

Questions & Answers Log

| | RFA Section | Question | Answer |
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| 1 | III-3. D | With the removal of SDBs and VBEs, are there no longer participation goals applicants must meet? | Applicants should review and respond to this RFA. SDB and VBE participation goals for 25 RFA-14207 are not mandatory. Applicants may use subcontractors in accordance with Section III-3.D. |
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| 2 | Appendix C | Are funds designated for Direct Client Support (\$250k) a pass-through or part of the \$900k budget? | Applicants should refer to the RFA sections IV-1 and II-6. E. |
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| 3 | I-11 | Can any portion of the submission be submitted as a pdf file? | Section I-11 of the RFA requires Applicants to submit their Application in a Microsoft Office or Microsoft Office compatible format. Adobe (.pdf) is compatible with Microsoft Office. |
| | RFA Section | Question | Answer |
| 4 | III-5. H | On page 24 of the RFA, National Kinship Care Month Activities, regarding the deliverable involving a press release and engaging print, radio and television media, will the DHS Communications Office provide any support in the development and dissemination of the press release and/or engagement of media sources? | Applicants should refer to RFA Section III-5.H.2-5, which detail the Department's involvement in the National Kinship Care Month Activities. |
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| 5 | Appendix H #34 | <p>Insurance Requirements - Comprehensive Crime Insurance</p> <p>The RFA lists a \$5 million requirement for "comprehensive crime insurance." Could you clarify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What specific coverages are expected under this requirement (e.g., employee dishonesty, computer fraud, funds transfer fraud)? <p>Whether this requirement is negotiable depending on whether the vendor handles funds, payments, or sensitive financial data?</p> | <p>Applicants should consult with their insurance and legal professionals regarding compliance with this section.</p> <p>Pursuant to Section I-14, the Department may, in its sole discretion, undertake negotiations with Applicants whose applications show them to be qualified, responsible, and capable of performing the Project. If Applicant is selected for negotiations, specific insurance coverage questions may be discussed as part of that process.</p> |

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| 6 | Appendix H #34 | <p>Insurance Requirements – Cyber Liability and Technology E&O Insurance The document lists both Cyber/Network Liability and Technology Errors and Omissions Insurance with \$3 million limits.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can a single policy combining Cyber and Tech E&O satisfy this requirement? Or are two separate policies required? <p>Please note that our Cyber/Tech E&O policy is a stand-alone policy and is not covered by our umbrella. Does this meet the intended structure of coverage for the Commonwealth?</p> | Please see the response to Question 5. |
| 7 | Appendix H #34 | <p>Insurance Requirements – Umbrella Coverage Our coverage includes umbrella limits that sit over general liability, E&O, cyber, and crime policies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will umbrella limits be accepted to satisfy portions of the required coverage where applicable? <p>May we submit a sample Certificate of Insurance (COI) for review and feedback to determine if our current limits and structure are acceptable for this contract?</p> | Please see the Response to Question 5. |
| 8 | Appendix H #34 | <p>Insurance Requirements – Insurance Waivers Will DHS consider coverage waivers or modified limits based on the scope of services provided (e.g., vendors not handling Commonwealth funds or physically accessing facilities)?</p> | Please see the response to Question 5. |
| 9 | Appendix H - Exhibit A | <p>Technical and Security Compliance – HIPAA Compliance The contract terms mention compliance with HIPAA and require signing a Business Associate Agreement (BAA) if PHI is involved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can you confirm whether the awarded vendor will be expected to handle, or store Protected Health Information (PHI) directly? <p>If PHI is not involved, will the BAA still be required?</p> | Pursuant to Section I-14, the Department may, in its sole discretion, undertake negotiations with Applicants whose applications show them to be qualified, responsible, and capable of performing the Project. If Applicant is selected for negotiations, the applicability of a BAA may be discussed as part of that process. |

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| 10 | I -26, Appendix H – Exhibit B | <p>Technical and Security Compliance – IT Security Policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can you confirm whether there is a central list of applicable Commonwealth IT policies (beyond the few linked in Appendix H)? Specifically, which policies will apply to vendors hosting data or operating a helpline with case tracking? | <p>The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Information Technology Policies (ITP) may be found at: IT Policies Office of Administration Commonwealth of Pennsylvania . The IT Terms and Conditions require applicants to comply with all ITPs.</p> |
| 11 | Appendix H – Exhibit B | <p>Technical and Security Compliance – Security Logging and Monitoring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What specific logging, retention, and reporting requirements will be expected for systems storing or processing program-related data? Are vendors required to retain audit logs for a specified number of years? | <p>Please see the response to Question 10.</p> <p>Applicants should refer to the Data Management Policy for this information.</p> |
| 12 | I-26, Appendix H #10 | <p>Technical and Security Compliance – Accessibility Standards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The RFA references WCAG 2.0. Is there a minimum conformance level required (e.g., Level A, AA, or AAA)? Will the awarded vendor be responsible for remediating all past KinConnector digital content for accessibility, or only new content going forward? | <p>The Commonwealth ITP requires WCAG2.1 - A and AA. Web Applications and any new content needs to comply with both the ITP and the ADA Final Rule.</p> <p>Static content that was created before the Final Rule was published does not have to conform to the WCAG2.1 A and AA standard. If, however, any static content created before the Final Rule changes or needs to be updated, compliance is required to that updated version of the content.</p> |
| 13 | Appendix H – Exhibit B | <p>Technical and Security Compliance – Breach Notification</p> <p>The contract requires notification of security breaches within 1 hour.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is this requirement applicable to all incidents, or only those involving exposure of Commonwealth data? <p>If Commonwealth data is breached due to a third-party vendor (e.g., a cloud host), is the primary vendor still liable?</p> | <p>Applicants should review section 33. Data Breach or Loss and consult with their legal counsel and security professionals regarding compliance. Pursuant to Section I-16, “the Department will require the Applicant assume responsibility for all services offered</p> |

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| | | | in its application whether it produces them itself or by sub-contract.” |
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| 14 | Appendix H - Exhibit B | <p>Technical and Security Compliance – Data Hosting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can you confirm whether program data is permitted to be stored in a cloud environment hosted by a commercial provider (e.g., AWS, Azure)? Are there any data residency requirements (e.g., must be stored in the U.S.)? | <p>The Commonwealth ITPs indicate that data may be hosted by a commercial provider as long as the Commonwealth policies are met.</p> <p>Applicants should note the Information Security Policy requires that all data must reside in CONUS.</p> |
| | RFA Section | Question | Answer |
| 15 | III-5 D. | <p>Technical and Security Compliance – Helpdesk/Call Center SLAs</p> <p>The RFA mentions expectations around returning helpline calls within 1 business day.</p> <p>Are there other SLA metrics vendors expected to meet (e.g., call answer rates, average hold time)?</p> | <p>The Department is unable to locate the one business day requirement cited in the question. The Department does not require helpline calls to be returned within one business day.</p> |
| | RFA Section | Question | Answer |
| 16 | Appendix H | <p>Technical and Security Compliance – Ownership of Work Product</p> <p>The Commonwealth will retain ownership of all developed works. Can you confirm whether that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Third-party licensed platforms or applications hosted by the vendor? <p>Only the data, reports, and content developed under this agreement?</p> | <p>“Developed Works” is defined in Section 1.g of the Appendix H, IT Terms and Conditions. Applicants should review Sections 44-46 of the Appendix H, IT Terms and Conditions, as well as the other sections which mention “Developed Works.”</p> |
| | RFA Section | Question | Answer |
| 17 | Appendix H | <p>Technical and Security Compliance – ITPs Applicable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are all current ITPs applicable to this RFA, or is there a defined subset of policies that applicants are expected to comply with? <p>If a specific list of applicable ITPs exists, could you kindly provide a reference or attachment? This will help ensure our proposal aligns fully with the Commonwealth’s expectations and compliance requirements.</p> | <p>See the response to Question 10.</p> |

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| 18 | Appendix H | <p>Technical and Security Compliance – Anti-Virus and Monitoring Requirements The contract includes language allowing the Commonwealth to audit contractor systems for up-to-date antivirus and patching.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are vendors required to use specific antivirus products or software agents provided by the Commonwealth? | Applicants should refer to the Information Security Policy for this information. |
| | RFA Section | Question | Answer |
| 19 | Appendix H DHS Addendum | <p>Technical and Security Compliance – Background Checks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual criminal background checks are required for all staff accessing Commonwealth systems or data. Does the Commonwealth require a specific background check vendor or reporting format? | The Commonwealth does not require a specific background check vendor or format. Applicants should review section 29 of the Appendix H, IT Terms and Conditions for questions and requirements regarding Background Checks. |
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| 20 | Appendix H – Exhibit B | <p>Technical and Security Compliance – Data Classification Authority</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who determines the classification level of data handled by the vendor under this contract (e.g., public, internal, restricted, confidential)? Will DHS provide specific guidance, or a data classification matrix based on the services being performed? | Applicants should refer to the Data Classification Policy for this information. |
| | RFA Section | Question | Answer |
| 21 | I-4 and II-4 and I-13 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can OCYF clarify whether this is intended to replace the current contractor or continue the current approach? Will any past performance evaluations or stakeholder feedback be made available to inform the proposal? | OCYF is seeking an applicant to work in the management and administration of Kinship Navigator Program services. Evaluation will be conducted as stated in the RFA Section II-3 and II-4. The Department will not accept alternate applications. |
| | RFA Section | Question | Answer |
| 22 | | Will DHS provide historical data for the program, such as call volume, web traffic, staffing numbers, needs/unmet needs for program participants? | For the federal fiscal year 2023-2024, there were 1370 incoming connections made through calls to the support line, emails and website inquiries with 1,252 families served. |

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| 23 | III-8 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How will DHS measure success? What are the key performance indicators? Will there be required outcome tracking or reporting through a specified database? | The Commonwealth has developed a set of minimum Key Performance Standards defined in III-8, which the selected Applicant shall meet or exceed. |
| | Section Reference | Question | Answer |
| 24 | I-3 | How much flexibility is available to design and refine the service delivery model as the Program Administrator deems necessary, based on input from the program advisory committee and stakeholders? | 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, as outlined in I-3. The Department is seeking an Applicant to work with OCYF in the management and administration of the Kinship Navigator Program. |
| | Section Reference | Question | Answer |
| 25 | III -5 | As the incumbent, can we approach the answers, especially those directing experience with kinship navigator program and specifically when it's asking for development or implantation of key services that have already been developed and implemented by us? | Applicants should describe in narrative form their technical plan for accomplishing the work with the Project tasks and the major milestones and deliverables as directed in III-5. Work Plan. |
| | Section Reference | Question | Answer |
| 26 | Appendix C | Can you please clarify for the cost submittal if you want a budget for all five years, the first-year base budget then four extension budgets? | The total proposed cost should be broken down into the components set forth in Appendix C – Cost Submittal Worksheet. |
| | Section Reference | Question | Answer |
| 27 | III-5. A and J | As the incumbent, are we required to submit both a transition plan and a turnover plan? | Applicants should respond to all areas noted for a response in Part III of the Technical Submittal. |

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| 28 | III-6. B | Regarding the Bolstering Service Delivery through a Digital Experience Strategy, are we required to register and use a keystone login portal even if we do not have any client login requirements and applications that use or require a central client record profile? | Applicant should refer to section III-6.B. |
| | Section Reference | Question | Answer |
| 29 | I-11. B. 1 and Part III | The Index numbering/sequence does not line up/match with the question/response section. Should we follow the Index numbering or the question/response numbering layout? | Applicants should provide a technical submittal as part of their applications that responds to all sections listed in Part III, Technical Submittal and include "Applicant Response." The Part III, Technical Submittal follows the same order listed in I-11.B.1.a. with the exception of the Cost Submittal that should be submitted separately, in an Excel Spreadsheet. |