******STATE OF NEW HAMPSHRIE**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

**RFP Questions and Answers**

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| **RFP NUMBER AND TITLE:** | RFP NHJB 2023-04  Language Interpretation Services |
| **AMENDMENT DATE:** | June 30, 2023 |
| **PROPOSAL DUE DATE:** | July 19, 2023, 11:59 PM |
| **RFP ISSUED BY:** | State of New Hampshire Judicial Branch  Administrative Office of the Courts |
| **Unless specifically addressed below, all other provisions and clauses of the RFP remain unchanged.** | |

**Provided below are submitted written questions received and the NHJB’s answers**

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| **Question #** | **Question** | **Answer** |
|  | Can you provide the name and pricing for the current vendor? | The current vendor is Language Bank. See Attachment 1. |
|  | Does New Hampshire Judicial Branch require court certified interpreters only or legal interpreters with court experience as well? | The NH Judicial Branch prefers court certified interpreters; however, proposals for legal interpreters with court experience will be considered. |
|  | On page 9, expanded services Can we bid on the required interpretation service and not some of the expanded services such as Language Access Consulting services, or do we have to bid on all expanded services as well? | Proposals for Expanded Services are optional. Proposals for Core Services only will not be disqualified if the proposal does not also include Expanded Services. See RFP Section IV, C. |
|  | On page 14, vendor qualifications, do we have to provide CVs for all the interpreters and translators as well? Please note that it will be very difficult to do so. Can we just provide CVs for the staff that will be working on this contract? | Yes, proposals must include CVs for staff assigned to work on this contract. |
|  | On page 14, vendor qualifications, “A complete and unedited list of customers that vendor has completed interpretation services for, including the contact information for all listed customers,” we have thousands of customers we have completed interpretation for and cannot list many of them due to confidentiality. Can we list a few firms and government agencies as reference instead of all customers? | Yes, vendor may submit a list of some clients as references, but not fewer than three. |
|  | On page 10, under expanded services, New Hampshire Judicial Branch is asking for on demand VRI. Do you have an estimate or historical volumes of how many minutes/hours of on demand VRI is needed monthly and in which languages? | No. |
|  | On page 8, video conferencing, is New Hampshire Judicial Branch asking the vendor to provide the video platform for remote interpretation? In our experience, it is best for the customer to provide the video platform such as Zoom so that they can control the meeting themselves instead of on the vendor side. Is the Judicial Branch open to this? | Providing the video platform is not required. The NH Judicial Branch is open to proposals that require the NHJB to provide the video platform. Proposals must clearly specify whether it will require the NHJB to provide the video platform or not. |
|  | On page 5, scope of work, the Judicial Branch is asking for interpreter confirmation after 48 hours. For jobs that are not last minute, this can be difficult to find interpreters so quickly, especially for the rarer languages. Can the Judicial Branch increase this timeline for non-rush requests? | Yes. Vendors should propose expected lead times for non-rush requests. |
|  | What are the average interpretation requests that you anticipate requesting on a monthly basis? | In 2019, the NH Judicial Branch utilized interpreters for 2,484 cases. |
|  | What percentage will be for Spanish? | In 2019, 70.3% of cases requiring interpreters requested Spanish or Spanish Creole. |
|  | Can NHJB provide a list of the most requested languages with the average number of requests per month per language? | We do not have this breakout per month. Here is the breakout for 2019:   * Spanish/Spanish Creole – 70.3% (provided in 496 Scheduled Time Blocks) * Arabic – 4.5% * Swahili – 3.9% * Kinyarwanda – 3.3% * ASL – 3.3% * Portuguese – 3 % * Chinese (Mandarin) – 2.4% * French – 1.6% * Vietnamese – 1.2% * Haitian Creole – 1.2% * Other – 5.1% |
|  | What is the volume for this contract? | See responses to question 11. |
|  | Is there a budget allocated to this contract? | Yes. |
|  | What is NHJB looking to improve or achieve with the new vendor? | This is explained clearly in the Request for Proposal. See RFP Section IV, VII. |
|  | Will the NHJB require any custom reporting? | Yes. See RFP Section IV. |
|  | Are there any additional requirements/skills that have not been mentioned already required from the interpreters? | No. |
|  | Do you need any proof of certification for the interpreters at the time of submission? | The selected vendor must, at a minimum, warrant that all interpreters engaged under an Agreement must be qualified to perform the services, abide by the NHJB Code of Professional Responsibility for Interpreters and the Code of Professional Ethics for NH Courts. Signed copies of these Codes must be maintained in each interpreter’s personnel file. |
|  | Do you currently have any languages on staff or do you have in-house interpreters/translators? If so, for what purpose? | No, the NHJB do not have interpreters/translators on staff. |
|  | Is this solicitation strictly a low-cost award? Are there any other evaluation factors? | This is not a low-cost award. See RFP Section VII. |
|  | Will you notify all participants of the results or only the awardee? | Once the award is made and the resulting contract is executed, all vendors will be notified. |
|  | I did not see a cost sheet provided, are we to create our own? If so, what information are you looking for on it besides the cost associated with these services? | Cost proposals must be detailed to include at the minimum an average hourly rate, administrative fee if any, transportation fee and any other fees associated with the services. The cost proposal must also detail cancellation policies. See RFP Section VI, B, 8 |
|  | Will requests be virtual or in person? If in person what percentage and where would they be located? | In person. |
|  | The RFP mentions background check for interpreters, is this required for the virtual services as well? (video remote interpreting or translation) | Yes. |
|  | We are an out of state vendor, are we allowed to bid on all services requested in this RFP? If so, what are the requirements at the time of submission? | Out of state vendors may submit a proposal. |
|  | Page 6. Provide in person and remote Interpreter Services in NHJB courts in a professional manner. – How are simultaneous, consecutive, and sight translation services to be provided remotely? Will the NHJB be providing the video/audio platform for these events to take place? Are cameras installed in areas where remote VRI services will be offered? | NH Judicial Branch courtrooms are equipped with audio & video technology for remote hearings. |
|  | Page 7. Conduct an in-person interview for all candidates and require that, prior to being utilized to perform services in a NHJB courtroom, all interpreters will have been observed in a legal setting by the vendor and must have taken a 114-word terminology test and have passed by at least seventy-five percent (75%). – Can the In-person interview take place live but remotely? And can the observation be conducted by a recognized SME in the area and can an attestation by the SME suffice for that requirement? | Yes, interviews may be conducted remotely. The vendor must observe the SME. |
|  | Certification of ASL Interpreters. Vendor will require all ASL interpreters to have taken tests through the national Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) and to have received their Specialist Certificate: Legal (SC:L). – Is the Texas BEI Certification (court approved) also acceptable? | The NHJB will consider proposals for ASL Interpreters that have received the Specialist Certificate: Legal or an equivalent, to be determined by the NHJB. |
|  | **Attachment 1** |  |