

Department of Developmental Services

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health & Human Services



New Provider Overview Contracting with DDS FY 2024

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NEW PROVIDER OVERVIEW CONTRACTING WITH DDS FY2024

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BACKGROUND

A new provider seeking to contract with the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) for direct care services, must respond to a Request for Response (RFR)/BID on COMMBUYS. COMMBUYS is the Commonwealth's procurement system of record. All proposals submitted for Purchase of Service (POS), are reviewed and evaluated by a Procurement Management Team. A proposal must either be scored as qualified or awarded a contract as a result of a competitive bid review.

In addition, a provider must be financially and administratively qualified by the Commonwealth before DDS can execute the contract. Providers that have never contracted with Commonwealth must complete the pre-qualification process at the same time the organization submits/uploads a proposal/quote to COMMBUYS. DDS can only execute a contract with a new provider if the organization has been financially and administratively qualified and has submitted a RFR proposal that has been evaluated and awarded a contract by a Procurement Management Team.

This section of the manual outlines the steps a new organization that has not contracted with the Commonwealth to provide direct care services has to take to respond to any RFR/BID on COMMBUYS, complete financial and administrative pre-qualification activities, as well as ongoing requirements for billing, service delivery, licensing, etc.

RESPONDING TO BIDS/ QUALIFICATION PROCESS

COMMBUYS:

DDS posts all RFRs (Request for Response) on COMMBUYS where providers can respond to the RFR. COMMBUYS is a web based online procurement platform managed by the Operational Services Division (OSD) that links public purchasers in search of services with vendors/providers seeking to contract with DDS for these services/programs. Providers are encouraged to register in COMMBUYS in order to respond to a DDS RFR/BID and to maintain an active email address.

TYPES OF RFR:

There are two types of RFRs: Competitive and Qualified.

Competitive RFR:

In the case of a Competitive RFR, the Department is seeking to identify one provider to contract with to provide a specific service/program. Proposals submitted by providers are evaluated by a Procurement Management Team and the provider with the highest score at the end of the evaluation process is awarded the contract. All evaluation and scoring criteria will be outlined in the RFR so that each respondent has the same information needed to prepare a response. A competitive RFR closes on a specific date and any proposals submitted after the close date will not be evaluated.

Qualified RFR:

The purpose of this type of RFR is to identify multiple contractors by establishing a set of criteria providers must meet to be approved as a qualified provider and sign a Master Agreement contract with the Department. Qualifications may include technical expertise, experience, staffing, location, etc. Qualified contractor RFR may be closed or open. If the RFR/BID is closed, no additional proposals will be considered unless the RFR is reopened. In the case of a rolling enrollment RFR, providers can submit proposals until the bid open date noted in COMMBUYS. Proposals are reviewed on a quarterly basis. RFR/BIDS currently open on COMMBUYS include:

- ALTR-24: Adult Long Term Residential Services
- ANSS-15: As Needed Support Services
- DESE-19: Community Residential Prevention Program
- EMPDAY20: Employment and Day Services
- IHS – 16: In Home Supports
- PS-15: Placement Services/Shared Living
- SSQUAL-23: Support Services Qualification
- SUPPLEMENTAL DAY20: Supplemental Day Services

New providers are encouraged to carefully review a RFR/BID before responding as each RFR will include criteria and standards that a new provider must meet.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FISCAL QUALIFICATION:

In addition to the required RFR submission materials, contractors that have not been previously qualified as a POS Contractor must complete the Contracting Qualification Form and Supplement forms which can be found under Forms on the DDS/POS web page. Contractors are encouraged to review these forms and accompanying instructions. The review will help to become familiar with qualification requirements prior to developing their RFR response. It is important to note that the Contractor Qualification Forms and supporting documentation must be submitted to the DDS Provider Qualification and Accountability staff if a provider is not already financially pre-qualified, at the same time or before a provider responds to a RFR/BID.

The Contractor Qualification process is used to evaluate a provider's administrative and financial capabilities to comply with the numerous federal and state administrative requirements surrounding the expenditure of public funds. The level of documentation submitted could impact if a provider is granted unconditional or limited status.

It is important to note that this process only signifies that a provider is financially and administratively qualified to do business with the DDS. This status does not entitle a provider to any level of business with DDS. Actual contract awards will be made through the submission of successful responses (also known as quotes) to RFR/BIDS posted on COMMBUYS and the specific service authorization processes described in the applicable RFR. Providers will be notified of their qualification status via email.

PROGRAMMATIC REQUIREMENTS

LICENSING AND CERTIFICATION:

If DDS signs a standard contract with a provider, the program to be provided may need to be licensed and/or certified by DDS. A provider's inability to receive licensing and/or certification approval from the Office of Quality Enhancement (OQE) will result in the termination of the signed contract with DDS for that service. Please refer to the following link for more information on DDS Licensing and Certification requirements: <https://www.mass.gov/lists/dds-licensure-and-certification>

SERVICE SUMMARY FORM:

Area Offices are responsible for referring and authorizing services for individuals that are eligible for services from DDS. Only providers that have executed a Standard Contract Form with DDS will be eligible to accept referrals for DDS Area Offices. Once services are authorized by the Area Office, the regional contract offices will begin the process of executing a Service Summary Form (SSF) with the provider. The SSF will acknowledge the regulated payment rate and the number of units of service the region/area anticipates purchasing from the provider in a given fiscal year.

CRIMINAL OFFENDER RECORD INFORMATION AND NATIONAL BACKGROUND CHECKS:

Employees of contracted providers are subject to Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) checks as well as fingerprint checks of the state and national criminal history databases in accordance with M.G.L. c. 123B, c.19B, §19 and 115 CMR 12.00: National Criminal Background Checks. Prior to accepting referrals from the Department, a provider must ensure that all staff have completed and passed CORI and NBC. Any associated costs are the responsibility of the provider. Additional information is available by contacting the DDS National Criminal Background Check Unit at DDS.NationalBackgroundUnit@mass.gov

ONGOING REQUIREMENTS

ENTERPRISE INVOICE MANAGEMENT (EIM):

All invoicing and service delivery reporting for DDS is managed through the Enterprise Invoice Management system (EIM), which is a service through the Virtual Gateway. A vendor providing direct care services to individuals served by DDS must agree to use such web based services and execute all required Use or Service Agreements required by the Virtual Gateway as well as comply with all applicable Virtual Gateway, DDS and EOHHS policies and procedures related to such services, including policies pertaining to data security and protection of confidential information. A provider must agree to submit all information as directed by EOHHS or DDS including, but not limited to, invoices, contract and/or other information required by DDS.

YEARLY QUALIFICATION PROCESS:

Uniform Financial Report (UFR)

Bidders with current contracts for the provision of purchased human and social services to clients (also known as MM3/M03 contracts) must file a Uniform Financial Statements and Independent Auditor's Report (UFR) with the Operational Services Division (OSD) via the Internet using the UFR eFiling application on a yearly basis. DDS is unable to continue to financially support contracted providers who do not submit a yearly UFR. Other contractor qualification/risk management reporting requirements and non-filing consequences promulgated by secretariats or departments pursuant to 808 CMR 1.04(3) may also apply.

Supplier Diversity Program (SDP)

In addition, providers are to upload an updated Supplier Diversity Report for POS with their annual Uniform Financial Report (UFR) submission. In the SDP report for POS, a provider will enter spending with SDP certified providers in the previous fiscal year and projected spend for the current fiscal year.

USEFUL HYPERLINKS:

There are several hyperlinks to websites that may be useful to a new provider.

Department of Developmental Services website:

<https://www.mass.gov/orgs/departments-of-developmental-services>

Office of the State Comptroller (OSC):

<https://www.macomptroller.org/>

Operational Services Division (OSD):

<https://www.mass.gov/orgs/operational-services-division>

UFR Guidance & Preparation Manual

<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/information-and-resources-on-the-uniform-financial-reports>

EOHHS Regulated Rates: Purchase of Service

<https://www.mass.gov/lists/provider-payment-rates-purchase-of-service>