



## Request for Proposals (RFP) for Auditing Services

### SCHEDULE

Issued: May 28, 2024

Deadline for Questions: June 11, 2024 at 5:00 p.m. EST

Deadline for Submitting Proposals: June 25, 2024  
at 5:00 p.m. EST

MaineHousing Contact for this Request For Proposals:

Darren Brown, Director of Finance

E-mail: [dbrown@mainehousing.org](mailto:dbrown@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, 26 Edison Drive, Augusta, Maine 04330



## Request for Proposals (RFP) for Auditing Services

### I. INTRODUCTION

#### Overview

Maine State Housing Authority ("MaineHousing") is requesting proposals from experienced and qualified certified public accounting firms ("Firm") to provide auditing services for up to five calendar years beginning with the calendar year ending December 31, 2024. MaineHousing intends to make a single award to a Firm that will provide all of the services specified in this RFP.

#### About MaineHousing

MaineHousing is an independent state agency that was created by the Maine Legislature. It is a public body corporate and politic and instrumentality of the State. It is a discretely presented major component unit of the State of Maine for financial reporting purposes.

MaineHousing issues bonds, allocates federal low-income housing tax credits, and provides financing under federal and state funded programs to finance single family and multifamily affordable housing in the state of Maine. It also administers various housing and energy related state and federal programs and collects and disburses federal rent subsidies for low income housing. Bonds issued by MaineHousing are payable solely from the assets of the various programs that are pledged under the resolutions authorizing the particular issues.

For more information about MaineHousing, including its financial statements, please go to [www.mainehousing.org](http://www.mainehousing.org).

### II. GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

#### Review and Compliance

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

#### Point of Contact

The point of contact regarding this RFP is:

**Darren Brown**  
**Director of Finance**  
**Maine State Housing Authority**  
[dbrown@mainehousing.org](mailto:dbrown@mainehousing.org)

Firms may contact Darren Brown only via email. Verbal communications, facsimile transmissions, and hard copy documents will not be accepted.

### Questions and Answers

All questions, including requests for clarification, must be submitted by email to Darren Brown no later than June 11, 2024. MaineHousing will respond to questions that MaineHousing deems relevant and material to this RFP by posting a list of such questions and responses to the MaineHousing website. Any responses provided by MaineHousing to questions will become part of this RFP. No other contact with MaineHousing employees is allowed.

### Proposal Terms

All proposals submitted by Firms and received by MaineHousing will be treated as contract offers. A Firm's proposal must remain open from the time of receipt of the proposal by MaineHousing and continue for a minimum of 90 days, pursuant to this RFP and may not be unilaterally modified by Firm 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 Firm 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 Firm in the preparation, delivery, or submission of their responses to this RFP. Costs of developing and delivering responses to this RFP are solely at the expense of the Firm.

### Proposal Materials

All materials submitted, as part of the response, become the property of MaineHousing, whether or not selected.

### Award Term

The term of the award, pursuant to this RFP will be three years, with the possibility of two, one-year renewals for a total of a five year term. The two one-year renewals shall be at the same price, terms, and conditions as stated in the Firm's original proposal.

### Rights Reserved by MaineHousing

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 Firms 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 Firm under this RFP, MaineHousing may, in its sole discretion, negotiate with another Firm or cancel this RFP and not award a contract to any Firm.
- Reject the Firm selected pursuant to this RFP and to offer a contract to another Firm in the event the selected Firm does not enter into the required contract to provide the services described in this RFP.
- Negotiate directly with one Firm 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.

### Other Terms and Conditions

**Conflict of Interest.** The Firm, any principal or affiliate of the Firm, or anyone who will be paid for work associated with this proposal, 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 - Firm Information Sheet**.

**Confidentiality and Nondisclosure.** Firm 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. Firm may use such information, documents, and data only to the extent required for the purposes described in this RFP. Firm 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.

**Public Information.** Information submitted by a Firm 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.A. Section 400 et seq. ("FOAA"), except as provided therein. Firm 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, Firm must follow the steps outlined in 2 CFR 200.321.

### **III. SCOPE OF SERVICES**

- A. Perform an annual audit of the financial statements in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAS) and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. The financial statements are prepared by MaineHousing staff. An Independent Auditors' Report must be completed and issued by March 31<sup>st</sup> after each calendar year end, beginning with the year ending December 31, 2024.
- B. Perform an annual Uniform Grant Guidance audit in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* and Title 2 U.S. Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 200, *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards*. Prepare and process the annual submission of the "Data Collection Form for Reporting on Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations" (Form SF-SAC) to the Federal Audit Clearinghouse.

- C. Review the submission and complete associated auditor's requirements, including issuing an Independent Auditors' Report on "The Financial Data Schedule for Certain HUD Programs", for the annual submission of the audited financial statements and other required supplemental financial and compliance information to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) through the Real Estate Assessment Center (REAC) Financial Assessment Subsystem (FASS-PH).
- D. Perform down-to-date procedures and issue an agreed-upon procedures comfort letter for each bond sale. MaineHousing periodically prepares official statements in connection with the sale of bonds. The official statements contain audited financial statements and the auditor's report thereon as well as unaudited quarterly financial information. Bond sales average six per year.
- E. Appear before MaineHousing's Board of Commissioners to make oral presentations of the written audit reports and as otherwise may be requested by MaineHousing.
- F. Provide information and guidance when needed relating to the implementation of new accounting pronouncements and treatment of financial transactions that are new or unusual to MaineHousing.

#### **IV. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS AND REQUESTED INFORMATION**

Proposal should demonstrate the qualifications, competence, and capacity of the Firm to effectively and efficiently audit MaineHousing in conformity with the requirements of this RFP. In providing the following information, restate each item and sub-item with its letter and number. Responses to each item must be included immediately after the restated item without reference to any appendix or attachment. The following items must be included:

##### **A. MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS**

- 1. These mandatory qualifications must be met for a proposal to be further evaluated under the evaluation criteria included in Section V of this RFP.
  - a. Must be a certified public accounting Firm licensed to practice in the state of Maine
  - b. Must have audit experience with State Housing Finance Agencies (HFA's)
  - c. Must have performed audits of a state government, local government, and/or affordable housing finance entity with assets over \$500 million within the last three (3) years.
  - d. Must have experience with mortgage and commercial banks with assets exceeding \$1.5 billion that have substantial activity in the origination of mortgage loans within the last three (3) years.

##### **B. GENERAL INFORMATION**

- 1. Provide a brief description of the Firm with at least the following information:
  - a. The year the Firm was organized.
  - b. The total number of audit staff.
  - c. The location of the office that will work on the audit engagement.
  - d. The size of the Firm's governmental and financial institution client base.
- 2. Provide the name, title, telephone number, and e-mail address of a primary contact person that will be responsible for day-to-day contact with MaineHousing and any backup personnel that will be accessible if the primary contact cannot be reached.

3. Provide evidence of certification from the State of Maine that the Firm is qualified and has a current license to do business in the State of Maine. Also, provide an affirmative statement that all assigned key professional staff are properly registered or licensed to practice in the State of Maine.
4. Describe your presence in Maine, if any. This may include, but is not limited to, information on offices in Maine, the location of such offices, and the number of employees working in the Maine offices. If no Maine presence, describe your ability to be present in Maine to conduct the services necessary under this RFP. Indicate if your Firm is registered and in good standing with the Maine Department of the Secretary of State - Bureau of Corporations, Elections and Commissions.

#### C. FIRM EXPERIENCE AND CAPABILITY

1. Describe the Firm's audit experience with state housing finance agencies. Describe how this experience demonstrates the ability to provide the services outlined for the respective activities in Section III of this RFP. Include prior experience with MaineHousing, if any.
2. Describe the Firm's audit experience with a state government, a local government, and/or an affordable housing entity with assets over \$500 million that supports the qualifications requirements set forth in the General Information section. Describe how this experience demonstrates the ability to provide the services outlined for the respective activities in Section III.
3. Describe the Firm's audit experience with mortgage and commercial banks with assets over \$1.5 billion that have substantial activity in the origination of mortgage loans and supports the qualifications requirements set forth in the General Information section. Describe how this experience demonstrates the ability to provide the services outlined for the respective activities in Section III.
4. Provide information on experience in the areas of bond sales and arbitrage tax matters. Provide listing of all bond issuing entity clients, including state housing finance agencies, for which the Firm provided professional services within the last three (3) years.
5. Provide a copy of the most recent external quality control peer review, with a statement whether that quality control review included a review of specific government and financial institution engagements.

#### D. ENGAGEMENT TEAM QUALIFICATION AND EXPERIENCE

1. Identify the principal supervisory and management staff, including the engagement partners, managers, other supervisors and specialists who would be assigned to the engagement. Provide information on the government and financial institution auditing experience of each person, including information on relevant continuing professional education for the past three (3) years and membership in professional organizations relevant to the performance of this audit.
2. Describe how the quality of staff over the term of the agreement will be assured. Indicate how much time will be required of MaineHousing staff for familiarizing the auditing staff with MaineHousing and applicable laws, programs, and accounting practices.

## E. AUDIT APPROACH

1. Describe the audit approach for the engagement. The approach should demonstrate the understanding of the audit requirements and the audit tests and procedures to be applied in completing the audit engagement and should include, but not be limited to, the following:
  - a. Proposed segmentation of the engagement.
  - b. Level of staff and number of hours to be assigned to each proposed segment of the engagement.
  - c. Use of computer audit and/or other specialists.
  - d. Approach to be taken to gain and document an understanding of MaineHousing's programs, laws, regulations, account structure and internal controls.
  - e. The types and formats of client schedules and any other information to be provided by MaineHousing.
  - f. The plan for transitioning from the predecessor auditing Firm, if necessary.
2. Describe the approach to keeping clients informed of new or revised accounting pronouncements, standards guidelines, accounting changes, audit procedure additions or changes and changes in markets or in regulations, especially related to state HFA's.

## F. FEE PROPOSAL

1. Provide a total fixed fee amount for the services described in Section III A through C for each of the next five calendar years beginning with the calendar year ending December 31, 2024. The total fixed fee amount must contain all direct and indirect costs, including all out-of-pocket expenses.
2. Provide a breakdown of the total number of hours and fixed fee amount for Section III A, B and C.
3. Provide a total fixed fee amount for each bond sale described in Section III D.
4. Specify the circumstances for which there will be additional charges for any service beyond the audit engagement outlined or other areas specifically identified in this proposal. Indicate whether the time associated with answering questions regarding various accounting issues, such as accounting for new programs or implementing new accounting pronouncements will warrant additional costs to MaineHousing and how those costs will be determined.

## V. PROPOSAL EVALUATION

Firms meeting the mandatory requirements under Section IV A. 4 will have their proposals evaluated based on the criteria described in this Section. Proposals submitted by Firms that do not meet the mandatory requirements will not be evaluated.

1. The Firm's experience, capacity, and approach to deliver the services described in Section III of this RFP.
2. The Firm's responsiveness and adherence to the instructions in this RFP.
3. The total fees of the Firm's proposal, including the fees for the audit and the fees for the other services outlined in this RFP, in accordance with the criteria of Section IV E.
4. Maine presence or ability to be present in Maine to perform the required services.

Firm may be contacted for clarification and to obtain additional information concerning any aspect of the proposal. MaineHousing is not required to ask for clarifications or information that is essential for a complete and thorough evaluation of Firm proposals. Therefore, all proposals should be complete when submitted.

Firms may be required to make a presentation of their proposal. The presentation, if necessary, will occur at MaineHousing's offices. The determination as to the need for presentations, and the order and schedule of the presentations, is at the sole discretion of MaineHousing.

## VI. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

- A. All proposals must be submitted by email in a single PDF document no later than 5:00 p.m. ET on June 25, 2024.
- B. Proposal must be sent to Darren Brown at [dbrown@mainehousing.org](mailto:dbrown@mainehousing.org) and the subject line must state "RESPONSE TO REQUESTS FOR PROPOSALS FOR AUDITING SERVICES".
- C. Proposals must be presented in a format that corresponds and refers to the section numbers and headings used in this RFP and must be presented in the same order. Pages must be numbered consecutively.
- D. All information requested by this RFP must be submitted as part of the 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.
- E. All proposals must include the completed and signed **Appendix A - Firm Information Sheet** and **Appendix B - Firm Certification Form** attached to this RFP. Include at the front of your proposal.



**APPENDIX A**  
**FIRM INFORMATION SHEET**

*for*

MaineHousing Request for Proposals for Auditing Services

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

<b>General Information</b>	
Company Name:	
Federal Tax ID:	
Street Address:	
City, State, Zip:	
Telephone#:	
<b>Contact Person for Questions</b>	
Name:	
Title:	
E-mail Address:	
Telephone#:	
<b>Conflict of Interest</b>	
<b>Conflict of Interest. Does the Firm, any principal or affiliate of the Firm, 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:</b>	

<b>Name, Title and Signature of Individual with Authority to Bind Firm</b>	
Name	
Title	
Signature	
Date	

**APPENDIX B**  
**FIRM CERTIFICATION FORM**

*for*

MaineHousing Request for Proposals for Auditing Services

<b>Firm Name</b>	
<b>Firm Address</b>	

**The undersigned Firm 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 Firm or potential Firm.
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. Firm 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. Firm acknowledges that MaineHousing will determine whether a conflict of interest exists and that MaineHousing reserves the right to disqualify any Firm on the grounds of actual or apparent conflict of interest.
5. Firm 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. Firm understands and acknowledges that the representations in its proposal are material and important and will be relied on by MaineHousing in evaluating the proposal. Firm 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 Firm will disqualify Firm from further consideration in connection with this RFP.
7. The undersigned individual is legally authorized to sign this Firm Certification Form for and on behalf of Firm and to bind Firm to the statements made herein.

Name, Title and Signature of Individual with Authority to Bind Firm	
<b>Name</b>	
<b>Title</b>	
<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Date</b>	