



VIRGIN ISLANDS HOUSING FINANCE AUTHORITY

3202 Demarara Plaza · Suite 200
St. Thomas · U. S. Virgin Islands · 00802-6447
Telephone (340) 777-4432 · Fax (340) 775-7913

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

for

EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE CASE MANAGEMENT SERVICES **ADDENDUM 2**

RFP 002-2022-STT/STX

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Contact person:

Nicole Roberts

Procurement/Contract Officer

nroberts@vihfa.gov

(340) 777-4432 ext. 4227

<https://www.vihfa.gov/procurement/solicitation>

 *Unlocking the Door to Affordable Housing*

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EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE CASE MANAGEMENT SERVICES
ADDENDUM 2

This addendum is issued to modify the previously issued RFP document and/or given for informational purposes and is hereby made a part of the RFP document. The Respondent must acknowledge the receipt of any and all addenda by acknowledging it in the RFP Cover Letter, Enclosure Document A. The Virgin Islands Housing Finance Authority (“VIHFA”) is providing responses to the questions asked by potential Respondents. Below are the questions and the responses as follows:

- 1. Regarding the requirement that business be licensed in the USVI. We have made application and process is underway. Concern is that license will be finalized by March 15, 2022. Would it be possible to submit a copy of the application and status to mee that standard?**

Please provide proof of application submitted and a copy of your receipt with control number from the Department of Licensing and Consumer Affairs.

- 2. Enclosure Document F and G: Can we share the word document?**

It is not the practice of VIHFA to convert and share word documents.

- 3. Would be open to a vendor responding to part of your RFP? For example, provide the CM system, but do not provide direct services.**

VIFHA is not accepting partial responses to this specific RFP. The vendor must be able to provide the full scope of work as outlined.

- 4. Who is your incumbent service provider?**

Presently, some of the Territory’s ERAP data is housed within a special ERAP platform within the local HMIS (Homeless Management Information System). The HMIS is managed by MTOC, Inc., a local non-profit. At this point, the information housed within the HMIS accounts for only a portion of the applications pool because none of the applications that have been received via e-mail or the portal has been entered in HMIS.

5. **Will the successful bidder be working alongside them during the transition to a new provider?**

In light of the indication above regarding the uncertainty about the extent to which MTOC qualifies as a service provider in the true sense, there will be limited opportunity to work alongside them during the transition.

6. **Page 5 of RFP, Section 2.1 Minimum Technical Requirements – Case Management Software System: Our team has evaluated the major ERAP software used in other states. We have assessed their weaknesses and developed an ERAP management system that overcomes those gaps. It is a new ERAP management solution that incorporates the best practices and lessons learned gleaned from our research work with over 30 ERAP grantees. We are launching this software on March 1st. As a company, we have a successful track record with developing and implementing housing software solutions with our clients. With this in mind, is there flexibility in the requirement for program specific experience mentions in section 2.1 (Minimal Technical requirements)?**

Yes.

7. **What problems have you encountered that have prevented you from disbursing more funds?**

The primary issue impacting the rate of disbursement to date has been the lack of staffing capacity. VIHFA initially sought to hire twenty (20) temporary employees to conduct application reviews; to date, we have hired nine persons. Due to staff turnover, our present workforce is five (5) persons.

8. **Who is currently making the ERAP payments?**

VIHFA is administering ERAP on behalf of the Territorial government (grantee). As such, VIHFA currently makes the ERAP payments utilizing its in-house Accounting Division augmented by the recent addition of an accountant (temporary hire) assigned exclusively for ERAP.

9. **Is the new contractor expected to make the actual payments or is it the state?**

The state is expected to make the actual payments.

10. **Who at HFA will be the final approver of applications?**

Once a contract is executed, VIHFA will determine the final approver.

11. **Does VIHFA require a minimal number of intake centers to be established?**

The minimal number would be one in person intake center per island.

12. **Page 4 of RFP, Section 2.0 Scope of Services: Specific Deliverable 1 & 2: Do these deliverables apply to ERA1 as well? If not how will the ERA 1 applications be processed?**

The listed deliverables apply to ERA funds – i.e., ERA 1.0 and ERA 2.0.

13. **Page 4 of RFP, Section 2.0 Scope of Services: Specific Deliverable: The last applications eligibility processing and determination period listed ends in June 2022. Is it VIHFAs expectation that applications will be collected throughout the performance period?**

Yes, it is VIHFA's expectation that applications will be collected throughout the performance period.

14. **Page 4 of RFP, Section 2.0 Scope of Services: Specific Deliverable: There is a gap in the application processing and determination from January 2022 – February 2022. Will this time period need to be included?**

Yes, it will need to be included.

15. **What are the requirements for the vendor's case management system to integrate with the existing case management system or is this a one-time migration?**

It is likely that this will need to be a one-time migration.

16. **Are there specific requirement for the new case management system to track other grant awards and relevant funding beyond ERA 1 and ERA 2?**

No.

17. **Are ERA 1 and ERA2 considered two different funding sources, or will this award constitute a single funding source for time tracking/billing purposes?**

To date, VIHFA has treated ERA 1 and ERA 2 as a single funding source for staff time tracking and program marketing purposes. The intention is to continue to treat them as a single source.

18. **Page 2 of RFP, Section 1.1: In the 3rd paragraph under this section, the term 'residual funds' is used. Does this refer to ERAP 1.0 funds that were not distributed?**

The term 'residual funds refers to all funds remaining from the ERAP 1.0.

19. **Page 2 of RFP, Section 1.1: Does this RFP include “residual funds’ and the ERAP 2.0 funds?**

Federal Programs recommends that the RFP covers all ERAP funds that may be available to the Territory.

20. **Page 2 of RFP, Section 1.1: Is the USVI ERAP 2.0 term sheet approved by Treasury; and is it available to the respondent?**

The USVI ERAP 2.0 term sheet has been approved by Treasury; and is not available to respondents.

21. **Page 2 of RFP, Section 1.2: Will the respondent be required to process and disburse funds to landlords/awardees, or will VIHFA take a file from the respondent perform the actual processing and disbursement of funds?**

VIHFA will be processing the payment and disbursing the funds.

22. **Page 3 of RFP, Section 3.0: Do you have projected application volume for ERAP?**

As of the date, there are an estimated 500 applications in need of processing.

23. **Page 3 of RFP, Section 3.0: Do you have projected funded grantees?**

No.

24. **Page 3 of RFP, Section 3.0: Can you provide a timeline for vendor selection after RFP submission?**

Vendor selection will be less than a 30-day period.

25. **Page 3 of RFP, Section 3.0: Is there a projected start date for the ERAP program?**

The EAR program is currently in progress.

26. **Page 3 of RFP, Section 3.0: Will HUD Certified housing counselors play role in assisting applicants?**

VIHFA does not anticipate the participation of housing counselors at this time.

- 27. Page 3 of RFP, Section 3.0: What will be the responsibilities of VIHFA Staff or this ERAP program?**

HFA staff will be responsible for final approval and processing.

- 28. Page 3 of RFP, Section 2.0 Specific Deliverables # 7 & 8: The delivery timelines for Items 8 & 9 have passed. How are they relevant to this RFP?**

The primary reason for solicitation of contract ERAP case management services is that the Territory has a significant backlog of applications requiring processing. The mentioned dates refer to the time period within which the applications were received by the program and not the expected date of performance by the Respondent.

- 29. Page 6 of RFP, Section 2.1 Item G: In this section you expect the respondent's CMS system to be able to integrate with two VIHFA systems. Are there existing API for these systems? Are they proprietary or commercial?**

There is not an existing API for the systems.

- 30. Page 6 of RFP, Section 2.1 Item S: Along with email letter, does VIHFA expect to send physical letters through the U.S. Postal Service whenever approval or denied or the status change?**

Currently, hard copy (physical) letters are sent to approved applicants transmitting a copy of the payment to the landlords. Formal denial letters are also sent via the USPS. All other correspondence to program applicants is sent via e-mail except in those cases where the applicant does not have access to e-mail.

- 31. Page 7 of RFP, Section 2.1 Item W: What is the number of applications/files, presumably from ERAP 1.0, that must be migrated to respondent's CMS?**

Estimated 500 applications.

- 32. Page 10 of RFP, Section 12.0 Item 4: In this section the following limitation on weekly billable hours is described "The contract maximum hours per week may not exceed 40 hours total". Does this mean that the respondent may not exceed this limit in its pricing model for call center, application processing and underwriting, technical support, and any other related services?**

The contract maximum hours per week may not exceed 40 hours total. The VIHFA shall determine the amount of hours to be worked to comply with budgetary restraints.

33. **Page 22 of RFP, Document E: Must respondent be licensed to do business in USVI at the time the response to the RPF is submitted?**

Respondent will have ten (10) business days after selection of award notice to provide valid VI Business License.

34. **Page 2 of RFP, Section 1.1 Background: What percent of funds have been obligated date?**

Approximately 5.4% of the combined ERA1.0 and ERA 2.0 funds has been expended to date.

35. **Page 2 of RFP, Section 1.1 Background: Since the selected vendor will not be able to impact the percentage of obligated funds prior to the milestone, (RFP responses due 3/15), is the territory at risk of their funds being reappropriated to a higher performing grantee (State, County, City Territory)?**

The Territory hopes that none of its ERA funds will be re-apportioned; however, the final decision regarding re-apportionment rests with the Department of Treasury.

36. **Page 2 of RFP, Section 1.1 Background: How much of each fund has been spent?**

ERAP 1.0 Administration: \$486,917.00
ERAP 1.0 Assistance: \$1,420,191.00
ERAP 2.0 Administration: -0-
ERAP 2.0 Assistance: \$174,145

37. **Page 2 of RFP, Section 1.1 Background: If the total unpaid amount from Section 3201 is about \$14.8 M is the new total \$32.8M including \$18M reallocated funds under 3201 (e)?**

Please clarify the question.

38. **Page 3 of RFP, Section 2.0 Scope of Services Item 5: Regarding #5 under Scope of Services, “development and implementation of internal controls”, are there documented internal controls already in place covering the payments that have already been made?**

Yes. There are various internal controls in place to reduce the potential for fraud.

39. **Page 3 of RFP, Section 2.0 Scope of Services, Table of Major Tasks: Regarding Task 1 “electronic portal”, how have application been submitted to date?**

To date, applications are able to be submitted via e-mail, via an established portal, and also in-person drop-off.

40. **Page 3 of RFP, Section 2.0 Scope of Services, Table of Major Tasks: Regarding Task 5 “AFWA”, has the term “ineligible recipients” been defined?**

For purposes of the program, ineligible recipients include applicants whose household income exceeds the statutory income limits, applicants who are owners of the assisted dwelling, and applicants who are unable to reasonably demonstrate financial hardship due to, or during, the COVID-19 pandemic.

41. **Page 13 and Page 24 of RFP, Section 17.0 Contents Cost Form Item H and Document G: Please clarify if Document G (Proposal Cost Sheet) should include the hourly billing rate per actual employee or if the intent is to include the hourly billing rate for the position.**

Please identify your key personnel and include billing rates for each employee who hold titles and are expected to work on this contract.

42. **Page 4 of RFP, Section 2.0 Scope of Services, Table Specific Deliverable: For items #8 “September-October 2021 and #9 November-December 2021”, what do these refer to?**

The primary reason for solicitation of contract ERAP case management services is that the Territory has a significant backlog of applications requiring processing. The mentioned dates refer to the time period within which the applications were received by the program and not the expected date of performance by the Respondent.

43. **Page 3 of RFP, Section 2.0 Scope of Services: Is there an estimate of the total number of applications and the total number of payments?**

The estimated number of applications remaining to be processed is approximately 500. It is estimated that up to 25-30% of applicants may require 2 payments.

- 44. Page 7 of RFP, Section 2.1 Minimum Technical Requirements, Items dd: Regarding Item dd “provide outreach capabilities, such as surveys to collect pertinent information for the program”, have any surveys already been done? Also, what type of information is anticipated be needed?**

No surveys have been completed. VIHFA is seeking information relevant to the program, which will allow for better processing of applications (of this another disaster-relatd nature) should the need arise in the future.

- 45. Page 13 of RFP, Section 2.1 Minimum Technical Requirements, Item G: Regarding item g “ability to integrate with VIHFA Disaster Recovery website and VIHFA Financial Management Software”, is it anticipated that such integration will be real time or on a schedule?**

Real time.

- 46. Does USVI currently have a vendor for processing ERAP 1 application?**

Processing of ERAP applications (including but not limited to, determination of eligibility, calculation of assistance amount, preparation and disbursement of assistance payments) is currently performed in-house at the Virgin Islands Housing Finance Authority.

- 47. Does USVI current have a software solution for ERAP 1 applications?**

Please refer to the response at Question #4 above.

- 48. Does USVI expect that ERAP applications will be imported into the ERAP 2 software solution? If so, how may ERAP 1 applications will be imported into the new system?**

Approximately 200.

- 49. How may in-person application assistance centers does USVI anticipate?**

The minimal number would be one in person intake center per island.

- 50. Will USVI be responsible for disbursing payments to eligible applicants?**

Yes.

51. Page 11 of RFP, Item 15: Will VIHFA release the recording and/or slides from the pre-proposal conference?

The solicitation viewed in the pre-proposal conference is posted on www.vihfa.gov

52. Page 12 of RFP Item E: Please clarify which type of license is required.

Business and Management Consulting or similar.

53. Page 21 of RFP Item 7 (Juris Doctorate Degree) Please confirm that a Juris Doctorate Degree is not required with this submittal. If it is required, please provide additional detail about this requirement.

A Juris Doctorate Degree is not required for submittal

54. What portions of ERA 1 and ERA 2 funding have been expended?

Approximately 9% of ERA 1 funds have been expended to date (including admin spending). Less than 1% of ERA 2 funding has been expended to date.