The Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System (CCWIS):

A Model Request for Proposals

Revision 1.0 | September, 2020

Developed under a grant by the Annie E. Casey Foundation and released into the public domain on October 1, 2020 under the Creative Commons CC0 License

# Text Description automatically generated

Introduction

This document presents a Model Request for Proposals (RFP) for the procurement of software (and, optionally, services) under the Comprehensive Child Welfare Information Systems (CCWIS) program. It has been released into the public domain with the intent that procuring agencies may freely borrow concepts and text from it. Agencies and/or their procurement consultants are not required to obtain permission from the authors before using or reproducing elements of the document in their own RFPs.

This document should be reviewed and utilized in conjunction with its companion document, “A Guide to the Model CCWIS Request for Proposals”. We cannot stress enough how important this is. The Guide provides extensive and useful background on the thinking behind the Model RFP and many of its specific provisions, especially with regard to innovations in procurement strategy and child welfare practice. It also contains important, hands-on information on how to adapt the Model RFP to an agency’s own specific needs. We strongly encourage readers to consult the Guide while exploring the current document.

Please see the Guide, as well, for important information on the Creative Commons license under which both documents have been released, permitted uses of the Model RFP, and limitations of liability.

Getting Help

Technical assistance is available, through a network of experienced consultants, to states and other entities seeking to utilize the Model RFP. For more information, please contact [CCWIS@humanservicestech.com](mailto:CCWIS@humanservicestech.com).

THE CCWIS MODEL RFP BEGINS ON THE NEXT PAGE

State of StateName

Request for Proposals #RFP number

RFP Title: RFPTitle

Issuing Agency: AgencyName

All questions about this procurement should be addressed to:

«Procurement administrative contact name and email»

«State seal and other identifying and/or statutorily required information»

Table of Contents

[1](#_Toc52983512)

[Procurement Timeline 10](#_Toc52983513)

[Introduction 11](#_Toc52983514)

[Purpose of the Procurement 11](#_Toc52983515)

[High-level Goals for the Project 11](#_Toc52983516)

[Solution Architecture 12](#_Toc52983517)

[Ownership of Work Products 12](#_Toc52983518)

[Bidder Eligibility 13](#_Toc52983519)

[Contract Term 13](#_Toc52983520)

[Initial and Ongoing Budget 13](#_Toc52983521)

[Procurement Philosophy 14](#_Toc52983522)

[The Goals, Guideposts and Constraints Model 14](#_Toc52983523)

[Access to State Information and Staff 15](#_Toc52983524)

[Pre-proposal Bidders’ Conference 15](#_Toc52983525)

[Resource Library 15](#_Toc52983526)

[[Bidder Question and Answer Process] 15](#_Toc52983527)

[[Bidder Forum] 15](#_Toc52983528)

[Process Provisions 16](#_Toc52983529)

[Equal Opportunity Commitment 16](#_Toc52983530)

[Amendments 17](#_Toc52983531)

[Price Binding 17](#_Toc52983532)

[Exclusions 17](#_Toc52983533)

[Handling of Minor Issues 17](#_Toc52983534)

[Notice of Conditional Award 17](#_Toc52983535)

[Appeals 18](#_Toc52983536)

[Confidentiality of Proposals 18](#_Toc52983537)

[How Bids Will Be Evaluated 18](#_Toc52983538)

[Evaluation Committee 18](#_Toc52983539)

[Focus on Value 18](#_Toc52983540)

[Scoring 19](#_Toc52983541)

[Use of External Information 21](#_Toc52983542)

[Best and Final Offer (BAFO) Process 21](#_Toc52983543)

[Format for Responses and Submission Instructions 22](#_Toc52983544)

[The Child Welfare Practice Ecosystem in StateName 23](#_Toc52983545)

[Key Agencies and Organizations 23](#_Toc52983546)

[Current Program and Policy Initiatives 23](#_Toc52983547)

[Family First Prevention Services Under Title IV-E 23](#_Toc52983548)

[Anti-Human Trafficking Initiatives 24](#_Toc52983549)

[NEICE 24](#_Toc52983550)

[Guiding Principles of Practice 25](#_Toc52983551)

[Important Outcome Goals and Measures; Areas Identified for Improvement 27](#_Toc52983552)

[The Child Welfare Technology Ecosystem in StateName 28](#_Toc52983553)

[Key Organizations and Their Functions 28](#_Toc52983554)

[Key Systems of Record 28](#_Toc52983555)

[Enterprise Components Available for Solutions to Leverage 29](#_Toc52983556)

[Statewide Technology Standards 29](#_Toc52983557)

[Solution Components Sought 29](#_Toc52983558)

[1. Program and Practice Goals, Guideposts and Constraints 31](#_Toc52983559)

[1.1 Intake 31](#_Toc52983560)

[1.2 Investigation 34](#_Toc52983561)

[1.3 Assessment 37](#_Toc52983562)

[1.4 Eligibility 40](#_Toc52983563)

[1.5 Case Planning and Management 41](#_Toc52983564)

[1.5.1. Case Opening 41](#_Toc52983565)

[1.5.2. Case Planning 42](#_Toc52983566)

[1.5.3. Ongoing Case Management 44](#_Toc52983567)

[1.5.4. Data Sharing with CWCAs 46](#_Toc52983568)

[1.5.5. Case Closure 47](#_Toc52983569)

[1.6 Placement Selection 48](#_Toc52983570)

[1.7 Service Referral and Utilization Management 51](#_Toc52983571)

[1.7.1. Goals, Guideposts and Constraints Common to All Types of Services 51](#_Toc52983572)

[1.7.2. Services Delivered Prior to Case Opening 52](#_Toc52983573)

[1.7.3. Services Delivered in the Course of Case Management 53](#_Toc52983574)

[1.7.4. Family First Support 54](#_Toc52983575)

[1.8 Permanency Planning and Post-Permanency Support 55](#_Toc52983576)

[1.9 Adoption and Guardianship 57](#_Toc52983577)

[1.9.1. Adoptive Home Studies and Matching Processes 58](#_Toc52983578)

[1.9.2. Adoptive Placement and Finalization 59](#_Toc52983579)

[1.9.3. Adoption Subsidies 60](#_Toc52983580)

[1.9.4. AFCARS Adoption Elements 61](#_Toc52983581)

[1.9.5. Guardianship 61](#_Toc52983582)

[1.10 Program Administration 62](#_Toc52983583)

[1.10.1. Staff Management 62](#_Toc52983584)

[1.10.2. Caseload Management 63](#_Toc52983585)

[1.10.3. Case Review Support 63](#_Toc52983586)

[1.10.4. Audit 64](#_Toc52983587)

[1.11 Foster Care Provider Management 64](#_Toc52983588)

[1.11.1. [Recruitment] 67](#_Toc52983589)

[1.11.2. Licensing 67](#_Toc52983590)

[1.11.2.1. Standard Licensing Workflow 67](#_Toc52983591)

[1.11.2.2. Provisional/Emergency Licensing 68](#_Toc52983592)

[1.11.2.3. Waiver Support 68](#_Toc52983593)

[1.11.2.4. License Status Changes 68](#_Toc52983594)

[1.11.3. Capacity Management 69](#_Toc52983595)

[1.11.4. [Monitoring Performance-Based Contracts] 70](#_Toc52983596)

[1.12 Financial Management and Contracting 71](#_Toc52983597)

[1.12.1. Fund-based Accounting 71](#_Toc52983598)

[1.12.2. Contracting 73](#_Toc52983599)

[1.12.2.1. [Support for Performance-Based Contracting] 74](#_Toc52983600)

[1.12.3. Payment Workflows 75](#_Toc52983601)

[1.12.4. Trust fund accounting 76](#_Toc52983602)

[1.12.5. [Purchasing of Supplies and Equipment] 77](#_Toc52983603)

[1.12.6. Audit Support 77](#_Toc52983604)

[1.12.7. Financial Reporting 77](#_Toc52983605)

[1.13 Reporting, Data Exports and Document Generation 77](#_Toc52983606)

[1.13.1. Federal Reporting 77](#_Toc52983607)

[1.13.2. Operational Reporting 79](#_Toc52983608)

[1.13.3. Analytical Reporting 80](#_Toc52983609)

[1.13.4. Correspondence and Document Generation 82](#_Toc52983610)

[1.14 Solution Administration 82](#_Toc52983611)

[Technology Considerations 85](#_Toc52983612)

[2. Technology Goals, Guideposts and Constraints 86](#_Toc52983613)

[2.1 Solution Architecture 86](#_Toc52983614)

[2.2 Use of Existing Enterprise Components 89](#_Toc52983615)

[2.3 Data Security 89](#_Toc52983616)

[2.4 Data Quality 92](#_Toc52983617)

[2.5 Interoperability and Integrations 94](#_Toc52983618)

[Services Sought 98](#_Toc52983619)

[3. Solution Delivery Goals, Guideposts and Constraints 99](#_Toc52983620)

[3.1 Delivery Methodology 99](#_Toc52983621)

[3.1.1. Solution Delivery Life Cycle (SDLC) Approach 100](#_Toc52983622)

[3.1.2. Project Management Methodology 101](#_Toc52983623)

[3.1.3. Project Planning Methodology 102](#_Toc52983624)

[3.1.4. Quality Management Methodology 103](#_Toc52983625)

[3.1.5. Managing the CCWIS Solution Design Process 104](#_Toc52983626)

[3.1.6. Managing the Solution [Development | Configuration] Process 105](#_Toc52983627)

[3.1.7. Testing 106](#_Toc52983628)

[3.1.8. Data Conversion 107](#_Toc52983629)

[3.1.9. Training 109](#_Toc52983630)

[3.1.10. Organizational Change Management 110](#_Toc52983631)

[3.1.11. Implementation/Rollout 112](#_Toc52983632)

[3.1.12. Warranty 113](#_Toc52983633)

[3.2 Team Composition and Qualifications 113](#_Toc52983634)

[3.2.1. State Personnel 114](#_Toc52983635)

[3.3 Ongoing Support 114](#_Toc52983636)

[3.3.1. Hosting 115](#_Toc52983637)

[3.3.2. Backup and Recovery 116](#_Toc52983638)

[3.3.3. Ongoing Maintenance of Solution Performance 116](#_Toc52983639)

[3.3.4. Software Updates 117](#_Toc52983640)

[3.3.5. Reporting Updates 117](#_Toc52983641)

[3.3.6. Resolution of Data Exchange Data Quality Issues 118](#_Toc52983642)

[3.3.7. Problem Resolution 118](#_Toc52983643)

[3.3.8. User Education and Support 119](#_Toc52983644)

[Appendix 1: Administrative Requirements 120](#_Toc52983645)

[1. Bidder Qualifications and Relevant Experience 121](#_Toc52983646)

[1.1 Bidder Structure, Qualifications and History 121](#_Toc52983647)

[1.2 Financial Strength 121](#_Toc52983648)

[1.3 Fulfillment of Eligibility Criteria 121](#_Toc52983649)

[1.3.1. Solvency 121](#_Toc52983650)

[1.3.2. Debarment and Similar Restrictions 122](#_Toc52983651)

[1.3.3. Legal and Procurement-related Actions 122](#_Toc52983652)

[1.3.4. Certificate of Insurance 122](#_Toc52983653)

[1.3.5. Bank or Creditor Reference 123](#_Toc52983654)

[1.3.6. Payment and Performance Bonds 123](#_Toc52983655)

[1.4 Project References 123](#_Toc52983656)

[1.5 Key Staff Biographies and References 124](#_Toc52983657)

[1.6 Proposed Partners and Subcontractors 128](#_Toc52983658)

[1.7 Compliance with Visa Requirements; Background Checks 128](#_Toc52983659)

[2. Additional Statutory and Regulatory Requirements 128](#_Toc52983660)

[Appendix 2: Cost Proposal 129](#_Toc52983661)

[General Instructions for Creating a Cost Proposal 129](#_Toc52983662)

[Appendix 3: Glossary of Terms 130](#_Toc52983663)

# Procurement Timeline

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| RFP issued | «issuance date» |
| Pre-proposal conference | «date, time and location» |
| Notice of intent to respond due | «date, time» |
| [Questions due | «date, time, email address for submissions» ] |
| [Formal responses to questions posted | «date» ] |
| [Early submission of Administrative sections opens | «date» ] |
| PROPOSALS DUE | «date, time, delivery location and/or mailing address» |
| Live oral presentations, as requested [(including solution demonstrations)] | «date» through «date», «location» |
| Best and Final Offer (BAFO) process with finalists | «date» through «date» |
| Conditional contract award announcement | «date» |
| Final contract award announcement (target date, subject to successful contract negotiations) | «date» |
| Expected project start | «date» |

# Introduction

## Purpose of the Procurement

The State of has issued this Request for Proposals, (#), to solicit bids for the replacement of its current child welfare information system with a solution that is fully compliant with the federally-administered Comprehensive Child Welfare Information Systems (CCWIS) program. The procurement [includes/does not include] professional services to [operate and] maintain the system after it comes online.

## High-level Goals for the Project

This project is being undertaken in order to meet the following major goals:

* [Create | Acquire | Implement | Extend] a statewide, enterprise-class child welfare solution fully compliant with the Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System (CCWIS) Final Rule and subsequent communications by the Administration for Children and Families of the United States Department of Health and Human Services[[1]](#footnote-1)
* Leverage innovative technology to drive positive life outcomes for children, youth and families
* Accelerate the State’s ability to meet important human service program and policy objectives (see the section entitled, “Important Outcome Goals and Measures” on page 27)
* Support the State’s human service professionals, as well as outside entities with whom they collaborate, in making sound case management decisions based on complete, accurate and timely data
* Provide an intuitive, secure, accessible, family-centric and mobile-ready user experience that enables staff to do their work productively whether they are in the field or in the office
* Implement a modular, configurable solution that can be adapted to meet changing mandates and support new initiatives without significant modification
* Support the secure, timely and efficient exchange of data between the CCWIS system of record and various partner systems
* Implement the solution in a cost-effective, risk-managed manner, staying within the defined project budget and contractually-agreed delivery timelines
* Ensure that the solution’s underlying architecture leverages common standards and is configurable enough to enable the solution to adapt to changes in policy, practice and technology
* Complete a smooth transition to the new CCWIS solution, avoiding data loss and minimizing disruption for staff and the children, youth and families they serve

## Solution Architecture

From a technical perspective, Bidders may propose [any of] the following:

* [A configurable, Commercial Off the Shelf (COTS) product]
* [A Platform-as-a-Service (PaaS) solution [built on the «State PaaS product name» platform]]
* [A custom-built solution [developed with Agile methodology]]
* [A hybrid solution combining one or more of the architectures listed above]

The State [requires | prefers] the solution to be hosted [in the State data center | in a secure private cloud environment [using a Software-as-a-Service licensing model]]. See section ‎2.1 for further architectural requirements.

## Ownership of Work Products

To the extent that substantially all funding for this project will derive from state or federal sources, all work products resulting from the winning bidder’s engagement with the State shall be considered property of the State or in the public domain, with the exception of materials and products that were proprietary, patented and/or copyrighted by others prior to contract inception. Such materials and products include proprietary software tools, whether provided in source code or executable form.

[If the bidder requires clarification on whether the State would assert an ownership claim on a particular piece of intellectual property, it should contact the procurement manager listed on the title page of this RFP.]

## Bidder Eligibility

[In order to be eligible to bid on this procurement, an organization must be a current member of the State’s Prequalified Vendor Pool. For further information on the pool, please contact «contact».]

[In order to be eligible to bid on this procurement, an organization must be associated with a currently valid master contract per «State regulation reference». For further information on this requirement, please contact «contact».]

In order to be considered for award under this procurement, bidders must first meet a set of criteria listed in Appendix 1, Administrative Requirements. These criteria are evaluated on a Pass/Fail basis.

Please see Appendix 1, beginning on page 120.

## Contract Term

The contract that results from this procurement will have an initial term of «nn» years, with the option for the State to extend with up to «n» «nn»-year terms.

## Initial and Ongoing Budget

In keeping with our intent to obtain both the best solution and the best value for taxpayer dollars, we have opted to disclose the project budget as a guide for both bidders and proposal evaluators.

The current estimated project budget, including anticipated Federal CCWIS matching funds, is as follows:

Software and services acquisition: «$ budget»  
  
This budget is allocated across contract periods, including any optional extension periods, as follows:  
  
«Table showing year-by-year budget»

Ongoing maintenance and operations (including hosting and/or ongoing usage or licensing fees if appropriate): «$ budget»  
  
This budget is allocated across contract periods, including any optional extension periods, as follows:  
  
«Table showing year-by-year budget»

Bidder proposals must adhere to this budget. Bids that exceed it will be disqualified.

The State reserves the right to adjust the project budget due to legislative and/or regulatory actions, and/or changes in Federal matching funds contribution. In the event of a downward adjustment, the State will notify project vendors as soon as possible and will engage with them to adjust project scope, deliverables, timelines or other cost-carrying project elements.

## Procurement Philosophy

This RFP seeks to follow the spirit of CCWIS by being less prescriptive and more goal-driven than traditional RFPs, encouraging greater creativity in responses. This said, CCWIS does contain a number of specific requirements, and the State’s own regulatory, legal and standards frameworks impose others. Where these come into play, they are clearly stated as such.

### The Goals, Guideposts and Constraints Model

In keeping with an emphasis on outcomes, the RFP articulates a set of goals—both high-level and more specific—and encourages bidders to propose innovative ways of meeting them. While traditional procurements often focus largely on requirements, with underlying goals in the background, we begin with goals and then document any guideposts and/or constraints that should be considered in devising a solution.

Guideposts convey the State’s preferred approach to a solution element, if it has one; they can also express the State’s current understanding of best practice for that element. *User-centered Design* and *Encryption of Data in Transit* are typical examples of Guideposts. Bidders should feel free to redirect, reframe or suggest alternatives to a Guidepost. Again, we are looking for creativity rather than strict adherence to a checklist of formal requirements. Evaluators will score solution components based on their contribution toward stated goals, not on whether a specific guidepost was followed verbatim.

Constraints are documented chiefly for the bidder’s information. These might include limits on the availability of State staff during the implementation phase, for example, or limitations imposed by older technology in the State ecosystem. If a bidder were to propose a Web service integration with a legacy system that cannot support Web services, for example, the solution may be unworkable without some sort of middleware; bidders should be aware of this as a constraint. Where known, the RFP documents such constraints, though this should not be considered a substitute for a bidder’s own due diligence.

In some cases, a constraint may represent an absolute requirement—*HIPAA compliance*, for example—and will be flagged as such.

An Important Note About Guideposts

We generally state Guideposts in high-level terms in order to encourage bidders to suggest their own unique and innovative solutions. In most cases we avoid specifying a particular approach or design; this is a conscious choice, meant to spur bidders to think outside the box and push the state of the art forward.

## Access to State Information and Staff

#### Pre-proposal Bidders’ Conference

The State will host a Pre-proposal Bidders’ Conference on the date specified in the Procurement Timeline. The conference will be located at «location». Prospective bidders [may|may not] participate remotely. [To register for remote participation, please visit «url».] During the conference, the State will present the project briefly and invite questions from the vendor community. [Questions may be submitted it advance to «contact».]

#### Resource Library

To provide bidders with a range of background information that may be valuable as they learn about the State’s programs, processes, systems and challenges, we have established an online Resource Library at «url». [The contents of the Resource Library are in the public domain and may be accessed by any interested party.]

#### [Bidder Question and Answer Process]

Prospective bidders may submit written questions to the procurement officer via this address: «email or physical address». Questions must be received by the date indicated in the Procurement Timeline and will be answered within «nn» days if possible. All questions and answers will be [posted to «url» | emailed to each bidder’s registered contact]. Questions and answers will be visible to all, but the source of the question will not be shared with vendors.

#### [Bidder Forum]

As a supplement to the Resource Library, we have established an online, moderated forum where bidders may ask questions of selected State staff and view conversations initiated by others. While traditional procurements typically provide for formalized submission of written questions, the result is too often a raft of overlapping and duplicative questions with no ability for bidders to seek clarification unless and until additional rounds of questions are permitted. The long turnaround time on receiving answers can greatly complicate the proposal development process.

A more interactive, conversational question and answer approach serves both the bidder and the procuring agency by shortening the turnaround time on answers and any clarifying followup questions; it also reduces the incidence of duplicative questions while providing full transparency for conversations.

The forum is open to all bidders through [the same registration process used for the Resource Library | a registration process] which can be initiated at «url». One individual per bidder may be authorized to access the forum. Forum members’ corporate affiliations and personal identities [will | will not] be visible to other participants. State staff [will | will not] have access to the same information.

The forum will be monitored by program staff, technical staff and procurement administrators according to the following schedule:

«schedule—consider allocating mornings to one team (e.g. Technical), afternoons to others»

In consideration of staff workloads, bidders are asked to search the RFP and the Resource Library for answers to their questions before posting a question on the forum.

Given that discussion on the forum will sometimes be fluid, any formal decisions or commitments made by the State as a result of activity there will be documented in a special section of the forum (Formal Responses) which only the State may update. The contents of this forum section correspond to the binding responses a State might give to written questions submitted by prospective bidders in a traditional procurement. While State participants will endeavor to provide accurate and meaningful replies to questions posed in the general discussion forum, their comments will not be considered binding on the State. Only material in the Formal Responses section of the forum will be considered binding.

## Process Provisions

#### Equal Opportunity Commitment

is committed to providing fair and equal opportunity to all qualified bidders and associated staff, without bias or preference regarding gender, race, ethnicity, disability or other potentially prejudicial factors. [Reference to relevant regulations if appropriate]

#### Amendments

At its discretion, the State may issue one or more amendments to this RFP, extending response deadlines if it deems an extension to be warranted. Qualified bidders will be notified of amendments via [an email to the bidder’s designated contact | the procurement website].

#### Price Binding

Bidders must commit in their transmittal letter that the pricing in their cost proposal, or a subsequent revision submitted during a Best and Final Offer process, is binding upon the bidder for one hundred twenty (120) days following the PROPOSALS DUE date specified in the Procurement Timeline section (page 10).

#### Exclusions

Issuance of this RFP in no way constitutes a commitment by the State of to award a contract, to pay costs incurred in the preparation of a response to this request, or to pay costs incurred in procuring or contracting for services, supplies, physical space, personnel or any other costs incurred by the Bidder.

reserves the right to reject any and all proposals[ or to make multiple awards].

In providing services and performing under the contract resulting from this procurement, the awarded Bidder shall act as an independent contractor and not as an agent of the State.

#### Handling of Minor Issues

, in its sole discretion, reserves the right to recognize and discount minor inconsistencies and irregularities, such as slightly misstated legacy system or department names, that may be found in proposals received in response to this RFP.

#### Notice of Conditional Award

Upon the conclusion of the evaluation process, the State will issue a public notice of conditional award which names the winning bidder. The award will be conditioned upon successful and timely negotiation of a contract that substantially reflects the winning proposal. Proposal scoring information [and evaluator comments] for unsuccessful bids (or reasons for their disqualification as appropriate) will be made available, upon request to the State procurement officer, after final contract award.

[Other standard language concerning the State’s award and contracting processes]

#### Appeals

Any person or commercial entity aggrieved by the award decision that results from this RFP may appeal that decision under the terms of «citation for the State’s controlling regulation/process».

#### Confidentiality of Proposals

Proposals submitted under this Request for Proposals shall be considered the property of the State and are therefore subject to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) provisions. Pursuant to a FOIA request for release of a proposal, the State may judge certain proposal contents to be confidential, including trade secrets and other information exempted from the Public Records Act. The bidder itself may also designate portions of its proposal as confidential, consistent with the provisions of governing public records statutes, by submitting a redacted copy of the proposal upon notification by the State that a valid FOIA request has been received. By so redacting proposal content, the bidder represents that it has made a good faith judgment, having received appropriate advice from counsel, that redaction of the content in question does not conflict with the requirements of governing public records statutes. Under no circumstances will pricing information be designated as confidential.

## How Bids Will Be Evaluated

#### Evaluation Committee

Bids will be read, scored and discussed by an Evaluation Committee consisting of representatives from program/practice, technology and procurement staffs. Evaluation Committee members may seek information or clarification from other staffmembers in their respective areas of expertise, but will not share any bidder’s proposal, in whole or in part, with them. The work of the Evaluation Committee will be conducted confidentially in order to protect the confidentiality of bidder offerings. Bidders may not contact any member of the Evaluation Committee or any staff assisting the Committee. Such contacts will result in immediate disqualification.

[Evaluators will review cost proposals only after scoring the technical proposals.]

#### Focus on Value

In evaluating bids, the Evaluation Committee will prioritize the quality of the proposed deliverable—including solution capabilities and creativity, delivery approach and an assessment of the bidder’s ability to successfully complete the project as proposed—as well as its alignment with the goals specified in this document. Within the constraints of the project budget, the emphasis will be on value received rather than absolute cost. Accordingly, no points will be awarded solely for being the low bidder, and no points deducted for being high bidder.

A Best and Final Offer (BAFO) may be requested from some or all bidders, as described on page 21.

*Bidder Presentations* At its sole discretion, the Evaluation Committee may request that bidders whose proposals are considered viable provide in-person presentations of their solution and/or proposal. Dates and times will be coordinated directly with the bidders. An agenda, including key points to be covered, will be provided by the Evaluation Committee in advance of the presentation date. Scenarios or vignettes reflecting important child welfare processes may be provided.

The presentation will be scored as a component of the overall proposal evaluation.

#### Scoring

Proposals will be assigned scores according to the criteria shown in the Evaluation Factors table immediately following. Each criterion carries a maximum number of possible points, as shown in the table; the proposals with the highest total point scores will be considered eligible for the Best-and-Final-Offer process outlined on page 21.

Note that while the Bidder Presentation is one of the scoring criteria, evaluators may adjust their point scores for other criteria based on discoveries made during that presentation. If, for example, sample screen shots in a proposal incline a given evaluator to award a fairly high point value for the Solution Usability criterion, but the live demo reveals awkward navigational flows, the score for Solution Usability may be downgraded accordingly. The final score will combine impressions garnered from a close analysis of the proposal and supplemental materials, on the one hand, and direct interaction with the bidder and/or proposed solution during the oral presentation.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Evaluation Factor | Points |
| Bidder understanding of project goals | «n» |
| Fidelity to CCWIS | «n» |
| Congruence with State child welfare goals | «n» |
| Innovation in solution and/or approach | «n» |
| Solution usability (quality of existing user experience and/or quality of user experience design process) | «n» |
| Solution technical architecture | «n» |
| «Solution functional completeness» | «n» |
| Solution’s ability to meet goals and adhere to constraints stated for each numbered functional area | «nn» |
| Delivery methodology and approach | «n» |
| Quality of bidder’s proposed key staff | «n» |
| Bidder’s past project references and results, including proven ability to deliver on time and on budget | «n» |
| Diversity incentive | «n» |
| Initial cost (until solution comes online) | «n» |
| Ongoing annual cost, first five years | «n» |
| Bidder presentation | «n» |
| Compliance with State and external standards | Pass/Fail |
| Compliance with administrative requirements | Pass/Fail |
| **TOTAL possible points** | **1000** |

#### Use of External Information

The Evaluation Committee may, in its discretion, consult publicly available information beyond the text of a proposal in order validate or further research assertions made by the bidder. This may include research into previous projects in which the bidder has participated.

### Best and Final Offer (BAFO) Process

In order to obtain the CCWIS solution best suited to its unique needs, the State reserves the option to engage finalist bidders in a consultative Best and Final Offer (BAFO) process. This phase will occur between the close of the proposal submission period and conditional contract award.

The purpose of the BAFO process is to engage viable bidders in a dialogue aimed at identifying areas of their proposals where clarifications are needed or where minor adjustments would better serve the State’s needs. [A BAFO may also be initiated if all cost proposals are too high.] The process is not a contract negotiation, and bidders are not required to alter their proposals to address the State’s concerns; at the bidder’s request, the State will treat a bidder’s existing proposal as its final proposal. If the bidder does choose to modify its proposal, it may do so only once unless otherwise requested by the State. Bidders should submit the revised proposal in two forms: a redlined copy showing changes made and a clean copy without revision marks. The State will assign a new score to each revised proposal received during BAFO.

Unsolicited BAFOs from bidders cannot be considered. The State must initiate the BAFO process.

Bidders will be afforded fair and equal treatment with respect to any opportunity for revision of proposals. If only one bidder needs to provide additional information about the proposed solution, all other bidders invited to provide a BAFO must be given an opportunity to submit additional information.

In the BAFO process, no material changes to RFP requirements will be made.

When the State invites a bidder into the BAFO process, it will provide confidential written comments on its proposal, meant to form the basis of an interactive discussion on ways to refine the bid. At the State’s discretion, this discussion may be conducted face to face or in writing, but in either case will be documented for the record (with contemporaneous notes in the case of a meeting). The State’s intent is to schedule the BAFO discussion within «n» weeks of bidder notification.

To promote open dialogue and fairness in the BAFO process, an official from the [procurement | purchasing] department will monitor all bidder-State communications, whether these should occur in person or by other means, and will keep a record of all such communications as part of the permanent procurement archive.

We believe that it is in the best interest of all parties, including taxpayers, to support bidders in creating proposals that have the best possible chance of fulfilling the project’s goals. The BAFO process is designed to achieve this outcome while maintaining a level playing field for all bidders.

### Format for Responses and Submission Instructions

This document contains general background information intended to orient bidders to the State’s child welfare and technology ecosystems; discussion of key assumptions and CCWIS requirements; Goals, Guideposts and Constraints associated with each aspect of the desired solution; and numbered sections (1, 1.1, 1.2 etc.) describing each solution component that must be addressed in a bid. Bidders are expected to respond specifically only to the numbered sections, and should include the numbered headings in their proposals for ease of comparison. Headings preceded by letters (a, b, c) do not require a response.

Responses should be submitted in the form of three documents in searchable PDF format:

1. Solution Proposal (covering all numbered sections in the body of this RFP)
2. Response to Administrative Requirements (see Appendix 1)
3. Cost Proposal (see Appendix 2)

Pages should be consecutively numbered and formatted with 1” margins on left and right sides. Text should be in a standard, sans serif font no smaller than 11 points.

The full proposal package (the three components) should be accompanied by a brief transmittal letter signed by a bidder representative authorized to bind the bidder organization to all commitments made in the proposal. The transmittal letter should include a statement of consent to the price binding period indicated in the Price Binding section on page 17 of this RFP.

The Solution Proposal component of the submission may not exceed «n» pages in length, including figures, tables, screen shots and any supplemental materials.

Proposals should be delivered on or before the PROPOSALS DUE date and time specified in the Procurement Timeline section (page 10). Proposals received after the close of the submission period will not be opened.

Deliver proposals to:

[physical address | PO box | email address | submission portal]

# The Child Welfare Practice Ecosystem in

## Key Agencies and Organizations

The State’s child welfare ecosystem involves a host of agencies, departments, independent organizations, contractors and other stakeholders who work together to provide, direct, monitor and coordinate services for families and children. It is important for bidders to understand this ecosystem, particularly for data sharing purposes. Below is a list and brief description of the scope of responsibility for the key players in the child welfare ecosystem.

«State Child Welfare Agency»

«State IV-A Agency»

«State Child Support Enforcement Agency»

«Courts Administration Agency or Agencies»

«Juvenile Justice Agency or Agencies (e.g. Juvenile Probation Division/Department)»

«State Title XIX Medicaid Administration Agency»

«State and/or County Education Agencies»

«State Public Health and/or Maternal and Child Health Agency»

«State Program Evaluation Entity»

«If relevant, County Child Welfare Administration Entities»

«If relevant, Licensed Child Placing Agencies (LCPAs)»

«If relevant, Other Private Child Welfare Contributing Agencies (CWCAs)»

## Current Program and Policy Initiatives

### Family First Prevention Services Under Title IV-E

Signed in February, 2018 as part of the 2018 bipartisan budget package, the Family First Prevention Services Act[[2]](#footnote-2) amends the IV-E entitlement to fund support for an array of services aimed at enabling “candidates for foster care” to remain with their parents and relatives. These prevention services can be funded for up to twelve months. Two key requirements of the program are that a trauma-informed prevention plan must be written and that services must be evidence-based. The bidder’s proposed solution must support all the requirements of Family First, including but not limited to trauma-informed prevention plans, referral to Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) providers; prevention services tracking, IV-E prevention services eligibility determination and expenditure reporting. The Act is also aimed at limiting federal funds for putting foster youth into congregate care placements, including both group homes and residential care.

On December 20, 2019, the Family First Transition Act (H.R. 4980/S.2777)[[3]](#footnote-3) was signed by President Trump as part of a year-end spending package. The legislation provides one-time, flexible funding for states, cities and tribes to allow an orderly transition to implementation of the Family First Prevention Services Act (Family First). It also provides short-term funding guarantees for states with expiring Title IV-E waivers, allowing states to move forward with Family First and not experience a financial shortfall during the transition. In addition, it phases in the requirements of the types of prevention programs for which states can receive federal reimbursement. (See <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/cb/im2001.pdf>.)

Specific State program initiatives associated with Family First include: «State-specific information»

### Anti-Human Trafficking Initiatives

The prevalence of human trafficking among children and youth has led to the creation of various multifaceted, typically interagency initiatives to detect and respond to instances of labor and sex trafficking. As the leading edge of contact with at-risk children and youth, the child welfare system has a special role to play in this effort. Some specific impacts on the system include the need for specialized screening at the time of intake and/or assessment; coordination of intervention and medical services; psychological support (especially for self-esteem building and PTSD); ongoing case management; and reporting. Solutions bidders propose should support these functional areas.

Specific State program initiatives associated with human trafficking include: «State-specific information»

### NEICE

The Family First Act of 2018 requires that states join the national electronic interstate system for processing interstate adoption placement cases (ICPC cases) by 2027. The only such system at present is APHSA’s National Electronic Interstate Compact Enterprise (NEICE). [The State seeks to integrate its CCWIS solution with NEICE.]

[Other State-specific programmatic and policy initiatives]

## Guiding Principles of Practice

The State’s child welfare practice rests on a number of guiding principles, each of which has been shown to contribute toward positive outcomes for children and families.

Helping Children Stay Safe and Supported in Their Family of Origin

Children thrive when raised in their family of origin. When the family is no longer safe and nurturing, our first recourse is to find ways to support and stabilize it; children are removed only if there are no supports that can enable them to stay safely at home. Reunification with the birth family is considered the primary goal of case management unless circumstances make it impossible for the family to provide a loving, nurturing and safe environment. All children deserve a permanent home.

Prevention Services

Child maltreatment can often be prevented through engaging early with families to identify risk factors and coordinating services targeted at preventing the situation in the home from reaching a crisis point. As a guiding principle of practice we seek to prevent maltreatment before it ever occurs.

Interdisciplinary and Integrated Services

In keeping with research on the social determinants of health, we recognize that effective case management often requires coordination of data and services across traditional disciplinary and departmental boundaries. Sharing of information between schools, clinics and the child welfare agency, for example, can help professionals understand and then communicate to the family vital information that can reduce the risk of child maltreatment by creating a healthier and safer home environment.

Kinship Placement

When a child must be removed, we strive to place her or him with appropriate kin or near-kin before looking to non-kin resources.

Trauma-informed Practice

It is traumatic for a child to be removed from his or her birth family. Adding to the trauma inherent in suffering or witnessing abuse and neglect, removal entails separation from parents and potentially siblings, community, and sometimes other support systems, like schools, that provide emotional grounding. Placement disruptions and changes bring their own degree of trauma. Accordingly, we have adopted Trauma-informed practice as a core component of our child welfare programs and strive to maintain a trauma-informed system of care, including use of trauma-informed prevention plans as required under the Family First Prevention Services Act.

Placement Stability

Research shows that minimizing the number of placement moves improves outcomes for children.[[4]](#footnote-4) We seek to make a strong, appropriate initial placement by considering such factors as kinship, community supports, cultural alignment and placement with siblings.

Consistent and Frequent Face-to-Face Contact

Experience has shown that regular, frequent face-to-face encounters between caseworkers and children in care, as well as between children in foster care and their biological families, contribute toward the goal of reunification. Arranging for, overseeing and tracking such contacts is a key element of our case management practice.

Supporting Youth in Transition to Adulthood

For older youth in foster care, the transition to adulthood can be challenging. In keeping with the federal Chafee and Family First programs, we strive to cultivate strong supports for such youth as an integrated component of case management. Such supports include not only specific services funded under Chafee and Family First (e.g., education and training vouchers), but also relationships with trusted adults who will provide permanence as they enter adulthood.

Focus on Community

Community partnerships are important in providing support to children and families. We strive to foster community engagement by partnering with community-based organizations, placing removed children within their familiar communities whenever possible, and connecting families with community resources that can provide services outside the formal child welfare system.

Strength-based Case Management

All families have strengths that can be built upon to create a supportive home for children. An engaged grandparent, for example, can provide respite, act as a role model for the child, and may even serve as a foster placement resource if needed. A parent’s or caregiver’s commitment to overcome his or her substance abuse problem represents another sort of strength. In assessing families and creating effective case plans for them, we consider strengths as well as challenges and seek to build on existing strengths whenever possible.

Reliable Data for Reliable Decisions

Older child welfare information systems made it difficult for caseworkers to enter, access and rely upon sound data as they did their work. CCWIS brings a strong, unified emphasis on data quality and availability; we expect our CCWIS solution to manifest these principles by making it as straightforward as possible for case managers and other professionals to create timely and accurate data, then utilize it for decision making and program management purposes.

Continuous Quality Improvement

We believe that we can always improve our practice and thereby improve outcomes for children and families. By continuously studying what we do, how we do it, and how our actions affect the lives of those we serve, we can identify and execute efficiently on improvements in our practice approach. Such continuous quality improvement requires reliable data, teamwork, a culture of honesty and a thoroughgoing organizational commitment to positive change.

## Important Outcome Goals and Measures; Areas Identified for Improvement

«Agency-supplied»

# The Child Welfare Technology Ecosystem in

## Key Organizations and Their Functions

«Office of Information Technology» – primary statewide IT administrator. Responsibility for enterprise IT standards, [technology procurement], [data center administration], administration of IT vendor contracts, and development and ongoing operation of the following applications: «application list».

«IT departments responsible for data exchange-related systems mentioned in the Interoperability and Integrations section»

«Other State and/or external technology groups»

«Current technology vendors with whom the winning bidder will be expected to coordinate»

## Key Systems of Record

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| System name | «legacy system name» |
| Functional domain | Child welfare system of record |
| Operated/maintained by | «Department or vendor name» |
| Developed by | «Department or vendor name» |
| Age in years | «n» |
| Application software technology stack | «technical description and/or diagram» |
| Database management software | «dbms name» |
| On premise / Hosted | [On premise | Hosted] |
| Organizations contributing data | «entity names» |
| Organizations consuming data | «entity names» |
| Integrations with other systems (including interoperability architecture) | «[link to documentation on] system, domain, integration method, types of data exchanged» |

«Repeat above table for each system of record»

## Enterprise Components Available for Solutions to Leverage

The State has invested in a number of enterprise software tools that will be available to the CCWIS vendor in building its solution. [In some cases, bidders must incorporate a tool into their proposed solutions, as indicated in the table below.] Proposals should indicate how and whether each tool will be utilized. If a tool will be used, the proposal should further indicate the number of licenses that will be required.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Product type | Product brand name | Enterprise function | Required Y/N |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

## Statewide Technology Standards

Proposed solutions will be required to comply a number of technology standards observed by the State. Documentation on these standards can be found in the Resource Library. The standards relevant to this project are:

«State standards list with brief descriptions»

# Solution Components Sought

This section describes the specific Solution Components for which the State is soliciting bidder proposals. Associated *professional services* are detailed in a subsequent section, Services Sought.

Proposals must address each item in this section, the Technology Considerations and the Services Sought sections, as well as items in Appendices 1 and 2. Taken together, the response to these three sections and the appendices constitute the proposal that will be reviewed by the Evaluation Committee. Other sections of the RFP are provided for informational purposes only.

Bidder proposals should respond to each item in this section in sequence and by number.

1. Program and Practice Goals, Guideposts and Constraints
   1. Intake

Goals

* Promptly receive, document and assign reports of alleged abuse and neglect, meeting both agency-established and statutorily-imposed target turnaround times for report screening. [Current agency-established target turnaround times are «agency goals».]
* Make it simple and straightforward for reporters to initiate a report from wherever they are.
* Ensure the confidentiality of reporters.
* Prevent any victim from suffering additional or continued harm due to incorrect decisions made at the point of intake. With a high degree of confidence [and a target error rate of «less than «n» inappropriate screenouts per «n» calls»], screen in all reports that meet criteria for investigative response. [Current criteria include «criteria».]
* Prioritize [and escalate] reports based on a research-validated, evidence-based safety/risk assessment [such as the Structured Decision-making Model or SDM, <https://www.nccdglobal.org/assessment/sdm-structured-decision-making-systems/child-welfare>].
* Use data effectively to increase the likelihood of making sound decisions throughout the intake process and beyond, including decisions that are not biased by factors such as race, ethnicity and gender identification.
* Capture and transmit to investigators, in real time, all data necessary to launch a timely, well-informed investigation. Ensure efficiency and future flexibility by [automatically] routing reports based on configurable rules that consider such factors as staff caseloads, acuity, allegation specifics, location, prior case history and work schedules (especially for rapid-response intakes).
* Coordinate promptly with law enforcement and other professionals if there is a reasonable suspicion that an alleged child victim is in imminent danger.
* Protect the safety of staff by gathering and transmitting information that will assist investigators when they visit the scene. For example, enable hotline/intake workers to document the presence of weapons or dangerous dogs as part of the report.
* Enable supervisory managers to approve or reject screening decisions, track operations and identify opportunities for practice improvement through a flexible reporting strategy.

Guideposts

* Multiple reports are sometimes received for the same alleged incident. The ability to merge, consolidate or otherwise deduplicate such reports without losing content contributes to the efficiency of intake work. This capability can be addressed in various ways; bidders are invited to propose an innovative approach.
* Where child protective services history is on file for a given household, allegation, alleged perpetrator or alleged victim, the ability to view and bring forward such history into the new intake record makes for a richer intake and a more efficient encounter with the reporter. It may also reveal past events which, even if they did not result in a substantiated allegation, nonetheless provide context for the current report and can help to inform a decision on whether to refer the intake for investigative followup.
* The better the intake module’s search functionality, the less likely it is that duplicate reports will be logged. At a minimum, searches should tap historical data residing in the solution’s own production database (including any converted data). Beyond this, the ability to tap into external resources such as educational records (subject to FERPA rules) and public assistance case records can help workers positively validate the identity of a subject in an intake report. [Though its feasibility depends upon a number of complex factors such as data-sharing Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs), an ability to conduct cross-jurisdictional searches (exchanges of data with child welfare systems in adjacent geographical areas) would add even more value.]
* While some calls may not meet the bar for screen-in, certain callers would benefit from receiving information on and/or referrals to supportive services that might help them, such as addiction counseling or public assistance. Such Information and Referral (I&R) calls should be trackable as a unique call type.
* Providing the ability to initiate reports through multiple channels—e.g. telephone, Web portal, even text message—would help meet the goal of enabling reporters to submit reports from wherever they are, even if a followup call is needed in order to gather more complete information.
* For hotlines, integration with the telephone system to provide acuity-based IVR, call logging, call rollover and escalation can help workers be responsive to reporters. Ideally, call metadata can be used to prepopulate the intake record. IVR integration can also assist in routing non-incident calls, such as calls regarding foster parent licensing, to appropriate State staff.
* Providing mandated reporters with an expedited path for submitting reports, including confirmation that a report has been received, can make them more productive.
* Giving reporters the ability to electronically submit supplemental materials that round out the report specifics can provide supervisors and ultimately investigators with key evidence to consider. Example: the ability for a caller to forward to the Intake system a concerning telephone message they’ve received, utilitizing the email or text forwarding capabilities of their phone. A process for linking such submissions to the intake record would be needed.
* The accuracy of human screen in/out decisions, as judged in part by successive intake reports, is a key measure of successful intake process. Analytics and/or machine learning targeted at this question may be helpful to the agency as it strives toward continuous practice improvement.
* Child welfare intake hotlines often receive referrals directly or indirectly from the juvenile court for youth who otherwise would not meet screening requirements. Often in these cases, the youth have been involved in parent-child conflict, or have been abandoned by their parents or caregivers, or have committed status offenses. Referrals commonly include behavioral health concerns. Notice may come in the form of orders from the court to investigate, to place a child in foster care, to undergo a mental health assessment, or to appear very soon at a hearing with a plan for the youth. A process for tracking such calls and orders and their disposition, separate from the “child protective services” framework that guides most intake hotlines, would be very useful but is not required by this RFP.
* [Document any known areas for improvement]

Constraint(s)

* Intake/hotline functionality must conform to all applicable laws and regulations concerning turnaround times, confidentiality, assessment and screening process, documentation and reporting.
* The solution must allow for the submission of reports through multiple channels, including at a minimum telephone and Web.
* The Intake module must enable different report types to trigger different workflows and response time assignments.
* The solution must support risk and safety assessments that can be modified or reconfigured without modification of source code.
* The solution must minimize the chance of duplicate reports and provide a means of merging, linking or otherwise resolving duplicates that do occur.
* For screened-in intakes, the solution must pass intake report information to the Investigation module without re-entry of report specifics.

[Other known constraints]

* 1. Investigation

The investigation process utilizes professionally trained staff to ascertain whether the allegations made during the intake phase are substantiated by the available evidence, and to determine the level of immediate safety threat as well as longer-term risk of harm to a child. Investigations unfold according to state-mandated timeframes which vary depending primarily on the immediacy of the safety threat suggested by the reporter.

Because an investigator is often the first child welfare professional to see first-hand the situation in the home, she may initiate such immediate interventions as separating children from caregivers, provision of emergency medical services to a child, and law enforcement or court actions. All this may occur prior to formal disposition of allegations or opening of a case.

Thus, while the investigator operates under clearly-defined practice guidelines and regulations with regard to the investigation itself, she also must be equipped to respond to the family’s (and/or alleged perpetrator’s, if non-family) immediate needs in a more flexible manner, making appropriate decisions about emergency service referrals, removals, placements and the like. The CCWIS solution should support both modes of work.

[Description of State’s Differential Response process, if relevant]

Goals

* Efficiently and fairly determine, using evidence-based and structured methods, whether each allegation contained in an associated intake is founded, unfounded or indeterminate.
* Respect the legal rights of all parties in the investigation.
* Using research-influenced tools, avoid or minimize bias based on factors such as race, ethnicity, gender identity and economic circumstances.
* Assist investigators in adhering to all applicable legal standards and mandated timelines for initiating, pursuing and closing out investigations.
* Efficiently and accurately assess immediate safety threats and the risk of future harm to children associated with acts of abuse or neglect alleged in an intake.
* Initiate steps to separate children from caregivers and/or provide emergency services to families when assessment indicates immediate safety threats and/or a risk of future harm, or when they can otherwise benefit from short-term service provision.
* [Support a differential response model in which less-severe reports are routed into a supportive service pathway without a formal finding regarding allegations made during intake.]
* Leverage the best available research-influenced decision tools to assist the investigator in arriving at safety-centered decisions that are in the best interest of the child.
* Support the investigator in interfacing effectively with law enforcement, the courts, other members of the child welfare team, healthcare providers and other allied professionals in communicating details of the investigation and coordinating interventions when appropriate.
* Protect the investigator by bringing forward all intake information concerning dangers she might encounter when visiting the home (dangerous dogs, weapons, drugs, mental illness, etc.).
* With minimal manual intervention required of the investigator, generate all needed documentation of investigation evidence, assessments, findings and subsequent actions taken to ensure the safety of affected children.

Guideposts

* Support for mobile working is considered essential for a solution’s Investigation functionality, and is therefore listed below as a Constraint. Given the availability of a mobile computing device such as a smartphone or a tablet, there is an opportunity to add value to the baseline functionality described under Constraints. Value-added features might include, for example, the ability to use the device’s camera, audio recording and/or GPS capabilities for evidence gathering and ensuring worker safety. Bidders are encouraged to propose innovative applications of mobile investigation technology.
* Support for intermittently offline mobile work helps investigators avoid the burden and delay of retrospective data entry, improving their efficiency and improving the timeliness and accuracy of data collected.
* Assignment of intakes for investigation can be a complex process that takes into account the nature of the allegations, the acuity of the alleged incident, investigator caseloads and other factors. Support for configurable assignment rules and guidelines, as well as the ability for human users with appropriate credentials to override them, can simplify and streamline this supervisory function.
* As research evolves and practice standards change, the ability to create configurable assessments and decision making tools, in addition to supporting those listed under Constraints below, would enable the CCWIS solution to continue to reflect best practices in the field at minimum expense to the State.
* Supervisors and investigators alike will find it easier to manage their workloads if case assignment and progress information is presented visually, e.g. in a graphical dashboard.
* In keeping with the CCWIS emphasis on data exchanges, an investigator will be most productive if she can access relevant data that may reside in other systems—schools, healthcare, vital records, criminal justice, sex offender registries, courts and so on.

Constraints

* Information collected during intake must be seamlessly available to the investigator and should automatically populate aspects of the investigation record, but the intake itself must not be modifiable once it has been referred for investigation.
* The system must enable supervisors to change staff assignments associated with an investigation after the investigation is underway.
* The system must enable investigators to build a family relationship tree or graph that can be seen and utilized by case management staff if a case is opened.
* In response to newly uncovered facts, the investigator must be able to add new allegations to those assigned during the investigation phase. The original intake would not be modified in this case—only the investigation record.
* The solution must enable investigators to access closed case records when new allegations are levied against parents who have previously lost custody of their children.
* Since investigators do most of their work in the field, support for mobile devices is essential. At a minimum, the investigator must be able to view prior case history, view and carry forward information collected at intake, gather documentation and perform assessments while on the scene. All data collected or processed on a mobile device must be secured with effective, high-quality privacy measures. (See the Guideposts section, above, for additional capabilities the State feels would add value to a solution.)
* The solution must assist investigators in adhering to mandated timelines for initiating, conducting and closing out investigations, as well as in adhering to all relevant privacy rules and legal or regulatory requirements.
* The solution must support commonly-used structured decision making tools and safety/risk assessments, including «State list of tools». See the Assessment section below, beginning on page 37, for details on desired assessment capabilities.
* The solution must provide a configurable workflow tool that guides key investigation business processes such as evidence gathering, interviews, assessments, submission and supervisory approval of recommended findings, and follow-on actions initiated with other entities (e.g., the courts).
* The solution must give the investigator the ability to initiate out-of-home placement decisions and the selection of placement resources, as well as service referrals, if needed, from within the Investigations module. Information collected during intake and investigation should automatically flow forward into these business processes as appropriate. For example, if a grandparent identified during the investigation is considered a candidate for receiving an interim kinship placement, information on the grandparent should be accessible to the placement component.
* The solution must enable the investigator to efficiently produce all legally- and policy-mandated reports and outputs. [Please see «reference to documents in Resource Library» for the list of these reports and outputs.]
* The CCWIS solution must enable the investigator to package evidence, associated documentation such as assessments, and findings in a form that can be transmitted to law enforcement, the courts and/or attorneys. Per CCWIS regulations, this data exchange should be electronic in format.
  1. Assessment

Assessment plays a role in many phases of the case management lifecycle, from intake through service planning and beyond, and is also part of business processes such as resource family licensing. In this sense, assessment is an important cross-cutting component of any CCWIS solution architecture. Assessments fall into several categories, such as risk and safety, education and special education, family strengths and needs, and physical and mental health.

Goals

* Assist child welfare staff in efficiently and accurately understanding the needs and strengths of families and children. Collect high-quality, unduplicated, statistically reportable, time-sensitive data across these dimensions.
* Using an evidence-based approach, guide caseworkers in making optimal decisions regarding a range of issues, from out-of-home care to service referrals.
* Assist other types of agency professionals in performing core business functions such as resource family licensing and provider management.
* Implement an adaptable assessment infrastructure that enables assessment instruments to reflect evolving best practices and program initiatives, including any new assessments or assessment timeframes consistent with FFPSA provisions.
* Integrate the assessment process into larger child welfare workflows (e.g. Placement), with support for escalations and de-escalations, signoffs and other workflow decision points.
* Ensure that assessments are unbiased with regard to demographic factors such as race and ethnicity.

Guideposts

* As practice standards change, the ability to create configurable or template-based assessments and decision making tools, in addition to supporting those listed under Constraints below, would enable the CCWIS solution to continue to reflect best practices in the field at minimum expense to the State. [While it is not strictly necessary that State staff be able to configure or create assessments without vendor assistance, and the State understands that even small changes in assessment logic and data models can have implications for other aspects of the solution, a high degree of autonomy is desirable.]
* Support for mobile assessments on an intermittently-connection portable device can improve worker productivity, especially in the areas of investigation, ongoing case management and resource licensing/inspection.
* Since assessments often uncover needs that inform out-of-home placement decision making, case plans and service referrals, the ability to link data collected during assessments to these other case management elements would provide a more comprehensive view of the efficacy of interventions and of child outcomes generally.

Constraints

* The solution’s assessment model must support the following types of questions, at a minimum:
  + Free text narrative
  + Numerical entry
  + Numerical range entry (*from n to n)*
  + Date entry
  + Exclusive and nonexclusive multiple-choice entry (i.e., select one and select multiple)
  + True/False
* Assessments must support scoring logic that allows for numerical or logical results to be calculated based on formulas applied to user responses.
* Assessments must support the ability to base a question on the response given to another question. For example, if gender is female, display a followup question about pregnancy status.
* Assessments must be embeddable as mandatory and/or optional steps in various case management processes, including:
  + Intake
  + Investigation
  + Placement
  + Resource Licensing
  + Permanency Planning
  + [State-specified processes]
* The solution must support multiple instances of a given assessment. For example, a series of safety/risk assessments may be performed for a given child over time; each should be retained independently as a component of the case history.
* Where assessment responses can be prepopulated based on data derived from the CCWIS database or from exchanges with other systems, they should be.
* The solution must include a mechanism for automatically (and/or manually, through supervisor intervention) locking an assessment from further editing based on business rules such as expiration of a “draft editing” period. [A supervisory function should be provided to allow authorized users to temporarily unlock a locked assessment if needed.]
* The solution must allow for configurable assessment signoff processes, requiring a supervisor to accept or reject an assessment submitted by the caseworker. [Not all assessments will require signoff.]
* [Certain types of assessments («State list») are conducted via a third-party tool, «tool name». To the extent feasible, the CCWIS solution should exchange data with this tool electronically in order to maintain high data quality and avoid double-entry. Ideally, the CCWIS solution would provide assessment inputs through an automated interface and be able to receive and record assessment results as part of the case record.]
  1. Eligibility

Eligibility determination and periodic redetermination are essential steps in tapping funding streams that pay for child welfare services, with Title IV-E being the chief, but not only, source of federal funds. In keeping with CCWIS regulations, the proposed approach to eligibility functions must support the efficient, economical and effective administration of Title IV-E and other federal programs.

Goals

* Accurately and efficiently determine whether services provided to a child are eligible for funding, including waiver funding, under the IV-E program [as well as «other programs to be supported»].
* Minimize human data entry and maximize data quality by leveraging data exchanges and historical records to prepopulate eligibility inputs whenever possible.
* Automate, to the greatest extent possible, the periodic redetermination of eligibility based on triggering events such as the child reaching a certain age.
* Store an audit trail of eligibility inputs, calculations and results.

Guideposts

* CCWIS application design requirements, detailed in §1355.53 of the Final Rule, call for “separation of business rules from core programming.” As it is inherently rules-based, the Eligibility function would be a logical place to demonstrate adherence to this design principle.
* In order for a child placed in foster care to be eligible for IV-E funding, court orders must contain specific key phrases (“best interest” of the child to be removed from the home; “reasonable efforts” made to prevent the removal). Automatic processing of court documents to detect and validate these phrases—or, in some cases, a checkbox completed by the judge to certify these findings—may add to the efficiency and accuracy of the eligibility workflow.

Constraints

* Per the CCWIS Final Rule, the same automated function or the same group of automated functions must be used for all Title IV–E eligibility determinations.
* Per the CCWIS Final Rule, the CCWIS solution must be the repository for all data required for Title IV–E eligibility determinations, authorizations of services, and expenditures under IV–B and IV–E. This includes all demographic, financial, household and removal information required as input to eligibility calculations.
* The bidder’s solution must support determination of IV-E eligibility for Prevention Services and Qualified Residential Treatment Programs (QRTPs) as specified by the Family First Prevention Services Act of 2018.
* [Per the CCWIS Final Rule, the CCWIS solution must support efficient, economical, and effective bi-directional data exchanges to exchange relevant data with each system used to calculate one or more components of Title IV–E eligibility determinations.]
* [In addition to IV-E, the solution must determine and redetermine eligibility for «other programs to be supported».]
  1. Case Planning and Management
     1. Case Opening

Goals

* Simplify the transition from investigation to ongoing case management, carrying forward all information gathered to date on the involved parties.
* Support various case types and various possible paths in the lifecycle of a case.
* Provide for effective and efficient assignment of staff to the case.

Guideposts

* Assignment of staff to a case involves a number of judgment factors, many related to the current caseload and case characteristics of team members. A solution that enables the supervisor to readily assess these factors will contribute toward optimal staff assignments. Case assignment (and other case management decisions) should not be biased by demographic factors such as race, ethnicity or gender identification.
* Automation or partial automation of the various workflows associated with case opening (staff assignments, eligibility determination, initial assessments, plan development, visits, document generation, etc.) can assist the case manager in moving efficiently from the case opening phase into service delivery and ongoing case management.

Constraints

* The solution must allow multiple, linked cases to be opened from one investigation.
* The system must avoid the need for reentry or duplicate entry of information collected during the Intake and Investigation stages.
* The system must provide checklists or similar aids to help caseworkers organize and complete the initial steps of case setup and management.
* The system must allow for multiple types of cases to be opened, including foster care and in-home services cases.

[State-specific constraints]

* + 1. Case Planning

Case planning interacts with a number of other business processes discussed in other sections of this RFP, e.g. Assessment, Placement and Service Referrals. The proposed approach should make it possible for caseworkers to invoke these processes as a natural part of building and acting upon a case plan.

Goals

* Enable caseworkers to build outcome-driven plans, specifying measurable outcomes where appropriate.
* Provide an efficient and effective user experience by enabling plan objectives to flow from assessment findings, and case actions (e.g. placements, interventions, service referrals) to flow from plan objectives.
* At a data level, provide a solid foundation for outcome reporting and analysis that links case outcomes all the way back to assessment findings, per the previous Goal.
* Promote family-centered case planning that takes into account the needs and strengths of those who surround the focus child.
* Promote team staffing of case plans and objectives.
* Promote coordination with service providers outside the agency.
* Ensure high-quality data.

Guideposts

* The ability to present often complex family structures visually can enable caseworkers to quickly understand the family ecosystem and build plans that involve all relevant parties. It can also help highlight resources (such as extended family) who might support specific aspects of the case plan.
* Support for flexible search capabilities throughout the entire case management module can significantly improve worker efficiency and productivity.
* Since the building of a case plan usually involves several intermediate steps, such as performing multiple types of assessments and engaging the family in plan development, a CCWIS can assist caseworkers by helping them keep track of case plan workflows, target timetables (including required periodic plan updates), incomplete work and outstanding tasks.
* Case services may be provided by outside entities. At a minimum case plans need to document this (as indicated by a Constraint below), but richer support for supervision, reporting and data sharing with external providers would contribute toward a more efficient CCWIS solution.
* Bidders may want to consider ways in which the case plan might serve as a case management “dashboard” that brings together interrelated elements of case management such as assessment, service referral and progress monitoring, placement and permanency planning. To the extent that the case plan drives much of what case managers do in support of children and families, it serves as a logical data hub throughout the lifecycle of a case.

Constraints

* Per CCWIS regulations, the bidder’s solution must ensure high-quality data in several ways: Minimize or eliminate the need to reenter data as case plans and cases evolve over time; not create data by default or inappropriately assign it; alert staff to collect, update, correct, and enter CCWIS data. Though not mentioned in the CCWIS Final Rule per se, solutions must also employ strong data validation rules at the time of entry, with supervisory override capability where appropriate. Bidders should demonstrate clearly that they understand the depth and breadth of the CCWIS data quality agenda.
* Case management data must be maintained in keeping with confidentiality standards referenced in the CCWIS Final Rule.
* The solution must allow for assignment of multiple professionals, potentially from multiple practice areas, to specific elements of the case plan.
* Because some services associated with a case plan may actually be delivered by outside entities, the solution must enable users to document and track services provided by such entities.
* [Case plans must support both primary and concurrent goals.]
* Per the CCWIS Final Rule, solutions must be configured to send electronic requests to Child Welfare Contributing Agencies (CWCAs) to submit current or historical CCWIS data to the CCWIS.
* [The case planning feature must provide support for supervisory review, revision and signoff of plan contents.]
  + 1. Ongoing Case Management

Goals

* Collect accurate and timely CCWIS data throughout the case management process.
* Support family-centered practice.
* Support focused, efficient case management and positive outcomes by helping case managers prioritize their work.
* Support effective and efficient casework by reminding case managers of upcoming visits and meetings, deadlines, overdue tasks etc.
* Allow for dynamic updates to the case plan reflecting new information gleaned from contacts, assessments and other case activities.
* Encourage appropriate decision making by making it easy for case managers to access and evaluate relevant case history, practice standards, progress reports from service providers and other decision inputs.
* Help case managers stay focused on outcomes.
* Promote efficient and effective collaboration between case managers and allied professionals in other units, organizations and disciplines.

Guideposts

* Effective team management is increasingly important as the field moves toward multidisciplinary and collaborative case management. Collaboration among professionals working with a child or family may be facilitated through the strategic use of technologies such as secure messaging and video conferencing. In some cases these same technologies might be used for communicating with children and families as well.  
    
  For reference, the State’s practice model currently incorporates teaming into the following components: «State list». This list is not exhaustive and may expand over time.
* Case management should be driven by a consistent focus on progress toward positive and measurable outcomes.
* Research shows that positive case outcomes are driven in part by regular, face-to-face contacts—between caseworkers and focus children, children and their families, caseworkers and caregivers. To the extent that a CCWIS solution can deploy innovative means to encourage this practice, it will contribute toward positive outcomes for the entire population of children in care. (Note that federal law[[5]](#footnote-5) requires caseworkers to visit children in foster care a minimum of once per month; the CCWIS solution should assist caseworkers in adhering to this standard, at a minimum.)
* [Support a Trauma-informed Practice model of care.]

Constraints

* All constraints listed under heading ‎1.5.1 also apply here.
* The case management module must collect all data needed for administration of IV-E-funded services.
* The case management module must support the generation and management of court-related documents, tying key case actions to court orders and actions.
* Caseworkers must be able to associate externally-produced documents with the case. Examples of such documents include referral letters, consents, medical test results, assessments performed by outside entities, school report cards, photos and video and audio recordings. Documents should be viewable, printable and downloadable subject to privilege controls.
* The solution must provide robust support for scheduling, documenting and managing family visits for children in care as well as other types of contacts (to be flexibly defined by the agency), in compliance with all applicable state and federal rules and regulations.
* The solution must assist caseworkers in managing to legally mandated deadlines. For example, it must remind or require caseworkers to file for termination of parental rights (TPR) when a child’s time in foster care approaches limits imposed by the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) [as modified by the State’s own rules].
* The solution must enable supervisors to flexibly assign cases to staff, as well as to change assignments for individual cases. [The solution must permit authorized users to conduct a batch reassignment of all cases managed by a specific caseworker (e.g. in the event that a caseworker leaves).] See the Caseload Management section for further detail on this requirement.
  + 1. Data Sharing with CWCAs

The State relies on a number of partner agencies (Child Welfare Contributing Agencies, or CWCAs) to perform certain case management functions. is required to share CCWIS data with these agencies, as outlined in ACF’s CCWIS Technical Bulletin #2, revised and reissued January 27, 2020. Data sharing can occur in two ways: 1) CWCA staff can be given direct access, as users, to the CCWIS solution; 2) an automated bidirectional interface can be created to link the CCWIS with the CWCA’s own information system.

A current list of the State’s CWCAs can be found here: «link to document in Resource Library». The list indicates, for each CWCA, the anticipated mode of data sharing (direct access or automated interface). For automated-interface CWCAs, the list also provides a high-level description of any existing interoperability capabilities of the CWCA’s own system (e.g. support for Web services or batch data exchanges).

For direct access users, the bidder should explain how it proposes to provide role-based controls that will enable the State to limit external users’ ability to view case data outside the scope of their responsibilities (e.g., data on cases they have not been assigned to manage). For CWCAs using the automated interface method, bidders should indicate the technical approach that it recommends for the integration and, if possible, provide a best-effort estimate of the cost for its portion of the integration work. Bidders may submit questions through the formal question process if they require further technical information on the CWCA systems in question.

Bidders are directed to the ACF Technical Bulletin referenced at the beginning of this subsection to ensure that their proposed solution conforms to Federal guidance.

* + 1. Case Closure

Goals

* Support a case closure process that minimizes the chance that the child will re-enter the child welfare system.
* Equip families and youth with the skills and tools they need to make a smooth transition from foster care, whether this means a return to the family home, adoption or another permanency outcome.
* Support referral to community-based family services intended to support to family and/or child after closure of the case.
* Help caseworkers be efficient in carrying out the business processes leading up to and following case closure.

Guideposts

* Case closure is a pivotal event from the standpoint of outcome evaluation. Solutions can facilitate meaningful evaluation by offering underlying data models that allow analysts to link assessments with case plan items, interventions and other case events.
* Significant workflow and documentation is often associated with case closure. Solutions can make caseworkers more efficient and effective by automating aspects of case closure workflow or providing assists of various kinds to help caseworkers stay on task and organized.

Constraints

* All constraints listed under heading ‎1.5.1 also apply here.
* Solutions must respect all federal and state laws and regulations concerning closure of child welfare cases.
* Solutions must record and integrate into the closure process any court orders pertinent to the case.
* For out-of-home cases, case closure must be linked to readiness assessments and ultimately to achievement of the permanency goal.
* Solutions must provide for the documentation, at or before the time of case closing, of all stabilization and permanency efforts, including in home, out of home, kinship adoption, non-kinship adoption, guardianship, youth-in-transition and other permanency options.
* Case closure with APPLA (Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement) must be supported.
* Solutions must provide for transfer of the case to another agency at the time of case closure by the current agency (e.g., in the event of family relocation to a different state, or upon transfer of a youth to the care of a mental retardation/developmental disability (MRDD) agency).
  1. Placement Selection

Goals

* Place children in the least restrictive, most family-like and most clinically appropriate setting, one objective being to avoid successive placement moves.
* Increase placement stability by ensuring a strong initial placement that preserves the child’s ties to family, school, culture and community.
* Decrease the time needed to achieve permanency.
* Provide workers with tools to make the placement process efficient and effective.
* Use data effectively to make appropriate placements and to evaluate longitudinal trends and needs.
* Ensure that while placements are culturally aware and sensitive, they are not biased with regard to demographic factors such as race, economic status, gender identification and ethnicity.
* If a child requires placement in a congregate care setting, provide workers with tools to assess and document the need, specify intermittent goals, and ensure that all Family First requirements for placement in a residential facility have been met.

Guideposts

* For the information of bidders, in placements are managed by [a dedicated team | the assigned case manager].
* Good placement decisions depend on a sound assessment of the child’s needs. Easy navigation between assessments and placements can make workers more efficient and effective and conduces to better placement choices.
* The placement matching process will be most effective if the system can intelligently prescreen for placement resources who can meet a child’s unique needs (e.g. language spoken, ability to parent children with special needs or behavioral issues) and who meet other criteria such as school district, location and cultural background.
* Information on the household composition and characteristics of a foster placement resource (e.g., the presence and ages of prospective foster siblings) may assist the caseworker in evaluating whether the resource is a good fit for the child being placed.
* Direct support for kinship and sibling placement models can assist caseworkers in making placements that address the goal of placement stability and in providing a normalized placement setting, as well as meeting requirements for placing siblings together (with the ability to revisit the arrangement each time a child in care must move to a new family).
* Some degree of automation in interacting with foster care providers can expedite the placement workflow—e.g., the ability for foster care resources to view and accept or reject proposed placements through a portal or other means.

Constraints

* Placement functions must conform to all rules and regulations concerning placement of children with licensed [, provisionally licensed] and unlicensed resources, including procedures for emergency placements with relatives and other unlicensed [or provisionally licensed] resources.
* Placement matching functions must automatically screen out foster care resources that have no current bed capacity.
* Placement workflow must adhere to court processes (such as court orders and court-imposed timelines).
* The Placement module must capture all required AFCARS placement data, and must support all Placement Settings enumerated in the AFCARS standard.
* The Placement module must enable caseworkers, supervisors and resource licensing staff [including placement staff at Child Welfare Contributing Agencies] to view and manage the status of current and pending placements.
* Placements must take into account funding source(s) for which the child is eligible and must collect all information required for foster care payment and claiming processes.
* The solution must provide support for both direct placements and placements initiated and managed by Child Welfare Contributing Agencies (CWCAs), such as licensed child placing agencies. [The solution must enable CWCA staff to access information about their placement referrals and the status of placements associated with their population of foster resources [via direct, role-limited access to the solution | through an automated interface or other automated means.]
* Caseworkers must be able to view a child’s full placement history for each placement episode, including any gaps, trial home visits, runaway periods, hospitalizations, institutionalizations and other placement interruptions.
* The solution must provide for tracking of concurrent and overlapping addresses and placements. For example, a foster child may be temporarily shifted to a secondary foster home while the primary foster mother is recovering from surgery, then returned to the original placement.
* The solution must enable the caseworker and other staff to see the child’s current address or physical residence at any given time, as well as a running total of the child’s length of stay in care (not just the number of days in a current placement).
* Solutions must support all provisions of the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC), including the ability to trigger reimbursements to other states and/or contractors of other states for home studies and similar placement-related expenses.
* [In keeping with the State’s Team Decision Making (TDM) model, the CCWIS solution must require documentation of a family team meeting prior to any placement move.]
* [State-specific constraints]
  1. Service Referral and Utilization Management

Service referrals can occur at any point in the life of a case. Service providers may include other government agencies, private contractors, community-based organizations, community collaboratives, individuals such as therapists, healthcare providers, and a host of other organization and professional types. Some services are paid under contract with the State; some are purchased by the State as needed, outside of a contract. Still other services are provided by independently-funded, external organizations such as food pantries or homeless shelters, which are not reimbursed by the State at all. The CCWIS solution should address each of these scenarios, as further detailed in the subsections below.

* + 1. Goals, Guideposts and Constraints Common to All Types of Services

Goals

* Link children and families with needed services as soon as needs are identified and for as long as needs persist.
* Whenever possible, track the status and outcome of service referrals, as well as utilization of services delivered as a result of them, in order to feed outcome reporting efforts.
* Facilitate referral efficiency by equipping child welfare staff with tools that enable them to quickly locate appropriate services and service providers. When the data is available, consider provider availability and capacity before making the referral.
* Ensure that services are funded, whenever possible, through preferred sources such as IV-E and Medicaid.
* Collect all utilization data required for billing, federal reporting and provider performance analysis and management.
* Ensure that the service referral process is unbiased with regard to demographic factors such as race, ethnicity and gender identification.
* Identify service gaps (services for which there are few if any providers in a given community).

Guideposts

* Categorization of services is an important element of service referral functionality. Many systems have been used in the wider human services field, from keyword-based approaches to five-tier taxonomies, each with their associated search and matching tools. Bidders are invited to suggest what they feel is the most efficient and effective service categorization model. (Note that for reimbursable services, the categorization scheme must be mappable to billable units and codes.)

Constraints

* Given the plethora of services available, the solution must provide the user with tools that efficiently match the service recipient with service providers convenient to them and appropriate to their needs. [The solution must be able to prioritize contracted service providers [and take into account provider availability and capacity when such data is available].]
* Referrals made during the investigation phase or during ongoing case management must include, at a minimum, the following data elements: date, time, service recipient(s), service sought, provider, estimated units of service, status, referring party/user, fiscal or supervisory authorization data if required.
* It must be possible to associate multiple individuals (typically family members) with a referral, then track utilization on an individual basis.
  + 1. Services Delivered Prior to Case Opening

Goals

* Connect children and families with services as soon as possible once a need is recognized.
* To the degree possible, track the outcome of service referrals.

Guideposts

* Service referrals may occur in the course of an initial hotline call. The call taker might determine quickly, for example, that although there is actually no child welfare dimension to the call, the caller does need social services of other kinds—elder care or housing assistance, for example. While it is important to close out non-child-welfare calls efficiently, the ability to refer the caller to relevant services would benefit the wider community. This might take the form of an integrated information and referral (I&R) component, for example, or an electronic or telephonic handoff to an independent I&R service such as 211.org or Aunt Bertha (auntbertha.org).
* Service referrals (typically for emergency services) can occur during the Investigation phase, as investigators uncover urgent family and child needs that should be addressed immediately. Because the focus child generally will not yet have been screened for IV-E eligibility—and no decision on out-of-home-care may have been made as yet—such services are not generally reimbursable under that program, but utilization is still tracked.

Constraint

* For referrals made during the investigation phase, the referral record should carry forward into the case management phase if and when a case is opened. Service delivery initiated during the Investigation phase may continue uninterrupted after case opening, and should be reflected as such in the underlying data model and case presentation.
  + 1. Services Delivered in the Course of Case Management

Goals

* Link services to assessment findings and case plans, providing a holistic view of the reasons behind service referrals and a framework for evaluating outcomes.
* Track utilization in a manner that facilitates billing, reimbursement and other business processes.
* Support the tracking of services delivered to more than one family member—a caregiver and a child, for example.
* Integrate service planning into the permanency planning workflow, enabling caseworkers to set up services to be tapped once the permanency goal is achieved.

Guideposts

* Coordination of multiple services across multiple case participants can be daunting for case managers, especially those with large caseloads. Bidders are invited to propose innovative ways to improve caseworker efficiency and effectiveness during service delivery.
* Secure electronic communication with service providers during the referral and service delivery phases can expedite these workflows.

Constraints

* In the underlying data model as well as the user experience, it must be possible to link services to specific assessment findings and case plan items, with the caveat that not all services require such linkages. For example, an assessment finding that the child’s father has anger issues may lead to a case plan goal of managing anger, which in turn may lead to a referral for therapy. This organic flow must be reflected in the data model so that analytical reporting can address questions of service needs and outcomes.
* The CCWIS solution must provide for the tracking of service utilization following acceptance of the service referral by the provider. Episodes of service, including missed episodes, must be linked to the original referral and funding source, if any. At a minimum, the episode of service record must include the following elements: date and time delivered, service recipient, service type, unit base, units delivered, location, associated staff, status (completed, partially completed, missing), status reason (if not completed).
* If multiple recipients are associated with a given service referral, it must be possible to track episodes of service for each individually.
* Tracking of utilization must provide for configurable unit types based on the service type. For example, a Parenting Class may be tracked episodically (one class = one unit, regardless of duration) while an Individual Therapy session may be tracked by duration (minutes).
* Utilization tracking must be sufficiently granular to provide all data needed for billing, reimbursement, federal reporting and other business processes.
  + 1. Family First Support

The bidder’s proposed solution must support all the requirements of the Family First Prevention Services Act, including but not limited to trauma-informed prevention plans, referral to Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) providers; prevention services tracking, IV-E prevention services eligibility determination and expenditure reporting. See the section entitled Family First Prevention Services Under Title IV-E, on page 23, for further information.

* 1. Permanency Planning and Post-Permanency Support

Goals

* Support caseworkers as they establish, plan for and monitor progress toward permanency goals for the children and youth they serve.
* Assist caseworkers in adhering to timelines mandated under the Adoption and Safe Families Act and other federal legislation.[[6]](#footnote-6)
* Continuously improve the agency’s ability to connect children and youth with appropriate, supportive and long-lasting living arrangements.
* Assist caseworkers in locating and engaging familymembers who may not currently be involved in the child’s life but who may be resources for support, fostering or adoption.
* Give caseworkers tools to equip families for success following reunification or another permanent placement, including tools that help identify and connect the family with ongoing supportive services.
* Collect all data needed for federal reporting.
* Support longitudinal analysis of permanency outcomes.
* Support youth in transition by equipping them with the skills and resources they need to succeed as adults.
* Support a team process with regard to permanency decision making.

Guideposts

* Case plans work toward a permanency goal. Accordingly, permanency planning and post-permanency support efforts should be linked to the case plan both at the data model level and in the user experience.
* Federal [and State] laws dictate that permanency efforts adhere to a number of statutorily-defined timelines. CCWIS solutions can assist caseworkers in keeping to these timelines through the use of reminders and other work management features.
* Post-permanency support often involves referrals for services directed at the child, youth and/or parents/caregivers and aimed at sustaining the permanency arrangement to the benefit of all. See the section on Service Referral and Utilization Management for specific goals, guideposts and constraints with regard to this aspect of practice.
* The ability to exchange selected case data electronically with partner organizations can enhance the agency’s ability to provide a smooth segué from agency-directed service delivery to post-permanency services rendered by other entities.
* Permanency experiences are fundamental to longitudinal outcome reporting. The ability to cross-map case data against data collected for the same child or youth in other systems (e.g. criminal justice, secondary and post-secondary education, workforce) can enhance the sophistication and precision of outcome analysis, helping the agency continuously improve its practice and outcomes. Such data crosswalks need not be real-time to be useful.

Constraints

* Permanency functions must support all AFCARS permanency outcomes (currently “reunify with parent(s) or legal guardian(s)”; “live with other relatives”; “adoption”; “guardianship”; “planned permanent living arrangement”; and “permanency plan not established”) and all AFCARS data elements associated with each (e.g., all elements association with adoption). See the section entitled Federal Reporting for further information.
* The solution must track and be able to report on key dates in the permanency process, including the date the permanency goal was established or revised.
* The solution must track changes in the permanency goal over time, including reasons for the change and any associated court actions.
* The solution must track permanency-related court hearings and court orders.
* The solution must track progress toward unsupervised and extended-time visits as well as trial home visits (when the goal is reunification).
* The solution must trigger and document caseworker visits related to permanency, including visits to focus children/youth and visits (by both caseworkers and children) to prospective guardians and adoptive parents.
* For youth transitioning out of foster care due to age, the solution must support the development and management of federally-compliant, goal-based transition plans.[[7]](#footnote-7) The solution should automatically flag youth prior to age 16, alerting caseworkers to start including exploration of transition and independent living in case plans.
* The solution must support all federal requirements associated with the John H. Chafee Program for Successful Transition to Adulthood (the Chafee Program), including but not limited to eligibility determination and service tracking and reporting as required by the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD).[[8]](#footnote-8) See the section entitled Federal Reporting for further information. [«State-supplied information on foster care extension to age 21, if appropriate»]
* The solution must support the identification, evaluation and implementation of APPLA (Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement) placements. With APPLA, the child welfare agency maintains care and custody of the youth and arranges a living situation in which the youth is expected to remain until adulthood. APPLA is a permanency option only when other options such as reunification, relative placement, adoption or legal guardianship have been ruled out.
* The solution must assist [designated eligibility] staff in determining eligiblity for and administering adoption [and guardianship] subsidies.
* In order to assist in coordinating temporary services to address disruption of a permanency arrangement after it is formalized, the solution must give duly authorized caseworkers access to closed case records.
* The solution must enable caseworkers and investigators to access closed case records when new allegations are levied against parents who have previously lost custody of their children. See the Investigation section for a parallel requirement.
  1. Adoption and Guardianship

Children who can’t return to their families of origin deserve to have a second forever family. In the case of adoption, a number of social work and business processes must be smoothly coordinated in order to effectively identify, screen and prepare prospective adoptive homes, leverage subsidies and other available funding, interact with courts and prepare the child for a successful transition.

The following high-level Goals and Guideposts apply to all aspects of the Adoption and Guardianship functions; subsections may contain additional items.

Goals

* Whether through adoption or guardianship, match children with a loving, safe and stable family, identified through their prior familial relationship or because they have the capacity to ensure the child’s permanent well being.
* Ensure that agency and system processes that support permanency through adoption or guardianship are smooth and efficient.
* Harness technology to help staff address the need of prospective families (both children and parents) for sensitive and timely support, before, during, and after the actual placement process.

Guideposts

* The Adoption and Guardianship team supports the crucial permanency work that caseworkers perform when a child cannot be reunified with his or her family of origin. These specialized workers are charged with the selection, preparation and support of new families for children who have been permanently and legally separated from their parents.
* Solutions should make the handoff of case information from the child’s case manager to the adoption/guardianship team as seamless as possible.
* This work necessarily includes timely and accurate interactions with a different court than that which handled the case to this point.
* The work depends on efficient collaboration with the agency’s fiscal team in coordinating subsidies to support adoption and guardianship.
  + 1. Adoptive Home Studies and Matching Processes

Guideposts

* Home studies are central to the adoption process. A continuous tracking and reminder process can support steady progress from application through approval and ultimately the license recertification process, when applicable.
* Because most public system adoptions involve foster parents becoming the permanent family for their foster child(ren), a specific solution for tracking their progress through the pipeline is desirable. Quite often they have been jointly approved as both a foster and adoptive parent at the time they became foster parents, so their adoption experience is more streamlined. (See the section on Licensing for more information.)
* When a child is not adopted by their foster parent or relative, the process of identifying the best family requires great care. A solution that can address the matching process electronically, based on the child’s and prospective adoptive parents’ specific characteristics, is ideal. It could also guide the “matching conference” process in which agency adoption staff and prospective adoptive parents meet to consider a specific child.

Constraints

* The solution must meet all home study requirements, including medical, financial, and criminal background checks on prospective parents; references; training; and home safety audits.
* The solution must also meet all of the State’s requirements for sharing information about the child with the prospective adoptive parents. [The policy governing this process can be found in the Resource Library in a document entitled, «Document name».]
* [The solution must support a model in which the State contracts with external agencies that provide licensing, matching and placement services. Such support includes not only the secure exchange of information on candidate children but also performance- and result-based payment to agencies for services rendered.]
  + 1. Adoptive Placement and Finalization

Guideposts

* Once the agency has selected the adoptive parent(s) for the child, a pre-adoptive placement is made with the new family. Typically, they must live together for a period of time, often six months, before the adoption may proceed in court—an important reminder item.
* During this time, an adoption caseworker monitors the placement in ways that mirror foster care case management functions, e.g. through monthly visits. Foster parent adoptions may proceed immediately if the family has already lived together for the required period.
* After the prospective adoptive family petitions the appropriate court, submitting documents required by state and local regulations, the court sets a hearing for finalization. The court’s order establishes a permanent parental relationship between the child and adoptive parents, and it then issues a new birth certificate and final adoption decree. Each of these steps should be monitored and tracked to ensure smooth and steady progress toward finalization.

Constraints

* The solution must reflect federal ASFA requirements for pursuit of termination of parental rights (TPR), which is a precursor to adoption activities.
* The solution must ensure tracking of legal timelines related to adoption filing, as well as submission to the agency and court of legally required documents.
* The solution must manage the legal sealing of child welfare case records at the point of adoption finalization [as well as implementation of State laws regarding later access by adoptees and others].
* [The solution must allow for archiving of legal agreements between biological and adoptive parents as specified by the State’s open adoption regulations.]
  + 1. Adoption Subsidies

Guideposts

* Government subsidies are often available to support families who adopt children from public systems. Application is made during the pre-adoptive placement period.
* Because re-certification for subsidies is typically required every couple of years, reminders and tracking systems are needed, which must be integrated with the agency’s fiscal processes.
* Post-adoption subsidies also exist, e.g. for a child’s pre-existing medical/psychiatric condition not apparent at time of adoption. These too need to be tracked/re-certified and coordinated with payment processes.

Constraints

* The solution must track the eligibility determination process for federal IV-E Adoption Assistance, as well as timely re-certification of eligibility.
* The solution must track the eligibility determination process for State adoption and post-adoption subsidies, as well as timely re-certification of eligibility. [A document entitled «Document title» in the Resource Library describes the State’s subsidy program[s].]
  + 1. AFCARS Adoption Elements

Constraint

* The solution must support tracking and export of the thirty-seven adoption-related AFCARS data elements.
  + 1. Guardianship

Guideposts

* Guardianship is available as an alternative permanency solution to adoption and does not require termination of parental rights (TPR) as adoption does. Guardians are typically relatives who wish to provide a permanent living situation in which the child can maintain relationships with extended family.
* Guardianship does not create an ongoing relationship between the family formed by the guardianship order and the public agency unless a subsidy has been provided.
* Subsidized kinship guardianship supported by Title IV-E federal dollars was authorized by the 2008 Fostering Connections Act.
* A solution which can track the subsidy application, approval and recertification, along with training, payment and other processes that support it, would make the guardianship process more efficient, economical and effective.
* [Parents may be ordered by the court to pay child support to the guardian.]

Constraints

* Since proof of the completed guardianship is necessary prior to case closure, the solution must provide a means to track the progress and outcome of the guardianship process.
* The solution must reflect all state and federal requirements for kin guardianship subsidies if applicable.
* [If the court orders parents to pay child support to the guardian, the solution must provide the ability to store a child support enforcement case number in the child’s CCWIS case record.]
* [The solution must support the coordination, management and payment of external agencies that provide “relative search and engagement” services.]
  1. Program Administration

The Program Administration module provides tools for administrators to manage various operational elements that underlie day-to-day program management. Solution Administration is covered in its own section. Certain other operations topics, such as financial management, also have their own sections.

The following Goals, Guideposts and Constraints pertain to all subsections of this section.

Goals

* Contribute toward efficient, economical and effective administration of child welfare services by enabling administrators to manage key programmatic resources and functions in real time.
* Provide transparency and accountability for program management decisions.

Guideposts

* Administrators will have many responsibilities besides managing the CCWIS solution. A well-designed Program Administration module should minimize the time it takes for administrative tasks to be performed.
* Where appropriate, judicious use of time- and process-based alerts and reminders—for staff training and credentialing deadlines, for example—can help administrators stay on target with key program administration duties.

Constraints

* Access to each program administration feature must be controllable as a role-based privilege. Access to one feature should not automatically grant access to all.
* The design of program administration capabilities must conform to state and federal rules and regulations where applicable.
  + 1. Staff Management

Many job functions within the State’s child welfare organization require special training, licensing and/or credentialing. The CCWIS solution must include facilities for monitoring the current status of staff with respect to these professional requirements and producing operational reports as needed. [It must also provide logistical support for training management, including scheduling [and notifications to trainees and trainers.] [This support requires an integration with the State’s existing learning management system, «system name», information on which can be found in the Resource Library.]] Note that provider licensing is addressed separately, in section ‎1.11 .

[The solution must integrate with the State’s human resource management (personnel) system, described in the Bidder Library document entitled «title». The integration should provide for auto-population of staff information for new hires and update of credentialing/training/licensing data when statuses change.]

* + 1. Caseload Management

The solution must provide assistance to case management supervisors in analyzing and balancing their teams’ caseloads. Caseload management functions should account for the type and severity of cases [and provide functions to automatically assign cases based on field-configurable business rules]. See the section on Case Planning and Management for more information on case assignment.

* + 1. Case Review Support

As required by such monitoring actions as AFCARS[[9]](#footnote-9) Assessments and Child and Family Service Reviews (CFSRs)[[10]](#footnote-10), agencies from time to time perform in-depth case reviews in cooperation with their federal partners. While each type of review has its own focus, most involve an examination of case files and history. In the context of AFCARS, for example, the aim is to detect and help agencies remediate any data quality issues pertaining to the semiannual AFCARS data export. Case file reviews compare case information to the State’s submission, with the AFCARS reporting data elements as the primary focus. CFSRs have a somewhat different, more specifically practice-oriented focus, but also rely on analysis of case files. Other types of reviews, such as NYTD[[11]](#footnote-11) and Title IV-E[[12]](#footnote-12) reviews, also consult case data to varying degrees.

Guidepost

* While it is not considered a formal Constraint (requirement) for purposes of this procurement, the CCWIS solution would make reviews more efficient if it could provide a way for administrators to preselect and display (or print out) relevant case data for purposes of in-depth case review.
  + 1. Audit

Audit support involves the automatic logging of system activity for a variety of purposes, ranging from security management to staff accountability.

Guidepost

* Because audit trails can grow voluminous, it is acceptable for the solution (or an administrator) to purge or move to a secondary repository activity older than «nn» months. In addition, audit trail queries need not be executed in real time.

Constraint

In addition to audit data kept by the Financial Management module, the system must keep a number of timestamped audit trails and provide a means to query them:

* Session login/logout events, with user identity information
* Security events such as failed logins and password resets
* Periodic system performance and load metrics; particulars to be determined in consultation with the State
* Record updates, with before and after values at a field level
* Data exchange events (e.g. calls to web services exposed by partner systems)
* [User click streams]
* [Workflow and batch process execution (successful, stopped, aborted)]
* [State-specified audit trail types]
  1. Foster Care Provider Management

The Foster Care Provider Management module supports several business functions related to management of an inventory of out-of-home placement resources. The following Goals, Guideposts and Constraints apply to all functions addressed by the module. Subsequent subsections provide additional background on specific functions and indicate additional Constraints as appropriate.

Goals

* Promote efficient, economical and effective identification, licensing, onboarding, training and monitoring of foster care and other out-of-home resources.
* Support emergency licensing workflows.
* Provide real-time or near-real-time capacity data to the Placement Selection module in order to ensure that proposed placements reflect actual bed availability.
* Provide accurate data on numbers and patterns of placement moves, including unplanned disruptions, “positive” moves (e.g. from a higher to a lower level of care or to a relative) and other metrics that can help program and policy teams continuously improve out-of-home care.
* Increase the pool of prospective foster care and adoption resources by using state-of-the-art approaches to recruitment, application and vetting processes.
* Report on the operations and performance of foster care resources, including the recruitment and retention of foster homes.
* [For contracted, external foster care agencies, support performance-based contracting.]
* Provide tools to support the effective processing of complaints, incidents, allegations, adverse inspections and other negative issues associated with out-of-home placement providers.

Guideposts

* Provider management entails constant back-and-forth communication with entities external to the State such as prospective foster parents [and private foster care agencies], whether it be to manage placements and placement capacity, exchange information during the licensing process, or manage [invoicing and ]payment for services. Such communications often contain sensitive information and are considered confidential; conventional, insecure email is generally an inappropriate messaging vehicle. The State would be interested to hear creative ideas on ways to expedite, protect and optimize communications with its external providers, whether through secure messaging, a portal or another approach.
* [Foster family recruitment and screening can be challenging in a variety of ways. To the extent that some stages of the process resemble classic marketing outreach and prospect management, the State would like to hear bidders’ suggestions on how to apply techniques and lessons learned from the commercial sphere in order to help increase the pool of qualified foster families.]

Constraints

* For each licensed out-of-home-placement provider, the solution must maintain information on household composition and capacity, foster parent demographics, license status and renewal date, credentials, ability to accept placements of children with psychological or physical health issues or disabilities, home studies and facility inspections, and ongoing training.
* The solution must retain a full history of each provider’s past and current placements, including proposed placements it chose to decline.
* The solution must prohibit placements with unlicensed providers except in the case of emergency placements.
* For Qualified Residential Treatment Programs (QRTPs), the solution must provide support for all requirements specified in the Family First Prevention Services Act, PL 115-123.
* [The solution must provide support for tracking both a) emergency placement providers who enter into a fast-tracked licensing process and b) unlicensed but approved kin providers who may or may not be paid for foster care services.]
* If an allegation of maltreatment is made against a provider, the solution must associate the provider’s profile with the corresponding Intake report and must allow for a placement hold to be initiated in order to prohibit further placements to the provider until the allegations are resolved.
* The solution must support placement holds of various types, including temporary holds due to factors that do not affect the provider’s license status (e.g. planned travel or illness).
* The solution must collect and be able to report on all federally required data elements.
* [The solution must collect all data needed for performance-based contract monitoring and payments, as detailed in the section entitled [Support for Performance-Based Contracting.]
  + 1. [Recruitment]

Guideposts

* Outreach to prospective foster and adoptive parents is conducted via multiple channels, including advertising in various media and on the Web, information hotlines, in-person recruiting sessions, and «State-specific measures».
* Once a prospective parent expresses interest, contacts with the prospect are tracked and the prospect is steered, if appropriate, to complete an application. Receipt of the completed application initiates a licensing workflow that includes background checks, home studies and other actions as detailed in subsection ‎1.11.2, leading to approval or denial of a license.

Constraint

* The solution must support all aspects of the Recruitment process in such a way as to maximize the State’s ability to attract, onboard and retain qualified foster and adoptive parents.
  + 1. Licensing
       1. Standard Licensing Workflow

The process of licensing a foster home involves several steps and actors. Key activities include: application receipt and review; background checks (abuse and neglect history, criminal records); financial resources evaluation; educational and literacy evaluation; home study and [third-party] inspections; applicant physical and mental health evaluation/documentation. [Additional State process steps]

Guidepost

* Federal [and State] laws mandate that when seeking a placement resource for a child, the agency give preference to a fit and willing adult relative over a non-relative caregiver. The Adoption and Safe Families Act requires relative foster family homes to meet the same standards as non-relative homes. [Additional considerations for licensing of relatives include «State-specific content»]

Constraint

The solution must accommodate and effectively support the standard licensing workflow described above.

* + - 1. Provisional/Emergency Licensing

In an emergency situation, a child may be placed with a resource, typically but not necessarily a relative, who is not yet formally licensed. In this case the agency conducts a shortened version of the standard licensing workflow focusing on basic safety checks of the home and its occupants. Upon the successful completion of the emergency licensing process it grants a time-limited provisional license, during the course of which the foster parent may apply for full licensure.

Constraint

The solution must support a modified licensing workflow reflecting the provisional licensing process, including advance notification to caseworker and foster family of the pending expiration of a provisional license.

* + - 1. Waiver Support

State licensing staff may grant waivers for non-safety-related licensing requirements. Examples of waiver conditions include: «State list»

Constraint

The solution must support signoff, override, expiration date if any, and documentation of reasons for a given waiver.

* + - 1. License Status Changes

*Renewal* Licenses are granted for a defined period of «nn» months and must be renewed periodically. Renewal workflow includes the following business processes: «State-specified description». Failure of the foster family resource to renew its license requires the State to move any foster children currently in the home to other living arrangements and for a placement hold to be imposed on the foster resource, if the resource intends to reapply for a license.

*License suspension and revocation* Licenses may be suspended or revoked for a variety of reasons, including maltreatment of foster or other children in the home, failure of the foster home to meet in a continuing manner required safety or suitability standards, and incarceration or incapacity of the foster parent. Adverse license actions may be appealed, as described in the document «link or reference to Bidder Library document describing appeal process».

*License modification* From time to time a foster family resource or the State may request a modification of the home’s license terms—to add bed capacity, for example.

Constraint

The solution must support all license status change processes described in this subsection.

* + 1. Capacity Management

Goal

* Maintain accurate and timely information on the availability of foster care beds, at the individual foster care resource level, in order to support an efficient and effective Placement Selection process.
* Support all data elements used for placement matching and foster care resource searches.
* Allow foster care providers [including Licensed Child Placing Agencies] to update the State Licensing team on developments that may affect their ability to accept further placements, regardless of their licensed capacity.

Guideposts

* Accurate and timely information on foster care bed capacity and the current foster care census is essential to a smoothly running placement process. This information comes predominantly from two sources:
* The CCWIS solution’s own licensing and placement management functions, which track the capacity of all licensed resources as adjusted by placement actions that increase or decrease the beds available in each foster home or facility
* Self-reporting by foster care resources when their capacity changes for reasons other than placement actions (e.g., return of a birth child to the home, changes in physical configuration of the home that temporarily affect capacity, changes in the resource’s ability to manage the full number of children for which they are licensed)

CCWIS solutions can facilitate data quality by automating capacity tracking and by providing simple ways for foster care resources to directly or indirectly notify the agency of temporary changes in their capacity.

* Capacity management is tightly wedded to licensing, on the front end, and provider payments on the back end. The data model underlying the foster care resource functions should support linkages to these other functions.
* There are situations in which a foster care resource that would be best suited for a child does not have current capacity. For example, a case manager may seek to keep siblings together but may not be able to find a home that can take all the children; a home with foster parents who speak a child’s native language may not be available when the child is placed. In these cases, a waitlist system would enable caseworkers to be maximally effective in matching children with appropriate homes when they become available—though case managers will always balance the pros and cons of moving a child from one placement to another.

Constraints

* As described in the Placement Selection section, caseworkers use a variety of criteria to match children with potential foster care resources. The Provider Management module must be designed to maintain current information on all such criteria, specifically: «State list of matching criteria».
* The Provider Management module must provide real-time or near-real-time data on bed availability to the Placement Selection module.
* The Provider Management module must provide a means for foster care providers to directly or indirectly update the solution’s information on their current bed availability when non-placement events temporarily affect their capacity.
* The Provider Management module must interact with the Licensing module to update the inventory of beds based on changes in license status, including the addition or subtraction of resources in the pool.
* [The Provider Management module must include a Waitlist capability, with automated notifications to case managers when specific placement resources become available.]
  + 1. [Monitoring Performance-Based Contracts]

The State employs a performance-based contracting model with its out-of-home placement providers. Performance against a set of standard metrics is a factor in [contractor compensation rates], [milestone payments], [contract renewals] [and «State-specific factors»].

* 1. Financial Management and Contracting

Management of fund flows associated with child welfare services involves a wide array of business processes that in turn engage a variety of stakeholders, both internal and external. The CCWIS solution must support these business processes efficiently, economically and effectively, complying with all relevant federal and State regulations concerning the expenditure of public funds.

* + 1. Fund-based Accounting

Goals

* Enable the State to efficiently identify and utilize the optimal mix of funding source(s) for each reimbursable activity while delivering the optimal mix of services to children, youth and families.
* Collect and manage all data necessary for core fund and expenditure accounting processes.

Guideposts

* Child welfare services are paid for through a variety of state, federal and non-governmental funding sources, including but not limited to Title IV-E, Title IV-B, Medicaid, Chafee Grants, Emergency Assistance programs, private foundation grants, and «State programs». In some cases a single service may be reimbursable through a mix of funding sources. The choice of funding source(s), and the ability to maximize the use of federal funds when appropriate, can have a significant impact on the State’s ability to adequately finance its overall system of care and implement new initiatives.
* The optimal blend of funding sources for a given service type can involve an analysis of service outcomes as well as strictly financial analysis. The ideal is to improve outcomes for children and families while saving money that can be realized as cost savings or invested in expanding and deepening the system of care.
* Funds are often but not always tied to the focus child.
* Various contractor types are paid through the available funding streams, from foster parents to community-based and commercial service providers who deliver services such as drug abuse counseling and parental training. Other services may be purchased without necessitating a contract.
* Claims for payment are received in various forms, from invoices submitted by service providers, to automated monthly payments sent to foster families based on nights of care provided, to debit card charges incurred by caseworkers who purchase incidentals for children (e.g., clothes for a child removed from a home during an emergency intervention).
* [The CCWIS solution’s accounting functions will need to exchange financial data with the State’s enterprise accounts payable system, which utilizes «ERP product name». Actual payments are generated on this system.]

Constraints

* The CCWIS solution must enable one or more funding sources to be associated with each service type. The default percentage allocation among sources is governed by business rules which seek to optimize the blend of funding sources. Conceptually, there is a many-to-many mapping between service types and funding sources. Not all funding sources can be used to pay for all service types.
* [For a given instance of service delivery—e.g., a referral for individual counseling services to be provided to a specific child under care—the system-calculated funding source allocation must be overrideable by staff with sufficient security privileges to do so.]
* The solution must be able to [acquire and] manage data on funding sources for which the child welfare agency is not the fiduciary or fiscal intermediary but which may be used to pay for certain child welfare services. For example, the solution must be capable of accounting for a child’s income from SSI or Medicaid.
* Certain service types involve multiple individual service recipients, as in the case of some family strengthening services. In this case, the solution must support the allocation of funds (potentially drawn from multiple sources) across multiple individuals.
* The solution must provide support for waivers that unlock restricted funding for specific service types and service recipient types, e.g. in federally-approved demonstration projects.
* The solution must support expenditure tracking at a variety of levels, including child, family, case, service referral episode and service provider.
* Expenditure tracking for federally-reimbursed services, such as services rendered under Titles IV-E and IV-B, must follow federal reporting guidelines.
* The solution must enable administrators to quickly set up a new funding source and map it to the services it can cover.
* The solution must enable administrators to efficiently reconfigure or reallocate funding for services currently in progress if a funding source or contractor becomes unavailable.
* The solution must provide fund accounting support for non-service expenditures, such as externally reimbursable staff training and IT costs.
* [The solution must enable a service budget to be established for each child. Expenditures against the budget should roll up to the funding source for accounting purposes.]
  + 1. Contracting

The State contracts with numerous service providers to provide in-home, community-based, and out-of-home services of many types.

Goals

* Make the process of contract negotiation and management efficient for all parties.
* Provide seamless integration of contract and payment terms with service referral and accounting functions.

Guidepost

* Support for standardized contracts or contract templates can improve the efficiency and accountability of contract management staff.

Constraints

* When a contractor requires special licensing, e.g. in the case of foster care providers, the solution must require that licensing requirements are fulfilled before a contract is considered active and subject to invoicing.
* Changes in contract terms, including authorized services and service budgets, begin and end dates, and payment amounts and terms, must be automatically reflected, as of the effective date of the change, in the service referral and accounts payable modules.
* The solution must generate reminders to appropriate staff regarding coming contract renewal and expiration dates.
* Contracts must be linked to funding sources for tracking the drawdown and allocation of funds.
* The solution must provide for storage and archive of contracts and contract-related documents, in Microsoft Word, PDF and other common formats.
* [The solution must share data with the State’s existing contract management system, «System name». [A batch interface is considered adequate for these purposes.] [Information on the system is available in the Resource Library in a document entitled «Document name».]]
* [The solution should enable newly-contracted vendors to set up an electronic profile and payment account through a portal or similar mechanism.]
  + - 1. [Support for Performance-Based Contracting]

The State employs a performance-based contracting model for the following purchased service types: «State list» A description of this model, as well as examples of standard contracts, may be found in the Resource Library. The CCWIS solution should support the performance-based contracting process as described in this subsection.

Guideposts

* The current metrics used for measuring out-of-home-care provider performance are: «State list»
* Metrics currently used for measuring performance of contractors that provide other types of purchased services are: «State list by purchased service type»
* The more automated the integration between contract performance monitoring functions and contractor payment management, the more efficient and accurate the funds flow will be.

Constraints

* The solution must be capable of tracking all performance assessment metrics described in the Guideposts section above.
* The solution must provide timely operational reports showing the performance of each contractor against the metrics. [This includes both child- and cohort-level metrics.]
* The solution must produce performance reports aligned with each contract’s effective period, in preparation for contract review and potential renewal.]
  + 1. Payment Workflows

Goals

* Efficiently support all business processes necessary to send and receive payments in connection with services provided, expenses incurred and other financial transactions related to the delivery of child welfare services.
* Support a variety of service scenarios, e.g. fixed, repeating payments to foster care providers; payments for episodic services such as subsidized daycare; payments to independent contractors such as therapists and counselors; and payment of ad hoc child-related expenses incurred in the course of emergency interventions.

Guideposts

* [The CCWIS system will delegate payment, invoicing and related processes to the State’s enterprise accounting system, «System name».]
* Support for invoice submission and account inquiry through a secure online portal is increasingly considered a standard feature of vendor management solutions.
* [Consolidated support for debit card tracking and payment management can contribute to the efficiency of fiscal operations. Agency debit cards are sometimes used to pay expenses for children in retail stores.]

Constraints

* The CCWIS solution’s financial functions shall adhere to generally accepted accounting principles for government organizations.
* For contracted services, payments may not exceed service- or case- or person-level budgeted amounts for the contract period without supervisory override, taking into account existing encumbrances that reflect services authorized to date.
* Where a single referral for services is associated with multiple service recipients, e.g. members of a family unit, the CCWIS solution must have the ability to account for and report upon encumbrances [and payments] at both group and individual levels.
* [The CCWIS solution must be able to generate and record service preauthorizations, subject to manual review.]
* [The CCWIS solution must be able to calculate payments to out-of-home care providers according to formulas that take into account placement information (e.g. nights of care) and rate tables that can incorporate higher payment rates for fostering children with special needs and similar extended services.]
* [Authorized supervisors must have the ability to override calculated payment rates in response to special circumstances. An audit record must be written for all such overrides.]
* [The CCWIS solution must support the recovery of overpayments (recoupment) on any type of purchased service, including the ability to decrease future payments by the amount overpaid and the ability to invoice the provider for the amount.]
* [For services purchased under contract, the payment system must authorize payments against contract budgets and encumber contract balances as payments are completed.]
* [The CCWIS solution must support electronic as well as manual invoicing and payment, including payment by electronic funds transfer.]
* [The CCWIS solution must collect all data necessary to support payment operations in connection with external entities such as out-of-home and in-home service providers. Outbound payments, as well as inbound refunds and other accounts receivable, will be processed by [the CCWIS solution | the State’s enterprise accounting system, «System name».] ]
* [The CCWIS solution must provide the means to create an automated integration with the State’s accounting system, «System name»; the vendor’s projected service budget for creation of the interface should be quoted in the Services portion of the bid. The interface will be used to pass utilization and activity data from the CCWIS solution to the accounting system and to pass expenditure accounting information back for purposes of federal reporting and budget management. ]
* [The CCWIS solution must support accounting and payment operations related to staff use of debit cards.]
  + 1. Trust fund accounting

Constraint

The solution must support accounting for trust funds held on behalf of children under State supervision, including tracking of receivables, authorized expenditures and balances.

* + 1. [Purchasing of Supplies and Equipment]

Constraint

The CCWIS solution must provide support for transaction and account processes associated with the purchase of supplies and equipment. ]

* + 1. Audit Support

Constraint

The CCWIS solution must keep detailed audit trails of financial transactions and enable authorized users to query and report on specific transactions by timeframe, transaction type, user and various other criteria.

* + 1. Financial Reporting

See the section entitled Reporting, Data Exports and Document Generation for requirements related to fiscal reporting.

* 1. Reporting, Data Exports and Document Generation
     1. Federal Reporting

Goals

* Produce all mandated federal reports, including data extracts and exports, with timely and accurate data.
* Keep federal reporting functions up to date with the latest federal requirements.

Guideposts

* It is important that bidders familiarize themselves with all federal data requirements relevant to child welfare programs. Key examples of federal data include, but are not limited to, the following:
* Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) – 45 CFR 1355.40 et seq.; see <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/research-data-technology/reporting-systems/afcars>
* National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) – Case management data – 45 CFR 1356.81 (a), (b), and (c); and 45 CFR 1356.83 (g); see <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/research-data-technology/reporting-systems/nytd>
* National Child Abuse Neglect Data System (NCANDS) – 42 USC 5106a (d) of CAPTA; see <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/research-data-technology/reporting-systems/ncands>
* Financial information for the CB-496 – SSA 474 [42 U.S.C. 674] and ACYF-CB-PI-11-07; see <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/cb/attachmentc_form496.pdf>
* Data necessary for title IV-E eligibility determinations – 45 CFR 1355.52 (b)(1)(ii)
* Data required for authorization of services – 45 CFR 75.302 and SSA 475 [42 U.S.C. 675 (1) and (4)]
* Foster care licensing information for title IV-E reimbursement – 45 CFR 1355.52 (b)
* Data needed for a CFSR or CFSR Performance Improvement Plan – 45 CFR 1355.33 (b)(2); see <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/monitoring/child-family-services-reviews>
* Data needed for the Annual Progress and Services Report (APSR) and the five year comprehensive Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) – 45 CFR 1357.15-16; <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/programs/state-tribal-cfsp>
* Data needed for the Family First Prevention Services Act – Pub. L. 115-123
* Data needed to comply with the Multi-Ethnic Placement Act (MEPA) of 1994 – Pub. L. 103-82
* Data needed to comply with the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act – Pub. L. 113-183
* The ability to run trial reports (full and partial) can enhance data quality by enabling analysts to spot and correct data issues before producing the formal federal reports.
* Updates to federally required reports are considered part of the vendor’s service proposal, per the section entitled Ongoing Support.

Constraints

* The proposed solution’s approach to federal reporting must satisfy all relevant federal requirements.
* Per the CCWIS Final Rule, the solution must “[g]enerate, or contribute to, required title IV–B or IV–E federal reports according to applicable formatting and submission requirements” and “[G]enerate, or contribute to, reports needed by state or tribal child welfare laws, regulations, policies, practices, reporting requirements, audits, and reviews that support programs and services described in title IV–B and title IV–E.”
* While data may be gathered from external systems and stored in the CCWIS database, the CCWIS solution must be the official repository for federal reporting purposes, per the CCWIS Final Rule. Where appropriate, provision should be made for CCWIS-related data to be collected from Child Welfare Contributing Agencies (CWCAs).
* The vendor must provide for periodic updates to reporting contents, variables and logic in order to keep pace with changing federal requirements. Updates must be included in the cost of standard support.
* Updates to federal reporting and extract functions, when issued on the basis of federally-mandated changes in reporting standards, must be delivered, installed and tested to the State’s satisfaction at least three months in advance of the next federal reporting deadline.
  + 1. Operational Reporting

Goals

* Ensure that the provision of services is efficient, economical and effective by equipping staff with clearly-presented reports on operational data relevant to their job functions.
* Make reports accessible from contextually-relevant locations within the CCWIS solution so that users can run reports relevant to the task they are currently engaged in.
* On a technical level, ensure that the running of reports during the work day does not impede system performance for other interactive users.
* Protect the privacy and security of sensitive data throughout the reporting infrastructure.
* Enable reports to be shared collaboratively among team members, subject to all relevant privacy and need-to-know rules.
* Simplify the further use and dissemination of reports by enabling them to be output in common formats such as PDF.

Guideposts

* Some types of operational reports would be more useful if users were provided with the ability to query or filter the report data according to ad hoc criteria.
* The ability to output report data as a data extract file is often useful, though this can often be accomplished (less elegantly) by other means such as database queries.
* Users often find it helpful to be able to group frequently-used reports for easy access. Designs such as “pinned” reports, favorites lists and hotkey or one-click report access are often used to achieve this.
* The ability for trained State staff to create ad hoc reports (or new reports that will be added to the standard report library) adds value to the operational reporting function. Support for report templates, or cloning an existing report as a starting point for a new one, further facilitates this activity.

Constraints

* The solution must protect the privacy and security of sensitive data by allowing system administrators to restrict access to reports based on user role.
* [The operational report library must include all reports required to satisfy the following State regulations: «State list»]
* [The solution must use «State’s preferred reporting tool» for standard operational reports. [The State will provide the necessary licenses for the tool.]]
* [The solution must provide or support the use of a report design tool that will enable trained State staff to create new reports and, optionally, add them to the standard report library.]
  + 1. Analytical Reporting

Goals

* Enable program administrators and policy staff to identify opportunities for service improvement by exploring trends, patterns, outcomes and other key metrics of interest.
* Empower the State team to answer program and policy questions by querying the data in ways that may not be anticipated at this time.
* Ensure that analytical reporting activities do not impede performance of the CCWIS system for interactive users.

Guideposts

* Analytics queries can consume significant server resources. Accordingly, the reporting infrastructure should be designed to minimize impact on interactive users. There are several ways to accomplish this, from a denormalized data warehouse approach to a shadow database instance that mirrors the production database into an environment specifically used for reporting. Bidders are invited to propose their best solution.
* Analytical reporting is greatly simplified when the software provider can furnish its State counterparts with detailed information on underlying data models, data dictionaries and other conceptual aids.
* The availability of prebuilt, reporting-oriented views in the database can improve the efficiency and accuracy of analytical reports.

Constraints

* The solution must protect the privacy and security of sensitive data by allowing system administrators to restrict access to analytical tools, reports and extracts based on user role.
* The selected vendor must deliver and keep up to date an annotated data dictionary and accompanying data model that provide State analysts with the information they need to create meaningful analytical queries and reports without vendor assistance.
* Analytical reporting activities must not impede system performance for interactive users.
* [Analytical reporting functions must support [the State’s existing | a new] data warehouse.]
* [The solution must use «State’s preferred analytics tool» for analytical reports. [The State will provide the necessary licenses for the tool.]]
  + 1. Correspondence and Document Generation

Constraint

* The solution must provide tools to generate a range of standardized letters, notices, court reports and other correspondence in the course of performing agency business. A representative list of such outputs can be found in the Resource Library document entitled «State document title».
  1. Solution Administration

Solution Administration features enable administrators to control a variety of solution behaviors and options without altering the underlying software code.

Goals

* Provide the means for qualified administrators to configure the CCWIS solution to reflect the State’s business rules regarding staff access to system data, features, workflow and other matters.
* Enable the State to be as self-sufficient as possible in changing configurations over time.
* Enable State administrators to update certain validation rules and lists of values used for validation (e.g. to add the name of a new school).
* Simplify the process of creating, modifying and deactivating user accounts.
* Allow administrators to audit system usage along a variety of dimensions.
* Keep the CCWIS solution running efficiently and reliably by enabling administrators to monitor key performance metrics.

Guideposts

* The use of predefined user roles or role templates can speed the setup of the solution and provide consistency over time.
* Externalization of business rules regarding user access, workflow and other solution features, whether achieved through a business rules management system or through configuration files, can contribute to the maintainability of the solution while satisfying a CCWIS requirement.
* When a configuration is specified in the form of a settings file rather than through a graphical user interface (e.g. a menu or picklist), configuration parameters should generally be expressed in a common, standards-based format such as XML or name-value pairs.
* The ability to export and import configurations can facilitate validation of configurations in a test environment as well as the exchange of configuration data among users of the same solution.

Constraints

* The solution must implement and allow for easy configuration of a role-based (or group-based) security model in which user access to modules, system features and specific types of data is defined by job role or membership in a specific, defined group of users.
* The solution must enable system administrators to broadcast brief messages to all users via such means as landing-page banners or in-system messaging.
* The system must provide robust capabilities to administer individual user accounts, trigger password resets, and audit user access and utilization of the solution. It must be possible to deactivate but not delete a user account; deletion should require a second-level authorization if any historical usage data is connected with the account to be deleted.
* The administrator must have the ability to create user accounts with a future activation date, to accommodate onboarding of new users.
* The solution must permit administrator-controlled maintenance of as many validation lists as possible. Examples include lists of school names, coded responses to assessment questions, job role names, contact outcomes, referral types and resource license types.
* The solution must give the administrator tools to monitor system performance and to take solution components offline for maintenance.
* The solution must allow administrators to build and maintain a [multilevel] categorization of services provided by internal and external service providers.
* If the solution involves licensed software components, the administrator must have a means of inspecting the current status of all such licenses as well as utilization of system resources (e.g. concurrent user signons or named-user accounts) that may affect access to the solution or charges assessed for its use.
* The solution administration module must provide access to searchable audit logs as described in section ‎1.10.4.
* [The solution must provide access to tools for configuring business processes and workflows. If a third-party application is used for workflow, the CCWIS solution can simply provide a link to it.]
* [The solution must provide tools for the configuration of web services and application programming interfaces (APIs) for the exchange of data with other systems.]

# Technology Considerations

1. Technology Goals, Guideposts and Constraints
   1. Solution Architecture

Goals

* Implement a solution architecture that fulfills the intent of the CCWIS Final Rule, which is to support “the use of cost-effective, innovative technologies to automate the collection of high-quality case management data and to promote its analysis, distribution, and use by workers, supervisors, administrators, researchers, and policy makers.”[[13]](#footnote-13)
* Implement a solution based on a proven, secure, user-centric, field-configurable, standards-based architecture that meets all CCWIS requirements and can evolve to support changing federal and state mandates, new initiatives and changing practice patterns.
* To the extent practicable, pursue a modular approach that would enable different clusters of business functionality to be deployed, implemented and updated independently of others.

Guideposts

* The State recognizes that the above solution architecture Goals might be met through the use of various solution models, from custom-built software, to configurable commercial-off-the-shelf products, to configurable Platform as a Solution (PaaS) applications—or a combination of any of these. [The State will entertain proposals incorporating any of these solution models. | The State’s [preference | requirement] is that bidders propose a solution based on «preferred solution model» model.]
* Solutions with a high degree of configurability, especially configurability accessible to trained administrative users, are more likely to stand the test of time than solutions that necessitate programming services for even minor, predictable changes. Configuration of one-time items such as county names may be handled by the vendor during the implementation phase.
* Experience across many sectors has shown that solutions designed with intensive user input throughout the process prove more effective and durable over time. The solution should be easy to use, reflective of the real-world challenges users face (e.g., able to handle interruptions and shifting priorities throughout the workday), accessible to users with disabilities, easily navigable, and helpful to users as they prioritize their work and strive to adhere to deadlines and data requirements. User engagement is very helpful in building solutions that exhibit these characteristics.
* Solutions should incorporate proven best practices in user interface design and functional design. Examples include:
  + Field-configurable data validation lists, surfaced through dropdown controls or similar components
  + Progressive search (i.e., running display of a narrowing list of potential matches as the user continues to type search keys)
  + Heuristic or “fuzzy” search (e.g. algorithms that overlook misspelled words)
  + Rich-text notes
  + Support for multimedia attachments
  + Navigation aids such as breadcrumbs
  + Visual aids (such as checklists and progress bars) that help users track where they are in a structured workflow
  + The ability for supervisors to override, with an explanatory note, decisions or data entered by subordinates
  + Attention to the layout and density of information presented on each page or screen, with an emphasis on ease of use and accuracy of data collection
  + Judicious use of alerts and notifications, prompting users for action as necessary without creating excessive “noise”
  + Integrated help resources

This list is not intended to be comprehensive or binding; bidders are strongly encouraged to present their own vision of best practices in solution design.

* Use of a service-oriented architecture (SOA) [may | will] make it easier for the CCWIS solution to interact with other applications in the state’s ecosystem, as well as supporting the modular architecture envisioned by the CCWIS Final Rule.
* Staff mobility is important in child welfare, as many types of work are done outside the office. An architecture that can skillfully incorporate device-independent mobile support capable of at least limited offline use is generally preferable to one where mobile support is limited to the ability to access a Web application through a device browser.
* Solutions can be efficiently and effectively augmented through the use of third-party services and technologies that add significant value without adding significant cost. Bidders are encouraged to explore the creative use of resources such as online mapping services and language translation tools when they address functional needs within the CCWIS solution. The State is interested in the innovative use of commercial and non-commercial technology to improve outcomes for children and families.
* [Incorporation of open-source tools and technologies can help reduce cost and tap into innovative thinking.]
* [Secure, cloud-based, vendor-managed hosting governed by a Service Level Agreement (SLA) can offer IT departments an attractive alternative to an on-premise implementation.]

Constraints

* Consistent with the CCWIS Final Rule, the solution must:
  + be modularly designed and separate business rules from core programming (waived for Software as a Service systems owned and maintained by vendors)
  + be documented in plain language
  + follow information technology standards that promote efficient, economical and effective development
  + be shareable and reusable by other states, tribes, and agencies
* The proposed solution architecture must conform to all relevant federal standards for software to be used in public agencies, including protections such as those found in the HIPAA Privacy Rule (PL 104-191) and accessibility standards such as those found in Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C. § 794d).
* The proposed solution architecture must integrate with the following existing enterprise resources: «resource list»
* The proposed solution must conform to the following State and external IT standards: «standard list with references to governing documents»
* [The proposed solution architecture must be based on the «preferred solution model» model.]
* [The proposed solution must incorporate the following third-party [and/or open-source] products: «product list»]
* [The State is seeking a vendor-hosted solution. [Bidders may host the solution environment in their own data centers (provided they meet all standards for data center facilities and management referenced in this document) or in the data centers of a qualified third party provider such as Amazon Web Services or Microsoft Azure. | The solution environment must be implemented in a private cloud environment provided by «cloud provider».] ]
  1. Use of Existing Enterprise Components

Per the discussion in the section entitled “Enterprise Components Available for Solutions to Leverage” on page 29, the State holds licenses to various enterprise tools and technologies the vendor may wish to consider in its solution. [Inclusion of certain of these tools is required, as indicated in the Constraints section below.] For each existing enterprise component the bidder intends to use, please indicate the component name, the number of licenses required, and a brief description of the role the component will play in the proposed solution architecture.

Goals

* Maximize reuse of existing investments made in enterprise technology.
* Create a more maintainable solution by harmonizing it with elements of the existing technology ecosystem.
* Encourage use of standards through sharing of common components.

Guideposts

* As noted in section ‎2.1 , full or partial use of a service-oriented architecture may simplify the process of integrating the CCWIS solution into the State’s enterprise architecture.

Constraints

[Vendors are required to include these components in their solution architecture, if feasible: «list based on table in the Enterprise Components Available for Solutions to Leverage” section»]

* 1. Data Security

Goals

* Ensure the security and confidentiality of legally-protected child, family, provider and other production data throughout the CCWIS ecosystem’s infrastructure.
* Rigorously adhere to all relevant state and federal laws and regulations governing the security of data maintained on individuals and families.

Guideposts

* Data security can be viewed at a number of levels. *Confidentiality* governs access and the ability to edit, add or delete sensitive information regarding individuals and families, especially personally-identifiable information governed by statute and regulation. *Technical integrity* concerns protections that prevent stored data from being viewed by intruders, maliciously modified, hacked, stolen or corrupted because of technical problems such as media failures. *Protection for data in transit* pertains to techniques used to shield data from intrusion or corruption when it is passing between the user’s computer and the solution’s database, or between the solution and external systems with which it exchanges data. Protections such as the use of SSL for Web communications and strong Web service authentication address this need.
* A role-based privileging system generally provides the simplest way to implement confidentiality safeguards. See the Constraints section below for specific privileges required of the solution.
* Security best practices encourage a *defense in depth* approach that relies on multiple, independently managed layers of security. Security safeguards should begin with solution design, continue through software development and deployment, and be rigorously observed during system operation and management for the entire lifetime of the solution.
* The security of external documents associated with CCWIS records—e.g. word processing documents containing court communications, or audio and video recordings associated with investigations—is as important as the security of data held in the CCWIS solution database. Bidders should propose their best solution to this need. Proven strategies include the use of a secure document repository (e.g. an enterprise content management system); storage of files as BLOb data within the application database itself; file-system encryption of individual files using the AES-256 standard or better; storage of external files on a dedicated content server behind a separate, access-managed firewall.

Constraints

* The solution must implement all moderate-impact controls as defined in the latest revision of NIST Special Publication 800-53, available here: <https://nvd.nist.gov/800-53>. (Constraints listed elsewhere in this subsection provide additional clarification or guidance on certain of these NIST 800-53 controls.)
* A role-based privilege system must enable system administrators to set privileges, by role, for the following:
* Access to solution modules
* Ability to view/edit/add/delete specific record types
* Masking of specific fields
* Access to information on cases to which the user is not assigned—e.g., cases being worked out of the same county office, or the same team, but by different case managers
* Administrative rights—the ability to manage user access, system configurations and other global solution components
* Report generation
* Report modification and new report development
* The integrity of data at rest must be ensured through the application of proven software and/or hardware technologies. The bidder should explain its proposed architecture for ensuring data integrity. If the proposed solution is to be hosted on a cloud platform, the proposal should indicate any certifications, such as FedRAMP, that demonstrate the platform’s conformance to data integrity standards equivalent to those required of health information and financial systems. If the proposed platform has a current FedRAMP certification, it is not necessary for proposals to detail components of its data integrity architecture that are already included in FedRAMP.
* The integrity of data in transit must be ensured through technologies such SSL and/or VPN.
* External files associated with people, cases and other entities in the CCWIS database (e.g. word processing documents or audiovisual data files) must be protected from unauthorized access.
* Regardless of deployment platform, the solution must include industry-leading technology for continuously monitoring and detecting disruptions in data security.
* If the solution is to be hosted by the vendor, the proposal must include specifics of a disaster recovery plan and infrastructure consistent with industry standards for critical enterprise systems. The plan should include protocols for regular testing of offsite backups and the disaster recovery process. See the Services Sought section for further requirements on this topic.
* If the bidder proposes to incorporate videoconferencing, chat messaging or other such communication tools into its solution for use in situations where confidential and personally-identifiable information may be exchanged, such tools must support secure communications protocols to the same extent as is required of HIPAA-compliant telemedicine communications (i.e., ePHI as defined in the HIPAA Security Rule).[[14]](#footnote-14)
* The vendor must be prepared to furnish to the State upon request the results of all periodic and ad hoc security scans, penetration tests and other security assessments conducted in compliance with NIST 800-53 or similar standards.
* For any software developed under the contract that results from this procurement, the winning vendor must employ a proven, security-aware software methodology such as the Microsoft Security Development Lifecycle.[[15]](#footnote-15)
  1. Data Quality

Goals

* Meet all federal data quality requirements.
* Enable the CCWIS system to present the right data to the right people at the right time, so that individuals working throughout the child welfare system have complete, accurate, timely and reliable data for each decision they make.
* Maximize the amount of data that is collected and monitored in an automated way so that staff are not spending more time than necessary on data entry.
* Minimize the amount of extra effort required to review, reconcile and clean up data for federal and state reporting purposes by building in real-time checks on the accuracy and timeliness of data as it is being entered and collected.
* Manage the bidirectional data exchanges so that they contribute to the accuracy and consistency of the data rather than becoming a source of duplicate, incomplete or inaccurate information.
* Manage the data conversion process from the current system to the new CCWIS system in ways that promote high quality data.
* Create and maintain a data quality plan that drives decision-making and can be adapted to reflect results of data quality reviews and the ongoing refinement of data quality protocols.

Guideposts

* Implementing an effective data conversion process during the transition to the new solution will be critical for establishing high quality data from the moment the solution goes live. An effective process will include activities such as data cleansing prior to conversion, decisions about which data will be converted and which data will be archived for historical use only, iterative conversion tests and cycles in a data sandbox to troubleshoot conversion issues, employing automated and human data quality checks of sample converted data to identify issues. See the topic ‎3.1.8 Data Conversion for further information.
* The most effective way to ensure that high quality data is entered into the CCWIS solution is to create a virtuous cycle so that the people responsible for inputting data are also consumers of data and thus see the value of accuracy.
* An effective search function that can be accessed throughout the solution is essential to the maintenance of high quality data and high quality decision-making because it allows staff to find the person, report, foster family, etc. that they are seeking and minimizes the likelihood of erroneously creating duplicates. See section ‎1.1 Intake for further discussion of this concept in the context of a specific child welfare business process.
* The capacity to do work in an offline mode can promote timely and accurate input of data by allowing workers to enter information as soon as possible after an event occurs or data about it is collected. See ‎1.2 Investigation for further context.
* As policies, priorities and programs evolve, changes to CCWIS data elements will be required. In order to have the capacity to maintain high quality over time, it should be possible for the vendor and/or state IT staff to make changes to the data model and migrate the existing data to the new model. The State appreciates that this process involves numerous data and application interdependencies and does not expect bidders to provide a solution that enables the State to carry out such changes without vendor involvement. The strategy needs to embrace the need to assess and address implications for data exchanges as well the CCWIS solution core.

Constraints

The CCWIS Final Rule includes several data quality provisions which should be treated as solution requirements:

* The solution must promote high quality data because it supports the efficient, economical and effective administration of the child welfare program.
* The solution must support consistent and uniform data among all programs and users.
* The solution must meet the most rigorous of the applicable federal, state or tribal standards for completeness, timeliness and accuracy.
* The solution must be able to produce ad hoc, custom extracts from production data to serve as inputs to the biennial data quality review mandated under CCWIS.
* The solution must include the capacity to monitor data quality regularly, including automated or semi-automated monitoring of data exchanges, periodic reports and checks, third-party tools that verify addresses, data quality support help and other measures. The State will work with the vendor to ensure that monitoring procedures and results are aligned with the State’s Data Quality Plan.
* The solution must alert staff to collect, update or correct CCWIS data in the course of their work with user-friendly and effective methods. [For purposes of this provision, staff include direct users of CCWIS and staff at contracted CWCAs who use their own systems.]
* The solution must employ strong data validation rules at the time of entry, with supervisory override capability where appropriate.
* The solution must ensure that data is maintained and exchanged in accordance with all relevant State and federal confidentiality requirements.
* The solution must support the conduct of biennial data quality reviews. Six-month reviews of data quality on federal reports such as AFCARS and NYTD are appropriate.
* The solution must not have default values inserted automatically when a user doesn’t make a selection.
* [The bidder should outline a strategy that will enable the State to correct data quality issues uncovered as part of periodic reviews, including update of data exchanges, automated functions, screen and interface design, staff training and other component.]
  1. Interoperability and Integrations

Goals

* Implement all CCWIS-mandated data exchanges using a sustainable, standards-based approach.
* Where appropriate, provide for CCWIS-related data to be collected from Child Welfare Contributing Agencies (CWCAs), in keeping with the CCWIS Final Rule.

Guideposts

* See the section entitled The Child Welfare Technology Ecosystem in StateName for specific details on external applications for which data exchanges will be built.
* Reliance on standard technologies (e.g. SSL, RESTful web services) and data exchange dialects (e.g. XML, JSON) can reduce interface development time, improve reliability, and make integrations more resilient and adaptable over time.
* Enterprise IT ecosystems include software applications of various ages and capabilities. The bidder’s interoperability strategy will be more viable if it includes a variety of interface modalities and connection strategies.
* Integration plans should not assume predictable uptime across all systems in the State portfolio; fail-safe designs that emphasize reliability and resilience are preferable to point-to-point interfaces that assume both systems are always up and running.
* Consistency and maintainability can be enhanced by incorporating standardized data definitions, such as those found in the Human Services Domain of the National Information Exchange Model (NIEM)[[16]](#footnote-16), wherever possible.[[17]](#footnote-17)

Constraints

* CCWIS mandates a set of bidirectional data exchanges, which bidders must commit to implement in coordination with owners of the respective applications. Exchanges must be efficient, economical and effective. The proposed solution must support the following integrations to the extent possible:
  + IV-E and IV-B financial payment system(s), «name»  
    For information on this system and currently supported integration points and capabilities, see: «link or reference to system details»
  + [Child welfare contributing agency (CWCA) systems, if these CWCAs collect CCWIS-required data data  
    For information on these systems and currently supported integration points and capabilities, see: «link or reference to system details» ]
  + System[s] needed to calculate one or more components of IV-E eligibility, «name[s]»  
    For information on [this system | these systems] and currently supported integration points and capabilities, see: «link or reference to system details»
  + [Each system external to CCWIS used by title IV–E agency staff to collect CCWIS data, if applicable.  
    For information on [this system | these systems] and currently supported integration points and capabilities, see: «link or reference to system details»]
  + Title XIX Medicaid eligibility system, «name»  
    For information on this system and currently supported integration points and capabilities, see: «link or reference to system details»
  + IV-A TANF system, «name»  
    For information on this system and currently supported integration points and capabilities, see: «link or reference to system details»
  + IV-D child support system, «name»  
    For information on this system and currently supported integration points and capabilities, see: «link or reference to system details»
  + State child abuse and neglect system, «name»  
    For information on this system and currently supported integration points and capabilities, see: «link or reference to system details»
  + Medicaid claim system, «name»  
    For information on this system and currently supported integration points and capabilities, see: «link or reference to system details»
  + Education system[s], «name(s)»  
    For information on [this system | these systems] and currently supported integration points and capabilities, see: «link or reference to system details»
  + Child welfare court system[s] , «name»  
    For information on [this system | these systems] and currently supported integration points and capabilities, see: «link or reference to system details»
  + [Probation officer support system (for dually-involved youth), «name»]
  + [Any other systems the IV-E agency uses to collect CCWIS data  
    For information on these systems and currently supported integration points and capabilities, see: «link or reference to system details» ]
* While data may be gathered from external systems and stored in the CCWIS database, the CCWIS must be the official repository for federal reporting purposes, per the CCWIS Final Rule.

# Services Sought

The State is seeking a number of professional services in connection with the Solution Components detailed in the preceding section.

Bidder proposals should respond to each item in this section in sequence and by number. Where a given service will be performed by one or more subcontractors, the name(s) of the subcontractor(s), and specific individual subcontractor staff names if requested, should be clearly indicated.

1. Solution Delivery Goals, Guideposts and Constraints
   1. Delivery Methodology

Goals

* Engender a collaborative process between the State and its vendor(s) so that the parties succeed together.
* Control project risk while allowing room for innovation and ongoing refinement of the solution.
* Communicate continuously and clearly about roles, responsibilities and expected deliverables (including deliverable timeframes) across the entire project team.
* Ensure that deliverables align with the implementation methodology, solution architecture and overall project goals.
* Deliver quality throughout the project.
* Provide high transparency to the State on critical project and solution design decisions.

Guideposts

* As with the proposed solution itself, the State invites bidders to put forward innovative delivery plans and methodologies bolstered by project references or case studies that attest to their effectiveness.
* [The State has a preference for [and competencies in] «Preferred methodology» methodology.] It is important that the bidder’s proposed methodology be highly adaptable, allowing for mid-course corrections to be made based on an evolving understanding of business requirements as well as user feedback.
* Project success will depend upon the ability to proactively identify and mitigate risks of various types, including risks arising from limitations in the State’s own resources, competencies or systems.
* The long-term viability of the CCWIS solution will be enhanced if State and vendor teams work shoulder-to-shoulder throughout the project, with knowledge transfer being a natural element of day-to-day practice.

Constraints

* [The bidder’s proposed delivery approach must adhere to the Solution Delivery Lifecycle (SDLC) outlined in section ‎3.1.1.]
* [Bidders must propose a plan to deliver the solution in an iterative and incremental manner [as specified by Agile methodology].]
* The proposed delivery methodology and project plan must include all services and adhere to all Constraints detailed in this subsection.
  + 1. Solution Delivery Life Cycle (SDLC) Approach

Goals

* Deliver a consistently high-quality solution by applying proven solution delivery life cycle methodologies.
* Deliver a solution that enables the State to deliver services more efficiently, economically and effectively.
* Deliver the CCWIS solution within budget and the proposed timeline.

Guideposts

* We have repurposed the acronym “SDLC” from the traditional “Software Development Life Cycle” to “Solution Delivery Life Cycle” in order to reflect the full range of activities associated with actually delivering a working, durable solution to the State. These activities may include software development, but the State views the full solution as also encompassing such deliverables as organizational change management and training.
* [Bidders are referred to *A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge* (PMBOK® Guide) for guidance on best practices. <https://www.pmi.org/pmbok-guide-standards> ]
* [Bidders are referred to the Project Management Institute (PMI) *Agile Practice Guide* for guidance on best practices. [https://www.pmi.org/pmbok-guide-standards/practice-guides/agile]](https://www.pmi.org/pmbok-guide-standards/practice-guides/agile)

[C](https://www.pmi.org/pmbok-guide-standards/practice-guides/agile)onstraints

* [The project plan must utilize a[n] [Traditional | Agile | Hybrid] Solution Delivery Life Cycle (SDLC).]
* [Bidders should propose the Solution Delivery Life Cycle they feel will best achieve the goals of the CCWIS project. This life cycle should be a proven approach to managing projects of the size and scope of the CCWIS project. The SDLC must describe, at minimum, the following project activities: Planning and requirements analysis; Design (functional and technical); Development (and/or Configuration, if a configurable platform is used); Testing; Deployment. These activities may overlap or intertwine during the course of the project in response to new discoveries, tester feedback and other factors that cannot be predicted at the outset.]
* [Bidders must deliver the solution in an iterative and incremental manner.]
* The Bidder must describe how it will adhere to the SDLC, including a plan for coordinating across multiple stakeholder groups and technical teams.
  + 1. Project Management Methodology

Goals

* Deliver on time and on budget.
* Meet project goals as described in the section entitled High-level Goals for the Project.
* Ensure adequate, appropriate and efficient staffing for the life of the project.
* Establish and utilize a sound governance structure for decision making and problem resolution.
* Provide transparency and accountability for key project decisions.

Guideposts

* [If the project is to use a Traditional SDLC, Bidders are referred to the Project Management Institute (PMI) *A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge* (PMBOK® Guide) for best practices. <https://www.pmi.org/pmbok-guide-standards>
* [If the project is to use an Agile SDLC, bidders are referred to the Project Management Institute (PMI) *Agile Practice Guide* for best practices. <https://www.pmi.org/pmbok-guide-standards/practice-guides/agile> ]

Constraints

* The bidder must propose an approach to project management.
* The approach must address the following project management functions:
  + Schedule management
  + Project communications, including internal team and external stakeholder communications
  + Risk and issue identification, tracking, reporting and resolution
  + Change control procedures
  + Management of subcontractors, if any
  + Resource management
  + Quality management
  + Coordination with other vendors
* [Project Management Functions will be performed in a collaborative manner with the [State Project Management Office (PMO) | State’s designated Project Management vendor, «Vendor name»].]
  + 1. Project Planning Methodology

Goals

* Align with the program goals listed in the section entitled High-level Goals for the Project.
* Create and pursue a clearly-defined vision that provides a “true north” for the solution.
* Conduct project planning in a collaborative manner, with the appropriate stakeholders part of the process.

Guideposts

* Bidders are encouraged to propose planning artifacts that align with the proposed Delivery Methodology. [Artifacts common in Agile methodology include the Product Blueprint and the Product Roadmap.] [Artifacts common in traditional methodologies include the Requirements Traceability Matrix and the GANTT chart.]

Constraints

* The bidder must describe the approach and process for planning activities, including:
  + Developing the solution vision that aligns with the section entitled Guiding Principles of Practice.
  + Developing and maintaining to-be business processes that reflect the goals described in the section entitled High-level Goals for the Project.
  + Developing and maintaining the technical architecture, as described in the section entitled Technology Goals, Guideposts and Constraints.
  + Developing and maintaining the Project Schedule.
    1. Quality Management Methodology

Goals

* Employ a proactive approach to quality management, with a focus on preventing problems rather than addressing them after the fact.
* Bring a spirit of continuous improvement to the project by empowering team members to offer ideas and suggestions.
* Promote high-quality CCWIS data by designing a high-quality CCWIS solution.

Guideposts

* Quality management underpins all project activities necessary to plan, design, develop/configure and implement the CCWIS solution.
* Focusing on quality ensures that project activities and decisions are both effective and efficient.
* While the State would like to hear bidders’ perspectives on how to maintain high quality, quality management typically involves activities such as Quality Planning, Quality Assurance, Quality Control and Continuous Improvement.
* The State encourages bidders to propose innovative quality management approaches pursuant to the goal of continuous quality improvement.

Constraints

* The bidder must develop and implement an approach to managing the overall quality of the CCWIS solution and implementation.
* The quality management approach must integrate with the proposed Solution Delivery Life Cycle.
* Metrics for measuring quality from both project management and system perspectives must be defined.
* The quality management plan should incorporate a process for avoiding the recurrence of situations that compromise quality of the solution or implementation.
  + 1. Managing the CCWIS Solution Design Process

Goals

* Create a solution that reflects the desired future state and does not merely replicate the State’s legacy system.
* Design a solution with the potential to fundamentally improve the State’s child welfare processes across the full case lifecycle.
* Create a modern user experience that will make staff more effective as well as help the State recruit and retain younger staff not accustomed to older system designs.

Guideposts

* Solution design is a key element of the delivery process regardless of whether the solution is custom-built, built on a platform, COTS, or some combination of these. Design addresses the manner in which the solution will address the needs of users and other stakeholders, including both technical and interactive elements.
* With regard to design of the user experience (UX), the State encourages the use of human-centered design principles with their focus on understanding the user’s actual work day, including patterns of behavior, pain points and ways in which the user tasks may be blocked or slowed down by limitations of the legacy system.
* A customer journey map can provide a useful visual representation of the many ways in which the various stakeholders in the child welfare system interact with each other and with technology. The purpose of customer journey maps is to step into the stakeholder’s shoes and see the process from his or her perspective. As the UX is conceived and evolved, it can be tested against the map to see whether it contributes toward an improved experience for stakeholders. For example, a UX that enables caseworkers to perform assessments while offline in the field might eliminate a significant number of steps in the customer journey for both caseworker and foster parent.
* Prototyping enables users to interact with the design and provide feedback prior to development/configuration in order to enhance or refine the design.

Constraints

* The bidder must propose an approach to designing the CCWIS. The approach must reflect:
  + Practice standards and principles as described in the section entitled Guiding Principles of Practice
  + Technical architecture considerations as described in the section entitled Technology Goals, Guideposts and Constraints
  + Statewide Technology Standards
* The approach must include the process for user research, prototyping and eliciting user feedback.
  + 1. Managing the Solution [Development | Configuration] Process

Goals

* [Develop | Configure] a solution that reflects the design, behaves reliably and efficiently, and effectively implements the [Requirements | User stories] that emerge as the project proceeds.
* Build quality into the solution at every level.
* Support modularity of function, per CCWIS guidance.
* Be efficient by promoting code and configuration reuse wherever possible.
* Ensure maintainability by adhering to best-practice coding standards (incorporating code reviews); clearly document code and configurations for future developers who must maintain them.

Guideposts

* As described in the Solution Architecture section, the State recognizes that its CCWIS goals might be met through the use of various solution models, from custom-built software, to configurable commercial-off-the-shelf products, to configurable Platform as a Solution (PaaS) applications—or a combination of any of these. Most best practices in managing solution development apply regardless of approach.

Constraints

* The bidder must describe its proposed approach to managing the [development | configuration] of the CCWIS solution.
* The approach must reflect the Goals, Guideposts and Constraints described in the Technology Goals, Guideposts and Constraints section.
  + 1. Testing

Goals

* Confirm that the solution successfully [meets requirements | implements user stories] within identified constraints, including [requirements | stories] that are mutually developed in the course of the project.
* Find defects before the solution goes into production.
* Assure the reliability of solution as it goes to scale.
* Build confidence in the solution among stakeholders.

Guideposts

* Testing involves various stages, as detailed in the Constraints section below. Some are designed to flush out defects, while others are designed to assure that the solution meets the needs of users.
* By the time the User Acceptance Testing (UAT) stage is reached, the incidence of defects should be small or zero. The purpose of User Acceptance Testing is to confirm that the solution satisfies stakeholder needs and conforms to the agreed-upon solution architecture and project objectives, including any contractually-specified and CCWIS-mandated requirements. UAT is confirmatory rather than diagnostic in nature.
* [For project teams that employ Agile methodology, many types of testing occur more often and are typically tied to the sprint completion process.]
* Bidders should expect the State’s Independent Verification and Validation (IV&V) vendor to be involved in testing oversight.
* For the avoidance of doubt, the term “Integration Testing” as used in this RFP refers to combined, simultaneous testing of all solution components in a simulated real-world testbed. Testing of system-to-system integrations, by contrast, means the testing of Data Exchanges.

Constraints

* The bidder must describe their approach to testing, in alignment with the SDLC, which should include overall scope, approach, schedule, resources, environment and result reporting. The bidder shall specify processes and tools used for performing or contributing to:
  + System Testing
  + Unit Testing
  + Data Exchange Testing
  + Integration Testing
  + Regression Testing
  + Functional Testing
  + Performance/Stress Testing
  + Security/Vulnerability Testing
  + Accessibility and Usability Testing
  + User Acceptance Testing
  + Release Dry Run
  + Post Release Validation
* User Acceptance Testing (UAT) will be conducted by the [State | vendor | other vendor]. [The vendor will provide the UAT plan and test scripts for execution, which may be modified at the State’s discretion.]
  + 1. Data Conversion

Goals

* Ensure that historical data is carried forward accurately in the CCWIS solution.
* Establish a foundation for high-quality data once the CCWIS solution goes live.
* Intelligently address any data model discrepancies between the old system and the new one, with an eye toward preventing data loss or data misinterpretation post-conversion.

Guideposts

* The State is seeking to convert all active cases, as well as case data from the past «nn» years, into “live” records that can be viewed and edited under the same rules and procedures as new records created directly in the CCWIS solution.
* The State would like remaining case data to be [made available in a searchable, read-only PDF format | excluded from conversion | «other»].
* Conversion sometimes requires the resolution of discrepancies between the legacy data model and the new solution data model. (Many legacy systems are case-centric, for example, while newer solutions are family-centric.) The conversion plan should take this need into account.
* Data conversion provides an opportunity to improve the quality of historical data. Methods and tools, such as automated data cleansing, provide the ability to improve to correct legacy data issues before migrating to the new CCWIS. Typical improvements include the detection and elimination of duplicates, detection and elimination of “stubbed” field values entered by users just so they could advance to the next screen, and correction of common formatting issues (often in date fields) due to insufficient field masking or weak validation logic.
* Data conversion testing provides opportunity to analyze results, identify deficiencies and apply corrective action. Bidders should describe their approach to testing, including how they propose to employ automated analysis, spot checks of data integrity and credibility, randomized extract testing or other verification techniques.

Constraints

* The bidder must propose a plan for data conversion that aligns with the SDLC and that includes planning, design, development and testing to support the implementation of the CCWIS.
* The vendor will conduct conversion testing prior to the initiation of any conversion activities in the production environment.
* [As part of data conversion, some data cleansing will be necessary to address gaps and errors in historical data. Known issues include: «State-supplied list». Proposals must include a data cleansing deliverable.]
* [If the bidder is proposing an incremental rollout of the CCWIS solution (e.g. a rollout by module), its proposal must detail a strategy for exchanging data with legacy system components that are still in service, at least partially, during this rollout. If the State is expected to provide an Application Programming Interface (API), data extracts or other supporting services, the proposal should provide as much detail as possible about what will be required of the State IT organization. The overall intent is to avoid duplicate data entry for any period of time when the systems are operating in parallel.]
  + 1. Training

Goals

* Deploy an innovative and modern approach to training that complements the intuitive, user-friendly, caseworker practice-based design of the CCWIS solution.
* Give users the knowledge they need to use the solution efficiently and effectively.
* Build a CCWIS “center of excellence” culture in which the most experienced users mentor others, cascading competencies through the organization, and the knowledge resources and infrastructure of the training team contribute toward the ongoing improvement of the solution.
* Engage and motivate users to promote increased adoption of the new solution.
* [Enable State IT and administrative staff to take over full maintenance and operation of the solution when the contract ends.]

Guideposts

* It is the expectation of the State that formal, classroom training be at a minimum, given the modern, intuitive, user-friendly design of the solution.
* Skillful user experience (UX) design can facilitate and shorten training by adopting design patterns found in common web applications familiar to all.
* The most effective training curricula are tailored to specific job tasks associated with diverse user roles.
* Training should be offered in a variety of training formats in order to meet the diverse learning styles of the user community. Proposers should bear in mind that it can be difficult for investigators and caseworkers, in particular, to defer their usual work for long classroom sessions.
* The training plan should be complemented by online resources users can consult to refresh their skills, learn about new features and get assistance while completing tasks they may not perform often.

Constraints

* The bidder must propose a training plan that includes:
  + Role-based End User Training
  + [External User Training, including «State list of external entity types to be trained, e.g. CWCA staff». ]
  + Technical Team Training, designed to enable State IT staff to effectively collaborate with the vendor [and to take over full maintenance and operation of the system when the Agreement ends, if it desires to do so.]
* The training plan must be designed to minimize disruption of routine agency functions. It may include individualized computer-based training (CBT) if this is deemed an efficient, economical and effective way of educating staff.
* The bidder must develop all necessary training artifacts.
* All electronically-delivered training materials must be accessible per Section 508 requirements.
* [The bidder must deliver Train-the-Trainer training for «nn» State trainers.]
* [The [State | Training Vendor] will deliver end-user training.]
  + 1. Organizational Change Management

Goals

* Provide all CCWIS stakeholders with the information, awareness, coaching and transition support they need in order to effectively manage the changeover to the new solution.
* Make the transition a positive experience for the organization and its staff.
* Communicate expectations and coming events clearly and frequently.
* Minimize any negative impacts of the change on the organization (e.g. early retirement of experienced workers).

Guideposts

* The State would like OCM activities to start early in the project so that stakeholders understand, commit to, accept and embrace changes in their work environment.
* Effective change management requires a proactive, engaging strategy to enlist user support, generate enthusiasm and build a community of grassroots change agents.
* Communication is key especially in times of change; multichannel communication is even better.
* The OCM plan should consider the impact on users’ work lives during the first weeks after the cutover to the new system, anticipating increased stress levels as they work through learning curves and integrate the solution into their daily workflow.
* OCM should become part of the ongoing culture of the agency and the partnership between the vendor and the State.

Constraints

* The proposal must include a high-level OCM plan aligned with the overall project timeline and stakeholder map.
* The plan must take into consideration the full range of stakeholders affected by the transition to the new solution, including (but not limited to) intake staff, investigators, caseworkers of various types, supervisors, administrators, IT staff, providers, foster parents and the children and families being served.
* The OCM plan must include a communications strategy (including messaging and tone) tailored to the various types of stakeholders. The strategy should include preliminary assumptions regarding the cadence and timeline for communication efforts.
* [The State and vendor will mutually deliver OCM. Accordingly, the proposed approach must specify, define and provided an estimated effort level for State activities.]
* The OCM plan must include a set of evaluation criteria that can be used by the vendor and the State to gauge the effectiveness of OCM efforts and to plan mid-course adjustments if needed.
  + 1. Implementation/Rollout

Goals

* Ensure a smooth transition to the new CCWIS solution that takes into account the impact on each group of end users and minimizes disruption to their daily activities.
* Following the strategy articulated in the Organizational Change Management plan (see the prior section), provide clear communication to all stakeholders on timeline and expectations for each stage of the rollout process.
* Ensure that appropriate and adequate resources are allocated to the effort.
* Have valid, State-approved contingency plans for issues that might arise during rollout (e.g. data exchange malfunction due to problems on the external system side).

Guideposts

* The State is seeking a [single-cutover, aka “Big Bang” | incremental] rollout plan.
* Piloting the solution with a subset of end-users in «nnn» [counties | business units] would provide immediate feedback from engaged user groups who are using the solution as part of their daily activities, enabling the State and its vendor partner to refine the solution well in advance of full rollout.

Constraints

* The bidder must describe the proposed implementation/rollout approach for the proposed CCWIS solution. The approach must include contingency planning and highlight areas of anticipated risk.
* OCM and training activities must be executed prior to rollout so that users are ready to accept and use the system in conjunction with their daily activities.
* The plan must include a pre-production staging environment to pilot functionality with end users. The vendor may use feedback from the pre-production pilot to inform modifications to the proposed rollout plan.
* The State will validate and accept the completed solution prior to going live.
* For contractual purposes, the CCWIS solution will be considered fully implemented when all user types have been fully migrated to the new solution, without the need to rely on the legacy system for their work.
  + 1. Warranty

Goals

* Ensure that the solution is stable after rollout and that the State does not incur unanticipated expense if problems arise.

Constraints

* The State expects the solution to be free of material or hidden defects during the warranty phase and for this to be a period of continuous improvement of the CCWIS.
* The vendor must provide a «nn» month warranty after all components/modules of the proposed CCWIS solution are in production.
* Defects that are found within the warranty period must be addressed in a timely fashion at no additional cost to the State. Such defect resolution may include additions, modifications or adjustments to the system as necessary to satisfy contractually-specified project deliverables.
  1. Team Composition and Qualifications

Goals

* Create a well-integrated, high-functioning project team of State and vendor resources who will work side by side to deliver the CCWIS solution.
* Select team members who are fully committed to the project’s goals and who understand their roles, responsibilities and how they contribute to the greater whole.

Guideposts

* The implementation of a new CCWIS is a complex engagement. Fielding a team whose members have prior experience with similar types of engagements will contribute toward the success of the project. Refer to Appendix 1 for additional information on the qualifications being sought.
* A multi-disciplinary team will contribute to realization of a CCWIS that meets the program and technical goals outlined in this RFP.
* [Bidders are invited to propose additional key staff beyond those identified in the RFP.]

Constraints

* The bidder must submit Key Staff qualifications and references in accordance with Appendix 1, section ‎1.5 Key Staff Biographies and References.
* It is the expectation of the State that the key staff will be delivered to this project and committed to the proposed roles. Any changes to key staff require the approval of the State.
* [All key personnel must be on site at «Project location» for «duration».]
* [The bidder must submit a RACI matrix showing all key roles and responsibilities for major work streams of the project.]
* [The bidder must submit a proposed Project Organization Chart depicting the integrated project team that will deliver the CCWIS solution.]
  + 1. State Personnel

The State envisions a collaborative engagement and has allocated the following resources to the CCWIS project:

«State-determined list of State personnel with role and summary of relevant experience»

* 1. Ongoing Support

Goals

* Ensure smooth, consistent operation of the CCWIS solution, minimizing disruptions due to technical errors or routine updates. This goal includes the ability to restore the solution and its data after a catastrophic event such as loss of a data center, malicious intrusion or Denial of Service attack.
* Provide users with first-class support services so that they understand how to use the solution efficiently and effectively to accomplish their work.
* Anticipate and plan for change, whether this means the need for new functionality, interfaces to new systems, changes in reporting standards, or changes in the State’s child welfare practice. At key junctures such as new version rollouts, provide organizational change management services to users at all affected levels of the organization.

Guideposts

* Since the State will validate and accept the completed solution prior to go-live, the performance characteristics (response time, uptime, etc.) exhibited by the solution at go-live represent a meaningful baseline for evaluating ongoing application performance. Throughout the life of the contract, the CCWIS solution should continue to meet or exceed that baseline; support services should be planned, costed and bid accordingly. [Bidders are invited to propose a set of meaningful, quantitative performance metrics and a plan for support services that will be needed to continuously meet them. | See the *Constraints* section for the State’s required baseline performance metrics.]
* In a complex software environment, an update to one component may affect the performance of (or disrupt) others. Careful planning and coordination between State IT staff and the vendor can minimize the risk of such disruptions. Ongoing maintenance of a parallel test environment can facilitate a meaningful simulation of the effects of an update.
* Communication with users, especially in times of system change, is vital. Users must understand how to use the solution to accomplish their tasks and must have access to an array of help resources when they encounter difficulties. Bidders should propose a package of user support services that reflects this goal. The State invites bidders to offer innovative approaches that leverage technology and/or psychology to make the support experience efficient, productive and satisfying for users.

Constraints

* The proposed support plan should include all needed services and adhere to all requirements detailed in this subsection.
  + 1. Hosting

Constraint

* + If the bidder proposes to provide hosting services for the CCWIS solution, its support plan must indicate the specific services to be provided, including any standard Service Level Agreement (SLA) that it would propose to incorporate into the contract resulting from this procurement. Hosted solutions must adhere to all security-related Constraints documented in other sections of this RFP.
    1. Backup and Recovery

Constraint

* The bidder must explain its plan and process for creation, maintenance and periodic validation of a robust backup and recovery environment, following industry best practices.
  + 1. Ongoing Maintenance of Solution Performance

Constraint

* The bidder must propose a plan, and associated resources, for ensuring that the CCWIS solution meets or exceeds a set of mutually-agreed baseline performance metrics for the life of the anticipated contract. [The support plan and metrics will form the basis of a Service Level Agreement (SLA) that will be incorporated into the contract that results from this procurement.]  
    
  [The proposed support plan should reference the following metrics:  
    
  Scheduled uptime: «nn%» measured on a monthly basis, based on a 24x7 operational model

Maximum downtime for routine maintenance and planned updates: «nnn» minutes

Unplanned downtime: «nnnn» minutes per contract year

Average response time for a typical interactive Web request, normal business hours: «n.n» seconds

Maximum response time for a typical interactive Web request, normal business hours: «n.n» seconds

Average response time for a typical interactive request for mobile users, normal business hours, Wifi or average cellular connection (3 out of 5 bars): «n.n» seconds

Maximum response time for a typical interactive request for mobile users, normal business hours, Wifi or average cellular connection (3 out of 5 bars): «n.n» seconds ]

[The contract resulting from this procurement will include provisions allowing the State to impose financial penalties for continued failure to meet agreed performance standards. | The contract resulting from this procurement will include provisions allowing the State to incentivize the support vendor to meet and exceed agreed performance standards.]

* + 1. Software Updates

Guideposts

* Specific vendor obligations with respect to software updates will be detailed in the contract that ultimately results from this procurement. The remainder of the Guideposts in this subsection outline the general contractual provisions the State expects to propose.
* If the proposed solution relies upon externally-obtained software not created as a contract deliverable (for example, database management or Platform-as-a-Service tools), or on software owned and provided by the CCWIS vendor (e.g. COTS solutions), the CCWIS vendor will be responsible for advising the State on the costs, benefits and impacts of upgrading to any newly-released versions of such software.
* If the vendor’s contract includes ongoing maintenance and operations responsibilities, the vendor will be responsible for evaluating, obtaining (generally at State expense), testing and installing these upgrades at the direction of and on a timetable specified by the State. Testing will include integration testing in a test environment that adequately mirrors the production environment; real-time interfaces may be simulated through “phantom” applications that mimic actual data exchanges.
* If the proposed solution includes software licensed directly from the bidder, the bidder’s Cost Proposal (Appendix 2) should include any anticipated annual maintenance or update fees for the life of the anticipated contract.

Constraint

* If the bidder anticipates that it will be unable to consent to contractual terms modeled on any provision listed in the Guideposts section above, the proposal should discuss any requested exceptions and the bidder’s reason for requesting them.
  + 1. Reporting Updates

Constraints

* As specified in section ‎1.13.1 Federal Reporting, the vendor must provide for periodic updates to reporting contents, variables and logic in order to keep pace with changing federal requirements. Such updates must be included in the cost of standard support.
* Updates to federal reporting extract functions, when issued on the basis of federally-mandated changes in reporting standards, must be delivered, installed and tested to the State’s satisfaction at least three months in advance of the next federal reporting deadline.
  + 1. Resolution of Data Exchange Data Quality Issues

Constraint

* CCWIS requires that any data quality issues detected through biennial data quality reviews be corrected through enhancements to the CCWIS solution and/or relevant data exchanges. The contracted vendor must commit to completing, testing and deploying such enhancements within «nnn» days of finalization of the biennial data quality review that detected the issue. In the event that the contractor is unable to complete the enhancement due to forces beyond its control, including the failure of other IT groups to complete work on their portion of the enhancement, the State will work actively with the CCWIS vendor to unblock the work and to establish a reasonable delivery date.
  + 1. Problem Resolution

Guideposts

* Specific vendor obligations with respect to problem resolution will be detailed in the contract that ultimately results from this procurement. The remainder of the Guideposts in this subsection outline the general contractual provisions the State expects to propose.
* It will be the responsibility of the contracted vendor to diligently investigate and resolve software and other technical issues that cause the CCWIS solution to fail to meet contractually-required performance metrics, or to fail to perform any of the functions proposed by the bidder in response to this RFP.
* Expected turnaround times for incident response, investigation and resolution, as well as penalties for failing to meet those turnaround times, will form part of the Service Level Agreement (SLA) the winning bidder will negotiate with the State.
* [The State requires bidders to commit to the following turnaround time standards:

«State standards for investigation and resolution of minor and major issues»]

* Issues must be documented with issue-tracking/ticketing software. [The vendor will be required to use the State’s existing «product name» system for this purpose.] Designated State staff must be given access to the issue management system in order to monitor and comment on open tickets. [The State reserves the right to make final decisions on closing high-severity issue tickets.]

Constraint

* If the bidder anticipates that it will be unable to consent to contractual terms modeled on any provision listed in the Guideposts section above, the proposal should discuss any requested exceptions and the bidder’s reason for requesting them.
  + 1. User Education and Support

Constraint

The bidder’s user support plan must include, at a minimum, the following features:

* Help desk during extended business hours («State’s preferred hours»)
* Secure, chat-based support, potentially incorporating automated intelligent attendants; provision should be made for protection of legally protected information in chat transmissions and saved logs
* Easily accessible, context-sensitive, task-oriented documentation of solution functions
* Training materials customized for communities of users with specific job functions
* Plans and mechanisms for communicating effectively with users about upcoming system changes, downtime and other events of interest

# Appendix 1: Administrative Requirements

For convenience, bidders may submit their response to this Appendix 1 in advance of submitting their full proposal. See the Procurement Timeline on page 10 for relevant dates. Early submission of the Administrative Requirements section will not affect scoring of the proposal.

1. Bidder Qualifications and Relevant Experience
   1. Bidder Structure, Qualifications and History

Present a brief statement of the bidder’s organizational structure (ownership, major divisions and locations, high-level organization chart) and its qualifications, including any applicable licensure and/or certifications. Describe the history of the Bidder’s organization, especially regarding skills pertinent to the specific work required by the RFP and any special or unique characteristics of the organization which would make it especially qualified to perform the required work activities. The statement should not exceed «nn» pages in length.

* 1. Financial Strength

Provide information that would help the State assess the bidder’s financial strength and continued financial viability for the duration of the project. Where possible, data provided should include at least three years of operations.

While the specific choice of documentation is left to the bidder, examples of such documentation include:

* Dun and Bradstreet Comprehensive Insight Plus reports (for for-profit companies)
* Audited Profit and Loss statements (for for-profit companies)
* Statements of Financial Activities (for nonprofit organizations)
* IRS Form 990s (for nonprofit organizations)

With the exception of financial statements of publicly traded corporations, all materials submitted under this requirement will be treated as confidential and will be redacted from a bidder proposal if the State releases the proposal in response to Freedom of Information Act (FoIA) or state public access or information requests.

* 1. Fulfillment of Eligibility Criteria

In order to be eligible to bid on this procurement, an organization must meet several criteria. Please affirm that each criterion below has been met or exceeded and provide appropriate documentation as required.

* + 1. Solvency

The bidder may not have filed for bankruptcy protection within the three years preceding issuance of this RFP and may not be currently in bankruptcy proceedings or operating under the terms of a bankruptcy final decree.

* + 1. Debarment and Similar Restrictions

The bidder may not be presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, and declared ineligible or voluntarily excluded from bidding or working on contracts issued by any governmental agency.

* + 1. Legal and Procurement-related Actions

The bidder may not, within three (3) years of submitting its proposal, have been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against it for any of the following offenses:

* Fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a federal, state or local government transaction or contract
* Violating Federal or State antitrust statutes or committing embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, or receiving stolen property
* [State-specific conditions, if any]

In addition, the bidder must attest that it:

* Has not within a three (3) year period preceding this proposal had one or more federal, state or local government transactions terminated for cause or default
* Has not entered into a prior understanding, contract, or connection with any corporation, firm, or person submitting a response for the same materials, supplies, equipment, or services, in violation of laws and regulations concerning non-collusion
* [State-specific attestations, if any]

While not necessarily disqualifying in itself, if the bidder is currently under indictment or in ongoing litigation brought by any governmental entity for any of the above offenses, it must disclose such actions.

* + 1. Certificate of Insurance

The bidder must provide a valid certificate of insurance on a standard ACORD form evidencing the bidder’s general liability, cyber liability (minimum coverage of $«nn» million), professional liability and any other relevant liability insurance policies that might be associated with the proposed services.

* + 1. Bank or Creditor Reference

The bidder must provide one (1) duly-signed reference from a bank or creditor validating that the bidder is in good standing. [The reference may be supplied in PDF form. | The reference should be enclosed in a sealed envelope.]

* + 1. Payment and Performance Bonds

[The bidder must further demonstrate its ability to obtain payment and performance bonds by providing a letter from a surety or bonding company attesting that the bidder is able to:

* Obtain and maintain, for the initial period of performance and subsequent renewal periods, a payment bond, in a form acceptable to the State, in an amount equal to the total contract amount of all subcontracts with whom the Bidder intends to contract with.
* Obtain and maintain, for the initial period of performance and subsequent renewal periods, a performance bond, in a form acceptable to the State, in an amount equal to the contract amount between the Department and awarded Bidder.

The awarded Bidder shall submit executed payment and performance bonds to the State prior to, or at the time of, execution of the contract and again at the time of any renewal of the contract. ]

* 1. Project References

Provide the information below for «n» projects undertaken in the past five years that reflect the skills, capabilities, general project scope and complexity of the CCWIS project described in this RFP. While child welfare projects are certainly of interest, references may be from adjacent domains such as healthcare. Ongoing projects may be included. Note that individuals listed as project contacts may be contacted by the evaluation team for an oral reference.

For each project, please provide the information in the table that follows.

Project Reference Information

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Project name |  |
| Dates and duration; indicate if completed or in progress |  |
| Contact name, title, email and phone number |  |
| Brief description of project scope and objectives |  |
| Brief description of the bidder’s role(s) |  |
| Approximate dollar amount of contract |  |

* 1. Key Staff Biographies and References

Bidders should provide [brief professional biographies | curricula vitae] for individuals designated below as Key Project Staff. For staff marked with an asterisk only, «n» references must also be furnished. References must be from individuals who can attest to the staffmember’s ability to perform services similar to those for which she or he is being proposed.

For purposes of this requirement, Key Project Staff shall include:

«State-determined list of key staff roles; \* mark for those who require references»

[Key staffmembers must be employees of the bidder [or one of its subcontractors] at the time of proposal submission.] [Availability of key staff [may | may not] be subject to contingent-hire agreements that depend upon the award of a contract to the bidder.]

Staff references may be contacted to verify experience and qualifications as stated in the information submitted. References pertain to project work the proposed staffmember performed as an employee or contractor of a company other than the bidder. In other words, references must be external to the proposed staffmember’s current organization and cannot come from other employees of his or her current employer. The reference contact person must be a representative (or have been a representative at the time of the referenced project) of the company where the referenced project took place. References from another contractor or contracting company are not acceptable unless that contractor or company was the proposed staffmember’s direct client for the project in question.

The Client Reference contact person must be willing and able (i.e., familiar with what transpired, not bound by confidentiality, etc.) to answer questions that validate the information on the submitted reference form. Failure to provide verifiable references may cause the bidder’s proposal to be rejected.

If references are contacted, the State will make two attempts via phone and/or email to contact the reference provider using contact information provided in the Project Staff Reference form. Failure to reach a contact person will result in the qualification being scored as a FAIL. If any question is not answered, or if the customer answers “Not Applicable,” the bidder will FAIL this requirement.

Key staff references should be provided on copies of the Staff Reference Form on the following pages of this RFP.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Project Staff Reference** | |
| **AgencyName**  **StateName** | **Procurement:**  **RFP name/number** |
| **Bidder organization/firm name** |  |
| **Referee name** |  |
| **Referee’s proposed project role** |  |
| **Skills required for proposed role** | |
| Reference writer’s name |  |
| Reference writer’s affiliation and title |  |
| Reference writer’s email and phone | Email: Phone: |
| Approximate dates Referee and Reference writer worked together | From: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ To: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| Name(s) and description(s) of project(s) in which Referee and Reference writer collaborated | |
| Referee’s project role(s) |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Reference for (Referee name): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Project Staff Reference – Page Two | |
| **Instructions for the Reference Writer**  Please complete everything below this line, then sign and date the form. When finished, return the form directly to «procurement contact name and contact info»; [you may | may not] provide a copy to the referee. **IMPORTANT:** **The due date for completed reference forms is «date».** | |
| 1. Is the information in the grey boxes on the first page of this form correct, to the best of your knowledge (circle one)? Yes / No 2. How would you rate the Referee’s technical proficiency on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being Poor and 5 being Excellent? Enter a number: \_\_\_\_ 3. How would you rate the Referee’s interpersonal and team skills on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being Poor and 5 being Excellent? Enter a number: \_\_\_\_ 4. How would you rate the Referee’s efficiency in completing assignments and adhering to deadlines on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being Poor and 5 being Excellent? Enter a number: \_\_\_\_ 5. How would you rate the Referee’s ability to produce high-quality work with specific reference to the contents of the box on page 1 entitled, “Skills required for proposed role”? Rate the Referee on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being Poor and 5 being Excellent. Enter a number: \_\_\_\_ 6. How would you rate the overall quality of the Referee’s work product on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being Poor and 5 being Excellent? Enter a number: \_\_\_\_ 7. Would you work with the Referee again if given the opportunity (circle one)? Yes / No | |
| Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | Date signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |

Please return this form to the address indicated in the instructions above. Thank you.

* 1. Proposed Partners and Subcontractors

If subcontractors are to be used, provide a list that specifies the name, address, phone number, executive contact person and a brief description of each subcontractor’s organizational capacity and qualifications. If possible, provide an estimate of each subcontractor’s expected workshare as expressed in [billable dollars | billable hours].

«State-specific provisions relating to identification of subcontractors that may qualify for statutory set-asides, such as women-, minority- or veteran-owned enterprises.»

If any of the Key Project Staff roles listed in section ‎1.5 are to be filled by a subcontractor, the individual filling the role shall be subject to all Key Project Staff requirements indicated, including provision of [brief professional biographies | curricula vitae] and references (in the case of roles marked with an asterisk).

[The use of any specific subcontractor is subject to the approval of the State. If the State does not approve a subcontractor, the bidder shall have the opportunity to propose an alternative subcontractor during the BAFO process.]

* 1. Compliance with Visa Requirements; Background Checks

Bidder shall ensure that all staff (including subcontractor staff) proposed for the project are legally entitled to work in the United States, whether through citizenship, permanent residency, or possession of an appropriate visa or work permit. Bidder shall also ensure that background checks, including criminal history and sexual offender checks, have been conducted and that no adverse information has been found.

1. Additional Statutory and Regulatory Requirements

«State-specific requirements and required attestations such as non-discrimination provisions»

«Descriptions of relevant set-asides for specific types of bidders—e.g. minority-, women-, veteran-owned businesses»

«Registration and licensing forms, e.g. for the purchasing system»

# Appendix 2: Cost Proposal

Bidders should submit their cost proposal using the supplied spreadsheet entitled [title]. It is important that bidders follow the instructions detailed in the form, and that they complete all tabs. Failure to provide the requested information or to follow the required cost proposal format may result in disqualification of the proposal.

## General Instructions for Creating a Cost Proposal

* The Bidder must submit a cost proposal that covers the entire period of the contract.
* If desired, the Bidder may include a brief narrative discussing aspects of the cost proposal that require further explanation, such as key assumptions made or a description of the licensing model used.
* The cost proposal shall include the costs necessary for the Bidder to fully comply with the contract terms and conditions as well as to deliver the solution and services proposed.
* No costs related to the preparation of the proposal for this RFP or to the negotiation of the contract with the State may be included in the proposal. Only costs to be incurred after the contract effective date and that are specifically related to software acquisition, contracted implementation services or contracted operation services (including hosting, if applicable) may be included.
* [The total cost proposed must be equal to or less than the total project budget as stated in the Initial and Ongoing Budget section of this Request for Proposals. Please see page 13.]

# Appendix 3: Glossary of Terms

This glossary is provided solely as a reference for proposal writers and does not represent a comprehensive glossary of child welfare terminology.

1. The **Administration for Children and Families (ACF)** is a division of the Department of Health and Human Services. ACF promotes the economic and social well-being of children, families, individuals, and communities with leadership and resources for compassionate, effective delivery of human services.
2. The **Advanced Planning Document (APD) and Advanced Planning Document Update (APDU)** are documents created by «agency name» and submitted to ACF in order to obtain approval for Federal financial participation in the cost of acquiring automated data processing equipment and services.
3. **Agile** is a technology development approach that encourages a team to work toward a common goal by incorporating the importance and value of individuals and their interactions, specifically in terms of working to achieve quality, collaboration, and acceptance of frequent change in the company culture. It advocates adaptive planning, evolutionary development, early delivery, and [continual improvement](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Continual_improvement_process), and it encourages rapid and flexible response to change. Agile software development incorporates the following four (4) values:

* Individuals and interactions over processes and tools;
* Working software over comprehensive documentation;
* Customer collaboration over contract negotiation; and
* Responding to change over following a plan.

1. The **Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS)** is a federally mandated national data system. collects case-level information from state and tribal title IV-E agencies on all children in foster care and those who have been adopted with title IV-E agency involvement. Title IV-E agencies are required to submit AFCARS data twice a year. Refer to: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/research-data-technology/reporting-systems/afcars>
2. The **Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA)** was enacted in 1997 in response to concerns that many children were remaining in foster care for long periods or experiencing multiple placements. This landmark legislation requires timely permanency planning for children and emphasizes that the child's safety is the paramount concern. See: <https://training.cfsrportal.acf.hhs.gov/section-2-understanding-child-welfare-system/2999>
3. The **Advanced Encryption Standard (AES-256)** is a specification for the encryption of electronic data established by the U.S. National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST).
4. **Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA),** also known as **Other Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (OPPLA)**, is a permanency approach wherein the child welfare agency maintains care and custody of the youth and arranges a living situation in which the youth is expected to remain until adulthood. APPLA or OPPLA is a permanency option only when other options such as reunification, relative placement, adoption, or legal guardianship have been ruled out.
5. **An Annual Progress and Services Report (APSR)** provides annual updates on the progress made toward accomplishing the goals and objectives in the CFSP. Completion of the APSR satisfies the federal regulations by providing updates on a state's annual progress for the previous fiscal year and planned activities for the upcoming fiscal year.
6. An **Application Programming Interface (API)** is a set of functions and procedures allowing the creation of applications that access the features or data of an operating system, application, or other service.
7. A **Best and Final Offer (BAFO)** is a bid containing final pricing and deliverables submitted by bidding vendors based on the outcome of the negotiations conducted during a previous bid stage.
8. A **Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP)** is a five-year strategic plan that sets forth the vision and the goals to be accomplished to strengthen the states' overall child welfare system.
9. **Child and Family Services Reviews (CFSRs)** are periodic reviews, by ACF, of state child welfare systems, to achieve three goals:

* Ensure conformity with federal child welfare requirements
* Determine what is actually happening to children and families as they are engaged in child welfare services
* Assist states in helping children and families achieve positive outcomes

After a CFSR is completed, states develop a Program Improvement Plan (PIP) to address areas in their child welfare services that need improvement.

1. A **Child Welfare Contributing Agency (CWCA)** is “a public or private entity that, by contract or agreement with the title IV–E agency, provides child abuse and neglect investigations, placements, or child welfare case management (or any combination of these) to children and families.
2. **Commercial-Off-The-Shelf (COTS)** is an adjective that describes software or hardware products that are ready-made and available for sale to the general public.
3. A **Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System (CCWIS)** is a case management information system that state and tribal title IV-E agencies may develop to support their child welfare program needs. If a title IV-E agency elects to build a CCWIS, the federal government will provide a more favorable reimbursement than is provided for non- CCWIS as long as the system meets federal requirements and is designed to support social workers’ needs to organize and record quality case information about the children and families receiving child welfare services.
4. The **Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA)** amends parts B and E of Title IV of the Social Security Act to invest in funding prevention and family services to help keep children safe and supported at home, to ensure that children in foster care are placed in the least restrictive, most family-like, and appropriate settings, and for other purposes.
5. The **Federal Risk and Authorization Management Program (FedRAMP)** is a government-wide program that provides a standardized approach to security assessment, authorization, and continuous monitoring for cloud products and services. See: <https://www.fedramp.gov/about/>
6. The **Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008** generally amends the Social Security Act to extend and expand adoption incentives through FY2013; create an option to provide kinship guardianship assistance payments; create an option to extend eligibility for title IV-E foster care, adoption assistance and kinship guardianship payments to age 21; de-link adoption assistance from Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) eligibility over time; and, provide Federally-recognized Indian Tribes, Tribal organizations, or Tribal consortia (Tribes) with the option to operate a title IV-E program, among many other provisions. See: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/resource/implementation-of-the-fostering-connections>
7. The **Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA)** is the federal regulation that protects health insurance coverage for workers and their families when they change or lose their jobs. Title II of HIPAA, known as the Administrative Simplification (AS) provisions, requires the establishment of national standards for electronic health care transactions and national identifiers for providers, health insurance plans, and employers. The Administrative Simplification provisions also address the security and privacy of health data. The standards are meant to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the nation's health care system by encouraging the widespread use of electronic data interchange in the U.S. health care system.
8. The **Human Services Domain of the National Information Exchange Model (NIEM)** supports information sharing and promotes interoperability between and across social service providers at the federal, state, local, and tribal levels. NIEM is the National Information Exchange Model – a community-driven, government-wide, standards-based approach to exchanging information. The Human Services (HS) domain complements the NIEM core with data common to HS, including case, placement, eligibility, provider, employment, and financial data by providing harmonized data elements into the NIEM HS domain data model. See: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/niem-human-service-domain-iepds> and <https://www.niem.gov/communities/human-services>
9. The **Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC)** is a contract among all 50 U.S. states, the District of Columbia and the Virgin Islands providing for protection and support services for children moved between U.S. states for birth parent unification or reunification when the court has jurisdiction over the child. The ICPC ensures that the sending agency or individual does not lose jurisdiction over the child once the child moves to the receiving state. An ICPC case is closed when a child is adopted, reaches the age of majority, or becomes self-supporting or when the appropriate authorities in the sending state and receiving state agree that the ICPC case can be closed.
10. The **John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP)** offers assistance to help current and former foster care youths achieve self-sufficiency. Grants are offered to States and Tribes who submit a plan to assist youth in a wide variety of areas designed to support a successful transition to adulthood. See: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/resource/chafee-foster-care-program>
11. The **Multi-Ethnic Placement Act (MEPA) of 1994** was passed as a part of the Improving America’s Schools Act as part of federal efforts to reduce delays in the permanent placement of children in out of home care. MEPA contains three major provisions affecting child welfare policy and practice:

* Prohibits agencies from refusing or delaying foster or adoptive placements because of a child's or foster/adoptive parent's race, color, or national origin
* Prohibits agencies from considering race, color, or national origin as a basis for denying approval as a foster or adoptive parent
* Requires agencies to diligently recruit a diverse base of foster and adoptive parents to better reflect the racial and ethnic makeup of children in out of home care

MEPA was later amended in 1996 by the Interethnic Placement Provisions (or Interethnice Placement Act) included in the Small Business Job Protection Act of 1996.

1. The **National Child Abuse Neglect Data System (NCANDS)** is a federal voluntary data collection system that gathers information from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico about reports of child abuse and neglect. See: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/research-data-technology/reporting-systems/ncands>
2. The **National Electronic Interstate Compact Enterprise (NEICE)** refers to the electronic exchange of data regarding the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC). See: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/resource/neice-two-states-perspectives>
3. The **National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST)** is a measurement standards laboratory, and a non-regulatory agency of the United States Department of Commerce. Its mission is to promote innovation and industrial competitiveness. Within the context of this document, NIST sets security standards for public technology projects.
4. **National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD)** is a federal data system that collects information about youth in foster care, including outcomes for those who have aged out of foster care. See: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/research-data-technology/reporting-systems/nytd>
5. **Personally Identifiable Information (PII)** is defined as any information that can be used on its own or with other information to identify, contact, or locate a single person, or to identify an individual in context.
6. **Platform-as-a-Service (PaaS)** is a category of cloud computing services that provides a platform allowing customers to develop, run, and manage applications without the complexity of building and maintaining the infrastructure typically associated with developing and launching an application.
7. The **Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act of 2014** seeks to prevent and address sex trafficking of children in foster care, to extend and improve adoption incentives, and to improve international child support recovery.
8. **Project Management Office (PMO)** is a group or department within a business, agency or enterprise that defines and maintains standards for project management within the organization. The PMO strives to standardize and introduce economies of repetition in the execution of projects.
9. A **Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTP)** is a non-family based placement which provides treatment to children using a trauma-informed treatment model. QRTP’s must be accredited by a non-profit accrediting agency (JACHO, CARF, COA, Teaching Family Association, and Educational Assessment Guidelines Leading Towards Excellence (EAGLE)), facilitate outreach to the family, have registered or licensed nursing staff and clinical staff, and provide after care support for at least 6 months. Within 30 days of placement in a QRTP, children must complete a clinical assessment to determine the appropriateness of the placement. Within 60 days the court must approve the child’s placement in a QRTP.
10. **Secure Sockets Layer (SSL)** is a protocol for web browsers and servers that allows for the authentication, encryption and decryption of data sent over the Internet.
11. A **Service Level Agreement (SLA)** is a contract between a service provider and a client which describes services the provider will furnish and a set of metrics by which performance will be judged. Metrics may include such factors a service quality (e.g. response time) and availability (uptime). An SLA also outlines the individual and mutual responsibilities of the service provider and its client.
12. **Service Oriented Architecture (SOA)** is a software design and software architecture design pattern based on structured collections of discrete software modules, known as services, that collectively provide the complete functionality of a large software application.
13. **Software as a Service (SaaS)** is a software distribution and licensing approach in which a third-party provider hosts applications and makes them available, over the internet, to the client via a subscription.
14. Solution Delivery Lifecyle (SDLC) reflects the full range of activities associated with delivering a working, durable solution to the State. These activities may include software development, but the State views the full solution as also encompassing such deliverables as planning, design, testing, organizational change management, training and deployment.
15. **Statewide or Tribal Automated Child Welfare Information System (S/TACWIS)** is the common name for federally legislated information systems states developed and implemented to support child welfare activities. The software’s requirements are outline in legislation of the same name that required and defined a large function-based application that all social workers would use to track and manage their child welfare caseloads.
16. **Structured decision-making (SDM)** is an approach to child protective services that uses clearly defined and consistently applied decision-making criteria for screening for investigation, determining response priority, identifying immediate threatened harm, and estimating the risk of future abuse and neglect. Child and family needs and strengths are identified and considered in developing and monitoring progress toward a case plan. See: <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/systemwide/assessment/approaches/structured-decision-making/>
17. A **Subject Matter Expert (SME)** is a person who is an authority in a particular area or topic.
18. **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)** provides financial assistance for purchasing food to low- and no-income people living in the U.S. It is a federal aid program, administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, though benefits are distributed by individual U.S. states.
19. **System of Care (SOC)** is a term for a spectrum of effective, community-based services and supports for children and youth with or at risk for mental health or other challenges and their families, that is organized into a coordinated network, builds meaningful partnerships with families and youth, and address their cultural and linguistic needs, in order to help them to function better at home, in school, in the community, and throughout life.
20. The **Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)** program (sometimes referred to as **Title IV-A**) helps move recipients into work and turn welfare into a program of temporary assistance. Individuals receiving assistance through TANF are categorically eligible to receive paid meal services.
21. **Title IV-B** is the Federal Welfare Program that governs the provision of child welfare services that can be used for prevention of and response to child abuse and neglect. Protect and promote the welfare of all children. It does so by funding services and programs which:

* Prevent the neglect, abuse, or exploitation of children;
* Support at-risk families through services which allow children, where appropriate, to remain with their families or return to their families in a timely manner;
* Promote the national goals of safety, permanence and well-being of children in foster care and adoptive families;
* Provide training, professional development and support to ensure a well-qualified workforce; and
* Promote and support adoption.

1. **Title IV-D** is the Child Support Enforcement Program that refers to state-run child support enforcement programs, which help parents establish paternity, initiate new child support orders, and collect unpaid child support, among other services.
2. **Title IV-E** is The Federal Foster Care Program helps to provide safe and stable out-of- home care for children until the children are safely returned home, placed permanently with adoptive families or placed in other planned arrangements for permanency. Name is reference to the federal code section that authorizes it.
3. **Title XIX** – Medicaid Program to provide medical and health related services for individuals and families with low incomes through direct payment to suppliers of the program.
4. **User Acceptance Testing (UAT)** is a type of testing performed by the end user or the client to verify/accept the software system before moving the software application to the production environment.
5. **User Experience (UX)** is the overall experience of a person using a product such as a website or computer application, especially with regard to how easy or pleasing it is to use.

1. The CCWIS Final Rule was published in the Federal Register on June 2, 2016 and took effect on August 1, 2016. The full text can be found here: <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2016-06-02/pdf/2016-12509.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/253 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/senate-bill/1376/all-info> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. See, for example, <https://www.casey.org/placement-stability-impacts/>. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Section 422(b)(17) of the Social Security Act [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. See this document for a summary of federal laws governing child welfare practice: <https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/majorfedlegis.pdf#page=3&view=Summaries%20of%20Federal%20laws> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. See <https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/transitional_plan.pdf> for federal guidance, including information on the Fostering Connections Act and the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act. For requirements pertaining to case planning for transition, see also ACF’s Program Instructions and Information Memorandums regarding these two Acts. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Information about NYTD can be found at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/research-data-technology/reporting-systems/nytd>. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/cb/afcars\_assessment\_review\_guide.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/monitoring/child-family-services-reviews [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/monitoring/nytd-reviews [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/monitoring/title-ive-reviews [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. The CCWIS Final Rule is here: https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2016-06-02/pdf/2016-12509.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. See <https://www.hipaajournal.com/hipaa-guidelines-on-telemedicine/> for a discussion of HIPAA telemedicine requirements. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. http://www.blackhat.com/presentations/bh-dc-10/Sullivan\_Bryan/BlackHat-DC-2010-Sullivan-SDL-Agile-wp.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. <https://www.niem.gov/communities/human-services> [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. See ACF’s “Human Services Domain Definition Guidelines” for suggested approaches to creating concise data doman definitions. <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/data_definition_guidelines.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-17)