



STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

**REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS #33101-26080DAS3
AMENDMENT #01
FOR CAREER READINESS ASSESSMENTS
(FY27-FY29)**

DATE: August 7, 2026

RFA #33101-26080DAS3 IS AMENDED AS FOLLOWS:

1. State responses to questions and comments in the table below amend and clarify this RFA.

Any restatement of RFA text in the Question/Comment column shall NOT be construed as a change in the actual wording of the RFA document.

RFA SECTION	QUESTION / COMMENT	STATE RESPONSE
Page 4, Procurement Purpose	1. Please clarify if the procurement budget of \$270,000 is an annual budget per year or for the entire three-year contract term.	The State's budget of \$270,000.00 applies to the entire three (3) year Contract Term for all awarded contracts.
Page 15, Pro Forma Contract, B., Term of Contract	2. The file name for the RFA indicates FY27-29, but the Term of Contract is blank on page 15. Please confirm that the anticipated contract term is October 5, 2026, through June 30, 2030.	The State's proposed effective date of the individual Pro Forma Contracts is October 26, 2026. That said, each awarded contract's final effective date will be determined once each awarded contract is fully executed by all required parties. The State's proposed end date of the individual Pro Forma Contracts is June 30, 2029.
Page 26, Pro Forma Contract D.37.a.(1)	3. For our organization to be able to propose our off-the-shelf assessments, and to agree to these terms, paragraph D37.a.(1) would need to be revised to allow application and certain customer support to be performed by offshore resources. Will TDOE allow offshore application and customer support, if the data resides within the U.S. and appropriate data security technologies are in effect?	The State may permit offshore work in certain circumstances, but the awarded contractor's request will be subject to a review by the State's information security team and any other applicable State agencies. As part of that review, the State may require additional controls or safeguards before approving an exception. Because any determination will depend on the specific circumstances and the State's review process for exceptions, the State cannot evaluate or approve such a request until after the selection of awarded contractors and submission of a formal exception request.
Page 26, Pro Forma Contract D.37.a.(2)	4. Paragraph D.37.a.(2) requires sharing encryption keys with TDOE. Neither the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) nor the Center for Internet Security (CIS) for cybersecurity practices frameworks encourage encryption key sharing between a service provider and customers, due to increased likelihood of data leakage during transfer, key management complexity, and limited auditing and accountability.	The State cannot accept material changes proposed by applicants and/or the selected contractors as part of any negotiation process. However, the State may in its sole discretion make clarifications and/or revisions to the Career Readiness Assessments (FY27-FY29) Pro Forma Contract on a case-by-case basis after the contract is awarded to the selected contractors. As such, based upon the revised guidance, the State may review requested

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	Would TDOE consider editing D.37.a.(2) in the current RFA to reflect that language, as shown below? The Contractor shall encrypt State Data at rest and in transit using the current version of Federal Information Processing Standard ("FIPS") 140-2 or 140-3 (or current applicable version) validated encryption technologies. The State shall control all access to encryption keys. The Contractor shall provide installation and maintenance support at no cost to the State The Contractor shall adhere to the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) and the Center for Internet Security (CIS) for cybersecurity practices to protect the encryption keys, information systems, and data.	redlines for approval with its information security team.
Page 27, Pro Forma Contract D.37.a.(3 and 4)	5. We are currently enrolled in the GovRAMP progressing snapshot program. What level of the GovRAMP program will meet these requirements?	The Pro Forma Contract outlines two (2) standards that are acceptable to the State. The exact standards and phase in the GovRamp program that is equivalent to the SOC 2 Type 2 or NIST 800-53 audit guidance should be determined between the awarded contractor and their auditor.
Page 29, Pro Forma Contract D.37.c, Business Continuity Requirements	6. We request clarification on the following questions regarding the Business Continuity Requirements section of the Pro Forma Contract. - Can the State identify what is driving the 24-hour RTO requirement—is it tied to a specific, regulatory, statutory, or contractual obligation, or was it established through internal policy? - Was the 24-hour figure derived from a formal Business Impact Analysis, or has it been carried forward as a standard requirement? - Can the State clarify when the 24-hour RTO clock begins — at the time of incident occurrence, upon detection, or upon formal declaration of a disaster by an authorized party? - Are there specific systems or services for which 24 hours is an absolute requirement, or are there areas where the State has more tolerance for a longer recovery window? - In the event that a disruption is caused by a third-party provider such as a cloud platform or SaaS vendor, does the full 24-hour RTO obligation still apply to the Contractor?	The State outlines various levels of recommended RPO/RTO timelines based on the criticality of the application. While the Career Readiness Assessments are not mission critical applications requiring hot/warm standbys, the work is important to the local education agencies ("LEAs") when evaluating their students. Any lower level of service impacts instructional time negatively if these assessments are scheduled in a specific timeframe of the school day or school year. Any deviations from this can only be approved on a case-by-case basis in coordination with the State. The RTO clock should begin once an incident has been detected, and the awarded contractor has determined that the system is unrecoverable. This determination can be made by internal teams and does not necessarily have to be made by a 3rd party. The RTO obligation extends to the awarded contractor and any sub-contractors/vendors they may leverage in the fulfillment of the required services under the Pro Forma Contract.

2. **RFA Amendment Effective Date.** The revisions set forth herein shall be effective upon release. All other terms and conditions of this RFA not expressly amended herein shall remain in full force and effect.