

Voluntary Pre-Applicant Teleconference
Request for Application 17-01
CalFresh Outreach Plan
Wednesday, March 16, 2016

The questions and answers below are from the Voluntary Pre-Applicant Teleconference.

Attachments Questions	
Q	Can you repeat which form is going to be updated and posted on March 25th?
A	<p>The following forms will be updated and posted to the CalFresh Outreach website on March 25, 2016:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attachment 7, Program Deliverables Worksheet • Attachment 12, Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 (FFATA) • Exhibit B - Budget Detail <p>CDSS will post the addendums to the CalFresh Outreach RFA 17-01 on the CalFresh Outreach website at http://www.cdss.ca.gov/calfreshoutreach/</p>
Q	CFO posted the questions online, but not the answers.
A	Correct, CDSS only posted the written questions online prior to the teleconference. Answers to questions received prior to the teleconference were posted to the CalFresh Outreach website on March 18, 2016.
Budgets Questions	
Q	On page 16 of 41 in the RFA, #2 (FTE for proration); so does that mean all staff, regardless of whether they are involved in this project? Technically, if a staff person is working on a different project, I would list this person as zero hours for CFO.
A	When completing Attachment 5b, 5d, 6b and 6d, each Applying Agency will provide just the number of their organization's total full time equivalent (FTE) to properly calculate proration. The Applying Agency will list all staff providing CalFresh Outreach services and the anticipated portion of their time-base dedicated to CFO activities.
Q	If a contractor ends up billing \$0.00 in a quarter because they didn't end up doing outreach activities (SOW = 0), is that a problem? Would it still be necessary to report deliverables? For a month or quarter they (contractor) would not do outreach activities or billing. If there is a period with 0 actual costs, what should we do?
A	All billing is based on actual costs incurred during the month or quarter for outreach activities. All SOW reporting is based on actual activities completed during the reporting month or quarter. If you have billable hours for working on the project, you may bill for those hours even though you have completed zero or limited SOW activities. If you have no activities to report and no billable hours, simply inform your program analyst that there are no activity or costs in the reporting period. There would be no need to submit an invoice or SOW report.

Exhibits Questions	
Q	Clarifying question regarding Attachment E, Exhibit 1; Client data that organizations on the ground gather because they are assisting clients, is that considered "confidential CDSS data"? Is the client's data that the organization is gathering considered confidential CDSS data? What does CDSS consider its own confidential data?
A	Exhibit E, Attachment 1 is a required document in its entirety. CDSS Information Security Office (ISO) has reviewed the CFO program and determined that information gathered in the course of fulfilling these contracts meet the definition of CDSS data. All data collected by contractors in the fulfillment of contract obligations to CDSS is potentially confidential CDSS data, even though CDSS does not require nor ask for such data to be shared directly with CDSS.
Q	The insurance requirement question; if we are considering having a subcontractor who has second-tier subs, do they need to follow the insurance requirement?
A	The insurance requirement applies to the Applying Agency. CDSS highly recommends that all subcontractors carry the appropriate insurance for their organization as they conduct CalFresh Outreach activities.
Q	Is there an opportunity somewhere in the process to modify/negotiate the intellectual property portion of the contract?
A	Intellectual property guidelines in Exhibit E are standard language in CDSS contracts. If there is a specific issue or question, it would have to be taken to CDSS legal for review.
Funding Questions	
Q	Do you know what the total funding amount for the next round of grants is supposed to be?
A	CFO is a reimbursement program based on the contractor's qualifying CBO contribution. CDSS intends to award all applications meeting the RFA guidelines. Through the Statewide Outreach Plan that CDSS submits to the USDA-FNS, USDA-FNS approves or denies the total funding amount.
Q	Is there a range for the award amount? Is CDSS looking to fund an "X" amount of dollars between a certain amount? Is there currently no minimum or maximum window that we should be aiming for?
A	CFO is a reimbursement program based on the contractor's qualifying CBO contribution. CDSS intends to award all applications meeting the RFA guidelines. Through the Statewide Outreach Plan that CDSS submits to the USDA-FNS, USDA-FNS approves or denies the total funding amount. The RFA does not specify a minimum or maximum.

Q	Are there any plans to limit the funding per county or is it not looked at per county? Is it one per county/region or are there no limitations?
A	Although CDSS does take into account the location of Applying Agencies for the RFA, CDSS does not limit funding per county/region.
Q	The FTE estimation calculator, I am not sure what the multiplication of 4.5 represents in the FTE calculation.
A	CDSS has observed that contractors need, on average, 4.5 hours of staff time to submit an application on behalf of a client.
Q	On the narrative section of fiscal experience, there is no page limit specified for page 8 of the RFA. Would it be part of the page 4 page limitation? (Section I of Attachment 4).
A	There is no page limit in Attachment 4 for the fiscal experience narrative.
Q	Once the plan has been approved, is it possible for CDSS to approve a contract in October, but then FNS denies reimbursement once the contract starts?
A	CFO is a reimbursement program based on the contractor's qualifying CBO contribution. CDSS intends to award all applications meeting the RFA guidelines. Through the Statewide Outreach Plan that CDSS submits to the USDA-FNS, USDA-FNS approves or denies the total funding amount prior to contract approval. For contracts utilizing federal funds, Exhibit B, B.2 states, "If funding for any fiscal year is reduced or deleted by the Budget Act for purposes of this program, CDSS shall have the option to either cancel this Agreement with no liability occurring to the State, or offer an agreement amendment to Contractor to reflect the reduced amount."
Q	Is there a minimum number of applications (Scope of Work) CDSS is looking for when determining funding? Per application, we receive funding for submitted SAR7s and recertifications?
A	Formulas in the RFA provide guidelines for the development of the contract budget. USDA-FNS does not reimburse for program deliverables, contractors are reimbursed for actual time and effort costs associated with allowable activities.
Program Deliverables Questions	
Q	I wanted to know if there was additional clarification of "It is beyond the scope of this RFA for contractors to obtain application status on each paper or electronic application from the CWDs", is CDSS going as far as to say that it is an unallowable activity?
A	Time spent contacting CWDs to obtain application status diverts prime and subcontractor time away from allowable program activities. It is not the intent of this RFA that contractors use their time pursuing application status. USDA-FNS Guidance clearly defines allowable and unallowable activities.

<p>Q</p>	<p>There was a brief mention of CBO Portals, is it CDSS intention that the electronic applications will go through the CBO portals? People can also create an account for the client and submit the application through the Client Portal. So they don't necessarily have to go through a CBO Portal to have it counted in CDSS-provided reports? C4Y doesn't allow you to upload verification documents, LA is not letting new CBOs in unless you get a hold of a person who can make a special exception for you.</p> <p>RFA Section Z. Definitions, defines electronic applications as, "...CalFresh applications submitted to a CWD containing a proper and valid electronic signature as defined in California Civil Code Sections 1633.1 – 1633.17. At present, electronic applications meeting the aforementioned Civil Code are submitted through the consortia portals provided by Your Benefits Now, C4 Yourself and My Benefits CalWIN."</p> <p>The custom reports will only be able to track applications submitted through the CBO Portal.</p>
<p>Q</p>	<p>At the beginning of the contract, will there be a period of time that the contractor will work with CDSS staff to ensure that they (reports) are correctly verified; that CDSS is able to capture all of the CBOs and assistors in the contract using the CBO Portals?</p>
<p>A</p>	<p>Validation efforts are taking place now, and current contractors are encouraged to be involved with CDSS in the process. In the new contract term, if contractors wish to ensure report accuracy, they may track all confirmation numbers and submit those confirmation numbers with each invoice.</p>
<p>Q</p>	<p>How often will CDSS provide the contractors with the CDSS reports? With approved, denied and pending? How much time will the contractor have to work with CDSS if there are any perceived discrepancies?</p>
<p>A</p>	<p>CDSS will provide monthly reports to the contractors by the end of the following month. On an as needed basis, contractors may work with their program analyst to review any perceived discrepancies.</p>
<p>Q</p>	<p>If you have a subcontractor and in their original proposal to CDSS, they have two assistors, and in November they hire a third assistant, who is also linked to their CBO account, will those be counted or not?</p>
<p>A</p>	<p>CDSS will provide clear instructions on how each organization should set up CBO accounts. Once properly set up, all activity by any number of assistors will be counted.</p>
<p>Q</p>	<p>When you were talking about pending applications, CDSS was going to follow up with counties on pending applications. I was curious, why not 30 days? 30 days is the cut-off for applications.</p>
<p>A</p>	<p>CalFresh Outreach is not responsible for county timeliness. However, the 45 day window allows time for the county to work with the client and any applications pending more than 45 days will alert CDSS to potential issues with the custom reports.</p>

Q	<p>Going back to minimum application requirements; minimum application is a signature, name, date, etc. Can you clarify what is the actual minimum the counties would like to see? There is a legal minimum and it shouldn't vary between counties.</p>
A	<p>Yes, there is a legal minimum for an application to be considered "complete." However, as part of the RFA, each contractor is to work with their counties to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Understand the county's preferred method of application submission" • "Understand the minimum requirements necessary to submit a complete application" • "Explore collaboration efforts to provide better client application experiences and results."
Q	<p>Trying to understand CDSS goals. Is there a preference for designing a multi-agency collaboration; is there a preference for county-wide or regional collaborations? Is there any preference for a single vs multiple in a county or region? Are there specific populations/targeted populations that you would like agencies to target? Are we looking for agencies to cover all targeted groups or portions of targeted groups?</p>
A	<p>Collaboration is always beneficial to increasing participation in CalFresh. Each organization may utilize its unique strengths and community connections to reach those eligible but not yet on CalFresh. It is up to the contractor, other CBOs and the county to establish partnerships in order to achieve this goal. Contractors are encouraged to work with all targeted populations and focus on populations that they specifically work with in their communities.</p>
<p>Training Question</p>	
Q	<p>If one organization wants to send all 15 of their people for training, will CDSS be ok with covering that?</p>
A	<p>Section L.5.e notes "CDSS will provide statewide and regional training events to agencies and their subcontractors."</p> <p>Yes, depending on the parameters of the event CDSS will reimburse accordingly.</p>
Q	<p>Follow-up to CDSS answer. Does that mean that we do not need to put this required (travel) expense in our budget?</p>
A	<p>Correct, CDSS will reimburse contractors for required training events.</p>