



STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS # 34353-16624
AMENDMENT # 1
FOR FARMERS MARKET ELECTRONIC SOLUTION**

DATE: January 2, 2024

RFP # 34353-16624 IS AMENDED AS FOLLOWS:

1. This RFP Schedule of Events updates and confirms scheduled RFP dates. Any event, time, or date containing revised or new text is highlighted.

EVENT	TIME (central time zone)	DATE
1. RFP Issued		December 8, 2023
2. Disability Accommodation Request Deadline	2:00 p.m.	December 11, 2023
3. Pre-response Conference	10 a.m.	December 12, 2023
4. Notice of Intent to Respond Deadline	2:00 p.m.	December 13, 2023
5. Written "Questions & Comments" Deadline	2:00 p.m.	December 18, 2023
6. State Response to Written "Questions & Comments"		January 2, 2024
7. Response Deadline	2:00 p.m.	January 9, 2024
8. State Completion of Technical Response Evaluations		January 18, 2024
9. State Opening & Scoring of Cost Proposals	2:00 p.m.	January 19, 2024
10. Negotiations (Optional)		January 19-24, 2024
11. State Notice of Intent to Award Released <u>and</u> RFP Files Opened for Public Inspection	2:00 p.m.	January 26, 2024
12. End of Open File Period		February 2, 2024
13. State sends contract to Contractor for signature		February 5, 2024

14. Contractor Signature Deadline	2:00 p.m.	February 9, 2024
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2. State responses to questions and comments in the table below amend and clarify this RFP.

Any restatement of RFP text in the Question/Comment column shall NOT be construed as a change in the actual wording of the RFP document.

RFP Section	#	Question/Comment	State Response
	1	Please provide an explanation as to why the previous RFP was canceled.	The State is not disclosing that information at this time.
	2	Please disclose how many responses the State received to the previous solicitation and the names of the vendors that responded.	The State is not disclosing that information at this time.
	3	Please name the current vendor that the State uses for the farmers market program.	The current contractor for the farmers market program is Central Trust Bank.
	4	Please explain the current process used by TN Senior and WIC FMNP.	The contractor provides banking accounts for Senior Farmers Market and WIC FMNP. The contractor provides printed checks with routing numbers, valid unit date, fund source and account number for Senior and WIC FMNP. The Contractor distributes a designated amount of checks to the Senior and WIC FMNP sites. The State distributes checks to eligible participants. Eligible participants present their checks at authorized farmers for the purchase of fresh fruits and vegetables. The farmers authorize the checks and presents for payment at their depository institution.
	5	Did the State request and receive grant funds from the FNS which allocates \$350,000 per state agency?	Yes the State received grant funds from FNS for approximately \$350,000 for the Senior Farmers Market program to allow for E-Solution development and additional funds for eligible participants to utilize at authorized farmers.
	6	The FNS website located here states that: https://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/modernization/fmnp-e-solutions-grant that "Costs associated with agency evaluation efforts to investigate the impact of transitioning from coupon-based operations to an e-Solution. "Training, outreach, and/or promotional material costs, including the costs associated with translating materials." Understanding that FNS is promoting moving away from coupon based solutions, why is the State requiring vendors to print coupons?	As approved by FNS, the State elected to provide for an electronic benefit solution that includes commercially-printed paper vouchers that contain a QR code as described in Section 1.1 of the RFP.

	7	Has the State received approval from FNS to procure a solution that still requires the use of paper-based coupons? If not, is there concern that FNS may not approve the use of funds for a paper-based solution?	Yes, the State received approval from FNS to provide for an electronic benefit solution that includes commercially-printed paper vouchers that contain a QR code as described in Section 1.1 of the RFP.
	8	Would the agency be willing to accept responses from vendors entering the market who have a fully digital solution that does not require printing of coupons?	In order to be accepted by the State, the responses from vendors must meet the requirements as stated in the RFP.
	9	What is the reasoning for requiring printed coupons?	As approved by FNS, the State elected to provide for an electronic benefit solution that includes commercially-printed paper vouchers that contain a QR code as described in Section 1.1 of the RFP.
RFP Attachment 6.2. A.4	10	The reference requirements appear to limit fair and open competition for this RFP. Would the State be willing to change these requirements to encourage a competitive and transparent bidding process?	It is not the State's intent to be overly restrictive. Section A are mandatory requirements for the State to ensure the respondent is qualified to meet the required items necessary for an electronic benefit issuance system designed for WIC FMNP and SFMNP.
	11	What backend systems is the agency staff using for the management of the FMNP program?	The FMNP Coordinator monitors the number of checks issued and redeemed. A backup person will be named to assist. An email is sent daily to our state fiscal office detailing the amount needed for wire transfers to the WIC FMNP and SFMNP.
	12	Was there an RFI or any sort of market research conducted to determine what solutions were available in the market to help drive this RFP?	The State utilized the FNS Notice of Availability of Funding guidance in developing the contents of this RFP.
	13	Please explain the process taken to research solutions in the market prior to this RFP being created.	The State utilized the FNS Notice of Availability of Funding guidance in developing the contents of this RFP.
	14	What is the desired go-live date?	As indicated in the RFP Schedule of Events, the contractor signature deadline is February 9, 2024 with timelines as described in Section A.3 of the Pro Forma Contract in this RFP.
	15	How much did the agency spend in printing and shipping costs for coupons for FMNP and Senior FMNP in 2022 and 2023?	In 2022, costs for printing and shipping checks for WIC FMNP was \$5,260.82 for 49,000 checks. In 2022, costs for printing and shipping checks for SFMNP, was \$9,673.16 for 93,375 checks. In 2023, costs for printing and shipping checks for WIC FMNP was \$4,405.15 for 42,000 checks. In 2023, costs for printing and shipping checks for SFMNP, were \$10,557.50 for 10,375 checks.

3. **RFP Amendment Effective Date**. The revisions set forth herein shall be effective upon release. All other terms and conditions of this RFP not expressly amended herein shall remain in full force and effect.