applicants whose applications are not selected will be notified when negotiations have been successfully completed and the Department has received the final negotiated agreement signed by the selected Applicant.

I-25. Use of Electronic Versions of this RFA. This RFA is being made available by electronic means. If an Applicant electronically accepts the RFA, the Applicant accepts full responsibility to ensure that no changes are made to the RFA. If a conflict arises between a version of the RFA in the Applicant's possession and the Issuing Office's version of the RFA, the Issuing Office's version shall govern.

I-26. Information Technology Policies. This RFA is subject to the Information Technology Policies ("ITPs") issued by the Office of Administration, Office for Information Technology and DHS Business and

Technical Standards (“BTSs”) created and published by DHS. ITPs may be found at <http://www.oa.pa.gov/Policies/Pages/itp.aspx>. The DHS Business and Technical Standards may be found at <https://www.dhs.pa.gov/providers/Providers/Pages/Business%20and%20Tech%20Standards/Business-and-Technology-Standards.aspx>.

All applications must be submitted on the basis that all ITPs and BTSs are applicable to this procurement. It is the responsibility of the Applicant to read and be familiar with the ITPs and BTSs. Notwithstanding the foregoing, if the Applicant believes that any ITP or BTS is not applicable to this procurement, it must list all such ITPs and BTS in its technical response, and explain why it believes the ITP or DHS BTS is not applicable. DHS may, in its sole discretion, accept or reject any request that an ITP or DHS BTS not be considered to be applicable to the procurement. The Applicant’s failure to list an ITP or DHS BTS will result in its waiving its right to do so later, unless DHS in its sole discretion, determines that it would be in the best interest of the Commonwealth to waive the pertinent ITP or BTS.

The selected Applicant shall comply with state and federal law and policies requiring electronic and information technology being accessible to individuals with disabilities, including Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (“WCAG”) 2.0, and Commonwealth ITP ACC001-Information Technology Accessibility Policy.

PART II

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

- II-1. Mandatory Responsiveness Requirements.** To be eligible for selection, an application must:
- A. Be timely received from an Applicant (see **Part I, Section I-10**); and
 - B. Be properly signed by the Applicant (see **Part I, Section I-11.A**).
- II-2. Technical Nonconforming Applications.** The two Mandatory Responsiveness Requirements set forth in **Section II-1** are the only RFA requirements that the Commonwealth will consider to be *non-waivable*. The Department may, in its sole discretion, (1) waive any other technical or immaterial nonconformities in an Applicant's application, (2) allow the Applicant to cure the nonconformity, or (3) consider the nonconformity in the scoring of the application.
- II-3. Evaluation.** The Department has selected a committee of qualified personnel to review and evaluate the Technical Submittals of the timely submitted applications that are eligible for selection. The Department will provide written notice of its selection for negotiations the responsible Applicant whose application is determined to be the most advantageous to the Commonwealth after taking into consideration all evaluation factors.
- II-4. Evaluation Criteria.** The following criteria will be used in evaluating each application:
- A. **Technical:** The Department has established the weight for the Technical criterion as **100%** of the total points. Evaluation will be based upon the following: **Understanding the Project, Applicant Qualifications, Personnel Qualifications, Soundness of Approach, and Cost.**
 - **Understanding the Project.** This includes the Applicant's understanding of Commonwealth's needs that generated the RFA, the objectives of the RFA, and of the nature and scope of the work involved.
 - **Applicant Qualifications.** This includes, but is not limited to, the ability of the Applicant to meet the terms of the RFA, including the time constraints involved with the Project and the quality, relevancy, and recentness of projects completed. This also includes the Applicant's ability to undertake a Project of this size.
 - **Personnel Qualifications.** This includes, but is not limited to, the competence and sufficiency of the personnel and staff who would be assigned to the Project by the Applicant.
 - **Soundness of Approach.** This includes, but is not limited to, the Applicant's technical approach for completion of all services by this RFA, if it is responsive to all requirements of the RFA and if it meets the Project's objectives.
 - **Cost.** This refers to the feasibility of the Applicant's Budget Submittal, and whether the proposed grant activities are commensurate with the budget.

The final Technical scores are determined by giving the maximum number of technical points available to the application with the highest raw technical score. The remaining applications are rated by applying the formula located at:

https://www.dgs.pa.gov/Materials-Services-Procurement/Procurement-Resources/Pages/RFP_SCORING_FORMULA.aspx

II-5. Applicant Responsibility. To be responsible, an Applicant must submit a responsive application and possess the capability to fully perform the agreement requirements in all respects and the integrity and reliability for the good faith performance of the agreement.

For an Applicant to be considered responsible for this RFA and eligible for selection for BAFO and selection for negotiations:

- A. The total score for the Technical Submittal of the application must be greater than or equal to **75%** of the **available raw technical points**; and
- B. The Applicant's financial information must demonstrate that the Applicant possesses the financial capability for the good faith performance of the agreement. The Commonwealth will review the Applicant's previous three financial statements, any additional information received from the Applicant, and any other publicly available financial information concerning the Applicant and assess each Applicant's financial capacity based on calculating and analyzing various financial ratios, and comparison with industry standards and trends.

An Applicant that fails to demonstrate sufficient financial capability to ensure good faith performance of the agreement as specified herein may be considered by the Department, in its sole discretion, for BAFO or negotiation contingent upon such Applicant providing performance security up to the full amount of the agreement base term cost proposed by the Applicant in a form acceptable to the Department. Based on the financial condition of the Applicant, the Department may require a certified or bank (cashier's) check, letter of credit, or a performance bond conditioned upon the faithful performance of the agreement by the Applicant. The required performance security must be issued or executed by a bank or surety company authorized to do business in the Commonwealth. The cost of the required performance security will be the sole responsibility of the Applicant and cannot increase the Applicant's cost application or the agreement cost to the Commonwealth.

Further, the Department will award an agreement only to an Applicant determined to be responsible in accordance with the most current version of Commonwealth Management Directive 215.9, Contractor Responsibility Program.

II-6. Final Ranking and Award.

- A. After any BAFO process is conducted, the Issuing Office will combine the evaluation committee's final technical scores, in accordance with the relative weights assigned to these areas as set forth in this **Part II-4**.
- B. The Issuing Office will rank responsible Applicants according to the total overall score assigned to each, in descending order.
- C. Except as provided in **Section II-6.D.**, the Department must select for negotiations the Applicant with the highest overall score.

- D.** The Department has the discretion to reject all applications or cancel the RFA, at any time prior to the time an agreement is fully executed, when it is in the best interests of the Commonwealth. The reasons for the rejection or cancellation shall be made part of the RFA file.
- E.** The Department intends to award a grant as a result of this RFA with maximum funding of \$900,000 for the base term, contingent on the availability of funding.

PART III

TECHNICAL SUBMITTAL

III-1. Statement of the Project. State in succinct terms your understanding of the Project and the service required by this RFA. The Applicant's response should demonstrate that the Applicant fully understands the scope of services to be provided, the Applicant's responsibilities, and how the Applicant will effectively manage the grant. Applicants should review the entire RFA, including **Sections I-3. Overview of Project** and **I-4. Objectives**, in preparing their response to this section.

Applicant Response

III-2. Management Summary. Include a narrative description of the proposed effort and a list of the items to be delivered and services to be provided. The Applicant should condense and highlight the contents of the Technical Submittal in a manner that allows a broad understanding of the entire Technical Submittal.

Applicant Response

III-3. Qualifications.

A. Company Overview. The Applicant should describe the corporate history and relevant experience of the Applicant. This section must detail information on the ownership of the company (names and percent of ownership), the date the company was established, the date the company began operations, the physical location of the company, and the current size of the company. The Applicant should provide a corporate organizational chart.

The Applicant should describe its corporate identity, legal status and forms, including the name, address, telephone number, and email address for the legal entity that is submitting the application. In addition, the Applicant should provide the name of the principal officers, a description of its major services, and any specific licenses and accreditations held by the Applicant.

Applicants should provide similar organizational background information on any significant subcontractor for services. A "significant subcontractor" is defined as an organization undertaking more than 10% on the total cost basis of the work associated with this RFA.

If an Applicant is proposing to use the services or products of a subsidiary or affiliated firm, the Applicant should describe the business arrangement with that entity and the scope of the services the entity will provide.

If the experience of any proposed subcontractor is being used to meet the qualifications and requirements of this RFA, the Applicant should provide the same information as listed above for the subcontractor. This information must be presented separately within this section, clearly identifying the subcontractor experience and name of the subcontractor.

The Applicant should disclose any contract or agreement cancellations, or terminations within five years preceding the issuance of this RFA. If a contract or agreement was canceled or terminated for lack of performance, the Applicant must provide details on the customer's allegations, the Applicant's position relevant to the allegations, and the final resolution of the cancellation or the termination. The Applicant must include each customer's Company or entity name, address, contact name, phone number, and email address.

The Department may disqualify an Applicant based on a failure to disclose such a cancelled or terminated contract or agreement. If the Department learns about such a failure to disclose after an agreement is awarded, the Department may terminate the agreement.

Applicant Response

- B. Prior Experience.** The Applicant shall include their knowledge and experience in providing child welfare, kinship caregiver supports, foster care, and adoption services. The Applicant should possess knowledge and understanding of the Commonwealth Kinship Caregiver Navigator Program Act ([2018 Act 89 - PA General Assembly \(state.pa.us\)](#)) and Title 67, Chapter 75 ([Title 67 - PA General Assembly \(state.pa.us\)](#)) regulations, as well as have experience in providing resources and referrals, trainings, and meeting facilitation. Applicants should detail their experience, direct and indirect, working with child welfare professionals and families who need support across the Commonwealth, particularly kinship caregivers. Experience should be work done by individuals who will be assigned to this Project as well as that of the company. Studies or projects referred to should be identified and the name for the customer shown, including the name, address and telephone number of the responsible official of the customer, company, or agency who may be contacted.

Applicant Response

- C. Personnel.** Include the number of executive and professional personnel, analysts, auditors, researchers, programmers, consultants, etc., who will be engaged in the work. Show where these personnel will be physically located during the time they are engaged in the Project. For “Key Personnel”, defined as **Project Manager** and the **Financial Analyst or Bookkeeper**, include the employee’s name and, through a resume or similar document, the Project personnel’s education and experience in similar in size and scope projects. Indicate the responsibilities each individual will have in this Project and how long each has been with your company. For non-Key Personnel, include position descriptions and minimum qualifications.

Submitted responses are not to include personal information that will, or will be likely to, require redaction to release of the application under the Pennsylvania Right-to-Know Law, including but not limited to home addresses and phone numbers, Social Security Numbers, driver’s license numbers or numbers from state identification cards issued in lieu of a driver’s license, and financial account numbers. If the Commonwealth requires any of this information for security validation or other purposes, the information will be requested separately and as necessary.

Include organizational charts outlining the staffing, reporting relationships and staff members in its description. Show the total number of staff proposed and indicate the Full Time Equivalents (“FTE”) to account for any additional staff (non-Key Personnel) that are not assigned on a full-time basis. Provide similar information for any subcontractors that are proposed. The organizational chart must illustrate the lines of authority, designate the positions responsible and accountable for the completion of each component in the RFA, indicate the names and job title and number of personnel that will be assigned to each role, and the number of hours per week each person is projected to work on the Project. The organizational chart must clearly indicate any functions that are subcontracted along with the name of the subcontracting entities and the services they will perform.

Key Personnel Diversions or Replacement. Once Key Personnel are approved by the Department, the selected Applicant may not divert or replace personnel without prior approval of the Department’s Grant Administrator. The selected Applicant must provide notice of a proposed diversion or

replacement to the Department's Grant Administrator at least 30 calendar days in advance and provide the name, qualifications, and background check (if required) of the person who will replace the diverted personnel. The Department's Grant Administrator will notify the selected Applicant within ten business days of the diversion notice whether the proposed diversion is acceptable and if the replacement was approved.

"Divert" or "diversion" is defined as the transfer of personnel by the selected Applicant or its subcontractor to another assignment within the control of either the Applicant or subcontractor. Advance notification and approval does not include changes in Key Personnel due to resignations, death, disability, dismissal for cause or dismissal as a result of the termination of a subcontract or any other causes that are beyond the control of the selected Applicant or its subcontractor. The Department's Grant Administrator must approve the replacement personnel.

The Department's Grant Administrator may request that the selected Applicant remove a person from this Project at any time. For vacancies other than those caused by diversions and unless otherwise approved by the Grant Administrator, the selected Applicant will have ten business days to interim fill and 60 calendar days to permanently fill the vacancy with a person acceptable in terms of experience and skills, subject to the Department Grant Administrator's approval.

Applicant Response

D. Subcontractors. Provide a subcontracting plan for all subcontractors, who will be assigned to the Project. The selected Applicant is prohibited from subcontracting or outsourcing any part of this Project without the express written approval of the Commonwealth. Upon award of the grant agreement, subcontractors included in the application submission are approved. For each position included in your subcontracting plan provide:

1. Name of subcontractor;
2. Address of subcontractor;
3. Primary contact name, email address and phone number;
4. Type of organization;
5. Date of formation;
6. Status of charter and corporate charter number;
7. Unique Entity Identifier Number;
8. SAP/SRM Vendor Number;
9. Number of years worked with the subcontractor;
10. Number of employees by job category to work on this Project;
11. Description of services to be performed;
12. What percentage of time the staff will be dedicated to this Project;
13. Geographical location of staff; and
14. Resumes (if appropriate and available).

If applicable, the Applicant's subcontractor information should include the employees' names, education and experience in the services outlined in this RFA. Information provided should also include the responsibilities each individual will have in this Project and how long each has been with subcontractor's company.

Applicant Response

III-4. Financial Capability. Describe your company’s financial stability and economic capability to perform the agreement requirements. Provide your company’s financial statements (audited, if available) for the past three fiscal years. Financial statements must include the company’s Balance Sheet and Income Statement or Profit/Loss Statements. If your company is a publicly traded company, please provide a link to your financial records on your company website in lieu of providing hardcopies. The Commonwealth may request additional information it deems necessary to evaluate an Applicant’s financial capability.

Applicant Response

III-5. Work Plan. Describe in narrative form your technical plan for accomplishing the work with the Project tasks and the major milestones and deliverables provided below as a reference point. Modifications of tasks are permitted; however, reasons for changes should be fully explained. Include a Program Evaluation and Review Technique (“PERT”) or similar type display, time related, showing each event. If more than one approach is apparent, comment on why you chose this approach was chosen. The relationship between Key Personnel and the specifics tasks, assignments, and deliverables proposed to accomplish the scope of work should also be described.

The Applicant should describe its management approach, including how it will implement its proposed work plan. Where applicable, the Applicant should provide specific examples of methodologies or approaches, including monitoring approaches, it will use to fulfill the RFA requirements and examples of similar experience and approach on comparable projects. The Applicant should describe the management and monitoring controls it will use to achieve the required quality of services and all performance requirements. The Applicant should also address its approach to internally monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of meeting the agreement requirements.

The Applicant should be including in the work plan its planned approach and process for establishing and maintaining communication between all parties and a technical approach that is aligned with all written specifications and requirements contained in the RFA.

Tasks:

A. Transition. As part of their application, the Applicant should prepare and submit a proposed comprehensive transition plan detailing the activities necessary to efficiently transition the grant operation from the incumbent grantee. The Applicant should address in its transition plan the resources required for the transition (including those from the Department, the incumbent grantee, and the Applicant). The selected Applicant will be afforded up to three months for a transition period at the beginning of the grant term before beginning services. Describe your transition plan to meet the following requirements.

1. Orientation and Knowledge Acquisition (“OKA”). OKA refers to those activities necessary for the selected Applicant to start-up and complete implementation plans to provide the required services. At a minimum, the selected Applicant shall:

- a.** Acquire sufficient knowledge of previous Kinship Navigator Program (“PA KinConnector”) activities necessary to successfully carry out the project requirements as set forth in this RFA in an effective and timely manner.
- b.** Coordinate and work with designated Department stakeholders, the incumbent, and third-party vendors, if applicable, during the transition phase to perform and manage all tasks.

- c. Identify the transition team, including their roles and responsibilities, and provide an organizational chart. Applicants should include their processes and protocols to ensure project governance, including a crosswalk to operational positions after transition completion.
 - d. Acquire sufficient knowledge to understand the current and ongoing needs of staff and operation of a toll-free helpline and website and planning for National Kinship Care Month and effectuate a smooth transition of the on-going business and operational activities currently being executed.
 - e. Acquire sufficient knowledge to enable staff to confidently assume ownership and independently manage the operational business functions and timely delivery of services to the Department, CCYAs, and the general public, without disruption and undue risks to state mandates.
2. **Transition Quality Management.** Applicants should describe their plan to provide quality management of the transition phase, including processes, procedures, assessments, and accountability controls.
 3. **Transition Progress.** During the transition, the selected Applicant shall provide the Department with transition progress assessments and status updates. The selected Applicant shall coordinate with the Department regarding transition tasks, prioritization issues, or conflicting activities interfering with maintaining business operations. Applicants should describe how they will meet this requirement.
 4. **Transition Results.** At the end of the transition phase, the selected Applicant shall prepare a Transition Results Report. Through this Report, the selected Applicant shall document the completion of transition activities and provide status of each high-level task and activity that took place during the transition period. The selected Applicant shall highlight how each of the objectives stated in the transition plan have been achieved and the resolution of issues identified and prioritized during the transition process. Applicants should describe how they will meet this requirement.

Applicant Response

B. Kinship Navigator Advisory Committee (“KNAC”)–The KNAC, established in October 2019, serves as a critical component to the Kinship Navigator Program. The purpose of the KNAC is to participate in planning and development of the program and to discuss and make recommendations to the Department on how to implement and improve program and service delivery within the scope of the contract. The KNAC will inform the Department and selected Applicant of the types of information that kinship caregivers and youth raised in kinship homes would find helpful and the best way to make such information available to appropriate parties.

1. The KNAC will convene on a quarterly basis, at a minimum, through the term of the grant unless otherwise directed by the Department. The selected Applicant shall serve on and manage the KNAC, in collaboration with the Department and workgroup members.
2. KNAC membership will consist of kinship caregivers, both those involved with the child welfare system and those not involved with the child welfare system; organizations representing kinship caregivers; youth raised by kinship caregivers; relevant government agencies; relevant community-based and faith-based organization. KNAC recommendations will include, but are not limited to the following:

- a. Increase partnerships between public and private agencies including schools, community and faith-based organizations, and relevant government agencies.
 - b. Increase the knowledge of local, state, and governing agencies about the needs of kinship caregivers and how families can better access the resources they need.
 - c. Support and increase access to resources and types of information that kinship caregivers and youth being raised in kinship families find useful.
 - d. Provide updated information on the changes to and accessibility of resources that are most important to kinship caregivers.
 - e. Support and provide ways to improve Pennsylvania's Kinship Navigator Program, known as KinConnector, initiatives.
3. **KNAC Tasks.** The selected Applicant shall be responsible for the following KNAC Tasks. Applicants should address the following, at a minimum, in their technical submittal:
- a. Secure a location for meetings virtually or in person that adequately accommodates members.
 - b. Manage logistics for meetings.
 - c. Work with the Department to identify potential Kinship Navigator Advisory Committee members.
 - d. Invite potential members to join the KNAC.
 - e. Manage and lead KNAC meetings, identify chairs or co-chairs of the committee, follow and update the charter (work plan) of items to be completed by KNAC, and identify any subcommittees that may be needed to accomplish the work. See **Appendix D, KNAC Charter.**
 - f. Work with the chairs or co-chairs of the KNAC to develop an agenda for each meeting.
 - g. Invite guests, members, and speakers to each meeting.
 - h. Arrange for all meetings to be open to the general public or others who are interested in the work of the Kinship Navigator Program.
 - i. Manage RSVPs for each meeting.
 - j. Prepare materials including, but not limited to, agendas, PowerPoints, and other meeting materials.
 - k. Submit materials for the meeting to the Department for review and approval two weeks prior to the scheduled meeting.
 - l. Support the KNAC by providing training about the needs of kinship families as well as participating on the committee and any sub-committees.
 - m. Take meeting minutes and provide those minutes to the Department and the chair or co-chair of the KNAC within one week of the meeting for review and approval. Once approved by the Department and the chair or co-chair, distribute minutes to members of the KNAC.
 - n. Email meeting minutes to members of the KNAC no later than two weeks after the date of the most recent meeting.
 - o. Provide the Department a roster of staff members assigned to participate in each KNAC meeting and the staff members' assigned roles or tasks.

Applicant Response

- C. **Kinship Support Center.** The Kinship Support Center includes Kinship Navigators, Kinship Navigator Helpline and Website, and Direct Client Supports. The Kinship Support Center provides assistance to kinship caregivers via Kinship Navigators who respond to the general public and kinship caregiver inquiries via telephone, posted mail and electronically via a website, email and online chat room or free online discussion group. The role of Kinship Navigators is to connect grandparents,

relatives, and kin who are raising children with community resources, such as health, financial, legal services, support groups, training, parenting advice, and compassion. Since many kinship caregivers are unaware of the services to which they are entitled, Kinship Navigators also explain how to apply for state and federal benefits and are knowledgeable about local benefits available to inquiring caregivers. Kinship Navigator services must reflect DEIA principles while helping kinship caregivers establish or maintain greater self-sufficiency and long-term stability needed to keep their children out of foster care.

1. Kinship Support Center Tasks. The selected Applicant shall be responsible for the following Kinship Support Center Tasks. Applicants should include the following, at minimum, in their technical submittal:

- a. Provide sufficient Kinship Navigator staff, known as Kinship Navigators, to effectively manage the KinConnector Helpline and website.
- b. Provide the Department with a roster identifying all Kinship Navigators.
- c. Educate Kinship Navigators and provide them with information about private and public services available statewide that kinship caregivers may need or be seeking, including information on kinship care support groups; kinship service providers; federal, state and; local benefits; training; and other pertinent services.
- d. Educate Kinship Navigators and provide them with information on pertinent parenting topics to address kinship caregivers' concerns with appropriate recommendations and advice.
- e. Provide eligibility and enrollment information for federal, state, and local benefits to assist kinship caregivers in obtaining services for and maintaining children in their home.
- f. Require Kinship Navigators to be knowledgeable about available trainings to assist kinship caregivers in caring for the children in their home.
- g. Require Kinship Navigators to be knowledgeable about child welfare in the Commonwealth, formal and informal kinship care, the needs of kinship families, and pertinent child welfare statutes, regulations, and policies.
- h. Require Kinship Navigators to attend either a mandated or permissive reporter training, so that they might recognize if circumstances being described to them should be reported to ChildLine.
- i. Develop and maintain a catalog of available services for all geographic areas of the state so that the Kinship Navigators have the most recent information available.
- j. Require Kinship Navigators to respond to inquiries from the public in a timely, competent, and customer-friendly manner.
- k. Provide Kinship Navigators with all the information they need to respond to callers including information on how to access and obtain federal, state, and local services, benefits and supports.
- l. Respond to questions received via the website and helpline.
- m. Provide a monthly data report to the Department which includes, but is not limited to, the number of inquiries received; the method by which they were received (i.e., the telephone, website, mail, or e-mail); the types of information requested, the types of information, service referrals, and materials provided; the number of calls made to follow up with the families and the results of those calls; the number of voice messages received and calls returned; and any other activities or services rendered.
- n. Provide information on the needs of kinship families expressed by kinship caregivers to child welfare professionals, community partners, and families about the Kinship Navigator Program at Statewide Adoption training and Permanency Network conferences, Pennsylvania State Resource Family Association conferences, or other venues as requested by the Department.

- o. Create a complaint resolution process to address concerns raised by kinship families and stakeholders regarding the Kinship Navigator Program.
- p. Create, and obtain the Department's approval for, a correction plan to address concerns or complaints received regarding the Kinship Navigator Program.
- q. Refer any complaints regarding the Kinship Navigator Program that cannot be resolved by the selected Applicant to the Department for resolution.
- r. For each year of the agreement, the selected Applicant shall make Kinship Navigator staffing recommendations to the Department related to the ability to respond to callers in a timely, customer-friendly manner.

Applicant Response

2. Kinship Navigators Tasks. The selected Applicant shall provide the following Kinship Navigators Tasks. Applicants should include the following, at minimum, in their technical submittal:

- a. Provide Kinship Navigator staff who are be able to provide education and information related to kinship care policies, procedures, statutes, and resources.
- b. Provide kinship caregivers with referrals to support groups and kinship service providers.
- c. Provide kinship caregivers with eligibility and enrollment information for federal, state, and local benefits
- d. Provide kinship caregivers with information on how to access relevant training to assist in caring for the children in their home and in obtaining benefits and services.
- e. Provide kinship caregivers with information on pertinent federal and state statutes that pertain to kinship care and child welfare.
- f. Provide kinship caregivers with information on relevant legal assistance and how to obtain legal assistance.
- g. Provide kinship caregivers with information about pertinent child welfare policies related to kinship care in the Commonwealth.
- h. Provide verbal support, recommendations, and parenting advice to kinship caregivers.
- i. Answer inquires generated from the public media campaign.
- j. Provide Kinship Navigators who are a patient, considerate listening ear to caregivers who may be experiencing a crisis in caring for a child in their home.
- k. Maintain daily logs of inquires received, the method through which the inquiry was received (i.e., via telephone, website, mail, or e-mail), the types of services requested, and the referrals made, and information shared.
- l. Ask caregivers if they would like additional information or a follow-up of their concerns at later date. If so, through Kinship Navigators, obtain the caregivers' contact information and a brief description of the services needed.
- m. Provide follow-up as needed, and as authorized by the caregivers.
- n. Complete research, as needed, on request by caregivers and the Department on available services.
- o. Find resources in real time for caregivers in need by utilizing all available resources, including the internet.
- p. Maintain a log of resources that can be utilized to help develop the website for the Kinship Navigator Program.
- q. Participate in an online chat room or free online discussion group (to be developed as described below) and provide assistance and information on services being sought by kinship caregivers.
- r. Participate on the KNAC as needed.

- s. Provide Kinship Navigators who are calm, patient, polite, and professional when dealing with the public at all times and in all settings.

Applicant Response

D. Kinship Navigator Program Helpline. The Kinship Helpline was established in July 2019 and serves as a main point of contact for the Kinship Navigator Program for kinship caregivers to inquire about resources and information. The selected Applicant shall provide the following Kinship Navigator Program Helpline tasks. Applicants should include the following, at minimum, in their technical submittal:

1. Operate a toll-free Kinship Navigator helpline, utilizing the existing toll-free number, 1-866-546-2111 (1-866-KIN-2111), which is operational, at a minimum, Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. through 5:00 p.m. The Department may direct, or the selected Applicant may request and obtain approval for, changes to the days and hours of operation and the number of staff assigned in future years.
2. Notify the Department of any outages to the toll-free telephone line or website and the expected duration of the outage.
3. Provide voice mail for after-hours calls and have a plan for timely response to messages left after operational hours
4. Answer inquiries generated from the public and private sector in response to media campaigns and other media or awareness events.
5. Provide information, education, resources, and referrals to inquiring kinship caregivers.
6. Respond to kinship caregivers at regular intervals to engage and support them through their kinship journey.
7. Facilitate communication and information with public and private agencies to assist inquiring kinship caregivers.
8. Provide the Department with data for received inquiries, including but not limited to number of calls from informal, formal kinship caregivers, professionals, reasons for call and referrals made and information shared.

Applicant Response

E. Kinship Navigator Program Website. The www.kinconnector.org website was established September 2020 as a tool to provide kinship caregivers with information and resources. The selected Applicant shall continue to use the existing www.kinconnector.org website in performance of the grant requirements.

1. The Department has unrestricted authority and ownership of the website, but the selected Applicant shall update the site as approved by the Department. Applicants should include the following, at minimum, in their technical submittal:
 - a. In maintaining the www.kidconnector.org website, the selected Applicant shall be responsible for the following:
 - b. Writing, reviewing, editing, and obtaining Department approval for all materials to be posted to the website.
 - c. Maintaining up-to-date information for easy access by parents, professionals, and community members seeking information on program services and kinship care information.
 - d. Provide online training and resource materials through the website.

- e. Work collaboratively with the Department to review ideas, designs, and applications of the website.
 - f. Use responsive design for the website so that it can be used on both computers and mobile devices.
 - g. Utilize the Department branding, as approved by the Department, for the website.
 - h. Obtain approval from the Department Grant Administrator of the design, functionality, and appearance of the website prior to implementation.
 - i. Maintain the website consistent with the recommendations and approval by the Department Grant Administrator. The selected Applicant shall obtain approval from the Department Grant Administrator for any modification to content, appearance, and functionality of the website.
 - j. Maintain a direct link accessible to the 211-information system through the website.
 - k. Update the website daily with resources, as available.
 - l. Include a "contact us" or e-mail address for families to use to ask questions via the website or e-mail.
 - m. Provide a monthly report to the Department that identifies the number of hits or users to the website, the sections of the website used most frequently, any complaints received via the website, the day and time of day the website receives the most hits, and any other pertinent information.
 - n. Maintain website compliance with section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended and with the development and technology standards of 29 U.S.C. § 794d.
 - o. Provide online application availability 99% of the time between the hours of 08:00 a.m. and 06:00 p.m. EST.
2. The selected Applicant shall include on the website, at minimum, the following information:
- a. **A Description of the program.**
 - b. How to access benefits and services.
 - c. A listing of all federal, state, and local resources available to kinship caregivers and how to access those benefits and services.
 - d. **Printable materials that can be downloaded from the website that provide helpful information to kinship caregivers, such as federal and state laws and regulations pertaining to relative caregivers.**
 - e. A map that shows the state and local resources and services available in each county.
 - f. An online discussion group to allow kinship caregivers to communicate with each other and with the Kinship Navigators for online support as needed. The online discussion group may be contained within the website or the selected Applicant may opt to utilize a free online discussion group and link it to the website.
 - g. Relevant training to assist kinship caregivers in caring for the children in their home and in obtaining benefits and services.
 - h. An interactive map that highlights kinship supports in each county, At-a Glance County Services, Kinconnector.org links, kinship caregivers, kinship support group facilitators and kinship service providers to each other, and to provide relevant services such as legal assistance and help in obtaining legal services, and financial services.

Applicant Response

- F. Direct Client Support Tasks.** The selected Applicant shall develop a plan and upon approval of the plan by the Department, execute the plan which:

1. Provides concrete goods to meet the urgent needs of kinship caregivers who contact the Kinship Navigator program. The concrete goods may include but are not limited to, gift cards, backpacks, books, and diapers.
2. Monitors inquiries and track goods provided to kinship caregivers to prevent duplication.

Applicants should, at a minimum, describe how they will provide these tasks, as part of their technical submittal.

Applicant Response

G. Outreach Campaign. The selected Applicant shall provide the following. Applicants should describe how they will implement these tasks as part of their technical submittal:

1. Develop and conduct an Outreach Campaign designed to inform the general public about the Kinship Navigator Program through the website and distribution of informational materials.
2. Target underserved populations, including but not limited to, rural areas of the Commonwealth, African American and Latino communities, and individuals over the age of 50, to increase awareness of the Kinship Navigator Program, services and resources.
3. Participate in recruitment activities designed by the Department such as, but not limited to, the Kinship Navigator media campaign which includes radio and online media advertisements, or other similar activities.
4. Establish a cooperative and positive relationship with local community-based organization in each county.
5. Provide to the Department for the Department's Facebook page, at least one Facebook post per week related to kinship care, the needs of kinship caregivers and the children they serve, or information about the Kinship Navigator Program. The selected Applicant shall provide Facebook posts which are helpful and informative to kinship caregivers, such as the Kinship Navigator Program telephone number, links to state and local resources, and information about available training and support groups.
6. Provide relevant, Department approved online materials such as, but not limited to, brochures and factsheets, about the Kinship Navigator Program that can be shared with interested individuals. The selected Applicant shall provide brochures which are easily downloaded and printed.
7. Work with the KNAC to develop recommendations on how to expand the Outreach Campaign. Support the KinConnector media campaign and events as requested by the Department.

Applicant Response

H. National Kinship Care Month Activities. As part of their application, the Applicant should prepare and submit a sample or a proposed National Kinship Care Month plan detailing the activities. The selected Applicant shall organize and facilitate events during the National Kinship Care Month held annually in September, including but is not limited to the following tasks. Applicants should describe, at minimum, how they will implement these tasks as part of their technical submittal:

1. Hold an event or events to promote National Kinship Care Month. The selected Applicant shall provide staff who will participate and administer the event or events.
2. Coordinate with the Department on all aspects of the planned events and activities, including any information that will be distributed or announced.
3. Work with the Department and other Department supported programs, such as the Statewide

Adoption and Permanency Network and Pennsylvania State Resource Family Association, to support event activities.

4. Develop materials, to include but not limited to, printed materials or promotional items. The selected Applicant shall provide initial drafts of these items to the Department Grant Administrator for review and approval six months prior to distribution.
5. Work with the Department to develop and distribute press releases announcing National Kinship Care Month related events. The selected Applicant shall focus efforts on engaging print, radio, and television media to celebrate and support all of Pennsylvania's kinship caregivers, bringing attention and greater awareness during the month of September. The selected Applicant shall obtain approval from the Department Grant Administrator for all press releases prior to distribution and provide all final drafts of materials to the Department Grant Administrator for approval at a minimum three months prior to distribution.

Applicant Response

- I. **Coordination and Collaboration.** The selected Applicant shall coordinate with other national, state, and local agencies or providers to promote kinship service coordination which includes but is not limited to and applicants should include the following, at minimum, in their technical submittal:
 1. Require Kinship Navigators to collaborate with school guidance counselors and social workers to establish cooperative and positive relationships with public school districts located in each county.
 2. Require Kinship Navigators to collaborate and partner with recognized kinship organizations in the Commonwealth and nationwide, including but not limited to, Grandparents Raising Grandchildren, Generations United, American Bar Association, state universities with established Kinship programs, nationwide Kinship Navigator programs, and public and private agencies and providers.
 3. Partner with existing organizations that provide free/low-cost legal assistance to kinship caregivers across the state.
 4. Collaborate with other Departments in Pennsylvania including but not limited to Department of Aging, Department of Health and Department of Income Maintenance to increase coordination and efficiency of services to Pennsylvania's kinship caregivers.
 5. Participate in identified workgroups, committees, or meetings designated by the Department.
 6. The selected Applicant shall work with the Department to meet required FFPSA criteria with the purpose of establishing the Commonwealth's Kinship Navigator Program as an EBP, including tasks such as providing data, feedback, and attending weekly meetings as needed.

Applicant Response

- J. **Turnover.** This task consists of activities that must take place between the selected Applicant and any subsequent vendor or vendors prior to the expiration of the Project in order to continue services without interruption. The selected Applicant shall work closely with the Department so that the turnover of responsibilities and the necessary knowledge transfer is complete by the end of the project term. The selected Applicant shall develop deliverables for contract turnover at the Department's direction. Upon expiration or termination of the Project, the selected Applicant shall provide for a smooth and timely turnover of its services to the Department and its designees, as applicable, to include but not be limited to, the following tasks. Applicants should include details regarding their proposed turnover plan as a sample or proposed plan, including all of the following at a minimum, as part of their application.

1. Provide a final detailed description of the turnover plan to the Department for approval, three months prior to the termination or expiration of the agreement. The selected Applicant shall include in their turnover plan comprehensive details of the proposed schedule, activities, and resource requirements associated with each turnover task and shall include copies of all relevant data, documentation, or other pertinent information necessary for the Department or its designee to take over and successfully assume operational activities.
2. Execute the approved turnover plan in cooperation with the Department and any incoming vendor's transition plan.
3. Provide the Department with a turnover results report within 90 days of the conclusion of the Project, documenting the completion and outcomes of each step of the turnover plan approved by the Department. The Department will not consider turnover complete and will not make final payment until the turnover results report is received and approved by the Department.
4. Turn over the operation and management of all service delivery functions to the Department or its designee. The selected Applicant shall plan and manage this turnover in an orderly fashion so that there is no disruption in services.
5. Work closely with the Department to accomplish the completion of turnover of responsibilities and the necessary knowledge transfer period.
6. Cooperate with the Department and supply the Department or its designee with all information required by the Department or its designee during the turnover process, in the timeframe defined by the Department at the time of the request.

Applicant Response

III-6. Requirements.

A. Emergency Preparedness.

To support continuity of operations during an emergency, including a pandemic, the Commonwealth needs a strategy for maintaining operations for an extended period of time. One part of this strategy is to ensure that essential agreements that provide critical business services to the Commonwealth have planned for such an emergency and put contingencies in place to provide needed goods and services.

1. Describe how you anticipate such a crisis will impact your operations.
2. Describe your emergency response continuity of operations plan. Please attach a copy of your plan, or, at a minimum, summarize how your plan addresses the following aspects of preparedness:
 - a. Employee training (describe your organization's training plan, and how frequently your plan will be shared with employees).
 - b. Identified essential business functions and key employees necessary to carry them out.
 - c. Contingency plans for:
 - i. How your organization will handle staffing issues when a portion of key employees are incapacitated due to illness.

- ii. How employees in your organization will carry out the essential functions if measures prevent from coming to the primary workplace.
- d. How your organization will communicate with staff and suppliers when primary communications systems are overloaded or otherwise fail, including key contacts, chain of communications (including suppliers), etc.
- e. How and when your emergency plan will be tested, and if the plan will be tested by a third-party.

Applicant Response

B. Bolstering Service Delivery through a Digital Experience Strategy. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania (“Commonwealth”) is committed to improving digital interactions with Pennsylvanians, individuals, and entities that conduct business with or on behalf of the Commonwealth, (each a “Business Partner”).

Executive Order 2023-08 - *Bolstering Service Delivery Through a Digital Experience Strategy* calls for the enablement of an online service delivery system that would provide a universal entry way to all Commonwealth programs, services, and resources organized by users’ needs and life experiences rather than agency program areas.

More information about the Executive Order is available at the following location: [Executive Order 2023-08 – Bolstering Service Delivery through a Digital Experience Strategy](#).

Applicants shall acknowledge and conform to the following six design principles and requirements when proposing solutions within applications and/or during product demonstrations in response to Commonwealth procurement solicitations. The selected Applicant shall align its performance and deliverables with these principles and requirements under any agreement that may be awarded from the procurement solicitation.

Design Principles and Requirements.

1. Delivering a consistent and friendly user experience across all Commonwealth agencies informed by human-centered design principles and user research.

A consistent and friendly user experience will enable Pennsylvanians, individuals, and Business Partners to locate services and conduct business with the Commonwealth, even if they do not know which agency to contact. Pennsylvanians, individuals, and Business Partners will continue to be able to navigate directly to services on agency websites, if they wish.

PA.GOV is the Commonwealth’s single state government destination. By using PA.GOV, Pennsylvanians, individuals and Business Partners will know that they are utilizing official services from the Commonwealth.

The selected Applicant shall use the PA.GOV domain for proposed websites and digital services. Refer to the Commonwealth Information Technology Policy (“ITP”) ITP-NET005 - *Commonwealth External and Internal Domain Name Services (“DNS”)*. Applicants shall acknowledge its understanding of and compliance with this requirement in its application.

Each Applicant’s application must include a description of how the Applicant plans to integrate a consistent and friendly user experience, starting with [PA.GOV](#). The selected Applicant shall be

able to receive and validate the credentials of a Pennsylvanian, individual or Business Partner that were previously authenticated from an active session.

The Applicant's solution must integrate with existing PA.GOV and be able to receive and validate credentials among Commonwealth websites, applications, and digital services to allow seamless navigation to and from PA.GOV.

Keystone Login is the Commonwealth's single login solution. Keystone Login provides a consistent and secure approach to account administration by offering Pennsylvanians, individuals, and in the future, Business Partners, a single online point of access to services offered by multiple Commonwealth agencies or other Business Partners. It is critical that by using Keystone Login any Pennsylvanian or Business Partner can work with any Commonwealth agency or other Business Partner through the Commonwealth's public facing applications using a single login credential.

The consistent and modern authentication standards available through Keystone Login will increase convenience for Pennsylvanians and Business Partners by simplifying account management and eliminating the need to remember multiple usernames and passwords, while also strengthening the Commonwealth's security posture.

In addition, Keystone Login provides the capability for a Pennsylvanian or a Business Partner to create a single profile managed by Keystone Login.

The selected Applicant shall register with and utilize Keystone Login.

Applications that utilize Keystone Login can leverage authentication methods through one of the following: (1) via a series of Application Programming Interfaces ("APIs"), (2) as a redirect to the Keystone Login Portal, or (3) a hybrid of both approaches.

A detailed Developer Integration Guide will be provided to the selected Applicant; however, to assist Applicants in preparing their applications, a summary version of the Developer Integration Guide and Keystone Login Branding Guidelines are available at the following location: <http://keystonelogindevelopers.pa.gov>.

The summary version of the Developer Integration Guide and Keystone Login Branding Guidelines should be reviewed by the Applicants prior to responding to this solicitation to ensure the Applicants understand the mandatory APIs and services that shall be made available to Pennsylvanians and Business Partners.

The Applicants shall include in their applications an acknowledgement that they will utilize Keystone Login for Pennsylvanians. If the Applicant requires any additional information to verify the identification of Pennsylvanians through the authentication process provided by Keystone Login, the Applicant must identify the additional required information the Applicant needs in its application.

Additionally, the Applicant must commit to utilizing Keystone Login for Business Partners when required by the Commonwealth. The timeframe for implementation of Keystone Login to Business Partners will be mutually agreed upon by the selected Applicant and the Commonwealth and will be documented through the change order process of the agreement.

2. Incorporating user feedback continuously into digital applications to ensure users' expectations and needs are better met.

Applicants must develop user-focused requirements that tie back to all personas that will be leveraging the solutions being suggested.

Applicants must include within their applications a reporting strategy and specific mechanisms for how the solution would measure its success in meeting the needs of users (e.g., reducing time to complete for end-users by XX%).

When designing any digital interface, a plan for user research and iterative prototype development must be included within their applications. The Applicant must plan for written sign-off on a finalized prototype prior to beginning any development work, and such must be acknowledged within their applications.

Developed prototypes must be informed not only by design best-practices, but also the feasibility of the back-end technical integrations that would be required to enable the front-end experience, so user feedback is informed by realistic examples. Applicants must outline in their applications the design best practices and technical integrations that would enable the front-end experience.

All existing user research completed by the Commonwealth related to this procurement will be provided, if available and permissible by law. If the Applicant does not have the ability to provide user research or prototype development, it must explicitly be called out in their application so that the Commonwealth can anticipate resources that will be required outside of the scope of the awarded agreement.

3. Sharing and integration of data across agencies to glean users' insights and measure experience, including satisfaction and trust across Commonwealth services.

The universal entry way outlined within the Executive Order will establish capabilities to connect Residents to existing systems of records using a consent-based approach that will enable Residents to view and update their data across agencies and program areas in a seamless fashion using a common technology identity.

An enterprise data management program strategy was established that focuses on democratization of data, efficiency of data transactions, and increasing data quality, availability, integrity, and security measures. The strategy also combines functional and cultural changes to the data habits and literacy of people, establishes standardized data processes, and deploys technologies to ensure optimal practices and business processes are used to collect, create, maintain, and/or disseminate data.

To accomplish the strategy, the Commonwealth is standardizing and deploying the following technology solutions in support of a centralized enterprise data hub.

- Core Resident and Business Profiles ("Golden Records")
- Universal Identifiers and ID Linkage
- Master Data Management
- Enterprise Messaging and Queuing Services
- Data API / Data Integration Services
- Enterprise Data Catalog

The Applicant shall provide within their applications a detailed overview of data available from the proposed solution, along with data format and all methods in which the data can be accessed by Commonwealth solutions and reporting tools (e.g., Enterprise Data Catalog, Power BI).

The Applicant shall also include in the application how the proposed solution can contribute to the centralized enterprise data hub. This information must include field-level data (e.g., profile/demographics/preferences of users) and outcomes data from the proposed solution (e.g., user logins, user journey history, completed applications).

The data is owned by the Commonwealth and cannot be used by the awarded Applicant without written consent of the Commonwealth.

4. Consolidate or eliminate outdated technologies and systems that are costly or challenging to maintain, insecure, or no longer impactful with the goal of minimizing or preventing the Commonwealth from incurring technical debt.

Applicants must acknowledge within their applications if the proposed solution has a roadmap that showcases a progression plan for sustaining, enhancing, and maturing the proposed solution into the future. Applicants must include the roadmap within their applications, if available.

Applicants must explain within their applications how solution enhancements and/or version releases are handled, and at what cyclical intervals.

Applicants must acknowledge within their applications the timeframe (e.g. years, months) the proposed solution has been implemented for other clients or if new and/or emerging technology(ies) is being proposed.

5. Designing digital services that incorporate best practices regarding data exchange, data privacy, security, records management, language translation, and accessibility associated with Commonwealth data, devices, and materials to provide comprehensive protections and manage risk.

Applicants shall acknowledge within their applications compliance with the Commonwealth's electronic information privacy standards. Refer to the ITP-PRV001 – Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Electronic Information Privacy.

Applicants shall acknowledge within their applications compliance with the Commonwealth's websites, applications, and digital content and services design standards. Refer to ITP-SFT002 – *Commonwealth of PA Design Standards*, and ITP-SFT009 – *Application Development*.

Title VI of the Federal Civil Rights Act of 1964 provides that “no person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. Title VI applies to all state agencies that receive Federal financial assistance.”¹

¹ 42 U.S.C. § 2000d (1964), “Title VI” includes this statute and its regulations.

Applicants shall demonstrate how they will support the Commonwealth in making vital digital information available to people with limited English proficiency with accurate digital language translation in frequently encountered languages.

Applicants must acknowledge within their applications and, if requested by the Commonwealth, demonstrate during product demonstration sessions, solution and deliverable compliance with relevant federal, and state laws, regulations, and rules including, but not limited to, the following.

- Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability;
- Section 508 Amendment to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which requires all Federal agencies' electronic and information technology to be accessible to those with disabilities; and
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability for entities receiving federal funds.

In addition, Applicants must acknowledge within their applications and product demonstration sessions compliance with the revised Section 508 Standards and the current version of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (“WCAG”), which are industry standards. The selected Applicant must provide as a deliverable of the awarded agreement quarterly reports that demonstrate compliance with WCAG. Refer to ITP-ACC001 – *Information Technology Digital Accessibility Policy* for additional information.

6. Follow Commonwealth data source standards to facilitate better connections and access of user data.

The purpose of the citizen and business data models are to standardize and promote common glossary definitions for the data elements and their associated attributes. A common understanding of data entities and elements across the enterprise is an essential first step in developing integrated processes and moving away from ‘silo’ systems, solutions, applications, and digital services.

Applicants must acknowledge within their applications and, if requested by the Commonwealth, demonstrate during product demonstration sessions compliance with ITP-INF003 – *Data Modeling Standards* as well as ITP-INF003’s associated supporting documents.

Applicants must provide within their applications the availability of APIs to add, update, and/or exchange resident, business, and solution/system/application data in real-time with centralized data hubs managed by the Commonwealth.

- C. **Non-Commonwealth Hosting.** The Commonwealth defines Non-Commonwealth Hosting as any service that is hosted by or within a Service Organizations or its subcontractor(s) (Subservice Organization(s)) managed infrastructure regardless of deployment model (public, private, or hybrid) or such type as, but not limited to, software-as-a-service for web-based proposals, infrastructure-as-a-service for Internet-based access to storage and computing power, and platform-as-a-service that gives developers the tools to build and host web applications. Solutions deployed through traditional hosting methods and without the use of NIST Cloud capabilities (i.e., rapid elasticity, resource pooling, measured service, broad network access, and on demand self-service) are also included. Please refer to [Glossary \(pa.gov\)](#) for more specifics.

1. The Applicant shall meet all hosting requirements outlined in **Exhibit B, Requirements for Non-Commonwealth Hosted Application Services of the IT Contract Terms and Conditions (Appendix H.)**
2. As described in **Exhibit B, Requirements for Non-Commonwealth Hosted Application Services, Section B.2**, the Applicant shall provide applicable SOC I and SOC II reports as noted in 2 below and upon contract execution and annually thereafter.
3. The proposed solution shall undergo an IT Vendor Risk Assessment review. In support of the review, the Applicant must submit the following documents and information related to the proposed solution:
 - a. SOC2 Type II, ISO 27001 certification, SIG and/or other relevant security documentation;
 - b. Information Security Policy;
 - c. PenTest Summary Results; and
 - d. Any other relevant information pertaining to the Offeror's Security & Compliance programs.

Applicant Response

- D. Lobbying Certification and Disclosure of Lobbying Activities.** This Project will be funded, in whole or in part, with federal monies. Public Law 101-121, Section 319, prohibits federal funds from being expended by the recipient or by any lower tier sub-recipients of a federal contract, grant, loan, or a cooperative agreement to pay any person for influencing, or attempting to influence a federal agency or Congress in connection with the awarding of any federal contract, the making of any federal grant or loan, or entering into any cooperative agreement. All parties who submit applications in response to this RFA must sign the **Lobbying Certification Form**, attached as **Appendix E**, and if applicable, complete the **Disclosure of Lobbying Activities Form**, also attached as **Appendix E**.

Applicant Response

- E. Worker Protection and Investment.** Pursuant to Executive Order 2021-06, *Worker Protection and Investment* (October 21, 2021), the Commonwealth is responsible for ensuring that every Pennsylvania worker has a safe and healthy work environment and the protections afforded them through labor laws. To that end, contractors and grantees of the Commonwealth must certify that they are in compliance with all applicable Pennsylvania state labor and workforce safety laws. Such certification shall be made through the Worker Protection and Investment Certification Form (BOP-2201) and submitted with the bid, proposal or quote. This form is attached as **Appendix G**.

Applicant Response

III-7. Reports and Project Control.

- A. Monthly Contract Management Meetings.** The selected Applicant shall participate in virtual monthly management meetings with the Department to provide an update on the selected Applicant's, objectives, outcomes, and status of all tasks. Meetings may be postponed or rescheduled if mutually agreed upon. The selected Applicant may not proceed with any new tasks, initiatives, or programs without the approval of Department. The selected Applicant shall take meeting minutes and submit those to the Department's Grant Administrator within 10 business days after the meeting date.

Applicant Response

B. Monthly Progress Report. The selected Applicant shall submit a monthly progress report covering activities as identified on the monthly report form. The Department will provide the monthly report form template to the selected Applicant. The selected Applicant shall submit the monthly to the Department by the second Friday of every month that includes t, at a minimum:

1. Direct Supports Report Section; and
2. Outreach Campaign Report Section.

Applicant Response

C. Annual Report. The selected Applicant shall submit to the Department at the end of each year a report which includes a synopsis of the monthly reports and summary of the Kinship Care Month Event, and any other identified information as determined by the Department's Grant Administrator. The selected Applicant shall submit the annual report to the Department within 90 calendar days after the end of the service year.

Applicant Response

D. Problem Identification Report. This is an "as required" report, identifying problem areas. In this report, the selected Applicant shall describe the problem and its impact on the overall project and on each affected task. The selected Applicant shall list possible courses of action with advantages and disadvantages of each and include recommendations with supporting rationale.

Applicant Response

E. Final Report. The selected Applicant shall complete and submit a final report 90 calendar days after the conclusion of the grant term. In this report, the selected Applicant shall:

1. Summarize the result of the study or service in terminology that will be meaningful to management and others generally familiar with the subject areas.
 - a. The number of kinship caregivers served (informal and formal) and county of residence.
 - b. The number of children in kinship families receiving services.
 - c. The method of service delivery (toll free helpline, website inquiry, in person contact).
 - d. The number of trainings provided to kinship families, professionals, and general public.
 - e. The number of visits to the website.
 - f. Number of support groups supported by the Kinship Navigator Program and number of caregivers receiving support through the attendance at a support group.
2. Describe data collection and analytical and other techniques used during the study.
3. Summarize findings, conclusions and recommendations developed in each task.
4. Include all supporting documentation; e.g., flow-charts, forms, questionnaires, etc.
5. Recommend a time-phased work plan for implementing the recommendations.

Applicant Response

III-8. Key Performance Standards. The Commonwealth has developed a set of minimum Key Performance Standards defined below, which the selected Applicant shall meet, or exceed. The first three months are a transition period, and the Department will not impose damages based on a failure to meet performance standards. Where an assessment is defined as an "up to" amount, the dollar value will be set at the discretion of the Department.

The selected Applicant's performance will be reviewed and assessed as outline below. The Department's Grant Administrator will give written notice of each failure to meet a performance standard to the selected Applicant. The Department may impose financial assessments for the selected Applicant's failure to meet the performance standards. If the Department does not assess liquidated damages in a particular instance, the Department is not precluded from pursuing other or future assessments relating to those performance standards and their associated damages.

Describe your ability to meet or exceed these minimum performance standards.

CATEGORY	CRITERIA	IF NON COMPLIANT, AMOUNT OWED
Communication	<p>The selected Applicant shall participate in monthly Contract Management Meetings with the Department, be responsible for meeting minutes, and may not proceed with any new tasks, initiatives, or programs without the approval of Department as outlined in, Section III-7. A.</p> <p>Monthly meetings and calls must be scheduled in coordination with the Department's Grants Administrator and attended by at least one representative of the selected Applicant.</p>	If the monthly meetings are not attended and the Selected Applicant does not seek approval to reschedule from the Department's Grants Administrator prior to the meeting, the Department may assess liquidated damages not to exceed 1% of the monthly invoice.
Reporting: Monthly Progress Reports	<p>The selected Applicant shall deliver the Monthly Progress Report to include but is not limited to the status of Direct Supports and Outreach Campaign, to the designated Department Grant Administrator by the designated due dates as second Friday of every month, as outlined in Section III-7. B.</p> <p>Monthly Progress Reports must be submitted timely to the Department's Grants Administrator.</p>	If the monthly reports are not completed by the due date, the selected Applicant does not demonstrate efforts to fulfill the requirements as outlined in the tasks section, or the Selected Applicant does not obtain approval from the Department's Grants Administrator prior to the due date, the Department may assess liquidated damages not to exceed 1% of the monthly invoice.
Reporting: Annual Report	<p>The selected Applicant shall complete and submit an Annual report 90 calendar days after the end of each year as outlined in Section III-7. C.</p> <p>The selected Applicant shall timely submit Annual Reports to the Department's Grants Administrator.</p>	If the reports are not submitted by the due date, do not address all items listed in the tasks section, or the Selected Applicant does not obtain approval from the Department's Grants Administrator prior to the due date, the Department may assess liquidated damages not to exceed 5% of the total invoice.

Reporting: Final Report	<p>The selected Applicant shall complete and submit a Final report within 90 calendar days after the conclusion of the grant period, as outlined in Section III-7. E.</p> <p>The selected Applicant shall timely submit Final Reports to the Department's Grants Administrator.</p>	<p>If the reports are not completed by the due date, do not address all items listed in the tasks section, or the Selected Applicant does not obtain approval from the Department's Grants Administrator prior to the due date, the Department may assess liquidated damages not to exceed 5% of the total invoice</p>
Tasks	<p>The selected Applicant shall fulfill the tasks described in the Work Plan as outlined in Section III-5. B, C, D, E, and F.</p>	<p>If the selected Applicant does not fulfill the tasks described in the Work Plan and does not communicate with the Department's Grant Administrator regarding barriers and obstacles beyond their control prohibiting completion, the Department may assess liquidated damages not to exceed 1% of the total monthly invoice.</p>

- A. For any deficiency, including ones relating to the performance standards, the selected Applicant will prepare and submit a corrective action plan for any observation or finding contained in a notice of deficiency. The selected Applicant must submit the corrective action plan to the Department within ten business days of notification of the deficiency or such longer time as may be agreed to by the Department.
- B. The corrective action plan must include, but is not limited to:
1. Brief description of the findings;
 2. Specific steps the selected Applicant will take to correct the situation or reasons why it believes corrective action is not necessary;
 3. Name(s) and title(s) of responsible staff person(s);
 4. Timetable for performance of the corrective action steps;
 5. Monitoring that will be performed to implement corrective action;
 6. Signature of the selected Applicant's Program Manager or a senior executive.
- C. The selected Applicant must implement the corrective action plan within the timeframe agreed to by the parties for that particular corrective action plan. Failure to implement a corrective action plan, in the manner agreed to, may result in further action by the Department, including, but not limited to, a finding of default.
- D. In the event the Department determines a deficiency to be a serious non-compliance with the selected Applicant's obligations under the agreement, the Department may find the selected Applicant in default.

Applicant Response

PART IV

COST SUBMITTAL

IV-1. Cost Submittal. The information requested in this **Part IV** shall constitute the Cost Submittal. The Cost Submittal shall be submitted as part of the Technical Submittal. The total proposed cost should be broken down into the components set forth in **Appendix C – Cost Submittal Worksheet**. The costs must be directly related to the project and must be allowable, reasonable, and necessary in order to be covered. If the Applicant includes assumptions in its Cost Submittal, the Department may reject the application. Applicants should direct in writing to the Issuing Officer pursuant to **Part I, Section I-9** any questions about whether a cost or other component is included or applies. All Applicants will then have the benefit of the Department's written answer so that all applications are submitted on the same basis.

The selected Applicant shall only include travel, lodging or meals under this agreement that are at or below the state rates outlined in Management Directive 230.10. The selected Applicant is not required to utilize the Commonwealth's online booking tools or other resources. The selected Applicant is not required to use a specific card but should maintain itemized receipts for all associated costs

Applicants may not propose costs in excess of the maximum amounts identified in Section 11-6. E.

The Department will reimburse the selected Applicant for work satisfactorily performed after execution of a written agreement and the Effective Date of the grant agreement, in accordance with agreement requirements.