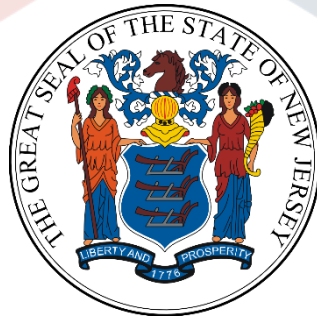


REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
for
CHILD SAFETY SEATS

Issued by
the STATE OF NEW JERSEY



In collaboration with



SOLICITATION NUMBER: 24DPP00938

RFP WEBSITE: NJSTART.GOV

RFP OVERVIEW

I. INTRODUCTION

This Request for Proposals (RFP) is being issued by the State of New Jersey (“Lead State”) in collaboration with the NASPO ValuePoint cooperative purchasing program. The purpose of this request for proposal is to establish one or more Master Agreements with qualified child safety seat manufacturers and/or authorized wholesale distributors to provide safe and reliable child safety seats in compliance with or exceeding the requirements set forth in the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) for infants, toddlers and special needs children for all Participating Entities. Additionally, the child safety seats that are offered must comply with any and all new regulations that may be implemented by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) during the course of the contract term.

The purpose of this competitive solicitation is to develop Master Agreements for the purchase of Child Safety Seats. The RFP is requesting proposals to supply Child Safety Seats in the following categories:

- Category 1 – Forward Facing Seats
- Category 2 – Rear Facing Only
- Category 3 – Booster Seats
- Category 4 – Special Needs
- Category 5 – Additional/Optional Offerings

About NASPO ValuePoint

NASPO ValuePoint is a division of the National Association of State Procurement Officials (NASPO), a non-profit association dedicated to advancing public procurement through leadership, excellence, and integrity. In accordance with NASPO ValuePoint’s Lead State Model™, the Lead State is issuing this RFP, evaluating responses, and establishing Master Agreements with the support and assistance of a Multistate Sourcing Team™ composed of individuals from other member states, representing a broad range of perspectives that ensure the RFP incorporates best practices recognized by public entities across the country.

Participation in NASPO ValuePoint Master Agreements is convenient and cost-effective for eligible entities—including state departments, institutions, agencies, and political subdivisions, federally recognized tribes, and other eligible public and nonprofit entities in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and U.S. territories—and suppliers, with no membership or registration required. In 2022, contractors reported a combined **\$843,000** in sales through NASPO ValuePoint Master Agreements awarded through cooperative solicitations like this RFP, including a combined **\$7.76 million** in sales from May 2014 through the current Child Safety Seats portfolio.

More information about NASPO, NASPO ValuePoint, and the NASPO ValuePoint Lead State Model can be found at www.naspo.org and www.naspovaluepoint.org and in Attachment E, Participation Information.

II. GENERAL INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS

- A. **RFP Website.** **NJSTART** is the eProcurement platform for the Lead State of NJ and will be the sole official source for RFP information and updates, the website link is below:

NJSTART - <https://www.njstart.gov/bsol/>

Searching for and accessing the solicitation can be found by searching for the solicitation number 24DPP00938.

Offerors interested in reviewing the current Contract specifications and pricing information may do so by following the instruction below. Offerors should not rely upon or use data or information from the contract when preparing a response to this RFP as this RFP addresses the State's current requirements.

- Go to: www.njstart.gov
- Select "Active Blankets"
- In the search bar, select "Blankets" from the drop down menu
- Enter the M0002 and click "Q"
- The current Contract list will appear under "Results"

B. RFP Documents. This RFP consists of this RFP Overview, the following attachments, and any information or materials posted by the Lead State to the RFP Website, as amended:

1. Attachment A, RFP Terms and Conditions
2. Attachment B, Scope of Work
3. Attachment C, RFP Evaluation Plan
4. Attachment D, Sample Master Agreement
5. Attachment E, Participation Information
6. Attachment F, *Reserved, Not Applicable*
7. Attachment G, Offeror Information, Acknowledgements, and Certifications
8. Attachment H, Offeror Response Worksheet
9. Attachment I, M2002 24DPP00938 State-Supplied Price Sheet
10. Attachment J, *Reserved, Not Applicable*
11. Attachment K, Confidentiality and Commitment to Defend

C. Important Dates.

1. **RFP Available Date:** June 28, 2024 at 9:00am EST
2. **RFP Q&A Deadline:** July 15, 2024 at 2:00pm EST
3. **RFP Open Date (proposal submission due date):** August 20, 2024 at 2:00pm EST ~~August 9, 2024 at 2:00pm EST~~

Dates and deadlines are subject to change. Offerors should continue checking the **NJSTART** (www.njstart.gov); for the most up-to-date information.

D. How to Ask Questions.

1. **Read and review this RFP, including all attachments, exhibits, and amendments.**
2. For questions about the content of this RFP, the Lead State will electronically accept questions and inquiries from all potential Offerors via the "Q&A" Tab of the Bid Solicitation in **NJSTART**. Questions should be directly tied to a RFP Section (example: Scope of Work), the Price Sheet, Form or Attachment; and should reference the specific section or document to which it relates.
3. Exceptions to the Master Agreement (Attachment D): Questions regarding the Master Agreement Terms and Conditions and exceptions to mandatory requirements MUST be posed during the Electronic Question and Answer period and shall contain the Offeror's suggested changes and the reason(s) for the suggested change(s).
4. The cut-off date for electronic questions and inquiries relating to this RFP is indicated in Section C of this attachment above. In the event that questions are posed by Offerors, answers to such questions will be issued by Bid Amendment.
5. A Offeror shall not contact the Lead State, Participating Entity and/or the Procurement Specialist directly, in person, by telephone or by e-mail, concerning this RFP, prior to Contract award. Only in the event of technical issues, an Offeror can contact **NJSTART**

(njstart@treas.nj.gov) for assistance with technical issues associated with the RFP Website.

E. How to Respond.

1. **Read and review this RFP, including all attachments, exhibits, and amendments.**
2. Prepare a proposal that:
 - a. Follows the requested format;
 - b. Includes the Solicitation Number on all materials making up the proposal;
 - c. Addresses each question and request for a response in this RFP, including all questions in Attachment H, Offeror Response Worksheet;
 - d. Clearly demonstrates your ability to meet the Scope of Work described in Section B; and
 - e. Includes all required submissions identified in Section IV – Offer Response (below).
3. Submit your proposal by the RFP Open Date through **NJSTART**, indicated in section D of this attachment above.

F. Submitting a Proposal through NJSTART:

1. In order to be considered for award, the Proposal must be received electronically by the Lead State's Proposal Review Unit, through **NJSTART**, by the required date and time, Section C of this attachment above.
2. Offerors are strongly encouraged to visit the [NJSTART Vendor Support Page](#), which contains Quick Reference Guides (QRGs), supporting videos, a glossary of **NJSTART** terms, and helpdesk contact information. Offerors should utilize the QRGs before attempting to submit a Proposal through **NJSTART**.
3. It is the Offeror's responsibility to ensure that the Proposal and attachments have been properly submitted. Inquiries concerning the use of **NJSTART** may be directed to njstart@treas.nj.gov. The Lead State will not respond to substantive questions related to the RFP or any other Contract via this email address.

III. SCOPE OF WORK

A detailed description of the Deliverables being sought through this RFP is attached as Attachment B, Scope of Work.

The scope of this RFP and its resulting Master Agreement(s) is intended to benefit all state departments, institutions, agencies, and political subdivisions and other eligible public and nonprofit entities in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and U.S. territories. Therefore, **Offerors should not interpret the Scope of Work to be associated with or limited to any specific purchase, implementation, project, need, or program** within the Lead State or any other state or eligible entity. Proposals should be generally applicable to all potential Participating Entities and Purchasing Entities, except where specificity is requested.

The initial term of the Master Agreement(s) resulting from this RFP is anticipated to be four (4) years, with the option to exercise renewals totaling up to an additional three (3) years following the initial term, upon mutual agreement by the Lead State and Contractor.

IV. OFFEROR RESPONSE

A. Required Submissions. The following must be submitted with your proposal:

1. Any response required must be submitted electronically through **NJSTART**;

2. Completed and signed Attachment G, Offeror Information, Acknowledgements, and Certifications
3. Completed Attachment H, Offeror Response Worksheet
4. Completed Attachment I, M2002 24DPP00938 State-Supplied Price Sheet, submitted as a separate document and separate file.
5. Completed and signed Attachment K, Confidentiality and Commitment to Defend

Notwithstanding any language or representation to the contrary, all information submitted in any Proposal shall be subject to disclosure pursuant to the New Jersey Open Public Records Act (OPRA), N.J.S.A. 47:1A-1 et seq., or the common law right to know, Proposals can be released to the public in accordance with N.J.A.C. 17:12-1.2(b) and (c). (See VI Confidentiality and Commitment to Defend)

6. Redacted copy of proposal clearly marked as such, if claiming confidential, proprietary, or protected information

B. Other Documents. The following are informational only and do **not** need to be submitted with your proposal:

1. This RFP Overview
2. Attachment A, RFP Terms and Conditions
3. Attachment B, Scope of Work
4. Attachment C, RFP Evaluation Plan
5. Attachment D, Sample Master Agreement
6. Attachment E, Participation Information
7. Attachments F and J, Reserved, No attachments.

V. EVALUATION AND AWARD PROCESS

A. Proposals will be sealed until the RFP Open Date. After opening, proposals will be evaluated in stages as set forth in this section and further detailed in Attachment C, RFP Evaluation Plan.

1. **Stage 1: Initial Responsiveness Evaluation.**
2. **Stage 2: Mandatory Minimum Requirements Evaluation.**
3. **Stage 3: Technical Criteria Evaluation.**
4. **Stage 4: Cost Evaluation.** Cost Proposals will be evaluated as detailed further within Attachment C – RFP Evaluation Plan. Cost Proposals may also be subject to an independent review for reasonableness and best value by the Lead State.
5. All weighted scores will be totaled to determine the Offeror's total scored evaluation.
6. Costs determined not to be reasonable or best value by the Lead State may result in all or part of Offeror's proposal being rejected, notwithstanding the results of the Cost Proposal evaluation.
7. The Lead State intends to make Contract awards to each responsive Offeror that meets the category bid and the RFP requirements.
8. The Lead State may invite one (1) Offeror or multiple Offerors to submit a Best and Final Offer (BAFO). Said invitation will establish the time and place for submission of the BAFO. Any BAFO that does not result in more advantageous pricing to the Lead State will not be considered, and the Lead State will evaluate the Offeror's most advantageous previously submitted pricing.

- a. The Lead State may conduct more than one (1) round of BAFO in order to attain the best value for the State.
 - b. BAFOs will be conducted only in those circumstances where it is deemed by the Lead State's Procurement Bureau or Director to be in the Lead State's best interests and to maximize the Lead State's ability to get the best value. Therefore, the Offeror is advised to submit its best technical and price Proposal in response to this RFP since the Lead State may, after evaluation, make a Contract award based on the content of the initial submission.
 - c. If the Lead State contemplates BAFOs, Proposal prices will not be publicly read at the Proposal opening. Only the name and address of each Offeror will be publicly announced at the Proposal opening.
 9. The Lead State intends to award a Contract to each responsive Offeror that submits a Proposal that meets the requirements of the RFP.
- B.** After evaluations are completed, the Lead State and Multistate Sourcing Team will determine which proposals are most advantageous to the Lead State and potential Participating Entities and Purchasing Entities.
- C.** Prior to announcement of awards and execution of Master Agreements, the Lead State will present an award recommendation to NASPO ValuePoint for approval of the proposed awards.
- D.** Following approval of NASPO ValuePoint, a Notice of Intent to Award will be issued by written notice from the Lead State to each Offeror.

VI. CONFIDENTIALITY AND COMMITMENT TO DEFEND

Pursuant to the New Jersey Open Public Records Act (OPRA), N.J.S.A. 47:1A-1 et seq., or the common law right to know, Proposals can be released to the public in accordance with N.J.A.C. 17:12-1.2(b) and (c).

The Offeror should submit a completed and signed Confidentiality/Commitment to Defend Form with the Proposal. In the event that the Offeror does not submit the Confidentiality form with the Proposal, the Lead State reserves the right to request that the Offeror submit the form after Proposal submission.

After the opening of Proposals, all information submitted by Offeror in response to a Bid Solicitation is considered public information notwithstanding any disclaimers to the contrary submitted by a Offeror. Proprietary, financial, security and confidential information may be exempt from public disclosure by OPRA and/or the common law when the Offeror has a good faith, legal/factual basis for such assertion.

When the Bid Solicitation contains a negotiation component, the Proposal will not be subject to public disclosure until a notice of intent to award a Contract is announced.

As part of its Proposal, Offeror may request that portions of the Proposal be exempt from public disclosure under OPRA and/or the common law. The Offeror must provide a detailed statement clearly identifying those sections of the Proposal that it claims are exempt from production, and the legal and factual basis that supports said exemption(s) as a matter of law. The Lead State will not honor any attempts by a Offeror to designate its price sheet, price list/catalog, and/or the entire Proposal as proprietary and/or confidential, and/or to claim copyright protection for its entire Proposal. If the Lead State does not agree with an Offeror's designation of proprietary and/or confidential information, the Lead State will use commercially reasonable efforts to advise the Offeror. Copyright law does not prohibit access to a record which is otherwise available under OPRA.

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The State reserves the right to make the determination as to what to disclose in response to an OPRA request. Any information that the State determines to be exempt from disclosure under OPRA will be redacted.

In the event of any challenge to the Offeror's assertion of confidentiality that is contrary to the State's determination of confidentiality, the Offeror shall be solely responsible for defending its designation, but in doing so, all costs and expenses associated therewith shall be the responsibility of the Offeror. The Lead State and NASPO assume no such responsibility or liability.

In order not to delay consideration of the Proposal or the State's response to a request for documents, the Lead State requires that Offeror respond to any request regarding confidentiality markings within the timeframe designated in the Lead State's correspondence regarding confidentiality. If no response is received by the designated date and time, the Lead State will be permitted to release a copy of the Proposal with the Lead State making the determination regarding what may be proprietary or confidential.