



STATE OF TENNESSEE  
Department of Correction

**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION  
FOR  
Food Services Management**

RFI # 32901-31250  
October 15, 2020

**1. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:**

The State of Tennessee, Department of Correction issues this Request for Information (“RFI”) for the purpose of exploring alternatives for providing quality, adequate plate coverage, nutritionally adequate meals for our inmate population.

This market research is not a competition. The information submitted will be used only to improve the State’s knowledge of private industry’s capabilities. No evaluation of participating vendors will occur and your participation is not a promise of future business with the State. Responding or not responding to this RFI does not preclude the vendor from bidding on any future solicitations. The information gathered during the RFI is part of an ongoing procurement. The RFI responses will not be available until the open records period of a resulting procurement effort, pursuant to Tennessee Code Annotated section 10-7-504(a)(7). Our hope is that this will encourage vendors to participate in the RFI process without fear that such participation will compromise their competitive position. Should responses from this Request for Information generate additional questions from the State; all vendors responding to this request will receive the additional Information provided in order to assist the State in understanding the current state of the marketplace, including best practices for the industry approach to research and advisory services.

We appreciate your input and participation in this process.

**2. BACKGROUND:**

The Tennessee Department of Correction (TDOC) operates seven (7) all-male and two (2) all-female facilities. One (1) facility houses both male and female inmates in separate complexes. All but one (1) of these ten (10) facilities have full kitchen facilities. These facilities are located in urban and

rural settings spread across Tennessee. The total capacity for these facilities is approximately fifteen thousand and seven hundred (15,700) inmates. TDOC also offers meals to staff at the facilities. Over four thousand (4,000) staff members are eligible for one (1) meal a day. Statistics for TDOC's Food Service Department from the second (2<sup>nd</sup>) and third (3<sup>rd</sup>) quarter of 2020 are included as **Attachment 1**.

Nine of the ten TDOC facilities serve three meals a day on weekdays and two meals a day on weekends. One site has a full kitchen and utilizes cold plate re-thermalization and serves three meals every day. Meals are brought in from another facility in the Metro Nashville area, re-heated, and served.

These meet state and federal nutritional guidelines and meet the dietary needs of its inmate population. These needs include special therapeutic and religious (Muslim, Jewish and other) populations. Therapeutic meals include those required by inmates at a medical facility and facility infirmaries. Enhanced sack lunches are provided to inmates who are part of work crews that work outside of the facility.

TDOC houses inmates of all security levels and serves meals to them in several locations, i.e. central dining rooms, individual cells and units, and remote units outside of the main facility

Nine (9) of the ten (10) facilities have full kitchen facilities, including coolers and freezers. These kitchens may not be necessarily complete for use as free-standing institutional kitchens. Some equipment has not been necessary under the current operation and may have been repurposed elsewhere.

Likewise, nine (9) of the ten (10) facilities have full kitchen facilities, including coolers and freezers and a limited amount of dry goods storage space. There are also satellite kitchens and other unique food service set-ups. Likewise, all ten of the facilities have warehouse space outside of the main secure perimeter. These warehouse facilities vary in size, and also have freezers, coolers and dry goods shelving space. TDOC uses inmate labor extensively in its warehouses, kitchen, and other food service facilities.

TDOC operates eight (8) produce gardens statewide and anticipates that any selected vendor(s) would work with the State to incorporate the produce into the menu.

Included as **Attachment 2** are figures on numbers of TDOC staff food service workers by site.

Included as **Attachment 3** are current contractually required vendor positions at each institution/site.

The State is considering awarding up to three (3) contracts in a future solicitation, one (1) for each grand division/region of the State.

**TDOC is transitioning to a LEAN/quality environment and would be looking for Vendor input on quality measures such as nutrition, palatability/consumption, and efficiency.**

TDOC is also committed to minimizing waste while providing an adequate food supply to meet peak demands and emergency situations when the standard diets cannot be prepared.

For additional information on TDOC, visit their website at <http://state.tn.us/correction>.

### **3. COMMUNICATIONS:**

3.1. Please submit your response to this RFI to:

Priscilla E. Wainwright, Director of Contract Administration  
Tennessee Department of Correction  
320 Sixth Avenue North  
Nashville TN 37243  
(615) 253-5571 (telephone)  
[priscilla.wainwright@tn.gov](mailto:priscilla.wainwright@tn.gov)

3.2. Please feel free to contact the Department of Correction with any questions regarding this RFI. The main point of contact will be:

Priscilla E. Wainwright, Director of Contract Administration  
Tennessee Department of Correction  
320 Sixth Avenue North  
Nashville TN 37243  
(615) 253-5571 (telephone)  
[priscilla.wainwright@tn.gov](mailto:priscilla.wainwright@tn.gov)

3.3. Please reference RFI # 32901-31250 with all communications to this RFI.

3.4. A Pre-Response Conference will not be held as part of this solicitation.

### **4. RFI SCHEDULE OF EVENTS:**

EVENT		TIME (Central Time Zone)	DATE (all dates are State business days)
1.	RFI Issued		<b>October 15, 2020</b>
2.	RFI Response Deadline	4:30 p.m.	<b>October 30, 2020</b>

**5. GENERAL INFORMATION:**

- 5.1. Please note that responding to this RFI is not a prerequisite for responding to any future solicitations related to this project and a response to this RFI will not create any contract rights. Responses to this RFI will become property of the State.
- 5.2. The information gathered during this RFI is part of an ongoing procurement. In order to prevent an unfair advantage among potential respondents, the RFI responses will not be available until after the completion of evaluation of any responses, proposals, or bids resulting from a Request for Qualifications, Request for Proposals, Invitation to Bid or other procurement method. In the event that the state chooses not to go further in the procurement process and responses are never evaluated, the responses to the procurement including the responses to the RFI, will be considered confidential by the State.
- 5.3. The State will not pay for any costs associated with responding to this RFI.

**6. INFORMATIONAL FORMS:**

The State is requesting the following information from all interested parties. Please fill out the following forms:

<b>RFI #32901-31282</b>
<b>TECHNICAL INFORMATIONAL FORM</b>
1. RESPONDENT LEGAL ENTITY NAME:

2. RESPONDENT CONTACT PERSON:

3. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF EXPERIENCE PROVIDING SIMILAR SCOPE OF SERVICES/PRODUCTS.

Include startup timeframes and sample operations plans.

Provide specific examples of work in a correctional setting.

Detail the number of customers/meals served per day in non-correctional settings and describe the environment where the customers/meals are served – K-12, Higher Education, Hospitality, Hospital, etc.

Describe your experience in serving correctional populations similar to or larger than TDOC's.

4. Provide a narrative for each of the topic items below.

**Goals and Objectives:**

Describe your concept for providing food service management including menu, inventory management, equipment purchases, maintenance and replacement.

Describe what products and/or services are included with your concept.

Describe any value-added or ancillary services in which TDOC may be interested such as dietitians, consultants, etc.

Would consultants be available to strategize with TDOC on moving towards self-operating food services management?

Describe your concept for disclosing and returning to TDOC any discounts, rebates, allowances, and incentives received from your suppliers for food purchased for the 10 facilities.

**Planning and Surveys:**

Would your organization require a site survey? What would your representatives be observing or looking for during such a visit?

What information would your representatives request from TDOC to complete a site survey?

**Technology/Systems:**

Describe the type of technology used and procedures involved, and how meals are counted.

Describe any minimal technical software and hardware requirements needed for the solution.

Describe network infrastructure required for the solution without using TDOC/State network infrastructure and resources.

Describe the oversight, auditing, and managerial processes involved with the technology solution.

Describe what processes your organization has for updating hardware and software.

Describe how recipe and menu costing data and updates are reflected in your information system.

Describe system backups and include details such as location of backup facility and distance from primary system location.

### **Food Preparation**

Describe your organization's meal preparation process. Include the following:

How are meal components procured or produced?

Where would food products be prepared?

If food products are not prepared onsite, how would food transportation, storage and warehousing be approached?

What on-site food preparation, if any, is required before the food is served?

### **Staffing**

Would your organization utilize current TDOC food service workers?

Would your organization utilize inmate workers?

Is your organization equipped to provide kitchen and dining room security or reimbursements for such?

Briefly describe your organization's staff experience, training and staff development philosophy.

Do you provide an option where a correctional agency staffs the food services operation and you provide the raw materials, equipment, paper products, hardware/software?

Describe your recruiting strategies/activities.

### **Menu and Diet**

Please provide a sample menu, including ingredients, recipes, portion sizes, caloric count and nutritional values.

How does your organization provide contingency meals?

How does your organization handle specialty diets, such as religious and therapeutic?

Are these meals freshly prepared onsite or are pre-packaged meals provided by subcontractor?

Are religious menus revised to combat menu fatigue? If so, how often?

Would TDOC have flexibility in ordering based on specific population needs?

How would potential ingredient allergens be identified and communicated to TDOC?

How often are menus revised to combat menu fatigue?

Does your organization have a therapeutic diet manual that corresponds with your specialty menus?

Describe your process for utilizing a farm-to-table program (or locally sourced garden produce).

## **Operations**

Describe your organization's processes, specifically outlining the following:

- Ordering
- Warehousing
- Shipments
- Ingredient-based Nutritional Analysis and menu item substitutions
- Delivery scheduling
- Contingency operations in the event of a prison shutdown, natural disaster or any other event that would preclude operations
- What are your practices for locally sourcing goods?

## **Security**

Describe your security practices in correctional settings.

Describe your practices on food service inmate worker supervision.

Describe your practices on reducing contraband.

Describe your practices on facility entry and exit.

Describe your practices for inventory shrinkage prevention.

### **Reporting**

Does your food services solution include a Management Information System?

What type of standard reports does your Management Information System provide?

Please provide examples of standard MIS reports.

Does your system offer the capability to provide customized (ad-hoc) reports to facility and agency management?

### **Performance Management**

Describe your organization's performance management system.

Describe your organization's problem resolution and crisis management policies and procedures. Include resolution timeframes.

Describe plans for periodic cost effectiveness and operational reviews.

Describe your organization's quality measures in areas such as nutrition, palatability/consumption, and efficiency.

Describe the penalties/Liquidated Damages most frequently assessed by correctional entities.

### **Market Information**

Describe your organization's ongoing market research/intelligence program.

### **Inmate Reentry Preparation**

Does your organization have experience in creating and overseeing an inmate re-entry program plan, including culinary training and certifications, skills and employability development, and job placement training? If so, provide a narrative describing the program.

**Transition**

Describe your company's typical Transition Plan paying specific attention to timelines.

Address if this plan and timeline can be modified (SHORTENED) in an Emergency Takeover by your Company.

**COST INFORMATIONAL FORM**

1. Describe what pricing units you typically utilize for similar services or goods (e.g., per hour, each, etc.):
2. Describe the typical price range for similar services or goods
3. Additional Cost Information that may be of interest to the State.

**ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS**

1. Please provide input on alternative approaches or additional things to consider that might benefit the State:

# Food Scorecard 3rd Qtr. 2020

✓	<b>Meals served</b>	3,414,809 (93,363 less meals than last quarter)
✓	<b>Regular Meals</b>	3,002,436 (63,169 less meals than last quarter)
✓	<b>Religious Meals</b>	85,723 (26,455 more meals than last quarter – Ramadan)
✓	<b>Therapeutic Meals</b>	167,981 (13,831 less meals than last quarter)
✓	<b>Regular Sack Meals</b>	445 (2,101 less meals than last quarter)
✓	<b>Enhanced Sack Meals</b>	68,546 (9,600 less meals than last quarter)
✓	<b>Staff and Visitor Meals</b>	89,678 (31,117 more meals than last quarter)
✓	<b>Average Participation Rate</b>	97% (up 3% from last quarter due to COVID-19 lockdowns)



# Food Scorecard 2nd Qtr. 2020

✓	<b>Meals served</b>	3,508,172 (45,535 less meals than last quarter)
✓	<b>Regular Meals</b>	3,065,605 (25,182 less meals than last quarter)
✓	<b>Religious Meals</b>	59,268 (384 more meals than last quarter - Passover)
✓	<b>Therapeutic Meals</b>	181,812 (23,216 less meals than last quarter)
✓	<b>Regular Sack Meals</b>	2,546 (239 less meals than last quarter)
✓	<b>Enhanced Sack Meals</b>	78,146 (3,900 less meals than last quarter)
✓	<b>Staff and Visitor Meals</b>	120,795 (6,618 more meals than last quarter)
✓	<b>Average Participation Rate</b>	94% (flat to last quarter)



**Attachment 2**

<b>UNIT NAME</b>	<b>COUNTY</b>	<b>MONTHLY SALARY</b>	<b>POSITION TITLE</b>
DJRC Dietary	Davidson County	\$2,724.00	FOOD SERVICE STEWARD 2
TCIX Dietary	Wayne County	\$2,559.00	FOOD SERVICE STEWARD 2
MLCC Dietary	Shelby County	\$2,492.00	FOOD SERVICE STEWARD 1
MLCC Dietary	Shelby County	\$3,182.00	FOOD SERVICE STEWARD 2
MLCC Dietary	Shelby County	\$3,922.00	FOOD SERVICE MANAGER 2
WTSP Dietary	Lauderdale County	\$2,602.00	FOOD SERVICE STEWARD 2
NECX Dietary	Johnson County	\$2,866.00	FOOD SERVICE STEWARD 2
NWCX Dietary	Lake County	\$3,801.00	FOOD SERVICE MANAGER 3
NWCX Dietary	Lake County	\$2,377.00	FOOD SERVICE STEWARD 1
NWCX Dietary	Lake County	\$2,603.00	FOOD SERVICE STEWARD 2
NWCX Dietary	Lake County	\$2,377.00	FOOD SERVICE STEWARD 1
DSNF Dietary	Davidson County	\$4,057.00	FOOD SERVICE MANAGER 3
DSNF Dietary	Davidson County	\$2,603.00	FOOD SERVICE STEWARD 2
MCCX Dietary	Morgan County	\$2,602.00	FOOD SERVICE STEWARD 2

**Attachment 3**

<b>TDOC Facility</b>	<b>RFP Managers</b>	<b>RFP Full Time</b>	<b>RFP Total Staff</b>
Bledsoe County Correctional Facility (BCCX)	3	25	28
DeBerry Special Needs Facility (DSNF)	2	10	12
Mark Luttrell Transitional Center (MLTC)	1	7	8
Morgan County Correctional Complex (MCCC)	4	19	23
Northeast Correctional Complex Main and Annex (NECX)	3	20	23
Northwest Correctional Complex (NWCX)	3	20	23
Riverbend Maximum Security Institution (RMSI)	3	9	12
Tennessee Correctional Academy (TCA)	1	9	10
Debra K. Johnson Rehabilitation Center (DJRC)	2	9	11
Turney Center Industrial Complex (TCIX) Main	3	13	16
Turney Center Industrial Complex (TCIX) Annex	1	6	7
West Tennessee State Penitentiary (WTSP)	3	21	24
	<b>29</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>197</b>