

Office of State Procurement  
State of Louisiana  
Division of Administration

JOHN BEL EDWARDS  
GOVERNOR



JAY DARDENNE  
COMMISSIONER OF ADMINISTRATION

**MEMORANDUM OSP 20-07**

TO: All Agency Heads, Department Undersecretaries, and Business Managers

FROM: Pamela Bartfay Rice  
Assistant Director/Professional Contracts

DATE: June 1, 2020

RE: Request for Proposal – Electronic Proposal Submission Process

Due to the public health concerns prompted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and as part of the Office of State Procurement's (OSP) continued efforts to improve the Requests for Proposal (RFP) process, OSP will provide agencies with a uniform and secure interactive environment for the electronic submission of proposals.

Electronic proposal submission is authorized by the provisions of JBE 59-2020, issued May 14, 2020, and its predecessors, and meets the statutory requirements as specified in La. R.S. 39:1595(B)(6).

Beginning June 1, 2020, OSP's electronic proposals portal will replace email submission as the authorized method for electronic submission of proposals. With prior approval of OSP, similar uniform and secure electronic interactive environments established by public procurement units may be used for electronic submission of proposals.

OSP will establish a unique submission link for each individual published RFP. The link will contain the RFP number, title, and additional information regarding the RFP. The link will be listed within the RFP and also posted on the RFP's LaPAC posting. A sample submission link is viewable at: <https://stateofla.app.box.com/f/f0e49d3bc0ff41d98345df9d370a82f6>. The link will expire at 11:59pm CT on the proposal opening date. Proposals will be date stamped and must be submitted in accordance with the Schedule of Events in the published RFP.

Following the proposal opening date, OSP will coordinate with the agency to provide access to proposals. Access to the proposals will be granted to the RFP Coordinator and evaluation team for administrative review and evaluation.

See below for a set for Frequently Asked Questions. If you have any other questions, please contact [Kristi.Bonvillain2@la.gov](mailto:Kristi.Bonvillain2@la.gov).

## FAQ

1. My agency prefers hard copy RFP proposal submissions. Are these permitted?  
*OSP recommends electronic submissions; hard copies are not encouraged, due to COVID-19 concerns as well as logistical issues with receiving hard copies, as state buildings are open to the public in a limited capacity. Agencies should contact their assigned OSP analyst to discuss.*
2. Will Proposers be able to view their submissions?  
*No, Proposers will not be able to view their submissions, but will see an upload status of each file and then a confirmation screen confirming successful upload. Large files may take an extended period of time to upload. If the upload fails, the Proposer will be prompted to try again.*
3. Will the agency see proposals as they are uploaded? Will the agency know which Proposers submitted a proposal?  
*No, the agency will not see proposals as they are uploaded or know which Proposers submitted a proposal until after the proposal deadline. At that time, OSP will distribute proposals to the agency's RFP coordinator via secure link, for handling in accordance with established evaluation protocol.*
4. Does this change apply to all RFPs?  
*This option applies to all RFPs issued under the authority of OSP-Professional Services, where the agency chooses to use electronic submission. This includes solicitations for consulting and social services RFPs required by law, and professional and personal services RFPs which agencies decide to issue.*
5. When does this process start?  
*Online submission is available immediately. As email submissions can be problematic, OSP recommends that all currently published RFPs requesting email submissions be revised to allow submissions via upload. Please contact your OSP analyst to discuss issuance of an addendum.*

## OSP Guidelines for Electronic Submission of Proposal and Virtual RFP Evaluations

To allow electronic submission of proposals, make the following highlighted changes in the specified sections of the RFP:

### **Section 1.6 Schedule of Events**

Deadline for receipt of **electronic** proposals **11:59pm CT**, [Due date]

### **Section 1.7 **Electronic** Proposal Submittal**

Firms or individuals who are interested in providing services requested under this RFP must submit **an electronic** proposal containing the mandatory information specified. The proposal must be received by **electronic copy to** the “**ABCProposals@la.gov** (agency’s designated RFP response email address, on or before the date and time specified in the Schedule of Events. **E-mail submissions are the only acceptable method of delivery. Fax, mail, and courier delivery** shall not be acceptable. Proposers **e-mailing** their proposals should allow sufficient time to ensure receipt of their proposal by the time specified.

The proposal package must be emailed to: \_\_\_\_\_ with the Subject Line: RFP# \_\_\_\_\_ Proposal Submission – [Proposer Name]. If the file size of the email submission exceeds server requirements, the email submission may be broken into smaller emails with “Part 1 of \_\_\_” included at the end of each original Subject Line (e.g. RFP# \_\_\_\_\_ Proposal Submission – [Proposer Name] – Part 1 of 3).

The State assumes no liability for assuring accurate/complete e-mail transmission and receipt. The responsibility solely lies with each Proposer to ensure their proposal is received at the specified **email address** prior to the deadline for submission. Proposals received after the deadline, **corrupted files, and incomplete submissions (e.g. Part 1 and Part 2 of 3 are received, but Part 3 is not)** will not be considered.

**AGENCY NOTE:** Agency RFP Coordinator must establish an email address to which they have the only access. For example: [DOIProposals@La.gov](mailto:DOIProposals@La.gov). The email address shall automatically reply to all received emails. The Agency RFP Coordinator shall not “open” proposals (i.e. read the email or open the attachments) until the Deadline for receipt of electronic proposals has passed.

### **Section 1.9.9 Certification Statement**

The Proposer must sign **electronically or submit a scanned** signature on **Attachment I**, Certification Statement.

### **Section 1.10 Number of Copies of Proposals**

The State requests that **one copy** of the **entire** proposal be submitted to the RFP Coordinator at the **email** address specified. The proposal shall contain **electronic signatures or scans of** original signatures of those

company officials or agents **who are** duly authorized to sign proposals or contracts on behalf of the organization. **An electronic signature as provided by LAC 4:I.701 et seq. is considered an original signature.** A certified copy of a board resolution granting such authority should be submitted if the Proposer is a corporation. The proposal will be retained for incorporation into any contract resulting from this RFP.

### **Section 1.11 Technical and Cost Proposals**

The State requests the following:

- One (1) technical proposal in PDF and Microsoft Word formats. The file shall be named: RFP# \_\_\_\_\_ Technical Proposal - [Proposer Name].
- One (1) cost proposal in PDF and Microsoft Excel formats. The file shall be named: RFP# \_\_\_\_\_ Cost Proposal - [Proposer Name].
- One (1) redacted technical proposal, if applicable, in PDF and Microsoft Word formats. The file shall be named: RFP# \_\_\_\_\_ Redacted Technical Proposal - [Proposer Name].

If the file size of the proposal exceeds server requirements, the proposal may be broken into smaller emails with "Part 1 of \_\_\_\_" included at the end of each original file name (e.g. RFP# \_\_\_\_\_ Technical Proposal– [Proposer Name] – Part 1 of 2).

### **1.14.2 Proposer Inquires**

Written questions regarding RFP requirements or Scope of Services must be **emailed** to the RFP Coordinator listed below.

**AGENCY NOTE: Do not include the mailing address or fax number.**

**To revise a published RFP, include the following changes in the addenda:**

Due to the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency declared by Governor John Bel Edwards in Proclamation Numbers 41, 33, 32, 30, 27, and 25 JBE 2020, electronic proposal delivery is being utilized for this RFP.

Update all sections in the RFP as referenced above.

## Virtual RFP evaluation

The agency may utilize Skype, Zoom, or another virtual meeting tool to conduct RFP evaluation kickoff meetings and consensus scoring meetings. Zoom is recommended if your agency has access.

*OSP has tested both Skype and Zoom and recommends Zoom as it is easier to use.*

The virtual meeting tool must allow the host to control who is present in the meeting and allow for “locking” the meeting to prevent unauthorized entry to the meeting.

It is expected the agency will hold an RFP evaluation kickoff meeting to provide guidelines to the evaluators regarding the evaluation process. Evaluators are expected to review all proposals and be ready to discuss strengths and weaknesses of each proposal during the consensus scoring meeting(s).

The RFP Coordinator, evaluators, and any observers (OSP or other agency staff members) will meet via video for the consensus scoring meeting(s). The purpose of meeting via video is to ensure there are no others listening in on the meeting, everyone is present and paying attention, and there are not distractions present (TV, children and/or pets).

The RFP Coordinator will be responsible for monitoring the attendees during the entire meeting.

Either the RFP Coordinator or the Evaluation Team Lead will be responsible for sharing documents and documenting the scores and strengths and weaknesses.

Each evaluator must certify in writing that the virtual evaluation meeting(s) was conducted confidentially.

### If using Zoom:

- Once the meeting has started and all evaluators and observers are present, the RFP Coordinator will lock the meeting. If anyone disconnects for any reason, the meeting will be unlocked to allow that individual back in. Once everyone is present again, the meeting will be re-locked.
- If there are any uninvited attendees present, the host should immediately remove them from the meeting. This includes unidentified phone numbers.
- **Ensure the following settings are turned off (this requires logging into your account on Zoom.com):**
  - Private chat (no private chats in RFP evaluations – everyone must be present for all discussions)
  - Virtual background (to help ensure no one else is present)

### If using Skype:

- Invite attendees, then using the 3 dots at the bottom right of the Conversation, select Skype Meeting Options.
- Click on the blue link that says “X Participants”, then click “Participant Actions”, then select “Everyone an Attendee”.
- Set “These people don’t have to wait in the lobby:” to “The meeting organizer” (this prevents additional people from being added to the meeting who should not be present.
- If there are any attendees who should not be present, right-click on their name and select “Remove from Meeting”.