



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

RFP NO. 2021HCA40

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PROJECT TITLE: 2022 Peer Pathways Workforce Development Conference

PROPOSAL DUE DATE: February 8, 2022 by 11:59pm Pacific Time, Olympia, Washington, USA.

Only e-mailed bids will be accepted.

ESTIMATED TIME PERIOD FOR CONTRACT: March 1, 2021 to September 30, 2022

The Health Care Authority reserves the right to extend the contract for up to six (6) additional one (1) year periods at its sole discretion, dependent on mutual agreement of the contract terms by the parties.

BIDDER ELIGIBILITY: This procurement is open to those Bidders that satisfy the minimum qualifications stated herein and that are available for work in Washington State.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 DEFINITIONS

Definitions for the purposes of this RFP include:

Apparent Successful Bidder (ASB) – The Bidder selected as the entity to perform the anticipated services under this RFP, subject to completion of contract negotiations and execution of a written contract.

Bidder – Individual or company interested in the RFP that submits a proposal in order to attain a contract with the Health Care Authority.

Business Day – Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Pacific Time, except for holidays observed by the state of Washington, unless otherwise specified within the RFP.

Health Care Authority or HCA – An executive agency of the state of Washington that is issuing this RFP.

Proposal – A formal offer submitted in response to this solicitation. To be responsive, a Proposal must include all items outlined in Section 3, PROPOSAL CONTENTS AND REQUIREMENTS. Two such items that may be referred to throughout this document are:

- 1) **Cost Proposal** – Bidder's cost as described in Section 3.9 and Exhibit G.
- 2) **Written Proposal** – Bidder's written response as described in Section 3.8 and Exhibit F.

Request for Proposals (RFP) – Formal procurement document in which a service or need is identified but no specific method to achieve it has been chosen. The purpose of an RFP is to permit the bidder community to suggest various approaches to meet the need at a given price.

Revised Code of Washington (RCW) – The laws of the state of Washington, as enacted by the Legislature. Any references to specific titles, chapters, or sections of the RCW includes any substitute, successor, or replacement title, chapter, or section. Pertinent RCW chapters can be accessed at: <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/>.

Subcontractor – A person, partnership, or entity not in the employment of or owned by the Bidder, who would be performing all or part of the services under this RFP under a separate contract with or on behalf of the Bidder. The term "Subcontractor" means Subcontractors in any tier.

Washington's Electronic Business Solution or WEBS is where HCA posts competitive solicitations. Individuals and firms interested in state contracting opportunities with the Department of Enterprise Services or any state agency should [register](#) for competitive solicitation notices on WEBS. *Note: There is no cost to register on WEBS.*

HCA Planning Committee- means the group of individuals identified as participants in a collective decision-making body, with the goals of advancing the goals and desired outcomes and themes of the conference.

Peer Program Staff, are the person(s) designated to be the subject matter expert(s) pertaining to the contract or conference or pre-conference planning decisions. Contact may be more than one individual.

HCA Workgroup, is the group of individuals from HCA who are identified by the agency's division or workgroup that sees the conference goals as a priority for the agency, and are participating, sponsoring, or otherwise supporting the facilitation of the conference.

1.2 ESTIMATED SCHEDULE OF PROCUREMENT ACTIVITIES

Issue Request for Proposals	January 5, 2022
Questions Due	January 18, 2022
Answers Posted*	January 19, 2022
Complaints Due (if applicable)	February 1, 2022
Proposals Due	February 8, 2022
Evaluate Proposals	February 11, 2022
Announce "Apparent Successful Bidder" via WEBS*	February 14, 2022
Debrief Request Deadline* (<i>3 Business Days after the ASB announcement</i>)	February 17, 2022
Negotiate Contract	February 18-22, 2022
Begin Contract Work	March 1, 2022

**Dates are anticipated and subject to change without an official amendment.*

HCA reserves the right in its sole discretion to revise the above schedule at any time.

1.3 PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The Washington State Health Care Authority, hereafter called "HCA," is initiating this Request for Proposals (RFP) to solicit Proposals from firms interested in participating on a project to source a qualified peer-run organization to manage and host the 2022 Annual Peer Pathways Workforce Development Conference. The goal of this conference is to provide continuing education, networking opportunities, and skill building for Certified Peer Counselors, peers, and peer allies across Washington State. HCA is seeking a Washington based organization that values and understands the principles of recovery. The contractor will promote recovery and resiliency principles during the entire contract period in working with internal and external stakeholders and conference committee members. HCA is committed to individual, youth, and family voice and choice in behavioral health services. The Certified Peer Counseling peer workforce is an effective resource promoting recovery and resiliency.

HCA seeks to make the best use of limited resources while providing the highest quality conference experience to a diverse group of attendees.

This conference is scheduled on an annual basis to be held mid-August. Traditionally, this conference has been held in person. In the past two years the conference was transitioned to a virtual format to meet the physical distancing requires due to COVID-19. We anticipate that the 2022 conference will be held in person, however, the awarded contractor will be expected to transition to a virtual format if directed by HCA to meet any physical distancing requirements.

HCA intends to award one contract to provide the services described in this RFP.

1.4 BACKGROUND

The first annual Peer Pathways Workforce Development Conference was held in 2015 with 298 registered attendees. This conference provided an opportunity for Certified Peer Counselors (CPC) to increase their knowledge base, skills, and an opportunity to network with CPCs across Washington State. Since 2015, the conference has grown to accommodate space for 425 CPCs, peers and peer allies to attend. As the workforce of Certified Peer Counselors has increased along with increased need for peer services, the need for continuing education and workforce development is essential. HCA is committed to providing opportunity for workforce development, skill building and networking.

Peer Counseling is a Medicaid service modality and agencies are robustly using peer support in a wide range of behavioral health programs, such as: mental health, substance use, youth, and family, supported housing, supportive employment, emergency rooms, and/or bridging programs. Peer supports are powerful services proven to be successful in promoting wellness and recovery.

1.5 SCOPE OF WORK

The awarded bidder will be responsible for completing all tasks outlined in the Scope of Work.

1. Coordination of Conference Planning Meetings

- 1.1 The Contractor will participate in a HCA conference planning committee.
- 1.2 The Contractor will work with HCA and assist with the following tasks:
 - Finalize conference planning timelines with HCA Peer Program Staff.
 - Create and maintain a conference email list.
 - Prepare and manage conference budgets in coordination with HCA Peer Program Staff.
 - Assist with drafting agendas and supporting documents, facilitate conference committee meetings, and record the minutes of the meetings.
- 1.3 The Contractor will meet a minimum of one time per month with HCA Planning Committee to review timeline, tasks and budget.

2. Coordination Pre-Conference

- 2.1 The Contractor will source a venue for the conference in accordance with the following requirements:
 - The venue must be able to host a maximum of 425 participants for an in-person conference.
 - The Contractor must seek final approval for its venue location as determined by HCA Peer Program Staff.
 - The conference venues must be ADA accessible and convenient via public transportation.
 - The conference venue must be able to meet the needs of participants with service animals in attendance and facilitate the needs of animal owners.
 - The conference will be held at the approved venue in August 2022. Any changes to this date must be authorized in writing by the HCA Peer Program Staff.
 - The venue must include one room that will comfortably hold 425 people for general sessions.
 - The venue will include the following facilities/rooms presenters' workshops (three (3) times per day) with a total capacity of at least 425 participants:
 - Five (5) classrooms with a capacity of 60-85 persons.
 - One (1) dedicated "Hospitality Room" for each conference day.

- 2.2 The Contractor will provide logistical coordination and support including all facilities, room set up, and technical assistance support.
- 2.3 The Contractor will provide a final list of registered participants to HCA Peer Program Staff two (2) calendar days prior to the event.

3. Virtual Conference (If Applicable)

- 3.1 The conference may be held using a virtual format due to COVID-19 physical distancing requirements.
- 3.2 The Contractor will assume all costs of a virtual platform and must include adequate technical assistance.
- 3.3 The virtual platform must be approved by the HCA Peer Program Staff.
- 3.4 The Contractor will be responsible for all reasonable technical assistance for registered participants.
- 3.5 The Contractor will provide up to three (3) pre-event technical assistance sessions for participants to learn how to navigate the virtual platform.
- 3.6 The technical assistance sessions will begin two (2) weeks prior to the conference date.
- 3.7 The technical assistance sessions will not exceed 60 minutes each.
- 3.8 The Contractor will provide technical assistance to the workshop presenters and the keynote presenters prior to the event in the form of pre-event planning meetings using a virtual platform during the event as needed.
- 3.9 The Contractor will be responsible for providing closed captioning and other reasonable accommodations requested by participants.
- 3.10 The Contractor will ensure there is one host in each workshop.

4. Conference Registration.

- 4.1 The Contractor is responsible for registration for the Conference. Contractor will:
 - Design and update or source an online registration system.
 - Design and update registration form, including all information requested by HCA.
 - Design, prepare content, print and distribute conference registration information and related forms.
 - Process participant registrations, send paper or online confirmation notices, process and track related payments.
 - Post registration information on the Conference website no later than April 15, 2022.
 - Design and update the registration and scholarship systems, including all information requested by the Peer Program Staff.
 - Design, prepare content, and distribute Conference registration and related links.
- 4.2 Registration Deadlines:
 - The target date for registration to open is by May 15, 2022
 - The Contractor will provide regular registration reports to the HCA Peer Program Staff by the 15th of each month starting June 15, 2022
 - Reports must include number of participants registered and number of scholarships requested
 - Weekly reports will begin on July 15, 2022. Reports must include paid registrations, scholarships, and presenter data.
 - The Contractor will charge participants no more than \$100 for an in-person conference participation and no more than \$50 for virtual conference registration. Registration fees will be used for conference expenses, such as speakers, and scholarship costs.

5. Conference Venue Procurements and Related Contracts

5.1 Conference venue management. The Contractor will:

- Confirm Conference dates with the approved venue.
- After obtaining HCA approval, execute venue, AV, security and catering contracts for the selected Conference venue.
- Determine and coordinate the securing of equipment, staffing and technical assistance for AV equipment needs. AV equipment will be arranged through the AV or venue contract or provided by the Contractor, HCA, or volunteers.
- Secure and ensure the set-up of meeting rooms and AV needs.
- Provide local coordination and support with hotel staff, presenters, and Conference attendees prior to, during, and after the event.
- Process all related payments for the venue, security, AV and catering selected by the Conference Committee.
- Submit a Conference venue proposal to the HCA Contact within thirty (30) days of contract award. (Details include, but are not limited to):
 - Venue cost, availability and capacity
 - Food and beverage service pricing
 - AV and other technology services and pricing
 - Proximity, pricing and capacity of hotels accepting Washington State per diem rates for a minimum of three (3) conference venue options. Specify if per diem rate lodging is also available at each potential conference venue location.

5.2 Food and beverage.

The Contractor will:

- Consult with HCA Peer Program Staff to plan and amend food and beverage needs according to participant needs, and in compliance with the Washington State's Office of Financial Management guidelines and rates for the Washington per diem and budget.
- Recommend to the HCA Peer Program Staff the food choices for the final selection unless HCA Peer Program Staff directs the Contractor to make this decision.
- Negotiate and execute food and beverage contracts. All food costs will be built into the contract and will comply with Washington State per diem guidelines and budget.
- Provide on-site monitoring and coordination of food and beverage preparation and distribution.
- Food and beverages must include:
 - A breakfast provided at the Conference for both mornings, including coffee and tea for a maximum of up to 425 participants.
 - Lunch provided at noon (12:00 pm) at the Conference for both days for a maximum of up to 425 participants.
 - Afternoon snacks provided at the conference for both days for a maximum of up to 425 participants.
- The participants will be asked if they have any special dietary requirements and will be accommodated to the best of the availability of the caterer's menu.

- Meals must be clearly marked for the participants being provided the specialized meals.
- Catering arrangements must be approved by the HCA Peer Program Staff.

6. Keynote Speakers, Presenters and Workshop Facilitators.

- 6.1 The Contractor and the HCA Peer Program Staff will solicit proposals for the Conference workshop speakers and presenters.
- The Contractor will manage and track the incoming proposals.
 - The Contractor will solicit proposals for the workshop speakers and presenters in two weeks after contract execution.
 - The conference workshop final proposals will be submitted to the HCA Planning Committee by April 15, 2022.
 - The HCA Planning Committee will have two (2) weeks to review proposals and will provide the Contractor a written report of approvals by April 1, 2022.
 - A draft of the conference workshop schedules is due to the HCA Peer Program Staff by May 1, 2022.
 - Any changes in the solicitation for proposals timeline must be approved in writing by the HCA Peer Program Staff.
- 6.2 The Contractor is responsible for negotiations for fees to be paid to the keynote speakers, facilitators, and presenters, including honorariums and travel expenses as negotiated.
- The conference workshop speakers, facilitators, and presenters will have their registration fee waived.
- 6.3 The Contractor is responsible for coordinating and scheduling the speakers.
- 6.4 HCA will make recommendations and may provide speaker options.
- The Contractor must make every effort to solicit speakers that are recommended by the HCA staff.
 - The HCA Peer Program Staff may direct the Contractor to use specific speaker(s) and/or solicit specific topics for the workshops.
- 6.5 The Contractor will send an email or hard copy confirmation letters to presenters indicating their designated presentation slot(s).
- 6.6 The Contractor will create and submit to HCA Peer Program Staff all presenter contact information, bios, and photos for promotional materials.
- 6.7 The Contractor will collect conference workshop evaluations from the participants, and will distribute the evaluation results to the individual facilitators, speakers, and presenters via email (post conference), and will submit a report to the HCA Peer Program Staff within 30 days following the conference.

7. Scholarships

- 7.1 The Contractor will facilitate the management of scholarships for this conference.
- 7.2 HCA has a set minimum allowance of \$35,000 for costs associated with the management of scholarships.
- The Scholarships will cover agreed upon costs for a qualified participants to attend the Conference.
- 7.3 Payment to Contractor for meeting the deliverable for the Scholarships is not to exceed \$35,000.

- 7.4 The Contractor will be paid for all qualified expenses regarding scholarship awardees upon completion of the conference and upon delivering all requirements outlined in section 7 of the SOW.
- 7.5 The Contractor will help develop the scholarship criteria in coordination with HCA and agreed upon by both parties prior to the beginning of the registration process. The recipients of the scholarships for the conference registration fee must demonstrate the following at a minimum:
- The participant is actively employed, or volunteering as a Peer Counselor;
 - There are no available resources through the participant's employer;
 - There is a financial need for the scholarship; and
 - Must have a commitment to attend the conference and participate in continuing education.
- 7.6 The Contractor will provide the following registration transportation and lodging requirements:
- The Contractor will facilitate management of lodging for the participants who were awarded scholarships and qualify through OFM Guidelines.
 - Participants will be lodged as single occupancy unless otherwise requested by the participant.
 - Parking will be included as part of the scholarship package.
 - Mileage (over 50 miles in one direction) will be reimbursed for scholarship participants at current federal rates.
- 7.7 The participants who qualify for a scholarship must not be charged a registration fee.

8. Conference Marketing Materials

- 8.1 The Contractor will develop and print conference programs in color using the HCA format from the 2021 conference. The HCA Peer Program Staff must approve all versions of the program prior to printing. Two (2) weeks prior to the conference, the final draft program must be submitted to HCA for approval.
- 8.2 The Contractor will print and distribute conference programs, signs, participant packets, name badges, certificates for Conference participants, and any other documents as needed in coordination with HCA Planning Committee.
- 8.3 The Contractor will distribute a "save the date flyer" that outlines conference details at the earliest date possible, but no later than 5 months before the conference event.
- 8.4 The Contractor must produce and distribute a conference flyer no later than April 15, 2022.
- The Contractor will design the conference flyer and must be approved by the HCA Planning Committee and the HCA Communications staff. Approval may take up to ten (10) days.
 - The flyer must include all of the speakers and topics for the conference.
- 8.5 Provide to HCA Planning Peer Planning Staff name lists and supplies for post-conference thank you note cards no later than the final day of the Conference.
- 8.6 The Contractor shall prepare and distribute HCA branded gift bags/or branded takeaways to participants of the Conference. All items incorporated in the gift bags and any designs must be approved by the HCA Peer Program staff.

- The Contractor will arrange for distribution of the branded gift bags/or branded takeaways no later than the end of the first day of the Conference.
- Total costs for recognition bags will be a minimum of \$5,000.
- The Contractor will be paid for all qualified expenses of the branded gift bags/or branded takeaways upon delivering all requirements outlined in Section 8 of the SOW.

9. Website Development, Updates and Maintenance

9.1 Provide project management for developing, updating and maintaining a conference website that is available for the Conference registration no later than April 1, 2022.

- The web languages used to develop the website will be limited to a combination of HTML, PHP, JavaScript and CSS.
- Using the previous year's conference website as an example or guide, the Contractor will work in coordination with HCA Peer Program Staff to update images, colors, and page layouts to use to match annual artwork design and color to match the most recent similar conference. Digital and print media graphic staff will work with HCA Peer Program Staff to finalize a design.
- Ensure that the website will be viewable and functioning in the last two major versions of Microsoft Internet Explorer, Firefox 4.0 or later, Google Chrome 25 or later, Safari 7 or later, and any updated versions that are released during the contract period. Compatibility is defined herein as all critical elements of each page being viewable and functioning in both browsers.
- Ensure Website is Mobile Friendly IOS & Android mobile devices and tablets.

9.2 Prepare and publish content for website including, but not limited to registration, forms, conference program agenda, activities, presentations and speakers.

- Input and publish content from HCA Workgroup, as directed by HCA Peer Program Staff.
- Regularly update website content as Conference information becomes available.

9.3 Ensure a seamless link to online registration system into the website.

- Use a proprietary Conference Management System (CMS) to assist with the registration management of the Conference. The CMS will not be considered part of the website.

9.4 Ensure website to be transferable upon completion of this contract. Upon request of the HCA Contact, provide a copy of the website, including data, graphics, and documents to download as a ZIP file.

9.5 Ensure that all materials and final documents and products are reviewed, revised, approved by the HCA Peer Program Staff before they are released to the public.

9.6 Supply HCA with a spreadsheet of all the registrant information from the Conference with the final report.

10. Speaker and Presenter Contracts and Payment

10.1 The Contractor will create a working agenda and coordinate speaker/presenter logistics.

10.2 The Contractor will process and execute all speaker contracts and payments including fees and travel expenses as negotiated.

10.3 The Contractor will send e-mail or hard copy confirmation letters to presenters indicating their designated presentation slot(s).

- 10.4 The Contractor will submit to HCA Contact all presenter contact information, bios, and photos for promotional materials.
- 10.5 If the speaker provides electronic copies of the handouts and permission to post them, the Contractor will post the items on the appropriate Conference website.
- In collaboration with HCA, coordinate speaker/presenter logistics.
 - Process and execute all speaker contracts to include the presentation content and payments including honorariums and travel expenses as negotiated.
 - Send email or hard copy confirmation letters to presenters indicating their designated presentation slot(s).
 - Submit to HCA Contact all presenter contact information, bios, and photos for promotional materials.
 - Work with all speakers to obtain electronic copies of the handouts and obtain permission to post them, the Contractor will post the items on the appropriate Conference website.
 - Pay presenter fees, honorariums, and travel expenses as negotiated.

11. Exhibitors.

- 11.1 The Contractor will, in coordination with the HCA Contact, identify and source exhibitors.
- 11.2 The Contractor will design, prepare content, print, and distribute all related materials and forms for exhibitors.
- 11.3 Process exhibitor letters, registration, coordinate facility and AV needs, facilitate the receipt of funds and payments for all exhibitors, where applicable.
- 11.4 Provide support to exhibitors throughout the conference.
- 11.5 The contractor can charge up to \$150 per exhibitor.

12. Participation Hours

- 12.1 Offer the appropriate hours or units to interested conference participants.

13. Conference Staffing

- 13.1 Work with HCA Contact to develop a work plan for conference staffing at the registration desk, hospitality room, food and beverage, and conference proceedings throughout Conference.
- 13.2 Train, oversee, and schedule conference volunteers.
- 13.3 Provide on-site liaison with conference managers.
- 13.4 Ensure secure access at the venue for conference set-up, including registration and vendor tables.
- 13.5 Provide local coordination and support with hotel staff, presenters, and conference attendees prior to, during, and after the conference.
- 13.6 Process all related payments for the facility selected by the HCA Planning Committee.

1.6 MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

The following are the minimum qualifications for the RFP:

- A. Licensed to do business in the state of Washington.
- B. Must have a minimum of 2 years experience with conference or large event facilitation/planning/hosting.
- C. Must be a consumer run organization dedicated to behavioral health recovery support services with headquarters located in Washington State.

1.7 FUNDING

HCA has budgeted an amount not to exceed Two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000) for this project. This budget includes \$35,000 of dedicated funding set aside for Scholarships for eligible participants of the conference and \$6,000 for conference branded takeaways. The winning bidder will be paid for qualifying expenses related to scholarships/branded takeaways in addition to expenses outlined in their proposal. Therefore, proposals in excess of One Hundred Fifty-nine Dollars \$159,000 will be considered non-responsive and will not be evaluated.

Any contract awarded as a result of this procurement is contingent upon the availability of funding.

1.8 PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

The period of performance of any contract resulting from this RFP is tentatively scheduled to begin on or about February 23, 2022 and to end on September 30, 2022. Amendments extending the period of performance, if any, will be at the sole discretion of HCA.

HCA reserves the right to extend the contract for six (6) one (1) year periods.

1.9 CONTRACTING WITH CURRENT OR FORMER STATE EMPLOYEES

Specific restrictions apply to contracting with current or former state employees pursuant to chapter 42.52 of the Revised Code of Washington. Bidders should familiarize themselves with the requirements prior to submitting a proposal that includes current or former state employees.

1.10 ADA

HCA complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Bidders may contact the RFP Coordinator to receive written information in another format (e.g., large print, audio, accessible electronic formats, and other formats).

2. GENERAL INFORMATION FOR BIDDERS

2.1 RFP COORDINATOR

The RFP Coordinator is the sole point of contact in HCA for this procurement. All communication between the Bidder and HCA upon release of this RFP must be with the RFP Coordinator, as follows:

Name	Alexander Agidius
E-Mail Address	HCAProcurements@hca.wa.gov

Any other communication will be considered unofficial and non-binding on HCA. Bidders are to rely on written statements issued by the RFP Coordinator. Communication directed to parties other than the RFP Coordinator may result in disqualification of the Bidder.

2.2 BIDDER QUESTIONS PERIOD

Bidders are provided an opportunity to ask questions during the bidder question period which starts on the date of the RFP posting and concludes on the *Questions Due* date specified in Section 1.2, ESTIMATED SCHEDULE OF PROCUREMENT ACTIVITIES.

- A. Questions regarding the RFP will only be accepted in writing, sent by email to the RFP Coordinator. The Bidder must use the following email subject line when submitting questions: "RFP 2021HCA40 Question(s) – [Bidder Name]" to ensure timely receipt.
- B. HCA anticipates it will post answers to the questions in WEBS as an RFP amendment on the *Answers Posted* date specified in Section 1.2, January 19, 2022.
- C. HCA is under no obligation to respond to any questions received after the *Questions Due date*, but may do so at its discretion.

2.3 SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

Proposals must be received by the RFP Coordinator no later than the *Proposal Due* deadline in Section 1.2, ESTIMATED SCHEDULE OF PROCUREMENT ACTIVITIES. Proposals must be submitted electronically as an attachment to an e-mail to the RFP Coordinator at the e-mail address listed in Section 2.1, and meet the following requirements:

- A. Attachments to e-mail must be in Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel format or Adobe PDF.
- B. The Cost Proposal must be submitted as a separate attachment.
- C. Zipped files cannot be received by HCA and cannot be used for submission of proposals.
- D. The Bidder Profile & Submittal Form (Exhibit A), Proclamation 21-14 – COVID-19 Vaccination Certification (Exhibit E), and Executive Order 18-03 Worker's Rights (Exhibit F) must have a signature of the individual within the organization authorized to bind the Bidder to the offer.
- E. HCA does not assume responsibility for problems with Bidder's e-mail. If HCA e-mail is not working, appropriate allowances will be made.

Bidders should allow sufficient time to ensure timely receipt of the proposal by the RFP Coordinator. Late proposals will not be accepted and will be automatically disqualified from further consideration, unless HCA e-mail is found to be at fault or HCA deems a grace period is in the best interest of the State. All proposals and any accompanying documentation become the property of HCA and will not be returned.

2.4 PROPRIETARY INFORMATION / PUBLIC DISCLOSURE

Proposals submitted in response to this RFP will become the property of HCA. All proposals received will remain confidential until the Apparent Successful Bidder is announced; thereafter, the proposals will be deemed public records as defined in chapter 42.56 of the Revised Code of Washington (RCW).

Any information in the proposal that the Bidder desires to claim as proprietary and exempt from disclosure under chapter 42.56 RCW, or other state or federal law that provides for the nondisclosure of a document, must be clearly designated. Each page claimed to be exempt from disclosure must be clearly identified, and must reference either: (1) the specific basis claimed under 42.56 RCW, or (2) a statement of why the information is designated propriety. Each page containing the information claimed to be exempt from disclosure must be clearly identified by the words "Proprietary Information" printed on the lower right hand corner of the page. Marking the entire proposal exempt from disclosure or as Proprietary Information will not be honored.

If a public records request is made for the information that the Bidder has marked as "Proprietary Information," HCA will notify the Bidder of the request and of the date that the records will be released to the requester unless the Bidder obtains a court order enjoining that disclosure. If the Bidder fails to obtain the court order enjoining disclosure, HCA will release the requested information on the date specified. If a Bidder obtains a court order from a court of competent jurisdiction enjoining disclosure pursuant to chapter 42.56 RCW, or other state or federal law that provides for nondisclosure, HCA will maintain the confidentiality of the Bidder's information per the court order.

A charge will be made for copying and shipping, as outlined in RCW 42.56. No fee will be charged for inspection of contract files, but 24 hours' notice to the RFP Coordinator is required. All requests for information should be directed to the RFP Coordinator.

The submission of any public records request to HCA pertaining in any way to this RFP will not affect the procurement schedule, as outlined in Section 1.2, unless HCA, in its sole discretion, determines that altering the schedule would be in HCA's best interests.

2.5 REVISIONS TO THE RFP

If HCA determines in its sole discretion that it is necessary to revise any part of this RFP, then HCA will publish addenda on WEBS. For this purpose, the published questions and answers and any other pertinent information will be provided as an addendum to the RFP and will be published on WEBS.

HCA also reserves the right to cancel or to reissue the RFP in whole or in part, prior to execution of a contract.

2.6 ACCEPTANCE PERIOD

Proposals must provide one hundred twenty (120) calendar days for acceptance, or up until the start date of the resulting contract, by HCA from the due date for receipt of proposals.

2.7 COMPLAINT PROCESS

The complaint process allows potential Bidders to focus on the solicitation requirements and evaluation process, and raise issues early enough in the process to allow HCA to correct a problem before proposals are submitted. The complaint period starts on the date of the RFP posting and concludes on the *Complaints Due* date identified in Section 1.2, ESTIMATED SCHEDULE OF PROCUREMENT ACTIVITIES.

- A. Potential Bidders may submit a complaint to HCA based on any of the following:
 - i. The RFP unnecessarily restricts competition;
 - ii. The RFP evaluation or scoring process is unfair or unclear; or
 - iii. The RFP requirements are inadequate or insufficient to prepare a response.
- B. For a complaint to be considered, it must be received by HCA by 5:00 pm PT on the *Complaints Due* date identified in Section 1.2. The complaint must:
 - i. Be in writing;
 - ii. Be sent to the RFP Coordinator, or designee;
 - iii. Clearly articulate the basis for the complaint; and
 - iv. Include a proposed remedy.
- C. HCA will address any complaint as follows:
 - i. The RFP Coordinator, or designee will respond to the complaint in writing.
 - ii. The response to the complaint and any changes to the RFP will be posted on WEBS.
 - iii. The Director of HCA will be notified of all complaints and will be provided a copy of HCA's response.

Complaints may not be raised again during a protest and HCA's action or inaction in response to a complaint will be final. There is no appeal process.

2.8 RESPONSIVENESS

The RFP Coordinator will review all proposals to determine compliance with administrative requirements and instructions specified in this RFP. A Bidder's failure to comply with any part of the RFP may result in rejection of the proposal as non-responsive.

HCA also reserves the right at its sole discretion to waive minor administrative irregularities.

2.9 MOST FAVORABLE TERMS

HCA reserves the right to make an award without further discussion of the proposal submitted. Therefore, the proposal should be submitted initially on the most favorable terms which the Bidder can propose. HCA reserves the right to contact a Bidder for clarification of its proposal.

The ASB should be prepared to accept this RFP for incorporation into a contract resulting from this RFP. The contract resulting from this RFP will incorporate some, or all, of the Bidder's proposal. The proposal will become a part of the official procurement file on this matter without obligation to HCA.

2.10 COSTS TO PROPOSE

HCA will not be liable for any costs incurred by the Bidder in preparation of a proposal submitted in response to this RFP, in conduct of a presentation, or any other activities related in any way to this RFP. Funds are not obligated until a contract has been fully executed.

2.11 RECEIPT OF INSUFFICIENT NUMBER OF PROPOSALS

If HCA receives only one responsive proposal as a result of this RFP, HCA reserves the right to either: 1) directly negotiate and contract with the Bidder; or 2) not award any contract at all. HCA may continue to have the bidder complete the entire RFP. HCA is under no obligation to tell the Bidder if it is the only Bidder.

2.12 NO OBLIGATION TO CONTRACT

This RFP does not obligate HCA to enter into any contract for services specified herein.

2.13 REJECTION OF PROPOSALS

HCA reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to reject any and all proposals received without penalty and not to issue any contract as a result of this RFP.

3. PROPOSAL CONTENTS AND REQUIREMENTS

3.1 PROPOSAL CONTENTS OVERVIEW

Proposals must be submitted per the instructions in Sections 2.5, SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS and 3.2, PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS AND GUIDELINES, in the order noted below:

MANDATORY:

- A. Bidder Profile & Submittal Form* (Section 3.3 and Exhibit A)
- B. Diverse Business Inclusion Plan (Section 3.4 and Exhibit B)
- C. References (Section 3.5 and Exhibit C)
- D. Proclamation 21-14 – COVID-19 Vaccination Certification* (Section 3.7 and Exhibit E)

MANDATORY SCORED:

- E. Written Proposal (Section 3.8 and Exhibit F)
- F. Cost Proposal (Section 3.9 and Exhibit G)
- G. Executive Order 18-03 Worker’s Rights* (Section 3.10 and Exhibit H)

**Authorized signature required*

3.2 PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS AND GUIDELINES

Proposals must comply with the requirements or restrictions listed below. Failure to do so may result in the disqualification of the Bidder’s Proposal:

- A. State the Bidder’s full legal name on the first or cover page of the Proposal.
- B. Proposals must provide information in the same order as presented in this RFP and with the same headings. Title and number each item in the same way it appears in the RFP. Each question must be restated prior to the Bidder’s response.
- C. Items marked “MANDATORY” must be included as part of the Proposal for the Proposal to be considered responsive; however, these items are not scored.
- D. Items marked “SCORED” must be included as part of the Proposal for the Proposal to be considered responsive and are awarded points by the evaluation team.
- E. Page limits stated in this RFP are determined by counting single-sides of the response. HCA has no obligation to read, consider, or score any material exceeding the stated page limits. There will be no grounds for protest if critical information is on the pages exceeding the specified page limit that is not reviewed.
- F. Bidders are liable for all errors or omissions contained in their Proposals. Bidders will not be allowed to alter Proposal documents after the deadline for Proposal submission. HCA is not liable for any errors in Proposals.

HCA is under no obligation to consider any supplemental materials submitted that were not requested.

3.3 BIDDER PROFILE & SUBMITTAL FORM (MANDATORY)

Exhibit A, *Bidder Profile & Submittal Form* must be completed in its entirety, and signed and dated by a person authorized to legally bind the Bidder to a contractual relationship (e.g., the President or Executive Director if a corporation, the managing partner if a partnership, or the proprietor if a sole proprietorship).

3.4 DIVERSE BUSINESS INCLUSION PLAN (MANDATORY)

Exhibit B, *Diverse Business Inclusion Plan* must be completed in its entirety. In accordance with legislative findings and policies set forth in RCW 39.19 the state of Washington encourages participation in all contracts by firms certified by the Office of Minority and Women's Business Enterprises (OMWBE), set forth in RCW 43.60A.200 for firms certified by the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs, and set forth in RCW 39.26.005 for firms that are Washington Small Businesses. Participation may be either on a direct basis or on a Subcontractor basis. However, no preference on the basis of participation is included in the evaluation of Diverse Business Inclusion Plans submitted, and no minimum level of minority- and women-owned business enterprise, Washington Small Business, or Washington State certified Veteran Business participation is required as a condition for receiving an award. Any affirmative action requirements set forth in any federal governmental regulations included or referenced in the contract documents will apply.

3.5 REFERENCES (MANDATORY)

Provide three business references for the Bidder using Exhibit C, *Reference Form*. References must be independent of the Bidder's and Subcontractor's company corporation (e.g., non-Bidder owned, in whole or in part, or managed, in whole or in part) and be for work similar to the scope of work contained herein. Complete all boxes of the reference form for each reference, including a description of the services provided, the timeframe in which services were provided, and the Bidder's team members who provided the services. By submitting a proposal in response to this solicitation, the Bidder and team members grant permission to HCA to contact these references and others, who from HCA's perspective, may have pertinent information. HCA may or may not, at HCA's discretion, contact references.

3.6 DRAFT CONTRACT

The ASB will be expected to enter into a contract which is substantially the same as the sample contract and its general terms and conditions attached as Exhibit D *Draft Contract*. HCA will not accept any draft contracts prepared by any Bidder. The Bidder must be prepared to agree to all terms of the attached Exhibit D, as presented or the Proposal may be rejected. If Bidder has exceptions to the terms and conditions, they must include with their Proposal a copy of the Draft Contract with redline edits/comments documenting the changes they propose to be made if selected as ASB. If the Bidder fails to identify an objection to any particular term or condition, the term or condition will be deemed agreed to by the Bidder. HCA will review requested exceptions and accept or reject the same at its sole discretion.

If, after the announcement of the ASB, and after a reasonable period of time, the ASB and HCA cannot reach agreement on acceptable terms for the Contract, the HCA may cancel the selection and Award the Contract to the next most qualified Bidder

3.7 COVID-19 VACCINATION CERTIFICATION (MANDATORY)

Bidder must review and complete Exhibit E, *COVID-19 Vaccination Certification* to respond as to whether or not the Bidder complies with Proclamation 21-14.1 – COVID-19 Vaccination Requirement. Bidder must sign and return Exhibit E with its Proposal.

Note: Compliance with the Proclamation is mandatory. For more information please visit <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/1600/coronavirus/505-160-VaccinationRequirementFAQs.pdf>.

3.8 WRITTEN PROPOSAL (MANDATORY SCORED)

Maximum available points: 75 Points

Exhibit F, Written Proposal must be completed in its entirety in accordance with the page limits identified within the Exhibit. Bidder must respond using Exhibit F as its template, to ensure compliance with the formatting requirements.

3.9 COST PROPOSAL (MANDATORY SCORED)

Maximum available points: 20 Points

The maximum cost proposed for this contract must be One Hundred Sixty-five Dollars (\$165,000) or less to be considered responsive to this RFP. Proposals in excess of One Hundred Sixty-five Dollars \$165,000 will be considered non-responsive and will not be evaluated.

The evaluation process is designed to award this procurement not necessarily to the Bidder of least cost, but rather to the Bidder whose proposal best meets the requirements of this RFP. However, Bidders are encouraged to submit proposals which are consistent with state government efforts to conserve state resources.

A. Identification of Costs

- i. Identify all costs in U.S. dollars including expenses to be charged for performing the services necessary to accomplish the objectives of the contract. The Bidder is to submit a fully detailed budget including staff costs, estimates for any applicable sales and use taxes (see 3.A(ii) below), and any expenses necessary to accomplish the tasks and to produce the deliverables under the contract.

B. Cost Proposal

- ii. Bidders must respond using Exhibit G *Cost Proposal* to submit their costs to ensure compliance with the formatting requirements. Exhibit G must be completed in its entirety in accordance with the instructions identified within the Exhibit.

3.10 EXECUTIVE ORDER 18-03 (MANDATORY SCORED)

Maximum available points: 5 Points

Bidder must review Exhibit H *Executive Order 18-03 Worker's Rights* and respond as to whether the Bidder requires its employees, as a condition of employment, to sign or agree to mandatory individual arbitration clauses and class or collective action waivers.

4. EVALUATION AND CONTRACT AWARD

4.1 EVALUATION PROCEDURE

Responsive Proposals will be evaluated strictly in accordance with the requirements stated in this RFP and any addenda issued. The evaluation of proposals will be accomplished by an evaluation team, to be designated by HCA, which will determine the ranking of the proposals. Evaluation teams could be comprised of internal (HCA) and external individuals. Evaluations will only be based upon information provided in the Bidder's Proposal.

- A. All proposals received by the stated deadline in Section 1.2 (ESTIMATED SCHEDULE OF PROCUREMENT ACTIVITIES) will be reviewed by the RFP Coordinator to ensure that they contain all of the required information requested in the RFP. Only responsive proposals that meet the requirements will be evaluated by the evaluation team. Any Bidder who does not meet the stated qualifications or any proposal that does not contain all of the required information will be rejected as non-responsive.
- B. HCA may, at its sole discretion, waive minor administrative irregularities.
- C. The RFP Coordinator may, at their sole discretion, contact the Bidder for clarification of any portion of the Bidder's Proposal. Bidders should take every precaution to ensure that all answers are clear, complete, and directly address the specific requirement.
- D. Responsive Written Proposals will be reviewed and scored by an evaluation team using the weighted scoring system described in Section 4.2 (EVALUATION WEIGHTING AND SCORING). Written Proposals will be evaluated strictly in accordance with the requirements set forth in this RFP and any addenda issued.
- E. The evaluation of the Cost Proposal and Executive Order 18-03 will be completed by the RFP Coordinator.
- F. HCA reserves the right to award the contract to the Bidder whose proposal is deemed to be in the best interest of HCA and the state of Washington.

4.2 EVALUATION WEIGHTING AND SCORING

Bidders' final scores will be based on the following scored items: Written Proposal, Cost Proposal, and Executive Order 18-03.

- A. Scoring of Written Proposal

Each question in Exhibit F *Written Proposal* has been assigned a weight. Points will be assigned to each question based upon the average score of all evaluation team members scores for the question (0-5) multiplied by the weight indicated below. Individual question scores will then be combined to result in the Bidder's total weighted score. Any point calculations that result in decimal points will be rounded to the nearest whole number. The weight and maximum points for each question are as outlined at the end of each question in Exhibit – F Written Proposal.

Evaluation Table		
Section Title	Weight	Maximum Points
Question 1.1	2	10

Question 1.2	2	10
Question 1.3	2	10
Question 1.4	2	10
Question 1.5	1	5
Question 1.6	1	5
Question 1.7	1	5
Question 1.8	1	5
Question 1.9	1	5
Question 1.10	1	5
Question 1.11	1	5
Written Proposal Maximum Points		75

B. Scoring Rubric for Written Response

Evaluators will score the sections outlined in the Evaluation Table above using the following (0-10) scoring rubric:

Scoring Rubric		
Score	Description	Scoring Criteria
5	Far Exceeds Requirements	The Bidder has provided an innovative, detailed, and thorough response to the requirement, and clearly demonstrates a high level of experience with, or understanding of the requirement.
4	Exceeds Requirements	The Bidder has demonstrated an above-average capability, approach, or solution and has provided a complete description of the capability, approach, or solution.
3	Meets Requirements	The Bidder has an acceptable capability of solution to meet this criterion and has described its approach in sufficient detail to be considered “as substantially meeting the requirements”.
2	Below Requirements	The Bidder has established some capability to perform the requirement but descriptions regarding their approach are not sufficient to demonstrate the Bidder will be fully able to meet the requirements.
1	Substantially Below Requirements	The Bidder has not established the capability to perform the requirement, has marginally described its approach, or has simply restated the requirement.
0	No Value	The Bidder does not address any component of the requirement or no information was provided.

C. Scoring of Cost Proposal

Each of the two cost elements listed in Exhibit G, *Cost Proposal*, will be scored individually based on the combined sum of the identified cost factors. Points for each element will be computed according to the formula below. Any point calculations that result in decimal points will be rounded to the nearest whole number

Lowest Cost Proposal	x	Cost Proposal Maximum Points	=	Bidder's Cost Proposal Points
Bidder's Cost Proposal				

The weights and the maximum number of points possible for each category are outlined in the table below:

Evaluation Table – Cost Proposal		
Cost Element	Cost Element Description	Maximum Points Possible
1	In-Person Conference	10
2	Virtual Conference	5
Cost Maximum Points		15

The Bidder's score for each of the cost elements will then be summed to determine the Bidder's total Cost Proposal score.

D. Executive Order 18-03

Pursuant to RCW 39.26.160(3) and consistent with Executive Order 18-03 – Supporting Workers' Rights to Effectively Address Workplace Violations (dated June 12, 2018), HCA will evaluate proposals for best value and provide a preference in the amount of 5 points to any Bidder who certifies, pursuant to the certification attached as Exhibit F, that their firm does NOT require its employees, as a condition of employment, to sign or agree to mandatory individual arbitration clauses or class or collective action waiver. Bidders that do require their employees, as a condition of employment, to sign or agree to mandatory individual arbitration clauses or class or collective action waiver will not be disqualified from evaluation of this RFP, however they will receive 0 out of 5 points for this section.

E. Total Score

Evaluation Table – All Scored Items		
Section/Exhibit	Title	Maximum Points
Exhibit F	Written Proposal	75
Exhibit G	Cost Proposal	20
Exhibit H	Executive Order 18-03	5
Total Maximum Points		100

4.3 BEST AND FINAL OFFER (BAFO)

HCA reserves the right to use a Best and Final Offer (BAFO) before awarding any contract to further assist in determining the ASB(s).

4.4 SUBSTANTIALLY EQUIVALENT SCORES

Substantially Equivalent Scores are scores separated by two percent or less in total points. If multiple proposals receive a Substantially Equivalent Score, HCA may leave the matter as scored, or select as the ASB the one proposal that is deemed by HCA, in its sole discretion, to be in HCA's best interest relative to the overall purpose and objective as stated in Section 1.3 of this RFP.

If applicable, HCA's best interest will be determined by HCA staff, who have sole discretion over this determination. The basis for such determination will be communicated in writing to all Bidders with Substantially Equivalent Scores.

4.5 NOTIFICATION TO BIDDERS

HCA will announce the ASB to all Bidders via the WEBS notification system.

4.6 DEBRIEFING OF UNSUCCESSFUL BIDDERS

Any Bidder who has submitted a proposal and been notified it was not selected for contract award may request a debriefing conference. The request for a debriefing conference must be received by the RFP Coordinator no later than 5:00 p.m., Pacific Time, within three (3) Business Days after the Unsuccessful Bidder Notification is e-mailed to the Bidder. The debriefing will be held within three (3) Business Days of the request, or as schedules allow.

Discussion at the debriefing conference will be limited to the following:

- A. Evaluation and scoring of the Bidder's Proposal;
- B. Critique of the Proposal based on the evaluation; and
- C. Review of the Bidder's final score in comparison with other final scores without identifying the other Bidders.

Topics a Bidder could have raised as part of the COMPLAINT PROCESS (Section 2.9) cannot be discussed as part of the debriefing conference, even if the Bidder did not submit a complaint.

Comparisons between proposals, or evaluations of the other proposals will not be allowed. Debriefing conferences may be conducted in person or on the telephone and will be scheduled for a maximum of thirty (30) minutes.

4.7 PROTEST PROCEDURE

A protest may be made only by Bidders who submitted a response to this RFP and who have participated in a debriefing conference. Upon completing the debriefing conference, the Bidder is allowed five (5) Business Days to file a protest. Protests must be received by the Contracts Administrator no later than 4:30 p.m., Pacific Time, on the fifth Business Day following the Bidder's debriefing. Protests must be submitted by e-mail to ensure timely receipt.

Consistent with RCW 39.26.030, proposal submissions and proposal evaluations will be available for public inspection following the announcement of ASB(s). If requested by a Bidder who received a debriefing pursuant to Section 4.6, the protest period will not conclude before the requestor has been provided with the applicable proposal submissions and proposal evaluations and provided five (5) Business Days to review the same. Bidder is responsible for notifying the RFP Coordinator of any such public disclosure requests so the timeline can be adjusted accordingly.

Bidders protesting this RFP must follow the procedures described below. Protests that do not follow these procedures will not be considered. This protest procedure constitutes the sole administrative remedy available to Bidders under this RFP.

- A. All protests must be in writing, addressed to the Contracts Administrator, and signed by the protesting party or an authorized agent. The protest must state (1) the RFP number, (2) the grounds for the protest with specific facts, (3) complete statements of the action(s) being protested, and (4) the relief

or corrective action being requested. Protests must be emailed to contracts@hca.wa.gov with the following subject line: "RFP # Protest – [Bidder Name]"

B. Only protests alleging an issue of fact concerning the following subjects will be considered:

- i. A matter of bias, discrimination, or conflict of interest on the part of an evaluator;
- ii. Errors in computing the score; or
- iii. Non-compliance with procedures described in the RFP, HCA's protest process, or Department of Enterprise Services (DES) policy requirements (POL-DES-170-00).

Protests based on anything other than those items listed above will not be considered. Protests will be rejected as without merit to the extent they address issues such as: 1) an evaluator's professional judgment on the quality of a proposal; or 2) HCA's assessment of its own needs or requirements.

C. Upon receipt of a protest, HCA will undertake a protest review. The HCA Director, or an HCA employee delegated by the HCA Director who is a neutral party with no involvement in the evaluation and award process (Protest Officer), will review and respond to the protest. If the HCA Director delegates the protest review to an HCA employee, the Director nonetheless reserves the right to make the final agency decision on the protest. The Protest Officer will have the right to seek additional information regarding the procurement from sources they deem appropriate in order to fully consider the protest.

D. If HCA determines in its sole discretion that a protest from one Bidder may affect the interests of another Bidder, then HCA may invite such Bidder to submit its views and any relevant information on the protest to the Protest Officer. In such a situation, the protest materials submitted by each Bidder will be made available to all other Bidders upon request.

E. The Protest Officer will issue a written protest response no more than ten (10) Business Days after receipt of the protest, unless additional time is needed, in which case HCA will notify the protesting Bidder in writing. The Protest Officer's decision is final, unless the HCA Director exercises their right to make the final agency decision on the protest. There will be no appeal process.

F. The final determination of the protest will:

- i. Find the protest lacking in merit and uphold HCA's action; or
- ii. Find only technical or harmless errors in HCA's acquisition process and determine HCA to be in substantial compliance and reject the protest; or
- iii. Find merit in the protest and provide options to the HCA Director, which may include:
 - 1) Correct the errors and re-evaluate all proposals; or
 - 2) Issue a new solicitation document and begin a new process; or
 - 3) Make other findings and determine other courses of action as appropriate.

If the protest is not successful, HCA will enter into a contract with the ASB(s), assuming the parties reach agreement on the contract's terms.

5. RFP EXHIBITS

Exhibit A	Bidder Profile & Submittal Form
Exhibit B	Diverse Business Inclusion Plan
Exhibit C	Reference Form
Exhibit D	Draft Contract (included as a separate attachment)
Exhibit E	Proclamation 21-14 COVID-19 Vaccination Certification
Exhibit F	Written Proposal
Exhibit G	Cost Proposal
Exhibit H	Executive Order 18-03 Worker's Rights

