COUNTY OF ALAMEDA

Questions & Answers

to

RFP No. 902206

### for

Emergency Prepared Meals Distribution and CalFresh Outreach Services

**Networking/Bidders Conference Held on October 3, 2022**

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| **This County of Alameda, General Services Agency (GSA), RFP Questions & Answers (Q&A) has been electronically issued to potential bidders via email. Email addresses used are those in the County’s Small Local Emerging Business (SLEB) Vendor Database or other sources. If you have registered or are certified as a SLEB, please ensure that the complete and accurate email address is noted and kept updated in the SLEB Vendor Database. This RFP Q&A will also be posted on the GSA Contracting Opportunities website located at** [**Alameda County Current Contracting Opportunities**](https://gsa.acgov.org/do-business-with-us/contracting-opportunities/)**.**  |

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Thank you for your participation and interest in the County of Alameda Request for Proposal (RFP) for Emergency Prepared Meals Distribution and CalFresh Outreach Services.

All the questions are taken verbatim from written questions emailed by potential Bidders. The County of Alameda shall be noted as “County” in the answers to these questions. The Questions and Answers are the final stances of the County. Please consider this document in preparation for your bid response.

**Questions and Answers:**

1. Proposals are to be submitted as a PDF – does this apply to the Excel Bid Form, as well?
	1. **The Excel Bid Form shall be uploaded to the EZSourcing Supplier Portal as an Excel Spreadsheet and shall not be converted into a PDF.**
2. Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, our organization has utilized Docusign for signing all documents. Will a more secure Docusign signature fulfill the “Wet Signature” requirement for this bid packet?
	1. **DocuSign signatures will be acceptable in place of wet signatures.**
3. Is this a re-bid for the exact same services recently pulled, but now with a new RFP number and due date of October 27?
	1. **RFP No. 902206 is a new bid for Emergency Prepared Meals Distribution and CalFresh Outreach Services and has revised specific requirements.**
4. Why was the previous version of the RFP withdrawn?
	1. **The previous RFP was cancelled to revise the specific requirements.**
5. Is there a target or maximum amount of funding that agencies can request for this contract? This would help us understand how much impact we could have depending on the amount available.
	1. **The County does not provide information regarding available funding and budgets for current competitive bid processes.**
6. Will the grant pay for salaries, equipment and supplies?
	1. **The County is requesting Unit Costs for Year 1 and Year 2 for Emergency Prepared Meals Distribution and CalFresh Outreach Services as this RFP requires in the Bid Form. The cost quoted must include all taxes (excluding sales and use tax) and all other charges, and is the maximum cost the County will pay for the term of any contract that is a result of this request for quote.**
7. Is there a current prime contractor providing these services for the County and if so, who is the agency? Or is this a newly funded program seeking an initial prime?
	1. **There is no current contractor for Emergency Prepared Meals Distribution and CalFresh Outreach Services, and RFP No. 902206 is for new services.**
8. What qualifies as an Emergency Meal?
	1. **For RFP No. 902206, an emergency prepared meal is any prepared hot or cold meal provided to individuals and families in Alameda County who are food insecure and need free prepared meals to help meet their nutritional needs outside of what they can purchase or prepare with their resources.**
9. Is a premium civilian Meals, Ready to Eat (MRE) like ours acceptable for the purposes of this bid?
	1. **No. Meals, Ready to Eat (MRE) is not acceptable as it does not meet the requirements under this RFP.**
10. Is it possible to operate a food pantry that supplies groceries rather than the prepared meals as meal equivalents for this RFP?
	1. **No. Food pantries and groceries distribution will not be accepted under this RFP. Prepared meals distribution and delivery activities may include, but are not limited to, meal preparation, meal delivery, grab-and-go meals, mobile or fixed meal distribution sites, and other forms of prepared meal distribution.**
11. Was the total number of meals for each region increased purely as a result of more funds available? or are you providing guidance for where the meals will be served since the numbers have gone up?
	1. **The total number of meals for each region has increased from the previous RFP due to the contract term being condensed to two (2) years, with an option to extend for an additional two (2) years. The estimated quantity of meals is 33,336 per region per year.**
12. Are the stated quantities in the Bid Form the number of individual meals/servings required?
	1. **The quantities listed in the Bid Form are estimates and are not to be construed as a commitment. No minimum or maximum is guaranteed or implied.**
13. The estimated total meal count per region set in the bid formula is 33,336. Does this mean that we have to use this number when calculating subcontractor/partner cost in Budget Detail? If we use 100 meals @ unit vendor cost of $5 for example, the total would be $500. If we use 33,336 meals @ $5, it would be $166,680. So depending on the total meal count we use, the unit cost will differ considerably. The only way to make a fair representation seems to be matching the total number of meals provided set in the bid form=33,336. Please advise.
	1. **The Estimated Quantity of meals per region per year is 33,336. The quantities listed in the Bid Form are estimates and are not to be construed as a commitment. No minimum or maximum is guaranteed or implied. The cost quoted must include all taxes (excluding sales and use tax) and all other charges and is the maximum cost the County will pay for the term of any contract that is a result of this request for quote.**
14. We offer both a Family Meal that serves 5 people, and Individual Meals that serve 1 person. Is the Family Meal option eligible for these funds, and if so, how should we include it in the bid worksheet?
	1. **One (1) meal unit is considered breakfast, lunch or dinner for one (1) individual.**
15. With the two components of the RFP (Meals & CalFresh), what constitutes a Service Unit, and how will that apply pricing and billing?
	1. **The Unit of Measure is one (1) meal. The cost quoted must include all taxes (excluding sales and use tax) and all other charges and is the maximum cost the County will pay for the term of any contract that is a result of this request for quote.**
16. The budget must be divided by the amount of food plus delivery or the total cost must be included?
	1. **Bidder must provide Unit Costs for Year 1 and Year 2 for the estimated quantity per region proposed in the Bid Form. The cost quoted must include all taxes (excluding sales and use tax) and all other charges and is the maximum cost the County will pay for the term of any contract that is a result of this request for quote. Bidder shall enter data into grey cells in the Bid Form, Provider Information, and Region 1, 2, 3, and/or 4-Budget Detail tabs. Any calculations will automatically formulate.**
17. The program to measure the data, do you want to include only the budget of how much the program would cost, specifying the cost on the same sheet of the bulletin?
	1. **See responses A6, A12, A13 and A16, and the Bid Form.**
18. Can only one area work to deliver food and submit the proposal for only one area or does it have to include all areas?
	1. **Bidder may propose to provide services for one (1) or more of the four (4) regions outlined in the RFP. If Bidder is proposing to bid on more than one (1) region, Bidder shall clearly list each region and provide details requested for each region separately.**
19. Can caterers apply to the CalFresh Restaurant Meal Program, and if a caterer did so before the application deadline would they be eligible to earn the points available for that Evaluation Criterium?
	1. **Pages 21-22 of the RFP, Section G (Evaluation Criteria/Selection Committee), Item 14.E, states:**

***Proposals will be evaluated against the RFP specifications and the questions below:***

***1. Does the Bidder clearly define the specific partnerships with the food suppliers and distribution partners that they will partner with to provide meal distribution and CalFresh application assistance services? (5 points)***

***2. Does the Bidder demonstrate a collaborative program design that ensures coordination of services, avoids duplication of services, and effectively utilizes different providers’ strengths that will benefit the target populations? (3 points)***

***3. Does the bidder’s partnerships include restaurants that are participating in or have applied to participate in the CalFresh Restaurant Meals Program? (2 points)***

***4. Does the Bidder describe how they will effectively serve individuals with food restrictions (i.e., diabetics/low-glycemic, gluten-free, vegetarian, halal, food allergies, etc.)? (3 points)***

 ***5. Does the proposal have an effective plan in place for implementing COVID-19 pandemic health and safety protocols, including food safety, in program operations? (2 points)***

1. Page 9, §C.1.c. of the RFP reads: “Partnering vendor(s) must have at least one (1) year of experience providing CalFresh application assistance services as described in this RFP.“ One of our potential partnering vendors is a halal establishment with no experience enrolling the public into CalFresh. May we as the lead organization, with years of experience in social navigation, handle CalFresh/WIC enrollment, and our partnering food vendor, with years of experience in food safety/preparation, simply handle the meals preparation.
	1. **Page 8 of the RFP, Section C (Bidder Qualifications), Item 1.c., states:**

***Bidder must have at least one (1) year of experience providing CalFresh application assistance services as described in this RFP. Bidders without this experience may partner with other vendor(s) to submit a single bid as a partnership. Partnering vendor(s) must have at least one (1) year of experience providing CalFresh application assistance services as described in this RFP. Experience will be verified by the County. Bidder’s experience and any partnering vendor’s experience must be clearly stated or demonstrated in the bid response.***

**If Bidder has at least one (1) year of experience providing CalFresh application assistance services as described in this RFP, then the partnering vendor(s) is not required to have experience providing CalFresh application assistance services as described in this RFP. The partnering vendor(s) may provide bidder with food services as described under this RFP if the partnering vendor(s) meet the minimum qualifications as described under this RFP.**

1. Define “dinnerware” on page 10, Section D (Specific Requirements), Item 2.b.
	1. **For RFP No. 902206, “dinnerware” is defined as utensils for eating prepared meals, such as but not limited to forks, spoons, containers, plates, and napkins. Page 11 of the RFP, Section D (Specific Requirements), Item 2.h. states:**

***Meals distributed to outdoor settlements should incorporate disposal protocols using sustainable/compostable materials that do not leave behind food and packaging waste.***

1. We receive shelf-stable items, fresh produce, and cold items from ACCFB. As they are not a partner who will be engaged in actual food preparation, we then will not need to provide any facility inspection information from them, correct?
	1. **Yes. Food facility inspection reports are required for Bidders and Bidder’s partner(s) and subcontractor(s) providing prepared meals services under this RFP. Food facility inspection reports are not required for suppliers of raw ingredients used to make prepared meals.**
2. For a Primary who is also the meal producer but is not BIPOC or woman-owned, does purchasing from BIPOC and/or woman-owned vendors for products and ingredients make the proposal eligible for the points available for those Evaluation Criteria?
	1. **No. The Evaluation Criteria does not have points allocated for the inclusion of BIPOC-owned and women-owned vendors under this RFP.**
3. What about ownership of partner orgs named in a proposal — if named partner orgs are BIPOC and/or woman-owned, would the proposal be eligible for the points available for those Evaluation Criteria?
	1. **No. The Evaluation Criteria does not have points allocated for the inclusion of BIPOC-owned and women-owned vendors under this RFP.**
4. We must include the name of the collaborator in our proposal? The personnel to be hired must be on the same page?
	1. **Yes. Please refer to pages 8-9 of the RFP, Section C (Bidder Qualifications) and pages 12-14 of the RFP, Section D (Specific Requirements). Please also refer to page 10 of Exhibit A - Bid Response Packet, Table of Key Personnel. The Table of Key Personnel shall include all essential personnel associated with providing services to the County, including collaborating partners.**
5. Do you require a dietician to provide guidance on the menu/DRI?
	1. **No. A dietician is not required to provide guidance on the menu or the Dietary Reference Intakes (DRI). However, the proposed menus must meet the guidelines on page 10 of the RFP, Section D (Specific Requirements), Items 2.b. and 2.d. Please also see Addendum No. 1.**
6. If a proposal contains multiple regions demonstrating varying degrees of strength in proposed activities by region, would you consider awarding the region(s) with stronger demonstration only or would the entire proposal lose its competitiveness due to the region(s) with weaker demonstration?
	1. **Bidder may propose to provide services for one (1) or more of the four (4) regions outlined in the RFP. If Bidder is proposing to bid on more than one (1) region, Bidder shall clearly list each region and provide details requested for each region separately. Bidder’s complete bid proposal shall be evaluated per region proposed.**