



Maine State Housing Authority
Request for Proposals (RFP) for
Software System to Manage Eviction
Prevention Program

SCHEDULE

Issue Date: June 24, 2024

Deadline for Questions: July 8, 2024 5:00 p.m. EST

Deadline for Submitting Proposals: July 18, 2024 5:00 p.m. EST

MaineHousing Contact for this RFP:

Adam Krea, Sr. Director of Finance & Lending

E-mail:

EPPsoftwarerfp@mainehousing.org

MAINEHOUSING NONDISCRIMINATION NOTICE:

MaineHousing does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, ancestry, age, physical or mental disability, familial status, or receipt of public assistance in the admission or access to, or treatment in, its programs and activities. In employment, MaineHousing does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, ancestry, age, physical or mental disability, or genetic information. MaineHousing will provide appropriate communication auxiliary aids and services upon sufficient notice. MaineHousing will also provide this document in alternative formats upon sufficient notice. MaineHousing has designated the following person responsible for coordinating compliance with applicable federal and state nondiscrimination requirements and addressing grievances: Lauren Bustard, Maine State Housing Authority, 26 Edison Drive, Augusta, Maine 04330, Telephone Number 1-800-452-4668 (voice in state only), (207) 626-4600, or Maine Relay 711.

Maine State Housing Authority
Request for Proposals
For Software System to Manage Eviction Prevention Program

I. INTRODUCTION

Overview

In this **Request for Proposals for Software System to Manage Eviction Prevention Program** (the “RFP”), Maine State Housing Authority (“MaineHousing”) is requesting proposals from experienced, qualified, and professional companies (“Vendor”) who can provide and assist with the implementation of comprehensive, modern, and secure software to manage a newly created Eviction Prevention Program (the “Program”).

Functionality included in the scope of this RFP includes, but is not limited to, functions for client intake, client prioritization, eligibility determination, budgeting, billing, payments, and report generation.

The Program is a pilot funded by the Maine State Legislature with \$18 million. MaineHousing may select one or more organizations to act as its agent in administering the Program. MaineHousing and the administrative agent, if any, will utilize a software system as described in this RFP to manage this statewide Program. MaineHousing would like to invite your company to participate in this process.

About MaineHousing

MaineHousing’s mission is to assist Maine people in obtaining and maintaining quality affordable housing and services suitable to their housing needs. MaineHousing is an independent quasi-state agency that, at its core, couples the efficiencies of the private financial markets with public purpose goals to provide affordable home ownership and rental housing opportunities for Maine people. In addition, it administers a number of state and federal housing-related programs including the Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program, the Section 8 Rental Assistance programs, the Emergency Solutions Grant Program, the Weatherization Program, and the Home Energy Assistance Program on behalf of the State of Maine. These programs, as well as others, reduce costs associated with housing for Maine people.

For more information about MaineHousing, please go to www.mainehousing.org.

II. GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Review and Compliance

It is the responsibility of each Vendor to review this entire document and comply with all requirements of this RFP. “Vendor” refers to any person or entity who may, or does, submit a proposal in response to this RFP.

Questions and Answers

All Vendor questions deemed relevant and material to this RFP along with response answers will be posted by MaineHousing at www.mainehousing.org, no later than July 10, 2024.

Any responses or answers provided by MaineHousing to Vendor questions will automatically become part of this RFP.

Proposal Terms

All proposals submitted by Vendors and received by MaineHousing will be treated as contract offers. A Vendor’s proposal must remain open from the time of receipt of the proposal by MaineHousing and continue for a minimum of 90 days after the date of Vendor’s product demonstration, pursuant

to this RFP and may not be unilaterally modified by Vendor during that period.

Alterations, modifications or variations of a proposal after the submission deadline will not be considered by MaineHousing, unless authorized by an amendment or addendum to this RFP issued by MaineHousing.

In the case of any award pursuant to this RFP, the awarded Vendor must keep in effect all proposal terms, including pricing, throughout any contract negotiations.

Proposal Costs

MaineHousing is not liable for any expenses incurred by the Vendor in the preparation, delivery, product demonstration, or submission of their proposal to this RFP. Costs of developing and delivering proposals pursuant to this RFP are solely at the expense of the Vendor.

Proposal Materials

All proposals submitted, including all items and materials submitted as part of the proposals, become the property of MaineHousing, whether or not selected. Proposal materials may be appended by MaineHousing to any contract between MaineHousing and the Vendor providing such materials.

Contract Term

The initial term of the contract award, pursuant to this RFP, will be for a minimum of one (1) year, with the possibility of four (4), one (1) year renewals for a total of a five (5) year term. As this Program is a pilot, ongoing funding is not assured.

III. REQUIREMENTS

General Requirements/Scope of Work

At a minimum, MaineHousing's expectation is to select a Vendor to provide a breadth of functionality necessary to support the business processes to successfully deliver the Program.

The system must have the ability to:

- Support the application process through an online portal
- Prioritize moving applications through the process based on the priorities set in the final Program rules
- Provide MaineHousing and any external administrative agent access to data on-line for final approval for the granting of benefits
- Generate electronic or check payment files, as well as a vendor list, into a specific format to interface with MaineHousing's current cash disbursement system
- Generate reports on key data points
- Be in production within 60 days of the award of this contract

Security Requirement

The Vendor must describe how the software will maintain the highest level of security protection of all sensitive, protected, and/or confidential data and materials, throughout the contracted relationship.

At a minimum, the software must:

- Have the ability to enable two factor authentication.
- Enforce password complexity controls.

- Capture audit trail of database activity and produce reports of audited activity.
- Utilize currently supported encryption methods for data at rest and in transit.
- Have the ability to allow MaineHousing, as the Administrator, assign user roles for internal staff and external partners.

Any Vendor that is invited to the demonstration phase of the selection process will be required to complete the MaineHousing Vendor Security Survey prior to the software demonstration. If you would like a copy of the MaineHousing Vendor Security Survey, please make that request via email to EPPsoftwarerfp@mainehousing.org. The findings of the security survey may disqualify the Vendor from moving forward in the selection process.

IV. PROPOSAL PRICING

Cost Items

The Vendor must provide:

- A detailed, itemized firm cost proposal for all costs associated with this RFP that will remain firm for the initial year of the contract and at least two (2) of the extensions, if any. The cost proposal must include all necessary labor, hardware, software, configuration, and programming and the selection of the proper type and quantities of the system components to assure a complete and operational solution.
- A fee schedule for one time or monthly reoccurring costs, including any extra costs necessary to support software upgrades, incident response, scalability of services or off hours access or services.

The basis of the price and any underlying assumptions must be included in the Vendor's cost proposal.

Payment

Generally, payment by MaineHousing will be tied to specific milestones, which may include satisfactory acceptance testing, and/or deliverables.

Payment terms are net 30 days after receipt of correct invoice containing information required by MaineHousing and acceptance of deliverable (after testing).

V. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The submission deadline for all proposals is 5:00 PM on July 18, 2024. Proposals should be emailed to EPPsoftwarerfp@mainehousing.org.

MaineHousing is not responsible for late delivery of a proposal for any reason.

Late proposals **will not be accepted or considered.**

Organization/Formatting

Proposals must be presented following the prescribed instructions within this RFP. The proposal, along with all supplemental documentation required under this RFP must be:

- Submitted by e-mail in PDF format
- Pages numbered consecutively

- Provided in the sequential order listed below:
 1. Vendor Information Sheet (see Appendix A)
 2. Vendor Proposal Response – include Detailed Requirements from Appendix D
 3. Itemized Costs and Licensing Model
 4. Business References (see table under Section V for formatting)
 5. Service Level Agreement
 6. Company W-9
 7. Current Certificate of General Liability Insurance
 8. Current Certificate of Workers Compensation Insurance
 9. Equal employment opportunity and affirmative action policy
 10. Vendor Certification Form (see Appendix B)

Content

All information requested by this RFP must be submitted as part of Vendor’s proposal. Only information that is received in response to this RFP will be evaluated.

References to information submitted to MaineHousing outside this RFP process or references to Internet website addresses will be deemed non-responsive and will not be considered by MaineHousing.

Cross-references to other portions of a Vendor’s proposal submitted in response to this RFP are acceptable but must reference the specific section number and heading for identification.

Business References

Vendors must provide a minimum of three (3) business references from clients who have Vendor’s proposed software in production for at least two years. MaineHousing reserves the right to contact and verify any or all references provided.

RFP: MaineHousing RFP for Software System to Manage Eviction Prevention Program	
Business Name:	
Business Reference Contact Information	
Name:	
Street Address:	
City, State, Zip:	
Phone, including area code:	
Email address:	
Alternate Contact Information	
Name:	
Street Address:	
City, State, Zip:	
Phone, including area code:	

Email address:	
Project Information	
Brief description of vendor's software modules being used in production for this reference.	
How long have you been a vendor for this reference?	
Have you supported this reference with an incident response? If so describe summary of incident and resolution.	
What federal or state housing programs are tracked using this software solution?	

RFP Point of Contact/Submission

To ensure clear communications, the following individual has been designated the point contact for this RFP. All requests, questions, proposal documents and/or correspondence must be communicated through this designated RFP contact:

Name:	Adam Krea
Title:	Senior Director of Finance and Lending
Address:	MaineHousing, 26 Edison Drive, Augusta, ME 04330
Email:	EPPsoftwarerfp@mainehousing.org

Vendors contact with any MaineHousing employee, consultant, or other MaineHousing representative concerning this RFP other than the MaineHousing contact person given above will be grounds for proposal rejection.

All questions must be in writing and submitted only to the designated RFP contact email address. Attempting to ask questions in person, or by telephone, will not be allowed and can disqualify a Vendor. Vendors will only rely on written statements issued from MaineHousing's designated RFP point of contact.

VI. PROPOSAL EVALUATION AND SELECTION CRITERIA

An evaluation committee consisting of MaineHousing staff will review all proposals. The evaluation committee may contact the Vendor to clarify any response and obtain information from any available source concerning any aspect of the proposal. MaineHousing may request any Vendor present to the evaluation committee as part of the selection process. MaineHousing's goal would be to have them in Maine or virtually in July 2024.

Vendor is cautioned that the evaluation committee is not required to ask for clarifications or information that is essential for a complete and thorough evaluation of Vendor proposals. Therefore, all proposals should be complete when submitted.

Subject to the reservation of rights and the other terms and conditions of this RFP, MaineHousing will select the Vendor or Vendors whose proposal is most advantageous to MaineHousing. Any award is contingent on successful negotiation of the final contract terms. In no event will any claimed obligations of any kind be enforceable against MaineHousing unless and until MaineHousing and the selected Vendor enter into a written contract. This RFP and the successful Vendor's proposal, as may be modified pursuant to this RFP, will be incorporated by reference into and be part of any contract between MaineHousing and the Vendor.

Vendors will be reviewed based on both a technical and financial basis from their written proposal to the RFP and interview, if any. The most important criteria will be:

- Qualifications and experience of entity/persons assigned
- Ability of proposed software to meet requirements outlined in RFP
- Implementation methodology/Work plan and Timeline
- Completeness of proposal and demonstration of the Vendor's understanding of MaineHousing's needs and expectations
- Proposal pricing

VII. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Rights Reserved by MaineHousing

In addition to the rights reserved by MaineHousing elsewhere in this RFP, MaineHousing reserves the right to:

Adjust the timetable for this RFP as deemed necessary.

Waive informalities and minor irregularities in proposals received.

Reject and not consider any or all Vendors who do not meet the requirements of this RFP, including but not limited to incomplete responses and/or non-responsive proposals.

Reject any or all proposals received and not to award a contract pursuant to this RFP, or to cancel or terminate this RFP process at any time, whether before or after any proposals have been submitted or received, if deemed by MaineHousing to be in its best interest.

Negotiate price or other factors included in any proposal submitted to MaineHousing, and in the event MaineHousing is unable to negotiate a mutually satisfactory contract with the successful Vendor under this RFP, MaineHousing may, in its sole discretion, negotiate with another Vendor or cancel this RFP and not award a contract to any Vendor.

Reject the Vendor selected pursuant to this RFP and to offer a contract to another Vendor in the event the selected Vendor does not enter into the required contract to provide related services described in this RFP.

Negotiate directly with one Vendor if the responses to this RFP demonstrate a lack of competition.

Correct or amend this RFP. In no case will this RFP be amended within seven (7) days of the proposal submission deadline unless the amendment includes an extension of time. MaineHousing will not be liable for any costs incurred as a result of changes to this RFP.

MaineHousing reserves the right to split the award among multiple Vendors.

Other Terms and Conditions

Conflict of Interest. The Vendor, any principal or affiliate of the Vendor, or anyone who will be paid for work on the Contract, that has business ties, familial relations, or other close personal relations with a current MaineHousing employee or a commissioner, or anyone who was a MaineHousing employee or a commissioner within the past year must disclose this information under **Appendix A – Vendor Information Sheet**.

Vendor Certification Form. As a mandatory requirement of this proposal, all Vendors must complete and submit the Vendor Certification Form attached to this RFP as **Appendix B**, along with their proposal submission.

Confidentiality and Nondisclosure. Vendors shall maintain in trust and confidence and shall not disclose to any third party, except as such disclosure may be authorized in writing in advance by MaineHousing, and shall not use for any unauthorized purpose, any and all information, documents and data received or obtained from or on behalf of MaineHousing. Vendor may use such information, documents and data only to the extent required for the purposes described in this RFP. Vendor shall adhere to all security, confidentiality and nondisclosure policies and procedures required by MaineHousing for the protection of such information and data from unauthorized use and disclosure and from loss.

Maine Freedom of Access Act. Information submitted by a Vendor in any proposal becomes public information and is subject to disclosure in accordance with the requirements of law, including without limitation the Maine Freedom of Access Act, 1 M.R.S. Section 401 et seq. ("FOAA"), except as provided therein. Vendor acknowledges that MaineHousing is required to comply with FOAA.

Protest Procedures. Protests of any award made pursuant to this RFP must be submitted in writing to MaineHousing at the address given on the cover page of this RFP, to the attention of: Director. To be considered, protests must be received by MaineHousing within fifteen (15) calendar days from the date of notification of the contract award and provide specific reasons and any supporting documentation for the protest.

Women and Minority Owned Businesses. Women and minority owned businesses are encouraged to apply. To subcontract any of the work, Vendor must follow the steps outlined in 2 CFR 200.321.

APPENDIX A
VENDOR INFORMATION SHEET

for
MaineHousing Request for Proposals (RFP) for
Software System to Manage Eviction Prevention Program

Please provide the following information, completed and signed, and place this form at the front of the proposal:

General Information	
Company Name:	
Federal Tax ID:	
Street Address:	
City, State, Zip:	
Telephone#:	
Contact Person for Questions	
Name:	
Title:	
E-mail Address:	
Telephone#:	
Business Description	
# Years in Business:	
# Years providing software of similar scale and composition as described in this RFP:	
Current Company Size:	
Current # of Customers:	
Evidence of Workforce expertise, experience, qualifications, and knowledge:	<i>Please be sure to include all supplemental qualification documents.</i>
Summarized Narrative of Vendor's ability to provide the services, materials, and labor required under this RFP:	
Conflict of Interest. Does the Vendor, any principal or affiliate of the Vendor, or anyone who will be paid for work on the contract have business ties, familial relations, or other close personal relations with a current MaineHousing employee or commissioner, or anyone who was a MaineHousing employee or commissioner within the past year? If yes, please describe here:	

APPENDIX B
VENDOR CERTIFICATION FORM

for
MaineHousing Request for Proposals (RFP) for
Software System to Manage Eviction Prevention Program

Vendor Name	
Vendor Address	

The undersigned Vendor represents and certifies as follows:

1. The prices in this proposal have been arrived at independently and without consultation, communication, agreement or disclosure with or to any other Vendor or potential Vendor.
2. No attempt has been made at any time to induce any firm or person to submit any intentionally high or noncompetitive proposal or to otherwise submit or refrain from submitting a proposal for the purpose of restricting competition.
3. Vendor has not given, and will not give at any time hereafter, any economic opportunity, future employment, gift, loan, gratuity, special discount, trip, favor, or service to any employee or representative of MaineHousing in connection with this RFP.
4. Vendor acknowledges that MaineHousing will determine whether a conflict of interest exists and that MaineHousing reserves the right to disqualify any Vendor on the grounds of actual or apparent conflict of interest.
5. Vendor has not employed or retained any person or entity to solicit or obtain any contract resulting from this RFP and has not paid or agreed to pay to any person or entity any commission, percentage, brokerage, or other fee contingent upon or resulting from the award of any such contract.
6. Vendor understands and acknowledges that the representations in its proposal are material and important and will be relied on by MaineHousing in evaluating the proposal. Vendor certifies that, to the best of its knowledge, all of the information contained in its proposal is true, correct and complete and acknowledges that any intentional misrepresentation by Vendor will disqualify Vendor from further consideration in connection with this RFP.
7. The undersigned individual is legally authorized to sign this Vendor Certification Form for and on behalf of Vendor and to bind Vendor to the statements made herein.

Name, Title and Signature of Individual with Authority to Bind Vendor	
Name	
Title	
Signature	
Date	

APPENDIX C
KEY PROPOSAL DATES

for
MaineHousing Request for Proposals (RFP) for
Software System to Manage Eviction Prevention Program

All dates are subject to change at MaineHousing's discretion.

All proposal documents, correspondence, and/or questions must be emailed to:
EPPsoftwarerfp@mainehousing.org

RFP Issuance:	
Date Issued:	June 24, 2024
Questions & Answers:	
Questions:	Questions will be received: From: June 24, 2024 to July 8, 2024 <u>no later than 5 p.m. EST</u> Questions must be emailed directly to: EPPsoftwarerfp@mainehousing.org
Answers:	All questions, and their subsequent answers, will be posted on the MaineHousing website for public viewing. Questions will be answered no later than July 10, 2024 <i>To locate these postings, go to the MaineHousing website located at:</i> https://www.mainehousing.org/rfp
Pertinent Proposal Dates:	
Deadline for Proposal Submission:	July 18, 2024 no later than 5:00 p.m. EST <i>**Please be sure emailed proposal is in PDF format, as well as all supplemental documentation.</i>

APPENDIX D
DETAILED FUNCTIONAL REQUIREMENTS
for
MaineHousing Request for Proposals (RFP) for
Software System to Manage Eviction Prevention Program

Application Intake

1. Applicant Portal for applicants to complete their application, upload/submit required documentation and see the updated status of their application as it is being processed.
2. Administrator(s) able to enter application information for applicants directly into the system.
3. Administrator/Applicant able to communicate via the portal and automated notifications based on application status.
4. Application (portal and base system) supports contextual responses to streamline data entry and required documents.
 - a. The Intake process should be intuitive to identify what documents should be completed by the applicant and provide those documents at the time of intake.
 - b. Supports categorical eligibility, meaning income documentation is not required when applicant provides documentation of receipt of other applicable income-based programming. Categorical eligibility functionality is available when an application is submitted using the portal or base application.
5. Document management in the base system will support record retention requirements.
6. Applicants can e-sign applications and other forms needed to complete the application via the Portal.
7. Portal would have option for applicant to select their native language (French, Spanish, etc.).
8. System will not allow duplicate applications.
9. The system can capture data needed to prioritize processing.
10. Ability to manage program waitlist.
11. Data validation edits will be flexible and support clear messaging to applicant
12. The system will use a mailing address verification solution to ensure accurate information.
13. Advanced search features, for example application search can be initiated for any member of the household.
14. Ability to assign workflow notifications for person(s) next in line to process the application.
15. Ability to enter/read case notes for applicants.

Certification/Eligibility Determination

1. Ability to set eligibility rules. Rules should be easily manipulated by the Administrator and would not require Vendor resources to change rules. All rules should be effective dated.
2. Generate various letters and benefit notifications pulling data from the system, ability to customize letters without Vendor support.
3. System tracks application statuses which reflect natural workflow, process map is available to demonstrate the workflow.
4. System supports denial reversals.
5. Ability to access and track history of notifications and letters previously sent.
6. The system can track contact attempts with applicants.

Landlord Management

1. Landlord Portal to upload/submit documents, e-sign, and receive payment remittance advices.
2. Ability for Landlords to self-onboard and Administrators ability to inactivate Landlords.
3. Administrator/Landlord able to communicate via the portal and automated notifications based on application status.

Payment Processing

1. Either integrated payment generation/reconciliation or payment export file or API to external payment generation system.
2. Benefit returns (prepay balance that is not used) are tracked and re-issued from the software.
3. Ability to manage overpayments and fraud in the system.

4. Ability to place payment hold on Landlord.
5. Ability to manually adjust payment amount.
6. Ability to track funding allocation in the system.

Reporting

1. Standard reports are delivered with the software and can be scheduled or run ad hoc dependent on user security roles.
2. Ad hoc report writer tool can be used by end users without technical skills to meet various reporting requests
3. Dashboard type visual reports not limited to but consisting of households served by geography, county, demographics, administrator(s), and application status.
4. Support for data APIs to generate a local reporting database.

Technology

1. Unified database solution for all programs supported by the software application. This ensures one source of truth, data entered in one “module” front end is immediately available in another.
2. System fully supports monitoring access and logs changes to sensitive data. Audit reports provide visibility to the log data.
3. System supports Azure single sign on.
4. Vendor utilizes a ticketing system with customer access to track support requests. Service level for ticket response is clearly defined and escalation procedure is available to customer.
5. Document size limits are published, and file types restricted. Files are scanned for malware or other attack vectors before being uploaded and stored in the system.
6. Role-based security is available and custom roles can be defined. Sensitive data access is controlled by role level security within the application and reporting tools.
7. System upgrade and patching process is clearly defined along with vendor/customer roles and responsibilities.
8. Production, Training and Test environments are licensed to customer.
9. Vendor provided documentation would include user guide, administrator guide, data dictionary and database entity relationship diagram.
10. Currently supported versions of Microsoft Edge and Firefox browsers provide the best performance for each of the modules in the application.
11. If solution is vendor hosted, all servers are in the United States
12. Vendor can provide results from web application security testing.
13. Mobile support for the applicant portal.
14. Vendor disaster recovery plan is provided.
15. Vendor solutions are high availability and high redundancy.
16. Message board on logon screen has time bound messaging capability.