

**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT SECURITY (“NHES”)**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
RFP# NHES 2021-03 ISSUED MARCH 22, 2021
TELEPHONE INTERPRETATION SERVICES**

ADDENDUM #2

RESPONSES TO RFP# NHES 2021-03, SECTION 4B, PROPOSAL INQUIRIES. This Addendum #1 to RFP NHES 2021-03 includes timely responses to proposer inquiries received by the required date of April 2, 2021, as follows:

Question 1. Please provide me with the anticipated monthly volume (number of minutes) for both OPI and VRI.

NHES Response: The anticipated monthly volume of OPI and VRI services is unknown at this time. Please see responses to Questions 7 and 8 for historical data.

Question 2. What percentage of your OPI need is for Spanish?

NHES Response: Please see responses to Questions 7 for historical data.

Question 3. The RFP requires “A list of certifications, credentials, licensure and experience of identified staff members, contractors and subcontractors who would perform the work, including copies of all certifications and/or credentials;, such as registration with the National Association of the Deaf-Registry for Interpreters for the Deaf (NAD-RID)” We work with hundreds of interpreters to provide professional telephonic interpreting services. Rather than provide copies of hundreds of certifications, would NHES accept a description of the methodology we use to vet and onboard qualified interpreters?

NHES Response: A resume describing the individual’s background and experience, as well as the individual’s ability and experience in conducting the proposed activities is required for each identified key staff member. Proposer must confirm and certify that contractors and subcontractors performing work under contract with NHES will have the necessary certifications, credentials, licensure and experience required in this RFP.

Question 4. Is there an incumbent on this contract?

NHES Response: Yes.

Question 5. If there is an incumbent, who is it? What was their prices per minute for phone interpreting services and VRI services, respectively? What was the average historic usage (in hours) of phone interpreting and VRI services, respectively, under the previous contract?

NHES Response: Telelanguage, Inc. is the incumbent. Their current per minute rates as follows:

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Language	VRI	Telephone/OPI
ASL	\$3.75	N/A
Spanish	\$2.75	\$0.67
All other languages	\$2.75	\$0.89

Question 6. If there is no incumbent, would NHES be able to provide a general, ballpark estimate of how many hours of phone interpreting and VRI, respectively, may be needed under this contract?

NHES Response: Telelanguage, Inc. is the incumbent. An estimate of how many hours of OPI and VRI services is unknown at this time. Please see response to Questions 7 and 8 for historical data.

Question 7. Please provide historical data on the number of calls per month, per language for over the phone interpretation services.

NHES Response:

<u>Month</u>	2018		2019		2020	
	<u>Minutes Used</u>	<u>Usage %</u>	<u>Minutes Used</u>	<u>Usage %</u>	<u>Minutes Used</u>	<u>Usage %</u>
January	482	8.6%	434	8.5%	429	2.5%
February	441	7.9%	561	11.0%	415	2.5%
March	449	8.1%	544	10.7%	458	2.7%
April	583	10.5%	320	6.3%	1,183	7.0%
May	388	7.0%	837	16.5%	1,506	8.9%
June	580	10.4%	541	10.7%	1,753	10.4%
July	1,044	18.7%	123	2.4%	1,042	6.2%
August	542	9.7%	529	10.4%	1,345	8.0%
September	303	5.4%	264	5.2%	2,619	15.5%
October	442	7.9%	246	4.8%	2,203	13.0%
November	192	3.4%	322	6.3%	1,568	9.3%
December	130	2.3%	357	7.0%	2,362	14.0%
TOTALS	5,576	100.0%	5,078	100.0%	16,883	100.0%

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Language	2018		2019		2020	
	Minutes Used	Usage %	Minutes Used	Usage %	Minutes Used	Usage %
Albanian	129	2.3%	26	0.5%	72	0.4%
Amharic	-		38	0.7%	-	
Arabic	99	1.8%	486	9.6%	512	3.0%
Armenian	-		39	0.8%	-	
Bosnian	137	2.5%	183	3.6%	3	0.0%
Brazilian Portuguese	-		4	0.1%	23	0.1%
Cambodian	106	1.9%	140	2.8%	34	0.2%
Cantonese	6	0.1%	59	1.2%	171	1.0%
Croatian	-		-		3	0.0%
Dinka	-		53	1.0%	-	
French	268	4.8%	139	2.7%	420	2.5%
French Creole	3	0.1%	-		24	0.1%
Gujarati	-		-		31	0.2%
Haitian Creole	39	0.7%	105	2.1%	162	1.0%
Hindi	405	7.3%	-		68	0.4%
Indonesian	21	0.4%	58	1.1%	25	0.1%
Kinyarwanda	-		66	1.3%	157	0.9%
Kirundi	-		-		29	0.2%
Korean	43	0.8%	-		86	0.5%
Korean	-		-		5	0.0%
Krahn	-		-		63	0.4%
Lao	97	1.7%	35	0.7%	-	
Luganda	-		-		7	0.0%
Macedonian	-		-		11	0.1%
Mandarin	299	5.4%	37	0.7%	1,016	6.0%
Moroccan Arabic	-		71	1.4%	-	
Nepali	-		15	0.3%	321	1.9%
Polish	-		-		36	0.2%
Portuguese	15	0.3%	35	0.7%	65	0.4%
Romanian	27	0.5%	-		-	
Russian	-		-		50	0.3%
Somali	101	1.8%	-		100	0.6%
Spanish	3,216	57.7%	3,199	63.0%	11,699	69.3%
Spanish	-		-		142	0.8%
Swahili	42	0.8%	-		230	1.4%
Thai	-		15	0.3%	-	
Tibetan	-		-		43	0.3%
Vietnamese	523	9.4%	275	5.4%	1,221	7.2%
Visayan (Filipino)	-		-		54	0.3%
TOTALS	5,576	100.0%	5,078	100.0%	16,883	100.0%

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Question 8. Please provide historical data on the number of calls per month, per language for video remote interpretation.

NHES Response: NHES has not previously utilized VRI.

Question 9. Do all calls need to be answered by interpreters located within the U.S.?

NHES Response: Proposers do not need to be based in the United States to submit a proposal. Any qualified Proposer may submit a proposal. However, at the time of contract execution, any company awarded the work will be required to submit a Certificate of Good Standing from the NH Secretary of State’s Office, evidencing that it is properly registered to do business in the State of New Hampshire.

Question 10. Can bidders just bid for over the phone interpretation services, or do we need to bid for both over-the-phone interpretation services and video remote interpretation services?

NHES Response: A proposal that only includes OPI services is not a responsive proposal.

Question 11. Whether companies from outside USA can apply for this?

NHES Response: Please see response to Question 9.

Question 12. Whether we need to come over there for meetings?

NHES Response: No on-site meetings are anticipated at this time.

Question 13. Can we perform the tasks (related to RFP) outside USA?

NHES Response: Please see response to Question 9.

Question 14. Can we submit proposals via email?

NHES Response: Proposals may not be submitted by e-mail. The RFP provides at Section 4.A that “Proposals may be submitted by U.S. Mail or other Delivery Service” to NHES headquarters located at 45 South Fruit Street, Concord, NH. Proposals submitted in response to the RFP must include one original and four clearly identified copies, including all required attachments. See RFP Section 4.A. The RFP anticipates and requires the submission of hard copies of Proposals by the submission deadline.

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Question 15. Can you share estimated amount of minutes the state and its offices are using language services? Any historical data will be helpful for me at this time.

NHES Response: Please see responses to Questions 7 and 8 for historical data.

Question 16. The RFP requires the Proposer must have a pin code system or other means in place to enable staff accessing telephone interpretation services to enter a (9 digit) code for each call place to identify department/section edge. This (9) digit code must be included on the approach line of the billing statement sent to NHES for approval and payment. Would you be willing to accept proposals from companies that are able to provide pins/digit codes that are 7 or 8 numbers? Not 9 digit numbers? We use emails and passwords to access our VRI platform not pin numbers. Would this be acceptable?

NHES Response: No.

Question 17. Can proposals be submitted by email?

NHES Response: Please see response to Question 14.

Question 18. What are the typical volumes in minutes for the listed languages?

NHES Response: Please see responses to Questions 7 and 8 for historical data.

Question 19. Who is the current incumbent(s) for both services and what are their prices?

NHES Response: Please see response to Question 5.

Question 20. What challenges do you currently face with telephonic interpretation and VRI services under this contract?

NHES Response: Not applicable. The RFP contains no indication that there have been challenges in service delivery.

Question 21. Who are the current incumbents? What are their rates?

NHES Response: Please see response to Question 5.

Question 22. What is the contract number of the current incumbent(s)?

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NHES Response: 1063382.

Question 23. Is this RFP open to individuals/single member LLC interpreters? (Interpreters who have incorporated themselves but do not have staff or a roster of multiple interpreters).

NHES Response: Any qualified Proposer may submit a proposal, but only if they can fulfill the requirements specified in the RFP.

Question 24. Is this RFP open to out of state vendors?

NHES Response: Please see response to Question 9.

Question 25. Will this bid be awarded to multiple vendors? If so, how will the work be distributed?

NHES Response: NHES expects to award the contract resulting from this RFP to a single vendor.

Question 26. Is there a minimum/maximum number of vendors the agency is anticipating on awarding?

NHES Response: Please see response to Question 25.

Question 27. How does NHES currently organize their requests – do they all go through one team or is it decentralized?

NHES Response: Requests come from different units within NHES.

Question 28. Does NHES currently utilize an online platform/portal for interpreter requests and scheduling? If so, is NHES paying an additional monthly fee outside of the interpreting/translating rates?

NHES Response: NHES utilizes a platform supplied by the vendor and required by Section 3.A.f of the RFP.

Question 29. Can you please break down the frequency of each language requested for 2019 and/or 2020? (Example: 50% Spanish, 20% Arabic, etc.)

NHES Response: Please see responses to Questions 7 and 8 for historical data.

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Question 30. Can you please break down the frequency of each service requested for 2019 and/or 2020? (Example: 50% over the phone interpretation (OPI), 50% video remote interpretation (VRI))

NHES Response: 100% OPI.

Question 31. What are the most common languages requested?

NHES Response: Please see responses to Questions 7 and 8 for historical data.

Question 32. What languages has NHES found to be the most difficult to fulfill?

NHES Response: Not applicable. NHES has not experienced any issues fulfilling requests for any languages.

Question 33. What was the monthly amount of VRI/OPI services requested in minutes for 2019?

NHES Response: Please see responses to Questions 7 and 8 for historical data.

Question 34. Are VRI/OPI appointments requested on-demand, pre-scheduled, or both? Can you provide an estimated breakdown of each? (Example: 50% on-demand, 50% pre-scheduled)

NHES Response: The vast majority of OPI service requests are on-demand. NHES has not previously utilized VRI services. An estimated breakdown is not readily available.

Question 35. How many requests were made for nights, weekends, and holidays for 2019 and/or 2020?

NHES Response: This information is not readily available. If Proposer has different rates for nights, weekends, and holidays, please provide that as part of price schedule.

Question 36. What is the cancellation policy in the event NHES cancels an assignment with last minute notice? What does NHES consider to be "last minute"?

NHES Response: If Proposer intends to charge for cancellations, those costs should be included in Proposer's price schedule. Proposer should also include a definition of "last minute."

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Question 37. It is industry standard that OPI/VRI interpreters are secured with a 30 minute minimum for each assignment. I do not see that in the RFP, would you consider adding this language?

NHES Response: No.

Question 38. What are the policies and procedures if an interpreter is on the scheduled call but the deaf/limited English proficiency (LEP) consumer is a no-show?

NHES Response: NHES will address this issue in a subsequent addendum.

Question 39. Due to the on-going COVID-19 pandemic and national slowdown of mail regarding the Post Office /UPS/FedEx, will your agency consider electronic submissions in lieu of mail?

NHES Response: Please see response to Question 14.

Question 40. Are there any challenges you would like this new contract to address?

NHES Response: Please see response to Question 20.

Question 41. Who is the Agency’s current OPI vendor?

NHES Response: Please see response to Question 5.

Question 42. Who is the Agency’s current VRI vendor?

NHES Response: Please see response to Question 5.

Question 43. How much is the Agency currently paying per minute for OPI?

NHES Response: Please see response to Question 5.

Question 44. How much is the Agency currently paying per minute for VRI?

NHES Response: Please see response to Question 5.

Question 45. Does the Agency have utilization numbers showing the total minutes of OPI and/or VRI provided during the past year?

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NHES Response: Please see responses to Questions 7 and 8 for historical data.

Question 46. Does the Agency have utilization numbers showing the total minutes of OPI and/or VRI provided by language?

NHES Response: Please see responses to Questions 7 and 8 for historical data.

Question 47. Does the Agency have utilization numbers by office location?

NHES Response: This information is not readily available at this time.

Question 48. Have you exercised all renewal options with your existing provider?

NHES Response: Yes.

Question 49. What is the current per minute pricing for each line item in Appendix B?

NHES Response: Please see response to Question 5.

Question 50. Historically how many minutes are you using and what is the language breakdown by volume?

NHES Response: Please see responses to Questions 7 and 8 for historical data.

Question 51. Will you require any equipment? If yes, can you please provide some parameters for pricing purposes?

NHES Response: No.

Question 52. Do you or will you need any document translation services?

NHES Response: Written translation services are outside the scope of this RFP.

Question 53. How do you currently track language service metrics . . . use, spend, connect time, etc.?

NHES Response: Vendor tracks and reports usage by minute as required by RFP.

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Question 54. What pain points are you looking to address that were not met by your current language service provider?

NHES Response: Please see response to Question 20.

Question 55. We understand that all Department offices are closed due to Covid-19. Can you please confirm whether or not the delivery address for bids (45 S. Fruit Street) will be open and staffed to accept deliveries? If not, would the Department accept bids submitted via email or other electronic means?

NHES Response: Please see response to Question 14. In person delivery will be accepted at the mail room entrance on the East/rear of the building.

Question 56. Exception to a provision in the Agreement in Appendix D: Would the Proposer delete section 8.2.2?

NHES Response: No.

Question 57. Regarding Section 8, Item A: a. Can the Department confirm that only a single contractor currently provides the services described in this RFP? b. Is there any circumstance under which the Department would award the contract to multiple vendors?

NHES Response: Yes, a single vendor currently provides OPI and VRI services. NHES anticipates awarding a single contract.

Question 58. What percentage of telephonic interpretation is Spanish?

NHES Response: Please see responses to Questions 7 and 8 for historical data.

Question 59. Does NHES have any past usage reports to share with vendors?

NHES Response: Please see responses to Questions 7 and 8 for historical data.

Question 60. Due to COVID restrictions, would NHES consider allowing electronically submitted proposals?

NHES Response: Please see response to Question 14.

Question 61. Do you anticipate awarding a single, or multiple vendors for this contract?

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NHES Response: Please see response to Question 25.

Question 62. If multiple vendors are awarded, how will work be distributed?

NHES Response: Not applicable.

Question 63. Is it possible to bid just OPI or VRI, but not both?

NHES Response: Please see response to Question 10.

Question 64. Who is your current vendor for these services?

NHES Response: Please see response to Question 5.

Question 65. What are the current rates you pay for these services?

NHES Response: Please see response to Question 5.

Question 66. Can you please tell us the historical monthly or annual volumes in minutes for Over-the-Phone Interpretation and Video Remote Interpretation?

NHES Response: Please see responses to Questions 7 and 8 for historical data.

Question 67. Can you please tell us the anticipated monthly or annual volumes in minutes for Over-the-Phone Interpretation and Video Remote Interpretation?

NHES Response: The anticipated monthly or annual volumes are unknown at this time. Please see responses to Questions 7 and 8 for historical data.

Question 68. How many minutes per month of ASL interpretation do you require?

NHES Response: Please see responses to Questions 7 and 8 for historical data.

Question 69. What languages are most requested in each service type? Can you please provide a breakdown by percentage?

NHES Response: Please see responses to Questions 7 and 8 for historical data.

Question 70. Do you anticipate the submission deadline for this RFP being extended for any reason?

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NHES Response: No.

Question 71. Historically, how often have you had emergency Video Remote Interpretation requests?

NHES Response: Not applicable.

Question 72. Do you ever require simultaneous Over-the-Phone Interpretation, or is your need just for consecutive?

NHES Response: Although unlikely, it is possible for the agency to need simultaneous OPI services.

Question 73. How often have you historically had a need for simultaneous Video Remote Interpreting, over consecutive?

NHES Response: Not applicable. NHES has not previously utilized VRI.

Question 74. How often do you have a need to pre-schedule OPI or VRI, and/or request a specific interpreter?

NHES Response: NHES pre-schedules OPI services infrequently and does not request specific interpreters. NHES has not previously utilized VRI services.

Question 75. As is common practice and industry standard, we work with thousands of independent contractors in order to provide round-the-clock access to hundreds of languages. It wouldn't be possible for us to send you all of these contractors' names, qualifications and resumes. Are you able to accept a blanket verification that your requirements are being met?

NHES Response: Please see response to Question 3.

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Please include a signed copy of this signature page with your proposal.

Vendor _____ Address _____

By: _____
(This document must be signed) (Title)

(Please print or type name) Tel. No. _____

**CONTACT: Jill D. Revels, Business Administrator
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