

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS RFP NHJB-2023-09

FOR

COURT FORMS REDESIGN For Simplification and ADA Compliance

October 16, 2023

Table of Contents

SECTI	ON I. OVERVIEW AND SCHEDULE	4
A.	Introduction	4
C.	Purpose and Background	4
D.	Contract Term	5
SECTI	ON II. SCOPE OF SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED	5
A.	Overview	5
В.	Scope of Work	6
C.	Minimum Requirements for Vendors:	8
SECTI	ON III. RFP PROCESS	9
A.	Agency Point of Contact/Restriction of Contact with Agency Employees	9
В.		
C.	RFP Addendum	9
D.	Property of the NHJB	10
E.	Confidentiality of a Proposal	10
F.	Public Disclosure	10
G.	Ethical Requirements	11
Н.	Non-Commitment	11
I.	Compliance	11
J.	Proposal Cost	
SECTI	ON IV. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS	11
A.	Proposal Submission, Deadline, and Location Instructions	11
В.	Validity of Proposal	12
С.		
SECTI	ON V. EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS	13
A.	Criteria for Evaluation and Scoring	13
D	Oval Interviews and Product Demonstrations	12

C.	Cost Proposal Scoring	14
D.	Negotiations and Selection	14
SECTION	ON VI. CONTRACT DOCUMENT	15

SECTION I. OVERVIEW AND SCHEDULE

A. Introduction

This request for proposals (RFP) is issued by the New Hampshire Judicial Branch (NHJB) through the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) to solicit proposals for simplifying court forms and making them Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant. Specifically, the NHJB seeks to ensure that its online forms comply with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act and be consistent in design and navigation with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The selected vendor will also simplify the NHJB forms and instruction sheets to use plain language to allow people access to the information they need in a way they can understand. This Project will enable the NHJB to produce forms and related documents that enable self-represented litigants (SRLs) to complete required forms independently, accurately, and promptly.

B. Schedule

The following table provides a Schedule of Events for this RFP through contract finalization and Notice to Proceed. NHJB reserves the right to amend this Schedule at its sole discretion and at any time through a published Addendum.

EVENT	DATE	LOCAL TIME
RFP Released to Vendors (Advertisement)	Oct. 16, 2023	
Vendor Inquiry Period Ends	Oct. 25, 2023	11:59 PM
Final NHJB Responses to Vendor Inquiries	Oct. 27, 2023	11:59 PM
Vendors Submit Proposals	Nov. 17, 2023	11:59 PM
Estimated Timeframe for Vendor Oral Presentations	Nov. 27, 2023	
and Interviews (if needed)		
Estimated Notification of Selection and Begin	Dec. 4, 2023	
Contract Development		

C. Purpose and Background

NHJB's mission is to preserve the rule of law and protect the rights and liberties guaranteed by the US and NH Constitutions by providing accessible, prompt, and efficient forums for the fair and independent administration of justice, with respect for the dignity of all served. Information on the NHJB can be found on the NHJB website at https://www.courts.nh.gov/.

In April 2023, the NH Supreme Court issued Administrative Order 2023-04 to create the Office of Access and Community Engagement (OACE). The OACE assists the NH Access to Justice Commission in carrying out its duties and "engage relevant stakeholders and community members in expanding access to justice for all in civil and other legal matters in New Hampshire." OACE seeks to implement processes and services to convert selected court forms from their current state to those both compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and simplified using plain language to improve readability. These "Optimized Forms" The NHJB will set the standard for all forms the court provides.

SRLs participate in their civil court case without the help of a lawyer. They make up a significant percentage of court users in New Hampshire. Given their lack of formal training regarding a complicated legal system, providing accessible and efficient administration of justice can be challenging. The ongoing work of the NH Access to Justice Commission and the recently formed Steering Committee on Diversity and Inclusion seek to improve the efficiency of justice administration and demonstrate inclusivity to all people who seek the court's help in resolving disputes. This Project will address the design and technical barriers inherent in the current court forms such that all litigants have an equal opportunity to tell their story in court with dignity and respect and in a non-biased environment.

Optimized Forms remove barriers for SRLs by making court processes easier to understand. These forms also include instructions, which allow court users to participate in their cases with greater control and reduce the time and costs an SRL would otherwise spend figuring out the next step or paying an attorney to assist them. They also improve community trust and faith in the justice system. By having uniform design, plain language explanations and consistent protocols across the court system, litigants can intuitively understand that the rules governing one person's use of a particular form will not deviate from what is required of another litigant.

Finally, Optimized Forms improve the court's ability to process cases faster and reduce rework and unnecessary delays created by incorrect or ambiguous filings. Forms that are easier to complete will be filed correctly the first time.

D. Contract Term

The initial Contract term will begin on the effective date and will be for one year. The actual contract start date will be established by a completed and approved contract. Following the initial term of the contract, the NHJB may opt to renew the contract for a one-year extension, at the sole option of the NHJB, subject to continued availability of funding and satisfactory performance.

The NHJB anticipates awarding one contract resulting from this RFP process.

SECTION II. SCOPE OF SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED

A. Overview

Most **NHJB** inbound court forms online the court's website. are on https://www.courts.nh.gov/resources/forms-and-fees. They are grouped by court/division, and a link to the form instructions is in the description. They are also linked from each Circuit Court Division and by Case Type. Forms by case type intend to help the SRL understand the documents needed for their case. Some legal information is available in instruction sheets, and most will benefit from forms simplification/plain language design.

The NHJB will identify groups of forms – called form sets – with sufficient commonalities that they are best converted as a set. Form sets may not include every form necessary for any given case type.

The NHJB employs a formal process to identify and modify (or create new) forms for the two trial courts and the NH Supreme Court. For Circuit Court, a forms committee oversees the process and works closely with forms editors to advise, execute, review, and approve changes. For Superior Court, the Administrator identifies a needed change and works with IT to make changes. For changes or changes to forms that affect forms used by both Trial Courts, NH Judicial Branch Administrative Council approval is required. All form edits are tracked in the Statement of Purpose.

Outbound forms are generated from the case management system (Odyssey) templates (produced in Word). The selected vendor is encouraged to include the appropriate Odyssey tokens in revised forms; however, to do so is not required.

In addition to forms, email templates used by the NH Information Center are similarly managed.

This Project aims to acquire services and technology that will enable the NHJB to meet the objectives described in Appendix D.

<u>The total maximum budget available for this project is \$80,000</u>. However, bidders are reminded that cost is part of the scored evaluation.

B. Scope of Work

- a. Design, plan, and execute the Project to meet the Objectives listed in Appendix D.
- b. Recommend a community outreach plan to include external stakeholders for requirements, design, testing, and dissemination activities.
- c. Incorporate user-centered design and user testing.
- d. Build a sustainability model, i.e., "Train the Trainer" for ADA compliance, basic concepts on plain language theory and forms simplification, and software instruction as required.
- e. Conduct project kick-off to explain project processes, procedures, roles, and responsibilities of team members.
- f. Provide "basic concepts" training for selected project team members and more detailed training for staff currently responsible for producing court forms.
- g. Work with the NHJB team to select individual inbound and outbound forms, form sets, and email templates to be converted from their "as is" state to the "to be" format.
 - i. Form sets may be from either trial court.
 - ii. Form sets are defined as a multiple page form, form instruction sheet, and any other documents related to the form.

- iii. For the purposes of pricing, a form set will not exceed five pages. The total number of simplified/ADA-compliant form sets shall not exceed two-hundred total pages.
- h. Assist the NHJB team in determining the criteria for selecting forms that are best suited for conversion during the Project.
 - i. Criteria must include the needs of all forms users, including court staff, judges, and litigants.
- i. Research, compare, and assess the design needed to improve the understanding and experience of the self-represented litigant in acquiring, completing, and submitting the form(s).
- j. Analyze, review, and produce overall changes to the design of our standardized court forms and instructional materials.
- k. Recommend forms to include in the project scope.
- 1. Work with NHJB staff, judges, and external subject matter experts to ensure converted forms comply with state and federal laws.
- m. Design and convert at least twenty form sets that meet the stated Objectives for plain language and ADA compliance.
- n. Field-test at least five form sets.
- o. Train court staff on field testing forms.
- p. Vendors who understand the use of Odyssey Case Management System tokens in outbound forms are preferred; however, this capability is not required.
- q. Provide recommendations on standard, non-proprietary software platform(s) with which to design simplified, ADA-compliant forms.
 - i. Recommendations should include as assessment of staff hours using current tools verses the recommended platform(s).
 - ii. Recommendations should also include pricing models.
- r. Develop a style guide explaining best practices for formatting, word choices, punctuation, and demonstrating cultural competence, including a reference document for gender inclusivity in court forms and similar communications. This style guide (work product) will become the property of the NHJB.
 - i. Gender inclusivity reference material must include information on compliance with federal law.
- s. Provide in-depth training for NHJB forms editors on utilizing the modern design techniques for remaining forms and future projects.
- t. Meet with NHJB Information Center Staff and other court staff to review the modified forms to ensure they can explain the forms to SRLs.
- u. Provide a post-project ongoing support model that enables NHJB to maintain new skills in ADA compliance and forms simplification.

- v. The NHJB prefers the converted form to be mobile device compatible. Preference will be given to vendors who include mobile-device-friendly forms.
- w. Submit a final report with supporting documentation that addresses the project goals and deliverables detailed in Appendix D, and answers the following questions:
 - i. What are the challenges and concerns of the stakeholders?
 - ii. What options address these challenges and concerns?
 - iii. How do these options compare in terms of cost, time to implement, long-term viability, etc.?
 - iv. What is the roadmap and budget for implementation and for sustaining the system?
- x. Provide ad hoc support to court staff working on forms for at least six months after the final report has been delivered.
- y. All "converted" forms and similar documents produced by the Vendor must conform with Section 508 of the US Rehabilitation Act and apply the Web Accessibility Initiative of the World Wide Web (W3C) standards (e.g., Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) for all converted forms and documents.

C. Minimum Requirements for Vendors:

- 1. All Vendors must demonstrate their experience and ability to produce high-quality court forms and documents by submitting "Before" and "After" samples with their proposal. Proposals that omit samples will be excluded from consideration.
- 2. Vendors with knowledge of outbound forms in the Odyssey case management system are preferred; however, this knowledge is not a prerequisite.
- 3. Vendor proposals must clearly define how their solution will meet the Project Objectives in Appendix D, and they must demonstrate a thorough understanding of ADA compliance and WCAG 2.
- 4. Vendors must demonstrate plain language conversion and ADA compliance expertise with legal information, court forms, general instruction sheets, and checklists commonly used by US judicial systems.
- 5. An out-of-state vendor must have a valid Certificate of Authority to transact business, as required by New Hampshire law RSA 293-A. The form for applying for a Certificate of Authority can be acquired through the New Hampshire Secretary of State's website at: https://sos.nh.gov/corporation-ucc-securities/corporation/forms-and-fees/
 This requirement must be satisfied by applying for a Certificate of Authority before the effective date of the contract resulting from this RFP.

SECTION III. RFP PROCESS

A. Agency Point of Contact/Restriction of Contact with Agency Employees

The <u>sole point of contact</u> for this RFP, from the RFP issue date until the resulting contract is effective:

Takhmina Rakhmatova procurement@courts.state.nh.us

From the date of release of this RFP until the award is made and announced regarding the selection of a vendor, all communication with personnel employed by or under contract with the NHJB regarding this RFP is prohibited unless first approved by the RFP Sole Point of Contact. NHJB employees have been directed not to hold conferences and/or discussions concerning this RFP with any potential contractor during the selection process, unless otherwise authorized by the RFP Sole Point of Contact. Vendors may be disqualified for violating this restriction on communications.

B. Vendor Inquiries

All contact concerning this RFP, including but not limited to, requests for clarifications, questions, any changes to the RFP, must be submitted via email and received by the Point of Contact by the end of vendor inquiry period (see Schedule of Events herein).

The email subject must be as follows: INQUIRIES TO RFP # NHJB-2023-09 COURT FORMS REDESIGN.

The Vendor must identify the RFP name, page number and relevant paragraph and include the Vendor's name, telephone number, and email address.

The NHJB's responses to properly submitted inquiries will be posted on the following website on or before the date specified in the Schedule of Events: https://www.courts.nh.gov/our-courts/supreme-court/about/administrative-office-courts/rfps-and-rfis

The NHJB may consolidate and/or paraphrase questions for sufficiency and clarity. Oral statements, representations, clarifications, or modifications concerning the RFP shall not be binding upon the NHJB. Official responses by the NHJB will be made only in writing by the process described above. It is the responsibility of vendors to review the most updated information related to this RFP before submitting a proposal.

C. RFP Addendum

The NHJB reserves the right to amend this RFP at its discretion, prior to the Proposal submission deadline. In the event of an addendum to this RFP, the NHJB, at its sole discretion, may extend the Proposal submission deadline, as it deems appropriate.

D. Property of the NHJB

All material received in response to this RFP shall become the property of the NHJB and will not be returned to the Vendor. Upon Contract award, the NHJB reserves the right to use any information presented in any Proposal.

E. Confidentiality of a Proposal

Unless necessary for the approval of a contract, the substance of a proposal must remain confidential until the Effective Date of any contract resulting from this RFP. A vendor's disclosure or distribution of Proposals other than to the NHJB will be grounds for disqualification.

F. Public Disclosure

The content of each Vendor's Proposal shall become public information upon the award of any resulting Contract. Any information submitted as part of a response to this RFP may be subject to public disclosure under applicable law.

Confidential, commercial, or financial information may be exempt from public disclosure under applicable law. If you believe any information being submitted in response to this request for proposal, bid or information should be kept confidential as financial or proprietary information, you must specifically identify that information in a letter to the NHJB and must mark/stamp each page of the materials that you claim must be exempt from disclosure as "CONFIDENTIAL". A designation by the Vendor of information it believes exempt does not have the effect of making such information exempt. The NHJB will determine the information it believes is properly exempted from disclosure. Marking of the entire Proposal or entire sections of the proposal as confidential will neither be accepted nor honored. Notwithstanding any provision of this RFP to the contrary, vendor pricing will be subject to disclosure upon approval of the contract. If a request is made to the NHJB to view portions of a Proposal that the Vendor has properly and clearly marked confidential, the NHJB will notify the Vendor of the request and of the date the NHJB plans to release the records. To halt the release of information by the NHJB, a vendor must initiate and provide to the NHJB, prior to the date specified in the notice, a court action in the Superior Court of the State of New Hampshire, at its sole expense, seeking to enjoin the release of the requested information.

By submitting a proposal, vendors acknowledge and agree that:

- The NHJB may disclose any and all portions of the proposal or related materials which are not marked as confidential and/or which have not been specifically explained in the letter to the person identified as the point of contact for this RFP;
- The NHJB is not obligated to comply with a vendor's designations regarding confidentiality and must conduct an independent analysis to assess the confidentiality of the information submitted in your proposal; and
- The NHJB may, unless otherwise prohibited by court order, release the information on the date specified in the notice described above without any liability to a vendor.

G. Ethical Requirements

From the time this RFP is published until a contract is awarded, no vendor shall offer or give, directly or indirectly, any gift, expense reimbursement, or honorarium, as defined by RSA 15-B, to judicial or non-judicial employee of the NHJB, any elected official, public official, public employee, constitutional official, or family member of any such official or employee who will or has selected, evaluated, or awarded an RFP. Any vendor who has been convicted of an offense based on conduct in violation of this section, which has not been annulled, or who is subject to a pending criminal charge for such an offense, shall be disqualified from bidding on the RFP. A vendor that was disqualified under this section because of a pending criminal charge which is subsequently dismissed, results in an acquittal, or is annulled, may notify the NHJB.

H. Non-Commitment

Notwithstanding any other provision of this RFP, this RFP does not commit the NHJB to award a Contract. The NHJB reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to reject any and all Proposals, or any portions thereof, at any time; to cancel this RFP; and to solicit new Proposals under a new acquisition process.

I. Compliance

Vendors must be in compliance with applicable federal and state laws, rules and regulations, and applicable policies and procedures adopted by the NHJB currently in effect, and as they may be adopted or amended during the contract period. It is Vendor's responsibility to determine the applicability and requirements of any such laws, rules and regulations.

J. Proposal Cost

By submitting a Proposal, a vendor agrees that in no event shall the NHJB be either responsible for or held liable for any costs incurred by a vendor in the preparation of, or in connection with the proposal, or for oral presentation or product demonstration if any.

SECTION IV. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

A. Proposal Submission, Deadline, and Location Instructions

Proposals must be submitted via email to <u>procurement@courts.state.nh.us</u>.

Proposals must be clearly marked as follows:

NEW HAMPSHIRE JUDICIAL BRANCH RESPONSE TO RFP NHJB-2023-09 COURT FORMS REDESIGN

The email subject must be as follows: RESPONSE TO RFP NHJB-2023-09 COURT FORMS REDESIGN

Proposals <u>must be received</u> no later than the time and date specified in the Schedule of Events section. Late submissions may not be considered for contract award. Delivery of the Proposals shall be at the bidder's expense. NHJB accepts no responsibility for mislabeled email or email that is not delivered or undeliverable for whatever reason.

B. Validity of Proposal

The proposal shall be signed by a person authorized to legally bind the bidder and shall contain a statement that the proposal and the pricing contained therein will remain valid for one hundred and eighty (180) days following the deadline for submission of Proposals in Schedule of Events, or until the effective date of any resulting Contract, whichever is later.

C. Proposal Format

- 1. For clarity, the proposal should be typed or printed. Proposals should be single-spaced with 1" margins on white 8 1/2" x 11" paper using a font no smaller than 12-point Times New Roman or similar.
- 2. Bidders must respond to each question and instructions listed in Appendix C of this RFP. Number each response in the proposal to correspond to the relevant question or instructions of the RFP.
- 3. All pages of the proposal should be numbered consecutively beginning with number one (1) on the first page (not including the cover page or table of contents pages) through to the end, including all forms and attachments. Bidder's name should appear on every page, including attachments.
- 4. All electronic documents should be formatted for printing as formatting will not be adjusted prior to printing and review of these documents.
- 5. It is the responsibility of the bidder to provide <u>all</u> information requested in the RFP package <u>at the time of submission</u>. Failure to provide information requested in this RFP may, at the discretion of the NHJB, result in a lower rating for the incomplete sections and may result in the proposal being disqualified for consideration.
- 6. The bidder shall complete and submit the "Proposal Cover Page" provided in Appendix A of this RFP and provide it with the Bidder's Proposal. The cover page must show the specific information requested, including Bidder address(es) and other details listed. The proposal cover page shall be dated and signed by a person authorized to enter into contracts on behalf of the bidder.
- 7. The bidder should complete and submit the "Debarment and Non-collusion Certification Form" provided in Appendix B of this RFP. Failure to provide this certification may result in the disqualification of the Bidder's Proposal, at the discretion of the NHJB.

SECTION V. EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

A. Criteria for Evaluation and Scoring

The NHJB will evaluate each responsive proposal using a scoring scale of 100 points which will be distributed as set forth in the table below:

CATEGORIES	POINTS
Technical Proposal	
Overall proposal alignment with Objectives stated in Appendix D	15
Demonstrated relevant experience in 508/W3C standards, plain language, and	15
ADA compliance. Some vendor experience must be in court forms and	
legal documents, and conversion of "legal-ese" to plain language is	
required.	
Documented training programs for court staff in plain language and ADA	10
compliance concepts and skills with respect to court forms and associated	
written materials. Vendors will be evaluated on their ability to help the	
NHJB build expertise in-house.	
Demonstrated ability to provide post-project support to court staff who	10
create, modify, and update forms to ensure trial court forms redesign	
becomes an NHJB core competency.	
Samples, testimonials, and similar evidence of exemplary trial court form	35
redesign capabilities in a project setting working with court staff, and	
other internal and external stakeholders	
Cost Proposal	
Project costs demonstrate value for the NHJB and are within the stated	15
budget. Itemized cost proposals are preferred, and the total project cost	
must be clearly stated in the proposal.	
TOTAL MAXIMUM POINTS	100

The review team will use a consensus approach to evaluate the proposals. The contract award(s) will be made to the Vendor receiving the highest number of evaluation points.

B. Oral Interviews and Product Demonstrations

The NHJB reserves the right to invite vendors to oral interviews and/or product demonstrations. The NHJB retains the sole discretion to determine whether to conduct oral interviews, with which vendors, and the number of interviews. Vendors are advised that the NHJB may decide to conduct interviews with less than all responsive vendors.

The purpose of oral interviews and product demonstrations is to clarify and expound upon information provided in the written proposals. Information gained from oral interviews and product demonstrations will be used to refine technical review scores assigned from the initial review of the proposals. Vendors are prohibited from altering their proposals during the oral

interviews and product demonstrations. Therefore, Vendors should submit proposals that present their rates and other information as clearly and completely as possible.

The NHJB may ask the Vendor to provide written clarifications of elements in their proposal regardless of whether it intends to conduct oral interviews.

C. Cost Proposal Scoring

Cost proposals will be reviewed upon completion of the final technical scoring of proposals. Vendors are advised that this is not a low bid award and that the scoring of the cost proposal will be combined with the scoring of the technical proposal to determine the overall highest scoring vendor. Proposals that exceed total available budget will not be considered.

For the purpose of use of this formula, the lowest proposed price is defined as the lowest price proposed by a vendor who has scored above the minimum necessary for consideration on the Technical Score.

<u>No Best and Final Offers</u>: The NHJB may seek a best and final offer (BAFO) from any Bidder in this procurement process. However, all Bidders are expected to provide their best value pricing with the submission of their proposal.

D. Negotiations and Selection

- 1. The NHJB reserves the right to waive minor or immaterial deviations from the RFP requirement if determined in the best interest of the NHJB.
- 2. The final decision regarding the award of the contract is subject to approval by the Director of AOC and the Administrative Council (if applicable).
- 3. If the NHJB determines to make an award, it will issue an "intent to negotiate" notice to a vendor based on these evaluations. The NHJB reserves the right to negotiate with the successful bidder to finalize a contract at the same rate or cost of service as presented in the selected proposal. Such negotiations may not significantly vary the content, nature, or requirements of the proposal or the NHJB's Request for Proposals to an extent that may affect the price of goods or services requested. The NHJB reserves the right to terminate contract negotiations with a selected Bidder who submits a proposed contract significantly different from the proposal they submitted in response to the advertised RFP. In the event that an acceptable contract cannot be negotiated with the highest ranked bidder, the NHJB may withdraw its award and negotiate with the next-highest ranked bidder, and so on, until an acceptable contract has been finalized. Alternatively, the NHJB may cancel this RFP, and solicit new proposals under a new acquisition process.
- 4. The NHJB reserves the right to reject any and all Proposals or to make multiple awards.

SECTION VI. CONTRACT DOCUMENT

- A. The Selected Bidder will be required to execute a contract in the form of the NHJB Standard Terms and Conditions which is attached as Appendix E.
- B. The NHJB may consider modifications of this form during negotiations. To the extent that a vendor believes that exceptions to the standard form contract will be necessary for the Vendor to enter into the agreement, the Vendor should note those issues during the vendor inquiry period. The NHJB will review requested exceptions and accept, reject or note that it is open to negotiation of the proposed exception at its sole discretion. If the NHJB accepts a vendor's exception the NHJB will, at the conclusion of the inquiry period, provide notice to all potential bidders of the exceptions which have been accepted and indicate that exception is available to all potential bidders. Any exceptions to the standard form contract that are not raised during the Vendor inquiry period are waived. In no event is a vendor to submit its own standard contract terms and conditions as a replacement for the NHJB's terms in response to this solicitation.
- C. Allocation of funds is final upon successful negotiations and execution of the contract, subject to the review and approval of the Director of the Administrative Office of the Courts, and NHJB Administrative Council (if applicable). Contracts are not considered fully executed and valid until approved by the Director and the Council and funds are encumbered. No contract is effective unless signed by the Director.

APPENDIX A PROPOSAL COVER PAGE RFP# NHJB-2023-09

COURT FORMS REDESIGN FOR ADA COMPLIANCE AND SIMPLIFICATION

Bidder's Organization Name:			
Chief Executive - Name/Title:			
Tel:		Email:	
Headquarters Street Address:			
Headquarters City/State/Zip:			
(Provide information requested below if different from above)			
Lead Point of Contact for Proposal - Name/Title:			
Tel:		Email:	
Local Office Street Address:			
Local Office City/State/Zip:			

- This proposal and the pricing contained therein will remain valid for hundred and eighty (180) days following the deadline for submission of Proposals in the Schedule of Events contained in the RFP, or until the effective date of any resulting Contract, whichever is later.
- No personnel currently employed by the NHJB, or any NH State agency participated, either directly or indirectly, in any activities relating to the preparation of the Bidder's Proposal.
- No attempt has been made or will be made, by the bidder to induce any other person or firm to submit or not to submit a proposal.
- The above-named organization is the legal entity entering into the resulting agreement with the NHJB should they be awarded the contract.
- The undersigned is authorized to enter contractual obligations on behalf of the above-named organization.

To the best of my knowledge, all information provided in the enclosed proposal, both programmatic and financial, is complete and accurate at the time of submission.

Name (Print):	Title:
Authorized Signature:	Date:

APPENDIX B

DEBARMENT AND NON-COLLUSION CERTIFICATION RFP# NHJB-2023-09 COURT FORMS REDESIGN FOR ADA COMPLIANCE AND SIMPLIFICATION

By signing this document, I certify to the best of my knowledge and belief that the aforementioned organization, its principals and any subcontractors named in this proposal:

- a. Have not, within the past 2 years, been convicted of, or pleaded guilty to, a violation of RSA 356:2, RSA 356:4, or any state or federal law or county or municipal ordinance prohibiting specified bidding practices, or involving antitrust violations, which has not been annulled;
- b. Have not been prohibited, either permanently or temporarily, from participating in any public works project pursuant to RSA 638:20;
- c. Have not previously provided false, deceptive, or fraudulent information on a vendor code number application form, or any other document submitted to the state of New Hampshire, which information was not corrected as of the time of the filing of a bid, proposal, or quotation;
- d. Are not currently debarred from performing Work on any project of the federal government or the government of any state;
- e. Have not, within the past 2 years, failed to cure a default on any contract with the federal government or the government of any state;
- f. Are not presently subject to any order of the department of labor, the department of employment security, or any other state department, agency, board, or commission, finding that the bidder is not in compliance with the requirements of the laws or rules that the department, agency, board, or commission is charged with implementing;
- g. Are not presently subject to any sanction or penalty finally issued by the department of labor, the department of employment security, or any other state department, agency, board, or commission, which sanction or penalty has not been fully discharged or fulfilled;
- h. Are not currently serving a sentence or is subject to a continuing or unfulfilled penalty for any crime or violation noted in this section;
- i. Have not failed or neglected to advise the division of any conviction, plea of guilty, or finding relative to any crime or violation noted in this section, or of any debarment, within 30 days of such conviction, plea, finding, or debarment;
- j. Have not been placed on the debarred parties list by the NH Department of Administrative Services pursuant to RSA 21-I:11-c within the past year;
- k. Have not been convicted of wage theft of its employees within the past 2 years;
- l. Have not been convicted of a felony level offense involving worker safety practices within the past 2 years; or
- m. Have not been found guilty, within the last 2 years of misclassification of workers as independent contractors, in violation of department of labor standards and the definition of employee in RSA 281-A:2.

I further certify that: the proposal submitted in response to this RFP, the prices, terms and conditions, and Work quoted have been established without collusion with other vendors and without effort to preclude the NHJB from obtaining the best possible competitive proposal. The above-mentioned entities

understand and agree that collusive bidding is a violation of state and federal law and can result in fines, prison sentences, and civil damage awards.

Failure to provide this certification may result in the disqualification of the Bidder's Proposal, at the discretion of the NHJB.

Name (Print):	Title:
Authorized Signature:	Date:

APPENDIX C

BIDDER RESPONSE TEMPLATE RFP NHJB-2023-09

COURT FORMS REDESIGN FOR ADA COMPLIANCE AND SIMPLIFICATION

Bidders must submit proposals in accordance with "Appendix C- Bidder Response Template". The Bidder's Proposal should sequentially follow each section found in Appendix C and Bidder must answer each question that is asked in each section, as well as respond to all information sought. The NHJB reserves the right to reject any and all proposals that do not follow this required formatting. All proposals must address the following:

A. Experience:

- a. Describe your experience with court forms and legal documents and your ability to produce high-quality court forms and documents.
- b. Describe relevant experience and qualifications that demonstrate a thorough understanding of ADA compliance and WCAG 2.
- c. State your level of understanding of Odyssey Case Management System tokens in outbound forms.
- d. Describe your ability to conform with Section 508 of the US Rehabilitation Act and apply the Web Accessibility Initiative of the World Wide Web (W3C) standards for all converted forms and documents.
- e. Describe your experience with software platforms used for digital, printable forms suitable for a web browser or mobile app.

B. Proposed Solutions:

- a. Clearly define how your solution will meet each Project Objective in Appendix D.
- b. Describe, at a high level, the project approach, plan, and execution to meet the Objectives listed in Appendix D.
- c. Describe your methodology and process to select individual forms, form sets, and email templates to be converted from their "as is" state to the "to be" format.
- d. Identify and describe the software platforms to be used for digital, printable forms suitable for a web browser or mobile app.
- e. Explain the number of forms you anticipate converting based on this Project's scope and budget.
- f. Describe how you will field test converted forms.
- g. Describe the design concepts that demonstrate improvements for self-represented litigants in acquiring, completing, and submitting court forms.

C. Training:

- a. Include an explanation of how you will train court staff on field testing forms.
- b. Provide a curriculum outline of "basic concepts" training for selected project team members and a more detailed training plan for staff currently responsible for producing and/or revising court forms.
- D. Provide three example style guide principles explaining best practices for formatting, word choices, punctuation, conveying cultural sensitivity, addressing gender identity, etc.

E. Post-Project Support:

- a. Describe your post-project ongoing support model that enables NHJB to maintain new skills in ADA compliance and forms simplification.
- F. Cost Proposal:

Vendors must include the following information in their cost proposal:

- a. Forms Conversion Costs select one:
 - i. Cost per page and estimated number of total pages, or
 - ii. Cost per hour and estimated total number of hours.
- b. Consulting select one:
 - i. Cost per hour and estimated number of hours, or
 - ii. Total flat fee.

Consulting includes assisting on forms selection, research, report writing, and facilitated stakeholder meetings.

- c. Training
 - i. Cost per "Train the Trainer" sessions and total number of sessions, and
 - ii. Flat fee for training materials and the style guide.
- d. Post-project ad hoc support to NHJB forms designers.
 - i. Quote as a flat fee for a specified duration.
- e. Itemized travel expenses, if applicable.
 - i. Specify the number of expected site visits and their duration.
 - ii. Travel expenses must follow GSA Rates for Concord, NH.

G. Sample:

- a. Provide samples of redesigned forms. Include "Before" and "After" forms.
- b. Please provide brief description what the forms are and how they were redesigned.

APPENDIX D

PROJECT OBJECTIVES RFP NHJB-2023-09

COURT FORMS REDESIGN FOR ADA COMPLIANCE AND SIMPLIFICATION

This request for proposal aims to acquire services and technology that will meet the following objectives.

- A. Determine which forms to "convert" from their as-is state to the ADA-compliant/plain language construction based on recommended criteria such as:
 - a. High volume
 - b. Commonly used by self-represented litigants
 - c. Those that save staff time spent assisting litigants or on rework due to inadvertent errors
 - d. Based on the language proficiency and literacy levels of ordinary users
 - e. Those that have repeated applications for previously denied filing
 - f. Forms that are denied for failure to meet requirements
 - g. Forms that self-represented litigants frequently have trouble completing because they are not written in "plain language," or litigants do not understand the legal terminology, or it deals with complex legal concepts.

Court forms are located here on the court's website: https://www.courts.nh.gov/resources/forms-and-fees

- B. Utilizing pre-determined forms samples, the Vendor will research, user test, and consider user experience (UT/UX) to:
 - a. Determine the best way to convey instructional information about forms and court process to litigants and provide graphic design, content, and medium recommendations,
 - b. Create visually appealing and easy-to-use forms that improve efficiency and usability for filer and court staff/judges while adhering to the most up-to-date standards for plain language/gender-neutral comprehension,
 - c. Incorporate design principles for accessibility as defined by WC3 WCAG 2: https://www.w3.org/WAI/standards-guidelines/wcag/
 - d. Ensure court form redesign changes can subsequently be implemented across the entire library of forms,
 - e. Note: e-Filed forms generated by TurboCourt for self-represented parties and other non-attorney filers are out-of-scope: https://www.courts.nh.gov/resources/electronic-services

Technical Objectives

The Forms Simplification/ADA Compliance will be based on affordable, proven technologies that leverage common standards such as Adobe PDF and modern document assembly technology solutions commonly used in legal organizations and court systems.

The project scope includes both inbound (i.e., filed by litigants) and outbound (court-generated) forms and other communications such as court orders and notices.

Service Objectives

In addition to forms design and development, this Project includes the following service objectives:

- a. Recommend a community outreach plan to include external stakeholders for requirements, design, testing, and dissemination activities.
- b. Incorporate user-centered design and user testing.
- c. Build a sustainability model, i.e., "Train the Trainer" for ADA compliance, basic concepts on plain language theory and forms simplification, and software instruction as required.

Management & Administrative Objectives

The solution provider for this Project shall deliver cost-effective, responsive, and efficient management and customer support as specified in the project scope.

APPENDIX E

CONTRACT



CONTRACT BETWEEN THE NEW HAMPSHIRE JUDICIAL BRANCH AND [INSERT VENDOR NAME]

THIS AGREEMENT (hereinafter "Agreement") is between the State of New Hampshire Judicial Branch, by and through the Administrative Office of the Courts, (hereinafter "NHJB") and [INSERT CONTRACTOR NAME], located at [INSERT STREET/MAILING ADDRESS] (hereinafter the "Contractor").

Vendor Number of the Contract is _____.

1. CONTRACT TERM.

- **1.1.** This contract shall be effective on ["the date signed by both Parties" or specify the date] and shall remain in full force until [INSERT TERMINATION DATE].
- **1.2.** The Contract Term may be extended up to [INSERT NUMBER] of years years(s), ("Extended Term") at the sole option of the NHJB, subject to the Parties prior written Agreement on applicable fees for each extended Term.
- 2. SCOPE OF SERVICES. The Contractor hereby agrees to furnish all qualified personnel, facilities, materials, and services and in consultation with the NHJB, to perform the services, study or projects described in Appendix A, which is incorporated into this agreement and made part of it by reference, and under the terms of this agreement.
- 3. PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT. At all times while working pursuant to the contract, the Contractor shall act in a manner that upholds the dignity and integrity of the NHJB. The Contractor shall observe standards of fidelity and diligence appropriate to work for the NHJB. During the term of the agreement, the Contractor may be engaged by one or more organization(s). The Contractor represents that the Contractor is not and shall not become a party to any agreement that conflicts with the duties hereunder.

4. CONTRACT COSTS.

- **4.1. Total Cost.** Total contract price, method of payment and terms of payment are set forth in Appendix A. Notwithstanding any provision in this agreement to the contrary, and notwithstanding unexpected circumstances, in no event shall the total of all payments authorized, or actually made hereunder, including personnel, facilities, materials, travel and expenses, exceed [INSERT NOT TO EXCEED PRICE].
- **4.2. Payment Contingency**. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary, all obligations of the NHJB hereunder, including, without limitation the continuance of payments are contingent upon the

- availability and continued appropriation of funds. In no event shall the NHJB be liable for any payments in excess of such available appropriated funds. In the event of the reduction or
- **4.3.** termination of appropriated funds by any state or federal legislative or executive action, the NHJB shall have the right to withhold payment until such funds become available, if ever, and shall have the right to reduce or terminate the services under this agreement immediately upon giving the contractor notice of such reduction or termination. The NHJB shall not be required to transfer funds from any other account or source to fund the contract in the event funds are reduced or unavailable.
- **4.4. Documentation of Costs.** During the term of the contract, the Contractor agrees to maintain books, records, documents, and other data evidencing and reflecting all costs and other expenses incurred by the Contractor in the performance of the contract.
- **5. CONTRACT MANAGEMENT.** The parties designate the following points of contact for all notices required under this contract:
 - 5.1. NHJB Contract Manager.

[INSERT NAME, EMAIL, PHONE OF CONTRACT MANAGER]

5.2.Contractor Contract Manager.

[INSERT NAME, EMAIL, PHONE OF PRIMARY CONTRACTOR CONTACT]

6. SET-OFF RIGHTS. The NHJB shall have the right to offset from any amounts otherwise payable to the Contractor under this contract the amounts required or permitted by RSA 80:7 through RSA 80:7-c or any other provisions of law.

7. COMPLIANCE BY CONTRACTOR WITH LAWS AND REOGULATIONS.

- **7.1.** In connection with the performance of the Services, the Contractor shall comply with all applicable statutes, laws, regulations, and orders of federal, state, county or municipal authorities which impose any obligation or duty upon the Contractor, including, but not limited to, civil rights and equal employment opportunity laws. In addition, if this agreement is funded in any part by monies of the United States, the Contractor shall comply with all federal executive orders, rules, regulations, and statutes, and with any rules, regulations and guidelines as the state or the United States issue to implement these regulations. The Contractor shall also comply with all applicable intellectual property laws.
- **7.2.** During the term of this agreement, the Contractor shall not discriminate against employees or applicants for employment because of age, sex, sexual orientation, race, color, marital status, physical or mental disability, religious creed, national origin, gender identity, or gender expression, and will take affirmative action to prevent such discrimination, unless exempt by state or federal law. The Contractor shall ensure any subcontractors comply with these nondiscrimination requirements.
- **7.3.** The Contractor agrees to permit the State or United States access to any of the Contractor's books, records, and accounts for the purpose of ascertaining compliance with this agreement and all rules, regulations and orders pertaining to the covenants, terms and conditions of this agreement.
- **8.** CONTRACTOR'S RELATION TO THE STATE. In the performance of this Agreement the Contractor is in all respect an independent contractor and is neither an agent nor an employee of the

- NHJB. Neither the Contractor nor any of its officers, employees, agents, or members shall have authority to bind the NHJB or receive any benefits, workers' compensation or other emoluments provided by the state to its employees.
- 9. INSURANCE. Contractor shall, at its sole expense, obtain and maintain in force, and shall require any sub-contractor or assignee to obtain and maintain in force, commercial general liability insurance against all claims of bodily injury, death, or property damage, in amounts of not less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence and \$2,000,000 in aggregate. At the request of the NHJB, the Contractor shall furnish a current certificate of insurance for all insurance required under this contract.
- 10. WORKERS COMPENSATION. The Contractor agrees, certifies, and warrants that the Contractor is in compliance with or exempt from, the requirements of NH. RSA chapter 281-A ("Workers' Compensation"). To the extent the Contractor is subject to the requirements of NH. RSA chapter 281-A, Contractor shall maintain, and require any sub-contractor or assignee to secure and maintain, payment of Workers' Compensation in connection with activities which the person proposes to undertake pursuant to the agreement. The NHJB shall not be responsible for payment of any Workers' Compensation premiums or for any other claim or benefit for Contractor, or any sub-contractor or employee of Contractor, which might arise under applicable State of New Hampshire Workers' Compensation laws in connection with the performance of the Services under the agreement.

11. EVENT OF DEFAULT AND REMEDIES.

- **11.1. Default.** Any one of the following acts or omissions by the Contractor shall constitute an event of default hereunder:
 - 11.1.1. Failure to perform the services to the reasonable satisfaction of the NHJB or on any agreed to schedule; or
 - 11.1.2. Failure to perform any other covenant, term, or condition of the contract.
- **11.2. Remedy.** In the event of a default, the NHJB may take any or all the following actions:
 - 11.2.1. Provide the Contractor with a written notice specifying the event of default and requiring it to be remedied within, unless another time specified in the notice, thirty (30) days from the date of the notice; and if the event of default is not remedied within the prescribed period, terminate the contract effective two (2) days giving the Contractor notice of termination;
 - 11.2.2. Set off against any other obligations the NHJB may owe to the Contractor any damages the NHJB suffers by reason of any default; and/or
 - 11.2.3. Treat the contract as breached and pursue any of its remedies at law, or in equity, or both.

12. DATA BREACH.

- 12.1. Contractor agrees to comply with all applicable laws that require the notification of individuals in the event of unauthorized release of personally identifiable information or other event requiring notification. In the event of a Security Breach, as defined by RSA 359-C:19, of any of Contractor's security obligations, or other event requiring notification under applicable law, Contractor agrees to:
 - 12.1.1. Notify NHJB's Chief Information Officer by telephone and email of such an event within 24 hours of discovery, and
 - 12.1.2. Assume responsibility for informing all individuals in accordance with applicable law,

and

- 12.1.3. Indemnify, hold harmless and defend the NHJB and/or the State of New Hampshire and its agencies, officers, and employees from and against any claims, damages, or other harm related to such Notification Event.
- 12.1.4. Contractor's notification to NHJB shall identify:
 - 12.1.4.1. The nature of the unauthorized access, use or disclosure;
 - 12.1.4.2. The computerized data accessed, used or disclosed;
 - 12.1.4.3. The person(s) who accessed, used or disclosed and/or received the computerized data (if known);
 - 12.1.4.4. What Contractor has done or will do to mitigate any deleterious effect of unauthorized access, use or disclosure; and
 - 12.1.4.5. What corrective action Contractor has taken or will take to prevent future unauthorized access, use or disclosure.
- 12.2. This paragraph shall survive the termination of the contract.
- 13. WAIVER. The NHJB's failure to enforce its rights with respect to any single or continuing breach of this contract shall not act as a waiver of the right of the NHJB to later enforce any such rights or to enforce any other or any subsequent breach.
- **14. TERMINATION FOR CONVENIENCE:** This Agreement may be terminated by the NHJB in whole, or in part, whenever for any reason. Any such termination shall be effected by a written Notice of Termination specifying the extent to which performance of the Work under the agreement is terminated and the date on which such termination becomes effective.
- **15. ASSIGNMENT, DELEGATION AND SUBCONTRACT.** Contractor shall not sell, transfer, assign, delegate, subcontract, or otherwise transfer any of its interest, rights, or duties under the contract without the prior written consent of the NHJB. No subcontracts or transfer of agreement shall in any case release the Contractor of its liability under this agreement.
- 16. INDEMNIFICATION. The Contractor shall defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the NHJB and/or the State of New Hampshire, its officers and employees, from and against any claims, liabilities and costs for any personal injury or property damages, patent or copyright infringement, or other claims or losses asserted against the NHJB and/or the State of New Hampshire, its agencies, officers and employees, and any and all claims, liabilities or penalties asserted against the NHJB and/or the State of New Hampshire, its agencies, officers and employees, by or on behalf of any person, on account of, based or resulting from, arising out of (or which may be claimed to arise out of), in whole or in part, the acts or omissions of the agreement. Notwithstanding the foregoing, nothing herein contained shall be deemed to constitute a waiver of the sovereign immunity of the NHJB and/or the State of New Hampshire. This paragraph shall survive the termination of the contract.

17. CONFIDENTIALITY

17.1. Contractor hereby agrees to keep confidential any and all NHJB data acquired or provided access to during the course of performance under the contract. The word "data" shall mean all information and things developed or obtained during the performance of or acquired or developed by reason of the contract. Disclosure of any NHJB data requires prior written approval by the NHJB. This paragraph shall survive the termination of the contract.

- 17.2. The Contractor acknowledges and agrees that this contract and all its attachments may, upon execution, be subject to public disclosure in accordance with New Hampshire law. Any information that Contractor claims is private, confidential, or proprietary must be clearly marked as "confidential." If NHJB receives a request for information that has been identified by the Contractor as Confidential, the NHJB will notify the Contractor if it intends to release the information so marked.
- **18. FURTHER ASSURANCES.** The Contractor, along with its agents and affiliates, shall, at its own cost and expense, execute any additional documents and take such further actions as may be reasonably required to carry out the provisions of this contract and give effect to the transactions contemplated hereby.
- **19. THIRD PARTIES.** This agreement is being entered into for the sole benefit of the parties hereto, and nothing herein, express or implied, is intended to or will confer any legal or equitable right, benefit, or remedy of any nature upon any other person.
- **20. GOVERNING LAW AND VENUE.** The contract shall be governed in all respects by the laws, statutes, and regulations of the United States of America and of the State of New Hampshire. Any actions arising out of this contract, including the breach or alleged breach thereof, may not be submitted to binding arbitration, but must, instead, be brought and maintained in the Merrimack County Superior Court of New Hampshire which shall have exclusive jurisdiction thereof. The Contractor consents to personal jurisdiction in the State of New Hampshire. This paragraph shall survive the termination of the contract.
- 21. FORCE MAJEURE. The NHJB may, at its discretion, excuse the performance of an obligation by a party under this contract in the event that performance of that obligation by that party is prevented by an act of God, act of war, riot, fire, explosion, flood or other catastrophe, sabotage, severe shortage of fuel, power or raw materials, change in law, court order, national defense requirement, or strike or labor dispute, provided that any such event and the delay caused thereby is beyond the control of, and could not reasonably be avoided by, that party. The NHJB may, at its discretion, extend the time period for performance of the obligation excused under this section by the period of the excused delay together with a reasonable period to reinstate compliance with the terms of this contract.
- **22. SEVERABILITY.** In the event any of the provisions of this agreement are held by a court of competent jurisdiction to be contrary to any state or federal law, the remaining provisions of this agreement will remain in full force and effect.
- **23. AMENDMENT.** This contract may be amended only by an instrument in writing signed by both parties and only after approval and execution of the Director of Administrative Office of the Courts and Administrative Council, if applicable.
- **24. CONFLICTING TERMS.** To the extent there is a conflict between the provisions of this contract and any attachments to this contract, including but not limited to Appendix A, the provisions of this Contract control shall take precedence.
- 25. EXECUTION. This agreement may be executed by transmittal of electronic signature

counterparts.

each of which shall be deemed an original	which may be executed in a number of counterparts, constitutes the entire agreement and understanding or agreements and understandings with respect to the
Print Name:	Date
Print Title:	
Contractor's Business Name:	
Dianne Martin, Esq. Director Administrative Office of the Courts New Hampshire Judicial Branch	Date