



***AMENDED* REQUEST FOR INFORMATION
TEST QUESTIONS AND EXAMINATION UPDATE
CHANGES IN RED**

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The New York State (NYS) Department of Civil Service (DCS) is presenting this Request for Information (RFI) to query the vendor community for information related to out-of-the-box services, solutions and industry standards for examination services for use by the Department of Civil Service and civil service administrators at the municipal government level.

1.1 PERTINENT DATES

Milestone	Date and Time
RFI Release Date	March 19, 2025
Closing Date for Questions from Vendors	March 26, 2025, 4 PM EST.
Official Responses to Questions Posted (Estimated)	April 2, 2025
RFI Response Due Date	April 30, 2025
Submission of Request for Vendor Demonstration (See Section 6.2)	Week of April 21st, 2025 Week of May 19th, 2025
(Optional) Vendor Demonstrations	Week of April 28st, 2025 Week of May 27th, 2025

2.0 BACKGROUND

The Department of Civil Service (DCS) is the central personnel agency for the Executive Branch of New York State government, serving approximately 150,000 employees. In addition, DCS is also responsible for oversight of administration of the merit system of 95 local governments. The New York State Constitution mandates that appointments and promotions within the civil service system be made according to merit and fitness as ascertained by competitive examination. DCS fulfills this mandate by providing examination services to New York State Agencies and Municipal Civil Service Agencies. Further, DCS is mandated to review and update examination questions as deemed appropriate no less than every five years. The individual elements of the exam development process conducted by an outside vendor should include the ability to:

- Review job classification standards and/or conduct a job analysis to determine the critical knowledge, skills and abilities (KSA's) needed to successfully perform the duties of the position for which the exam is being held;
- Create new multiple-choice test questions that measure the critical KSAs and edit existing test questions in conjunction with subject matter experts using predetermined guidelines and format;
- Specify a correct response (key) for multiple-choice test questions within four possible responses (distractors), provide a source for each test question (if appropriate) and assign questions to a category/categories;
- Ensure that new and updated multiple-choice test questions are valid (job related), psychometrically sound and free from bias;
- Create open-ended and/or survey questions to assess work-related tasks, training, education and /or experience;
- Provide a tagging mechanism for key elements of test questions such as the competency being tested, subject area, enemy or cloned items, items that share a stimulus, etc.;
- Provide study guides and/or test guides for candidate use using predetermined guidelines and format; and
- Download, export and share test questions in a secure platform, as needed.

3.0 CURRENT – AGENCIES / END USERS

- 95 local civil service agencies
- Over 70 State agencies
- State Examination Applicants
- Local Examination Applicants

3.1 CURRENT – CONTENT VOLUMES CALENDAR YEAR 2024 (CY '24)

- 233 State Exams held
- 5,788 Local Exams held

4.0 OBJECTIVE

New York State's primary objective is the enhancement of the test question (item) development and updating processes for multiple Civil Service examinations. These services and processes include, but are not limited to, conducting item inventories, updating existing item banks and items, adding to existing item banks, developing new test questions and/or examinations (i.e., multiple choice, evaluation of training and experience, job simulations), item validation, methods for ensuring test questions are job-related and free from bias, and a secure platform for item bank storage and/or exchange. Any new test questions and/or item banks would then be owned by DCS. Through this RFI, the State seeks to identify potential services and solutions in the marketplace to enhance the item development process to meet the needs of NYS, DCS and our customers.

5.0 RFI QUESTIONS

In responding to this RFI, please indicate the following profile information about your company's business:

- What is your company's primary business?
- Where is your company headquartered?
- Does the company have an office in the United States?
- Does your company currently provide the type of services/solutions described in this RFI? If so, are the services/solutions provided directly by the respondent or through subcontractors?

Please provide in a written summary with your response:

- Examples of potential approaches to provide the services/solutions summarized in Section 2. Responses should include strength and weakness comparisons of potential services/solutions.
- Information regarding potential issues or concerns that should be considered.
- An overview of the specific services/solutions you would be able to provide. The overview should include:
 - any services to be provided;
 - the approaches to services and the foundation on which they are based (i.e., writing style, reading level, etc.);
 - the way in which test questions are screened for job appropriateness, content and bias;
 - possible item bank storage; and
 - the way in which test questions will be kept secure from unauthorized viewing, sharing and use.

6.0 DESIGNATED CONTACT/WRITTEN INQUIRIES/RFI ELECTRONIC SUBMISSIONS

Primary Contact:

Dyane McGee, Contract Management Specialist 3
Office of Financial Administration
Email: dccontracts@cs.ny.gov

Alternate Contact:

Merissa Manell, Contract Management Specialist 2
Office of Financial Administration
Email: dccontracts@cs.ny.gov

6.1 RFI ELECTRONIC SUBMISSIONS

Please email all RFI Electronic submissions to: dccontracts@cs.ny.gov with the subject line Response, Test Question RFI

6.2 VENDOR DEMONSTRATIONS/PRESENTATIONS

For purposes of this RFI, DCS may elect to have vendors provide a demonstration/presentation as a part of the vendor's response.

Demonstrations may include a demonstration/presentation of the vendor's proposed solution/services. The demonstrations/presentations should provide answers to situational business-related questions as well as illustrations of how the vendor's solution/services would meet the business challenges described in this RFI. All Vendor staff in attendance must fully understand the response submitted, be able to address concerns and comments, and be able to provide additional information regarding the original information provided within the vendor's response. Marketing/Sales oriented demonstrations that are unable to illustrate desired services may be ended, at the sole discretion of DCS, prior to the one (1) hour vendor demonstration time limit.

Overall, demonstrations will be held to 1.5 hours. Questions from Section 5.0 should be addressed in the presentation. Time allotment should be as follows: identification of all parties on the call, 60 minutes vendor presentation and discussion, 30 minutes Q&A period and closeout.

Vendor demonstrations will be held via teleconference and dates/times will be scheduled in the future, as necessary, based on vendor requests that shall include:

- Notified vendors are required to provide names and titles of attendees.
- Vendors may be required to setup a teleconference to demonstrate their services.

*Note: All materials submitted by a vendor shall become the property of the State and may be returned to the vendor at the sole discretion of the State. The State has the right to adopt, modify, or reject any or all ideas presented in any material submitted in response to the RFI.

NYS is not liable for any costs incurred by Vendor in the preparation and production of a response to this RFI or for any costs incurred by a Vendor to participate in a demonstration.

6.3 NO AWARD

DCS will not make an award for the potential future services described in this Request for Information (RFI). DCS is conducting this RFI solely for the purpose of gathering information to determine the feasibility, reliability and potential of services/systems related to the development of test questions and examinations.

6.4 COMMUNICATIONS FROM NYS TO VENDORS

DCS has established a procurement website for the purpose of disseminating information relating to this RFI, and vendors are encouraged to monitor the site. The website URL is <https://www.cs.ny.gov/testquestionsRFI/>

6.5 NO LATE SUBMISSIONS

All responses shall be submitted and received by the submission dates and times specified in this RFI. Responses received after the deadline may or may not be reviewed.

Faxed responses and mailed responses will not be accepted. All responses shall be submitted via email to dccontracts@cs.ny.gov.

6.6 MULTIPLE SUBMISSIONS

Vendors may submit more than one submission for the purpose of offering alternative possibilities, but each response must be complete.

6.7 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR SUBMISSIONS

Responses that make extensive use of color photographs or illustrations, or that include separate brochures or marketing materials and overly elaborate embellishments, are discouraged.

All submissions in response to this RFI, must be written in the English language.

6.8 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION LAW

Disclosure of information related to this RFI shall be permitted consistent with the laws of the State of New York and specifically Article 6 of the New York State Public Offers Law, the Freedom of Information Law ("FOIL"). DCS shall take reasonable steps to protect from public disclosure any records or portions thereof relating to this RFI that are exempt from disclosure under FOIL. Information constituting trade secrets or critical infrastructure information for purposes of FOIL must be clearly marked and identified as such by the Contractor upon submission. Requests for exemption of the entire contents of Contractor's response to this RFI, and any other documentation, from disclosure have generally not been found to be meritorious and are discouraged. If the Contractor intends to request an exemption from disclosure under FOIL for trade secret materials or critical infrastructure information, the Contractor shall at the time of submission, request the exemption in writing and provide an explanation of (i) why the disclosure of the identified information would cause substantial injury to the competitive position of the Contractor, or (ii) why the information constitutes critical infrastructure information which should be exempted from disclosure pursuant to § 87(2) of FOIL. Acceptance of the identified information by DCS does not constitute a determination that the information is exempt from disclosure under FOIL. Determinations as to whether the materials or information may be withheld from disclosure will be made in accordance with FOIL at the time a request for such information is received by DCS.