

## RFP Q&A

My question is about the Request for Proposals for the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services, State of Alabama Independent Living Waiver. Page 4 states: "Processing payroll through paper checks, direct deposit, or debit cards depending on the participant's preference." Our policy is to pay by direct deposit only. No paper checks will be issued. Does our policy disqualify us from being approved as the Vendor Fiscal Employer Agent of your program?

**No, it does not.**

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Information for Bidders

Page 6: Providing the participants preferred option of communication including standard mail and internet/email communications. *Would an online chat feature fulfill this requirement?*

**No, it would not. The program is about participant choice, and providing only a chat feature would not give people the option of communicating via mail or internet/email.**

Page 7: Having sufficient knowledgeable staff to handle a large volume of calls. *What is the current FI's daily call volume?*

**Currently, the vendor averages 20-30 calls daily and about 100 to 120 emails daily.**

Page 7: Providing translation and interpreter services including American Sign Language and services for persons with limited English proficiency either in-house or through contract, when requested. *Can these services be provided through virtual meetings such as Zoom or Microsoft Teams?*

**Only if the participant has the desire and technology to do so and if the technology is HIPAA compliant. For instance, Microsoft Teams is not HIPAA compliant. ADRS prefers Zoom because it is HIPAA compliant.**

Page 7: Having and maintaining a system for receiving, responding to, and tracking all correspondence, including complaints, from any source and maintaining an automated log. *Would the contracted FI report on this on a scheduled basis, such as monthly, or would this be reported upon on request?*

**This would be on request.**

Page 10: Joint Venture: If a joint venture is submitting a bid proposal, the agreement between the parties relating to such a joint venture should be submitted with the joint venture's bid proposal. Authorized signatories from each party comprising the joint venture

must sign the bid proposal. *Would this apply to a subcontractor, such as an entity contracted to provide EVV services? Or only to a party that would be receiving payment directly for providing contracted services? For example, two FI's sharing services for the same contract?*

**This applies to the example you provided: two FI's sharing services for the same contract.**

Page 17: 10.3 Vendor Demonstration Meetings. *When would these vendor demonstration meetings take place? Would they be in person or virtual? What are you looking to see in these demonstrations? It says "demonstrate payment systems", are you looking to have an overview of the respondent's operations, or specifically, are you wanting to see an overview of just the payroll and vendor payment process?*

**Vendor demonstrations, if needed, would be virtual and take place mid-August. We would be requesting payment systems including payroll and reimbursement for other expenses.**

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Page 4, Section 1. ADRS has case managers who are responsible for enrollment activities and submission of paperwork to the FMSA. (See Appendix B for the description of duties of a case manager.) The Vendor will work with the program's case managers for issues related to the enrollment of participants and management of the spending plan. *What is the expectation of the vendor with regard to training? For example, is the vendor required to do in-person group trainings with the case managers? Can trainings occur online? If so, how frequently should trainings occur?*

**The vendor is required to conduct training twice a year. It can be in person or virtually.**

Page 5, 2. Information for Bidders The Alabama Medicaid Agency reimburses the operating agencies for expenditures. ADRS is responsible for obtaining reimbursement moneys from Medicaid. The Vendor will submit an invoice for the participant's monthly budget and administrative services to the ADRS, who will then forward the moneys to the Vendor. *For a complete payroll, what is the total cost of the invoice submitted to Medicaid on average?*

**Vendors do not submit billing to Medicaid. If all participants are receiving the maximum amount of care, invoices could approach \$800,000.**

Page 5, 2. Information for Bidders The Alabama Medicaid Agency reimburses the operating agencies for expenditures. ADRS is responsible for obtaining reimbursement moneys from Medicaid. The Vendor will submit an invoice for the participant's monthly budget and administrative services to the ADRS, who will then forward the moneys to the Vendor. *Please clarify that the vendor must advance payroll for the program and be reimbursed later by Alabama Medicaid. If so, what is the average turnaround time from invoice submission to payment to the vendor?*

**The vendor is paid for services by SAIL/ADRS. Turn-around time is typically 30-45 days after receipt of the invoice.**

Page 5, 2. Information for Bidders The Vendor will submit an invoice for the participant's monthly budget and administrative services to the ADRS, who will then forward the moneys to the Vendor. *What is the average size of the Participant's budget?*

**Typically approximately \$2000.**

Page 6, 2. Information for Bidders Workers' Compensation insurance is not a requirement in the state of Alabama for employers with less than five employees. *How many SAIL participants have currently purchased Workers' Compensation insurance.*

**Eighteen employers have offered workers' compensation insurance, and 17 employees are covered.**

Page 12, Section 4. Financial Audit Requirements A copy of the most recent financial statement, with an opinion letter from a CPA with a valid license, is required as a part to the RFP proposal *Is a compiled financial statement sufficient to meet the requirements of this section?*

**No, the requirement stands.**

Page 38. Key Task Six: EVV Language 1. What system does the VF/EA FMS organization's EVV system have in place to electronically capture and verify the personal care workers' clock-in/clock-out times? *Is Alabama an open model, where the vendor can choose its own EVV vendor? Alternatively, if the vendor is required to use the Statewide EVV Vendor, what integrations currently exist for the vendor to retrieve the EVV time from the Statewide EVV vendor?*

**Yes, the FI must have an EVV system available. There is not a statewide EVV vendor.**

Page 5 (Section 1.1) *Can you please confirm the current number of participants in each program and how many participants you anticipate over the life of this contract?*

**At the end of June 2023, SAIL Waiver had 406 Personal Choices participants.**

Page 5 (Section 1.1) *What is the average number of workers per participant?*

**Typically each participant has one worker.**

Page 10 (Submission of bid) *Can we provide ARDS with a redacted version of our proposal on a flash drive?*

**No. IT prohibits outside equipment being used on state networks and computers.**

Page 17 (11. Phase Two Eval Criteria) *What is the current PMPM FMS fee?*

**\$108 per month**

Page 17 (11. Phase Two Eval Criteria) *How does ARDS want the budget presented in the RFP response? Should it be included within the technical response or separated as its own document?*

**The budget should be separated as its own document.**

Page 32 (Key Task 3) *We believe utilizing our own enrollment staff is essential to how we complete enrollments. Will ARDS consider the FMS provider utilizing their own staff to conduct enrollments? If so, does ARDS require face-to-face enrollment visits or are virtual and/or phone enrollments allowed?*

**Yes. The vendor may use their own staff to conduct enrollments, which can be done virtually or over the phone.**

Page 34 (Key Task 4) *Please clarify if workers' compensation insurance required for employers.*

**There are no requirements for participants to offer workers' compensation insurance, but it is an option should they choose to do so.**

Page 34 (Key Task 4) *Are there any specific employer or worker trainings required to be delivered by the FMS?*

**Yes. The vendor must train participants/EoRs and workers in the use of EVV and the submission of any required forms.**

Page 36 (Key Task 5) *What is the average budget size, as well as the minimum and maximum budget sizes?*

**This depends on the numbers of hours of care being provided each week and the FI service fee.**

Page 36 (Key Task 5) *What is the timeframe for reimbursing for pass-through claims including the claims related to the hourly services provided by workers of the participant (Medicaid recipient receiving the self-directed services)?*

**Typically 30 to 45 days after the invoice is received.**

Page 36 (Key Task 5) *Does ARDS allow for invoicing for claims within the same month of services?*

**Typically, claims are made by the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month for the proceeded month.**

Page 36 (Key Task 5) *What is the frequency of submitting claims allowed by the State?*

**Claims must be submitted on a monthly basis.**

Page 36 (Key Task 5) *Does the contractor have to wait a required amount of time after the service is completed to submit for reimbursement of claims? If so, what is the amount of time?*

**Typically, claims are made by the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month for the proceeded month.**

Page 36 (Key Task 5): *What is the timeframe for reimbursing for provider-related claims, including the financial management PMPM claim?*

**Typically invoices are paid within 30 to 45 days after receipt.**

Page 36 (Key Task 5) *Does the state allow providers to draw down funds related to authorized services?*

**No, all claims are made against individual participant accounts.**

Page 36 (Key Task 5) *What is the length of the authorization for services?*

**Services are authorized quarterly.**

Page 38 (Key Task 6) *Will the contractor be required to aggregate EVV data with a national aggregator? If so, what national aggregator is the State currently using?*

**The vendor must interface with the state aggregator, Gainwell, on a regular basis.**

Page 42 (Key Task 7) *What are the background check requirements for workers? Are the costs for background checks part of the participant's budget or included in the PMPM (per member per month) FMS fee?*

**Background checks must be made in accordance with current Medicaid rules. The cost of the first two background checks are borne by the vendor.**

Page 42 (Key Task 7) *If there are background check requirements, what is the fee? Also, is fingerprinting required? Lastly, what is the average time it takes for results to be determined?*

**Background checks must be made in accordance with current Medicaid rules. The cost of the first two background checks are borne by the vendor.**

Page 42 (Key Task 7) *What is the current employer payroll tax?*

**Payroll taxes can be determined using the Alabama Department of Revenue guidelines.**

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General *The RFP requirements for financial statements and Appendix A require proprietary information. What is the process for submitting a redacted version of the proposal?*

**It can be submitted in its redacted form.**

9 Key Events *The current schedule allows over a month to submit questions and then the answers are released one week before the Bidder proposals are due. When you consider the requirement for printing/binding the proposals and then mailing the response, this leaves a bidder one or two business days to incorporate the responses. Would the State consider reducing the Electronic Questions and Response to Questions dates by one or two weeks to allow more time for the bidder to incorporate State responses?*

**No. The schedule is set.**

9 Cut-off Date for Questions & Inquiries *Would the State reconsider holding all questions and answers until the July 24<sup>th</sup> date? One interim response to questions and answers would be helpful.*

**No. The schedule is set.**

9. Cut-off Date for Questions & Inquiries *We assume the State will post the questions and answers on the website. Please confirm. If not, how will the State determine "...all proposed bidders."*

**Answers will be posted on July 24, 2023.**

General *Is there a current FMS contractor? If so, who is the contractor? If not, how are the FMS services being provided and by whom?*

**Yes. Morning Sun.**

General *If the Department is using a contractor what is their current PMPM rate*  
**\$108.**

General *What is the current number of clients using self-direction? What is the projected growth over the life of the contract?*

**At the end of June 2023, SAIL Waiver had 406 Personal Choices participants.**

General *On average, how many new client enrollments occur each month?*

**Approximately six to eight each month.**

General *On average, how many new employee enrollments occur each month?*

**Approximately five to ten per month.**

General *Will current vendor data and records be turned over to the new contractor? Will any data be required to be converted from the current vendor to the new contractor?*

**Yes, current data and records will be transitioned to the new vendor as needed. Because this transfer will happen at the end of a calendar year, there should be no need to transition payroll tax information. Data conversion is dependent on the compatibility of the vendors' systems.**

General *What is the current number of active clients in the program? What is the number of active employees?*

**At the end of June 2023, SAIL Waiver had 406 Personal Choices participants who were employing 395 individuals.**

6. 2. Bullet 11 *Please provide the number of paper checks, direct deposit and debt card payments made for the last 12 months by category.*

**Paper checks issued in last 12 months: 413  
Direct deposits made in last 12 months: 8,606  
Rapid Pay Card deposits made in last 12 months: 1,778**

6.2. Bullet 11 *Please provide the number of paper checks, direct deposit and debit card payments made for the last 12 months by month.*

**Monthly number of Paper Checks mailed out from the past 12 months:**

**July 2022 - 25  
Aug 2022 - 27  
Sept 2022 - 27  
Oct 2022 - 29  
Nov 2022 - 32  
Dec 2022 - 86  
Jan 2023 - 30  
Feb 2023 - 23  
Mar 2023 - 41  
Apr 2023 - 31  
May 2023 - 32  
Jun 2023 - 30**

**Monthly number of Direct Deposits made from the past 12 months:**

**July 2022 - 648  
Aug 2022 - 635  
Sept 2022 - 655**

Oct 2022 - 668  
 Nov 2022 - 688  
 Dec 2022 - 670  
 Jan 2023 - 692  
 Feb 2023 - 687  
 Mar 2023 - 796  
 Apr 2023 - 709  
 May 2023 - 715  
 Jun 2023 - 743

**Monthly number of deposits made to the Rapid Pay Card from the past 12 months:**

July 2022 - 146  
 Aug 2022 - 142  
 Sept 2022 - 144  
 Oct 2022 - 148  
 Nov 2022 - 150  
 Dec 2022 - 149  
 Jan 2023 - 155  
 Feb 2023 - 147  
 Mar 2023 - 144  
 Apr 2023 - 147  
 May 2023 - 156  
 June 2023 - 150

6.2. Bullet 16, sub-bullet 3 *Please elaborate on the Case Manager training of workers; i.e., what services or Fraud, Waste and Abuse, etc.?*

**Case Managers meet with the employer and employee prior to enrollment to review Personal Choices rules and regulations and to answer any questions.**

11.3 *"...participants enrolled in both current and future self-directed programs..." Please elaborate on the future self-directed programs. Are there any future programs already scheduled? If so, please describe the program(s) and the proposed date to be added.*

**At this date, there are no additional self-directed program planned.**

11.3 *"Cost for the first two background checks for a participant will be borne by the Contractor; the cost of any subsequent background checks will be borne by the participant's budget." Does this mean the cost for multiple employees' background checks? We assume the participant is responsible for background checks for every employee past 3 background checks. Please confirm.*

**Participants are responsible for the costs of any background checks after the first two. This must come from their savings account.**



11.3 “Cost for the first two background checks for a participant will be borne by the Contractor; the cost of any subsequent background checks will be borne by the participant’s budget.” *Does this mean the cost for a background check for one employee for multiple years? If so, what is the requirement for re-run background checks?*

**It is not anticipated that background checks will be run after the initial one unless there is a suspected issue. If so, participants are responsible for the costs of any background checks after the first two. This must come from their savings account.**

15. Key Task 4 *How many participants are currently offering workers compensation?*

**Eighteen employers are currently offering workers’ compensation.**

15. Key Task 4 *How many workers are currently receiving Workers Compensation?*

**Seventeen employees are currently receiving workers’ compensation.**

15. Key Task 4 *How do employers notify the contractor whether they will workers compensation for their workers?*

**This information is on the budget/spending plan and rate agreement that is submitted to the vendor.**

15. Key Task 4 *What is the current workers’ compensation rate?*

**That is dependent upon the insurance company that is utilized and the claims made against the policy.**

27. Key Task 1, number 21 *Does the State of Alabama have a state specific form for Power of Attorney? If so, does the State have specific processing requirements?*

**No. However, a form must be included in the Personal Choices enrollment package.**

31. Key Task Two, Number 18 *Please provide the “state’s new hire reposting process.”*

**NA**

36. Key Task Five, Number 1 *We assume the enrolled Medicaid provider means enrolled in the Alabama Medicaid program. Please confirm. Further will assume if selected as the new contractor we will be required to enroll in the Alabama Medicaid Program. Please confirm.*

**Your assumptions are right on both accounts.**

36. Key Task Five, Number 2 *Who is the PDS program agency? What are their requirements for contracting?*

**ADRS is the participant directed services agency.**

36. Key Task Five, Number 6 What is the purpose of maintaining “a separate bank account into which all payments received from the state for self-directed services are immediately deposited and that allows for electronic funds transfers?” *Does the State pre-pay employer payments? If not, please provide the reasoning behind this separate bank account.*

**The state of Alabama does not prepay for services. It does, however, pay the full budget amount, which means that the savings are, in essence, prepaid. The account must be separate to protect SAIL Waiver Personal Choices participants in the event that the vendor’s finances get tied up in some manner thus freezing or otherwise affecting SAIL Waiver funds.**

17&37. Key Task 6 & Key Task Six, EVV Language Key Task Six on page 15 is EVV and the Key task on Page 36 is EVV Language. *We assume these requirements are the same. Please confirm.*

**Your assumption is correct. That was a mistake on our part.**

37 Key Task 5 Number 16 *How many clients currently have a co-share of payments?*

**None.**

37 Key Task 5 Number 16 *How is the contractor notified of co-sharing of payments?*

**None.**

37 Key Task 5 Number 16 *How frequently can the co-share amount change? How is the contractor notified on the change?*

**None.**

37 Key Task 5 Number 16 *Who is responsible for communicating the amount and subsequent changes to the FMS?*

**Personal Choices Case Managers, Counselors, and Employers will all communicate with the vendor.**

37 Key Task 6 *Who is the EVV contractor?*

**As of today, it is HAA. It is expected to change in January 2024.**

39 Key Task 6 Number 28 *Are authorizations unit based, dollar based or both?*

**Authorizations are made in USA dollars and refer to 15- minute units.**

40 Key Task 6 Number 34 *Who is the Alabama Medicaid Agency aggregator? Please provide the requirements and data layout for transferring data to the aggregator.*

**Gainwell.**

40 Key Task 6 Number 34 *Will the same data regarding our clients that is required to send through the aggregator be shared with the FI prior to service delivery?*

**Yes.**

40 Key Task 6 *Will the FI be provided a contact with the Aggregator to work through systems issues?*

**Yes. The vendor will work directly with the aggregator in resolving systems issues.**

40 Key Task 6 Numbers 31-33 *“what policies and procedures are in place to capture and verify the ADL/task list code.” We have procedures in place to capture this information, but this is rarely required by a program. Can you confirm that this is a task that the FMS will be responsible for performing?*

**Yes, it is a Medicaid requirement.**

41 Key Task 7 *Is payroll expected every other Friday or twice monthly?*

**The current schedule is twice monthly.**

52. Key Task 7, Number 98 *This is the first mention of “...paying union dues for each support work...”. Should bidders assume workers are members of a union? Please provide more information about union participation.*

**At this point, no personal care workers in the program are in unions. In the unlikely event that this should happen, the vendor will need to be able to provide these services.**

52. Key Task 7, Numbers 97-98 *Are union dues mandatory for all workers and what is the frequency of withholding and paying these?*

**At this point, no personal care workers in the program are in unions. In the unlikely event that this should happen, the vendor will need to be able to provide these services.**

52. Key Task 7, Numbers 97-98 *What type of documentation is required regarding reporting these payments to the state and to the worker?*

**At this point, no personal care workers in the program are in unions. In the unlikely event that this should happen, the vendor will need to be able to provide these services.**

55. Key Task Nine. *How many independent contractors are providing services? If they are currently approved as independent contractors will the new contractor be required to recertify them?*

**Contractors do not typically provide ongoing services such as those provided by personal care workers, instead providing home modifications or other services that are not ongoing in nature. Independent contractors must “register” with the vendor and submit tax documentation in order to be paid in accordance with IRS rules and regulations.**

5/63. 2/Key Task 15 The Information for Bidders states, “Only one contractor will be selected” and Key Task 15 “When a participant changes VF/EA FMS organization...” *If there is currently only one FMS contractor and only one is planned for the new contract, what FMS’ are the participants transferring from? If they leave this program, where would they transfer to?*

**Yes. There is currently one vendor. This refers to transitions between vendors when/if a new vendor is contracted. However, if someone transitions from the SAIL Waiver to another Alabama Medicaid waiver, then they must also transition to the FMS for the new waiver.**

57. Key Task *What is the average number of customer service calls received per day? Per week? Per Month?*

**Currently, the vendor averages 20-30 calls daily and about 100 to 120 emails daily.**

63. Key Task 15 Does this key task refer to the transition of current clients from the FMS contractor to the new FMS contractor?

**Yes.**