



Energy & Housing Services Department Memorandum

To: RFP Respondents and Interested Parties

From: Daniel Drost, Director of Energy and Housing Services

Date: May 31, 2018

Subject: Response to Questions Maine State Housing Authorities Home Energy Assistance Program Management Information Systems Software RFP
RFP Issued: April 27, 2018
Submissions Due: 5:00 pm EDT, Friday, June 15, 2018
(extended from June 4, 2018 on June 15, 2018)

Pursuant to the provisions of the aforementioned RFP, MaineHousing will respond to questions and clarifications related to the RFP through Friday, May 18, 2018 and share them with interested parties and post them on MaineHousing's website at www.mainehousing.org.

The following questions were posed on May 18, 2018 and are posted as of May 30, 2018:

Q 1: RFP Section II.B.1.A.o. States that the vendor must supply a “robust reporting system (both internal and external)”. Does MaineHousing have existing external data reporting tools that the current system should provide data to, or should the response include implementation of a new external reporting system?

A 1: The reporting requirements, both internal and external, refer to the ability to provide partners with data that can be tailored to their requests for information. This does not mean there is a requirement for an additional reporting tool outside of the system. The current system utilizes SQL Server Reporting Services (SSRS) for customized and automated reporting.

Q 2: Does MaineHousing have specific requirements related to the external reporting system?

A 2: See Q&A 1 above.

Q 3: Does the MERAC database implement 100% referential integrity, data validation, and use of appropriate data types (e.g.; does always stored in date columns)?

A 3: Data parameters are established for a majority of the fields within the system. There may be some fields which at the time of data migration may require correction and a method of determining data field matching issues and how they can be corrected to meet the data field requirements of the new system.

Q 4: What database technology is used by the current MERAC database?

A 4: Microsoft Visual Studio.net and SQL Server Database.

Q 5: Does a test/sanitized copy of the MERAC database exist (i.e. one without real PII, but with generated test data)?

A 5: A test/sanitized copy of the existing data management system can be created.

Q 6: For the external reporting system, does MaineHousing envision a self-service, web-based, end user tool that includes predefined, parameterized and ad-hoc reporting capability, or more of an IT user tool for developing reports that are delivered to end users by IT?

A 6: See Q&A 1 above.

Q 7: For the data conversion, does MaineHousing envision a process in which MaineHousing IT staff deliver data extracts to the vendor for import to vendor system, a professional services approach where the vendor is primarily responsible for extracting data from the MERAC system or something in between?

A 7: It is anticipated that the Vendor will manage and perform these activities with the coordination and assistance of Department staff and IT support where needed.

Q 8: Does MaineHousing have a provision in its current agreement with MERAC solution provider that requires the provider to provide termination assistance to a successor organization? Can bidders assume that the current provider will be available to answer questions or provide hands on support for the data migration project?

A 8: No. Assistance to a successor organization will be coordinated by the Department.

Q 9: RFP Section 2.A.g. calls for availability of a Permission Module. Can MaineHousing provide a matrix depicting classes of users and the need to know process the system should support?

A 9: It is required that the new data management system allow for granular user roles and abilities to facilitate the management of data entry, data use and data extraction. That there is some flexibility in the exact structure of roles, responsibilities and assignments of users and this will be contingent upon the new data management systems permission structures and protocols. Below are the current user roles (in order of access – least to most):

Read Only

Restricts the user from making any changes but can view application information.

Intake LiHEAP

Ability to view, create and update basic application functions.

Certify LiHEAP

Ability to view, create, update and certify applications for payments and request the reopen of applications.

Administrator LiHEAP

Ability to access the Tool menu to control the maintenance of local landlords, employers, and assign local vendors.

EHS Administrator

Allows the user to change the physical address on an application, add or update users, update maintenance tables and run payment process.

Q 10: RFP Section 2A.h. calls for a SSO experience. Does MaineHousing have a preferred SSO and Federated Identify Trust scheme?

A 10: MaineHousing does not have a preferred SS and FIT scheme.

Q 11: RFP Section B.1.A.c. calls for agents, clients and vendors to use mobile devices to access and/or submit information. Can MaineHousing confirm that a responsive web application vs a native mobile application is sufficient to satisfy this requirement?

A 11: Yes, a responsive web application would be sufficient.

Q 12: RFP Section 3a. MERAC database: Is the data transfer from it a one time or ongoing process?

A 12: In respect to the data migration from the existing system to the new system it would be a one-time data transfer once all errors, inconsistencies and formatting requirements have been determined.

Q 13: RFP Section 3b. How is the transfer from the MERAC database going to be done? Extracts to text files that are loaded?

A 13: The manner in which the data is transferred from the existing system to the new system will be determined by the Vendor.

Q 14: RFP Section B.1.A.c. By mobile devices, are you meaning cellphones. Are they currently using cellphones?

A 14: No, cellphones and other mobile devices are not currently being used. See Q&A 11. Mobile devices would be tablets and cell phones and would allow for clients to complete applications, upload supporting documentation and monitor the status of applications.

Q 15: RFP Section B.1.A.e. What would be an example of another entity using the system?

A 15: Users other than MaineHousing or its subgrantees may include fuel vendors who would be uploading annual consumption data or clients completing applications or monitoring the status of applications.

Q 16: RFP Section B.1.A.q. Can you provide an example of a business rule that would need to be able to be modified?

A 16: An example of a business rule requiring a modification would be to allow the head of household to be under the age of 18 (emancipated minor). Another example would be the customization of rules related to income eligibility limits. Income table would be a standard feature within the system and updated when appropriate. The modification to the rule would be how household or regional characteristics determine how those income limits are to be used in determining eligibility.

Q 17: RFP Section B.1.A.r. What are aspects of vendor contract management you want the system to provide?

A 17: Vendor contract management would include, but is not limited to setting wood vendor pricing and service areas. It is also desirable to have a system that will track the status of vendor contracts. Examples of tracking would include, but not be limited to: date contract sent to vendor; date contract returned by vendor; fuel types offered by the vendor; contract effective dates and termination dates; contract suspension or termination information; comments about the vendor; dates of contract amendment or modification; and the storage of contracts in an easily accessible and useable format within the system.

Q 18: RFP Section B.1.A.v. Import to the system? Any examples of what this might be?

A 18: Examples of importing data into the system would include vendor pricing and annual consumption reporting data.

Q 19: RFP Section B.1.A.bb.2. Can you provide examples of these situations?

A 19: An example would be the ability to review a user audit trail in order to be in compliance with SAA. This would provide documentation of who viewed data and when; duration of data review; exporting of data; printing of data; or manipulation/editing data.

Q 20: RFP Section IV, Paragraph A.3. SSAE18: Vendors are requested to submit a copy of their SSAE 16 SOC Type 2 report. The section refers to SSAE18, while the description refers to SSAE16. We are assuming that you are requesting SSAE16, is this correct?

A 20: This is a typographical error. The second reference should be SSAE18 which became effective⁴ on May 1, 2017. If a Vendor that is submitting a proposal does not have SSAE18, SSAE 16 will suffice. Type 2 addresses operational controls related to storing and/or processing client information and should be submitted with the proposal.

MaineHousing is including in this response to questions and inquiries the SSA's electronic Information Exchange Security Requirements and Procedures for State and Local Agencies Exchanging electronic Information with the Social Security Administration. This document will also be posted on MaineHousing's website at www.mainehousing.org.

Q 21: RFP Section IV, Paragraph A.2. Past Performance: In the PFD version on page 17 there is an item e and then on the following page this is another item e. Is this correct?

A 21: This is an error in the numbering of sections. The sections referred to above should be numbered as follows:

- f. Provide Vendor background/history and why the Vendor is qualified to provide the services described in this RFP. (*Limit response to no more than four (4) pages.*)
- g. Vendor shall also discuss who currently uses the Vendor's System, how long they have been using it and what obstacles, if any, users have identified that may still need to be overcome with the System.
- h. Provide Dun and Bradstreet Number. (If Vendor currently does not have one, it will need to be obtained prior to contract execution if it is the awarded Vendor.)
- i. Provide Federal Tax Identification Number.
- j. Provide the last two (s) year's and current year interim:
 - 1. Profit and Loss Statement
 - 2. Balance Statement

Q 22: Regarding the “Security of System and Process” section of the RFP, the cloud based server that the MaineHousing solution runs on would require some very specific monitoring and service. When we review the 12 areas of the “Cost Proposal” we do not see any provision to reflect these costs.

A 22: Costs related to monitoring and service costs related to a cloud based server should be included in the Cost Proposal section of the submission.