



**NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL SERVICE**

**INVITATION FOR BID #EBC-2014-1**

**"The Empire Plan Employee Benefit Card"**

**RELEASE DATE: October 1, 2014**

**Amended 11-7-14**

**PROPOSAL DUE DATE: November 13, 2014**

**IMPORTANT NOTICE:** A Restricted Period under the Procurement Lobbying Law is currently in effect for this Procurement and will remain in effect until State Comptroller approval of the resultant contract. During the Restricted Period for this Procurement ALL communications must be directed, in writing, solely to the Procurement Manager as listed below and shall be in compliance with the Procurement Lobbying Law and the NYS Department of Civil Service "Rules Governing Conduct of Competitive Procurement Process" (refer to IFB, Section II: Procurement Protocol and Process).

**Department of Civil Service Contact for  
Inquiries and Submissions for this Solicitation:**

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**Jerry Boone  
Commissioner  
New York State Department of Civil Service**

**David Boland  
Director  
New York State Department of Civil Service  
Employee Benefits Division**

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**SECTION I: INTRODUCTION****A. Purpose**

The purpose of this Invitation for Bid (IFB) #EBC-2014-1, entitled “The Empire Plan Employee Benefit Card” is to secure the services of an Offeror to: 1) produce and distribute Employee Benefit Cards (EBC) on behalf of the New York State Department of Civil Service (Department) to individuals covered under The Empire Plan; and 2) create and distribute associated Management Reports to the Department to manage the contract. For the purposes of this IFB, the use of the term Offeror will be understood to mean Offeror.

*Note:* Numbers, data or statistics which may appear in this IFB are considered to be accurate but should not be used or viewed by prospective Offerors as guarantees or representations of any future card requests. Accordingly, prospective Offerors should rely upon and use such numbers, data or statistics in preparing their Proposals at their own discretion.

**The Department will accept Proposals only from qualified Offerors and will consider for evaluation and selection purposes only those Proposals that it determines to be responsive to the requirements of the IFB and the Program Service duties and responsibilities set forth in the IFB, Section IV “Technical Section.”**

It is the Department’s intent to enter into a contract (Agreement) with one (1) Offeror selected as a result of this IFB. The term of this Agreement shall include a sixty (60) day implementation period followed by five (5) years of Production Services. Unless modified as provided herein, this Agreement shall begin on June 1, 2015 and end on May 31, 2020. The State retains the right to cancel all or any part of the Agreement without cause and in its sole discretion, provided that the Department must give written notice to the Contractor not less than thirty (30) Days prior to the date upon which termination must become effective, such notice to be made via registered or certified mail, return receipt requested or hand delivered. The sixty (60) day implementation period shall begin after the Office of the State Comptroller approves the Agreement, during which the selected Offeror shall be responsible for the production and distribution of Employee Benefit Cards and associated Management Reports in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Agreement.

The Offeror must agree to be bound by its Proposal which will be explicitly incorporated by reference into the executed Agreement. The Department will only contract with a single Offeror, which will be the sole contact with regard to all provisions of the Agreement. If the Offeror's Proposal includes Key Subcontractors or Affiliates, the Offeror will be considered the Contractor, and the Offeror shall assume full responsibility for the fulfillment of all of the Contractor responsibilities under the Agreement. This IFB and other relevant information may be reviewed at: [www.cs.ny.gov/EBC2014IFB/index.cfm](http://www.cs.ny.gov/EBC2014IFB/index.cfm)

**Note:** Refer to Section VIII: Glossary of Terms, for definitions of terms used throughout this IFB.

## **B. Overview of the New York State Health Insurance Program**

The New York State Health Insurance Program (NYSHIP) was established by the New York State Legislature in 1957 to provide essential health insurance protection to New York State (NYS) Employees, Retirees, and their eligible Dependents. Public authorities, public benefit corporations, and other quasi-public entities, such as the NYS Thruway Authority and the Dormitory Authority may choose to participate in NYSHIP; those that do are called Participating Employers (PEs). Article XI of the NYS Civil Service Law also allows local units of government such as school districts, special districts, and municipal corporations to participate in NYSHIP; those local government units which choose to participate in NYSHIP are called Participating Agencies (PAs). At present, there are approximately 451 NYS agencies, 92 PEs, and 800 PAs in NYSHIP. Under Article XI of the Civil Service Law, as amended, and 4 New York Code of Rules and Regulations (NYCRR) Part 73, as amended, the President of the New York State Civil Service Commission, who also serves as the Commissioner of the Department, through the Department's Employee Benefits Division (EBD), is responsible for the ongoing administration of NYSHIP.

NYSHIP currently covers over 589,635 NYS, PA and PE Employees and retirees. Eligible covered Dependents bring the total number of covered lives to approximately 1,222,500.

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NYSHIP currently provides health benefits coverage through The Empire Plan, a Participating Provider Organization (PPO) with managed care components, and 10 Health Maintenance Organizations (HMOs). The Excelsior Plan is a lower cost version of The Empire Plan available to PAs. Additionally, the Student Employee Health Plan (SEHP) is administered through The Empire Plan contracts. SEHP is a health benefits plan for graduate student Employees of the New York State and New York City University systems. NYS and PE employees and retirees may elect to enroll in either The Empire Plan or in HMOs offered through NYSHIP. NYSHIP offers only The Empire Plan and the Excelsior Plan to PAs. PAs may, and frequently do, offer HMOs directly to their own Employees and retirees as an alternative to Empire Plan coverage.

Regarding new and replacement EBCs, The Empire Plan Enrollees who elect individual coverage receive one (1) EBC whereas Enrollees who elect family coverage, generally, receive two (2) EBCs listing all Dependents. Empire Plan Enrollees and Dependents use their EBC as identification when accessing healthcare services under The Empire Plan. There are approximately 208,195 Enrollees with individual coverage in The Empire Plan and 281,217 Enrollees with family coverage in The Empire Plan.

### **C. Overview of Required EBC Production, Distribution, and Reporting Services**

The EBC is a durable card that provides identifying information for an Enrollee and any covered Dependents enrolled in The Empire Plan. A sample of the current EBC is included in **Exhibit II.A** titled, “Sample Card, Card Carrier and Envelope.”

The Contractor produces and distributes EBCs on behalf of the Department. Over the last three (3) years, approximately 540,000 EBCs have been issued in the form of new, duplicate, and replacement cards, which equated to an average weekly production of approximately 3,000 cards. See **Exhibit II.D**, Sample Summary Report, for a summary of weekly EBC and carrier/envelope production. The Contractor also produces and distributes weekly Management Reports including Card Detail Reports and Card Summary Reports. The Card Detail Report contains data supporting the EBCs produced for each Enrollee and/or their Dependent. The Card Summary Report contains total card counts and the total number of agencies that received EBCs. Both reports shall be transmitted to the Department through a

secure electronic transmission that is HIPAA compliant and in a format that is searchable.

See **Exhibit II.C** Sample Detail Report and **Exhibit II.D** Sample Summary Report.

Once a week, currently on Wednesdays, the Department produces an EBC Data File(s) containing all the information necessary to produce and distribute EBCs. See **Exhibit II.B** to the IFB for the required file layout. Using the information contained in the EBC Data File(s), the Contractor produces and distributes the EBCs via first-class U.S. Postal Service to the Cardholder, and electronically sends both the Card Detail Reports and Card Summary Reports within the timeframes established in this IFB in Section IV. The file layout and information placed on the EBC is subject to change at the sole discretion of the Department.

The Department anticipates, but does not guarantee, that during the term of the Agreement, the number of EBCs required to be produced and distributed will not change substantially from current levels, i.e., approximately 3,000 EBCs per week. The typical number of EBCs produced is two (2) cards for Enrollees with family coverage, and one (1) card for Enrollees with individual coverage. EBC volume in any given weekly Production Cycle may be highly variable due to the addition of Participating Employers and Participating Agencies to The Empire Plan.

During the term of the Agreement, the Department reserves the right to re-issue EBCs to all Cardholders. If the Department determines a complete or partial re-issuance is required the Department will provide advance notice to the Contractor.