

SOLICITATION OF INTEREST

Title: **Solicitation of Interest # C041205 -Vital Events Integrated System**

AGENCY: New York State Department of Health
Bureau of Vital Records

Contract Number: C041205

Contract Term: Potentially 5 to 10 years

Date of Issue: November 21, 2024

Written Questions Due: ~~December 2, 2024~~ December 20, 2024

Answers Provided By: December 27, 2024

Due Date/Time: ~~December 13, 2024~~ January 3, 2024; 4:00pm

County(ies): Statewide-All Counties

Location: Statewide

Classification: Administrative & Technical

Opportunity Type: Solicitation of Interest

Description:

The New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) is responsible for filing birth, fetal death, and death certificates within New York State outside of New York City; marriage certificates for marriage licenses obtained in New York State outside of New York City; and divorce and dissolution certificates for the dissolution of marriages anywhere in New York State. The public requires certified copies of such certificates to apply for a passport or driver's license; to establish citizenship or employment verification; and to collect Social Security, life insurance and other benefits; etc. Article 41 of the New York State Public Health Law establishes the fee for certified copies of birth, death, marriage, divorce, adoption, and fetal death certificates. The Public Health Law authorizes additional handling fees. Payment is required before the certificate can be issued. Annually, the NYSDOH processes over 110,000 requests for certificate copies by mail, telephone, and the Internet.

This Solicitation of Interest (SOI) is to identify qualified organizations who are interested and have the functionality to provide NYSDOH with a comprehensive and integrated vital records solution. The solution is defined as the overarching, comprehensive service package the vendor provides, which includes all functional elements (e.g., software, infrastructure, and integration capabilities) needed to meet NYSDOH's requirements. The "solution" should encompass multiple "systems" that integrate seamlessly to deliver all required services.

A system is defined specifically for individual software modules, applications, or technical components that make up the "solution." For instance, the "vital records registration system" is one part of the overall solution, focused on managing and recording vital events.

The vendor's solution must provide a comprehensive suite, including a vital event electronic registration management system, remote order and payment processing services, and secure digital mailroom services. NYSDOH will utilize a single organization to provide the services outlined in this SOI. The selected vendor's solution will include an integrated vital records registration system that manages the electronic recording of births, deaths, fetal death, marriage, divorce and dissolution of marriage, and induced termination of pregnancy events. This system must also support record modifications, including amendments, corrections, statewide adoptions, and integrate with NYSDOH remote order issuance, processing, and imaging systems. This includes system requirements gathering, programming, and testing. The vendor will need to successfully support timely electronic filing and delivery of required data in accordance with NYS legislation, the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) and to the New York State health programs and numerous other entities for research and surveillance.

The vendor solution must integrate with New York's Health Commerce System (HCS) for authentication and authorization, ID proofing, and user's permissions and access for 100,000+ users. Integration with the comprehensive content management system, legacy applications and the federal data-exchange system will also be required. In addition, the vendor solution must integrate with systems currently in use in municipalities utilizing an Electronic Registry System.

The vendor solution will include managing and hosting the necessary information technology infrastructure for all systems within the solution, including servers, data storage, networking, backups, and updates. They will collect information necessary to process orders from applicants. This includes information about the applicant (name, address, relationship to certificate holder, etc.); entitlement review and verification, information about the requested record (names, dates, etc.), and financial information (credit/debit card number/money order/personal checks). The vendor must have the capability of identifying, transforming, and submitting vital records data to each of the 57 vital records offices in the United States, and, other federal government partners, daily. The vendor must be FHIR certified and have implemented and/or tested the transmission of FHIR mortality data between jurisdictional Vital Records Offices and the NCHS. The vendor will perform all data collection services and payment authorization functions. On a nightly basis, order information that is received from the vendor is automatically transferred into the NYSDOH via a secure data link. A synergistic relationship must be established to the actual certificate-based data, which will allow for immediate matching and retrieval of the requested certificate.

The selected vendor solution must include customer-funded operation of ordering systems and customer services, with no development, maintenance, or upgrade costs charged to the State. The responder must not charge the State to develop, maintain, and upgrade the ordering systems. The cost of the Electronic Registry System would be in the form of a maintenance, hosting, and enhancement cost. Vendors cannot propose the use of a subcontractor.

Expected Activities/Work Performed

The successful vendor will collaborate with NYSDOH and stakeholders to develop, test, and implement a comprehensive system as described above and below, including the secure and accurate consolidation and migration of data from the existing legacy system to the new platform.

Design, Build, and Implement a Vital Records Electronic System for the NYSDOH Bureau of Vital Records

The successful vendor will work with NYSDOH and stakeholders to develop and test a comprehensive system as described above and below.

Software Hosting and Security Assessments:

The vendor must be able to provide Production, Training, Test, Staging, and Development environments, and ensure web and mobile applications and database servers are operational and available 24x7x365. Vendor must meet NYS requirements of a 99.9% uptime rate with unplanned downtime equal to or less than nine (9) hours annually. The vendor will be responsible to host the web, the application, and database hardware, operating systems and the customer confidential information at a secure location.

The vendor will be expected to maintain the system's infrastructure, including hosting, backups, and disaster recovery with downtime totaling less than nine (9) hours annually.

Software systems required include the following:

- Electronic Death Registration System
- Electronic Spontaneous Fetal Death Registration System
- Electronic Birth Registration System
- Electronic Divorce Registration System
- Electronic Marriage Registration System
- Adoption Information Registry (AIR)
- DAVE Connect via Fast Healthcare Interoperability Resources (FHIR)

The New York State Database Application for Vital Events (NYS DAVE) shall include the following:

- The vendor will provide software for the electronic registration of births, deaths, spontaneous fetal deaths, induced terminations of pregnancies, marriages and divorces and dissolutions of marriage. Software programs must also include the ability to perform all corrections and amendments for a record.
- The vendor will supply a complete set of written installation and configuration documentation for all new, changed, or updated application software and system components including:
 - Technical documentation (system diagrams, data flow diagrams, configuration instructions, release deployment instructions, operating instructions, audit log locations, procedures for security and general maintenance).
 - User manuals.

- Disaster and Recovery Document (application and database).
- Business Continuity Plan.
- Data dictionaries (for both main database and reporting database).
- Documentation updates.
- The vendor will make all customizations through configuration changes unless a new release is accepted by NYSDOH to address functional specifications.
- The vendor will provide all features and functionality that support electronic registration and issuance of vital events based on national guidelines established by the National Center for Health Statistics and NYS legislation.
- The vendor will provide the NYSDOH with a catalog of all test scripts required to fully test the NYS DAVE application.
- The vendor will have an Acceptance Test Period to allow the NYSDOH to test the operation and functionality of the vendor's software in accordance with the NYSDOH's acceptance test criteria. If the software fails the Acceptance Test, the vendor will modify the software, at no cost, within 15 days of notification from the NYSDOH.
- Software enhancements developed by vendor to support new or revised NCHS and NYSDOH requirements will be provided in maintenance releases. Enhancements may include new/revised reports, extracts, security patches and any functionality introduced to support modules utilized by NYSDOH.
- The vendor will separately connect the electronic birth registration system, electronic death registration system, electronic spontaneous fetal death registration system to STEVE via FHIR protocol based on NCHS specifications, including creating APIs and endpoints for each electronic registration module and system preferences that NYSDOH can use to turn on or off the APIs.
- The vendor shall provide NYSDOH, at vendor's sole expense, with all updates, extensions, enhancements, modifications, and any other changes made or added to the software specifically for the services, systems, and platforms that NYSDOH owns. This includes any features or improvements that vendor makes available to other licensees of the same NYSDOH-utilized software and components.

Software Maintenance, Support, and Release Management for NYSDOH Vital Events System

- The vendor shall provide NYSDOH, at vendor's sole expense, with bug fixes and code corrections to correct software malfunctions and defects to bring the Software into substantial conformity with its operating specifications.
- Software releases provided by vendor shall be fully documented with release notes describing functionality and use cases utilized by vendor to test the full functionality of the release. The vendor must provide NYSDOH with release notes as they become available.
- Prior to the release of a new software version by vendor, vendor shall provide NYSDOH access to a hosted environment for reviewing new or updated software features. The vendor will adhere to industry-standard best practices and frameworks (such as ITIL, ISO 27001, or CMMI) for comprehensive testing, rollback capabilities, and obtaining formal NYSDOH sign-off prior to deployment.
- The vendor will provide maintenance and upgrade releases, as well as releases related to enhancements. These will be planned and deployed, as needed, to bring the NYS DAVE to current during maintenance period.
- Access can be via a WebEx based session or direct remote access.

- Develop, maintain and support software enhancements.
- The vendor will provide staffing, with the following competent key resources: Project Manager, Lead Training, Business Information Officer, Development Manager and Manager of Quality Assurance/Testing.

Order Processing to be performed:

- The vendor will manage all aspects of public order processing, including identity authentication, payment processing, and secure information transfer, with the capacity to process over 9,000 records on a monthly basis.
- The vendor will provide the public with the following methods of placing orders: Operator assisted telephone, Interactive Voice Response Unit (IVR) orders, Internet Orders, Mail Orders, Customer Support, and NYSDOH support.
- The vendor will be required to submit a detailed description of the methodology it proposes to use to authenticate applicant identity for all requests regardless of the manner (telephone or internet) by which the request is made.
- The vendor shall ensure that all information and records collected in the implementation of this contract will be held highly confidential in accordance with applicable provisions of State and Federal law including, but not limited to the New York State Public Health Law, the New York State Domestic Relations Law, the Federal Confidentiality Law in 42 CFR Part 2, State Confidentiality Law in Chapter 584 of the Laws of 1988, Part 50 of Title 10 (Health) of the Official Compilation of Codes, Rules and Regulations of the State of New York.
- The vendor must agree to implement all security provisions resulting from the Federal Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 at no additional cost to DOH or the public.
- The vendor will be required to integrate the Order Processing Service with the above electronic registry system and comprehensive content management system to search, identify, edit and retrieve images. The vendor will also provide an image editor which allows for editing of images prior to issuance.
- The vendor must provide 24/7 call center support / help desk services, email support, web FAQs, order status, no cost updates as NYSDOH laws and rules change, and daily guaranteed reconciliation and summary of funds.

Secure Mailroom Services

Services include opening, sorting, and scanning of all mail items. Secure electronic order processing. **This service will provide the Bureau of Vital Records with a more efficient mail order processing that includes moving vital records order to higher efficiency channels, which will in turn optimize fulfillment times and improve customer service. The mailroom service includes the following components:**

- Complete order verification (i.e. QC, entitlement, authentication, etc.)
- Return shipments of mail items to DOH weekly (i.e. amendments, 1st Copy etc.).
- Customer Correspondence (i.e. initial contact, follow-up reminders, order status, etc.)
- Customer Support (24/7 Phone, email, web FAQ's and order status).
- Secure record retention.

- Guaranteed payments to NYS Vital Records.

Performance will be monitored by DOH and vendor weekly. Vendor will provide a report of metrics related to application processing during the duration of the contract. The vendor must submit monthly invoices, due thirty days after the end of each month, accompanied by a New York State Claim for payment (see AC3253-S).

Provide ongoing support and maintenance of the system

The successful vendor will provide all necessary support and maintenance needed to sustain the system beyond the design and implementation phase. The vendor must be open to feedback and committed to continuous improvement of the system. The vendor must offer 24/7 support and defect fixes at no additional cost.

Capability to Sustain the Current NYS Customizations

Sustaining the current NYS customizations for the system involves maintaining and supporting state-specific configurations, functionality, and promptly addressing issues across all vital event domains. This approach ensures ongoing compliance with New York State policies, security standards, and operational needs, while emphasizing detailed customization capabilities for each event domain.

- Ability to process specific fees per event type (e.g., \$20 burial permit fee, marriage license fees, and birth certificate issuance fees).
- Support for dual authorization where applicable, such as signatures between authorized personnel (e.g., coroner and physician for deaths, authorized representatives for other event verifications).
- Customizable display settings across all registration pages, including but not limited to CAPS LOCK display settings based on NYS requirements.
- Event-specific permissions for case updates by designated officials (e.g., cremation clearance for medical examiners in death cases, and similar permissions for other event types).
- Controlled editing permissions for demographic details such as Date of Birth (DOB) and age, based on user role and event type ownership.
- Implementation of email encryption standards for secure communication related to all vital event records and integrations with Vital IQ for NYS compliance.
- Enhanced search filter capabilities to display registered, unregistered, voided, and abandoned cases across all event types.
- Warning message triggers when an event location falls outside New York State, ensuring accuracy in location-specific requirements across all event types.

In addition to the above requirements, the vendor shall provide NYSDOH with telephone or electronic support during NYSDOH normal business hours (8:00 am – 5:30 pm EST) to assist in locating and resolving issues.

Malfunction severity levels shall be categorized per the table below, and any disagreements on severity levels between NYSDOH and the vendor will be escalated to the governance committee for resolution.

Critical	The system is not functioning according to specifications, impacting significant aspects of business operations or workload. No workaround is available within the system or workaround is causing severe interruption of production processing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <60 minutes for help desk contacting by phone the designated point of contact • Max Resolution Time Goal: 24 hours • Escalation if not resolved in 24 hours • Delivery method: Service pack may be applied to otherwise unaltered version of New York code currently in production maintained by Vendor at New York's determination.
High	The system is not functioning according to specifications, impacting significant aspects of business operations or workload. No workaround is available within the system, causing severe interruption of production processing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 days with result of analysis • Maximum resolution goal: six months • Escalation if resolution not scheduled with strong likelihood of effective delivery with two months • Delivery Method: High level malfunctions identified during New York's testing process shall be delivered to the most recent release in New York's test environment as a service pack or received in the next scheduled release as mutually agreed. The vendor shall provide a fix to the software in the next scheduled release, or at NYSDOH discretion a later release, subject to the requirement that a malfunction is reported four months prior to a release.
Medium	The system is not functioning according to specifications, but most business operations continue; (b) System is not functioning according to specifications, but a known workaround exists and the NYSDOH is able to implement the workaround without severe interruption of production processing, or (c) NYSDOH requires information or assistance on software capabilities, installation, or configuration.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 business days with result of analysis • Maximum resolution goal: Mutually agreed release date • Escalation if not resolved to mutually agreed release date • Delivery Method: Scheduled release as determined by established schedule and report date
Low	NYSDOH reports a documentation problem that has no material impact on current productivity, or NYSDOH reports a problem or suggestion that would result in product enhancement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60 days with result of analysis • Maximum resolution goal: Mutually agreed release date if other than suggested enhancement • Escalation if not resolved to mutually agreed release date if other than suggested enhancement

Minimum Qualifications

- The vendor must have a minimum of five (5) years of experience in each of the services described within the SOI and summarized below:
 - Processing operator assisted, and internet placed orders for Governmental Vital Records with any State or Municipal government agency.
 - The development and successful implementation of software for the electronic registration of vital records government agencies.
 - Providing the digitization and management of incoming mail electronically, including end to end data encryption, secure document storage sharing, security audits, and integration with the remote order management system.
- The vendor must provide a minimum of three (3) references from other vital records jurisdictions where the same or similar service(s) described in this SOI were successfully implemented and are still active.
- The vendor must provide a system that accepts orders to be placed to a toll-free Interactive Voice Response system or by Internet portal 24 hours a day and 365 days a year. The system shall be compatible with TTD and TTY for the hearing impaired. Vendor must distinguish prioritization category with corresponding NYS required response times.
- The vendor must be FHIR certified and have implemented and transmitted FHIR mortality data between jurisdictional Vital Records Offices and the NCHS.
- The vendor must provide Language Assistance/Spanish Speaking Operators.
- The vendor must provide a System that collects and processes payment from applicant via credit card, debit card, and electronic funds transfers from checking account. The vendor must be able to accept and refund payments by check, wire transfer or ACH Direct Deposit.
- The vendor must demonstrate the capacity to support internet, mail, telephone and IVR based ordering of over 110,000 orders annually.
- The vendor must demonstrate a minimum of three years' experience in managing a high call volume call center.

How to Apply:

Interested eligible organizations should submit a completed Checklist and Application Cover Sheet (available under the "Documents" tab) and no more than a eight (8) page document describing the organization's background, capacity and experience that demonstrates its ability to conduct the activities as described above and cost breakdown of provided services. The vendor should also provide details of how they meet all qualifications listed under "Minimum Qualifications" above. These documents must be submitted via email to Melissa Thapa at bvrfiscal@health.ny.gov no later than 4:00 pm on ~~December 13, 2024~~ **January 3, 2024**.

This advertisement is not a guarantee or promise of funding. Please note this is solely a Solicitation of Interest and does not guarantee an award or contract.

Written questions will be accepted until 4:00 p.m. on ~~December 2, 2024~~ **December 20, 2024**. All questions should be submitted electronically to the email address: bvrfiscal@health.ny.gov and with the subject line "BVR Vital Records SOI - Questions". If any updates and/or clarification of information is warranted, information will be posted in the Contract Reporter under the tab "Documents" for this announcement as well as the New York State Department of Health website at the following address: <https://health.ny.gov/funding/#soi>

Responses to all questions received by ~~December 2, 2024~~ **December 20, 2024** will be posted on or about ~~December 6, 2024~~ **December 27, 2024**.

Required Response Components

The following items must be completed and submitted for the Vital Events Integrated System application for this Solicitation of Interest. All Required Attachments must be completed, signed if applicable, and emailed to bvrfiscal@health.ny.gov.

Application Cover Sheet

A standardized form provided by the issuing agency that includes essential vendor details, such as the company name, contact information, and primary points of contact. This cover sheet will serve as a quick reference for identifying key information about the vendor.

Organizational Background and Experience

A detailed narrative that outlines the vendor's history, mission, and relevant experience as it pertains to the minimum requirements listed above. Vendors should emphasize their past work with government agencies, particularly in areas related to the specific needs of this SOI, such as vital records or health data management systems. This section should demonstrate the vendor's familiarity with complex government projects, including any New York State-specific experience if applicable.

Vendors must list the jurisdictions and modules that are currently implemented, as well as those in process or planning to be implemented. Any New York State-specific experience should be highlighted.

References

Contact information for a minimum of three (3) previous or current clients—particularly government or jurisdictional partners—who can attest to the vendor's performance, reliability, and ability to deliver services similar in scope to those requested in the SOI.

Certification

Proof of Vendor's FHIR (Fast Healthcare Interoperability Resources) certification.

Preliminary Project Approach

A high-level outline that describes the vendor's intended approach to the project. This should demonstrate an understanding of the project's requirements, the vendor's current capabilities to handle the services outlined in this SOI, highlight potential challenges, and include any preliminary strategies for addressing these challenges. This should also include whether the proposed software solution is a Commercial off the Shelf (COTS) product or a custom-built product; the time frame required for building and implementing the software; the estimated total cost for the project – preferably with a detailed broken down of the costs.

Contact Information

Primary and submit to contact: Melissa Thapa
Bureau of Vital Records
New York State Department of Health
bvrfiscal@health.ny.gov