



Petition for Relief from Competitive Sealed Bidding Requirements

Miss. Code Ann. § 31-7-403 and § 31-7-413

PPRB OPSCR Rules and Regulations Sections 3-201, 3-203.01(g)(2), and 7-103

Agency: MDRS

Requested Date for PPRB Approval: 5/7/25

Procurement Method Requested: RFQ

Intended Initial Contract Term: 9/12/25 - 9/11/26

Intended Renewal Terms Available: 4 optional 1-year renewals

Number of Contracts Intended to be Awarded: multiple

The Agency intends to solicit the following service(s) and/or scope of work:

The contractor will collaborate with MDRS Vocational Rehabilitation/Vocational Rehabilitation for the Blind Counselors and the local school districts to provide outreach about the event. MDRS Vocational Rehabilitation/ Vocational Rehabilitation for the Blind Counselors will provide the Contractor with the Referral for Contracted Pre-ETS Services Form (MDRS-VR-100) for students who meet the definition of a student with a disability and whom the counselor has determined require this service(s). Only students for whom the Contractor has received an MDRS-VR-100 Referral for Contracted Pre-ETS Services Form may participate in the event.

A student with a disability is an individual who meets the following criteria:

- ? Not younger than 14 years of age and is not older than 21 years of age;
- ? Is in a secondary or post-secondary education program or other recognized education program and needs assistance to be successful in order to enter competitive employment;
- ? Has received special education services or related services under IDEA or is an individual with a disability for the purpose of section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act; and
- ? Is eligible for VR/VRB services or is enrolled as a potentially eligible student who meets the definition of a student with a disability, has not been determined eligible or ineligible for VR services, and is not required to apply for or be determined eligible for VR to receive Pre-ETS. They will, however, have an open PE case and will interact with a VR/VRB Counselor.

As explained below, use of an Invitation for Bids is: ☐ not practicable
☐ not advantageous
☒ both

MDRS believes that an RFQ would be the most appropriate method to procure these services. An RFQ allows the agency to be able to effectively evaluate each respondent's individualized plan and ability to provide these services beyond the minimum requirements. Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA, MDRS, through its Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) and Office of Vocational Rehabilitation for the Blind (OVRB), is required to provide extensive Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) for students with disabilities. Job exploration counseling is a major part of these services and MDRS, through its office of Business Development, is seeking vendors to plan and host "job extravaganza" events for their clients.

MDRS has successfully used the RFQ method in the past for similar services. In previous procurements, selecting a vendor using the RFQ method allowed MDRS to evaluate the ability of a vendor to provide services based on our client's needs in certain areas of Mississippi. Furthermore, the agency desires to award these contracts based on more than price alone. The vendors plan, prior experience, and knowledge of the Pre-ETS program and its federal requirements are big factors when determining who will best provide these services to our clients. MDRS believes that expertise, quality and company resources are overriding factors in providing these events to our clients. Being able to score the technical factors gives

The Agency intends to use the following Evaluation Factors:

Price – 35 points (35%)*

*Each vendor will receive a 35/35.

Technical factors (Proposed methodology) – 30 points (30%)*

- Plan for performing the required services- 30 points (30%)*

Management factors (Factors that will require the identity of the offeror to be revealed must be submitted separately from other factors) – 35 points (35%)*

- Ability to perform the services as reflected by technical training and education, general experience, specific experience in providing the required services, and the qualifications and abilities of personnel proposed to be assigned to perform the services 15 points (15%)
- Personnel, equipment, and facilities to perform the services currently available or demonstrated to be made available at the time of contracting 10 points (10%)

Record of past performance of similar work 10 points (10%)

Is the Agency requesting to score Cost openly? Yes ☐ No ☒

If yes, please provide an explanation:

Are these services currently being provided to the Agency? Yes ☐ No ☒

If yes, who is currently providing the services?

Agency Representative for PPRB Meeting: Lee Shirley

The Agency Representative will attend: In Person ☐ Remote ☐

*The option to attend remotely is not available to Agencies located in Hinds, Rankin, or Madison counties.

By signing below, I certify that all information provided herein is true, correct, and complete to the best of my knowledge.



Chief Procurement Officer

4/01/25

Date

Chief Procurement Officer Name: Samandra Murphy

Telephone Number: 6001-853-5240 Email Address: SMurphy@mdrs.ms.gov

The PPRB may modify or revoke its approval of the Petition for Relief at any time. The Board's approval must be "reviewed for current applicability from time to time." Miss. Code Ann. §31-7-403(4). Therefore, a solicitation cannot be issued from this Petition for Relief if the Board's approval occurred more than one year prior to the date the solicitation will be issued.