



STATE OF TENNESSEE  
Department of Correction

**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION  
FOR  
Food Services Management**

**RFI # 32901-31282  
May 18, 2015**

**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 all-male and two all-female facilities. One facility houses both male and female inmates in separate complexes. All but one of these 10 facilities has full kitchen facilities. These facilities are located in urban and rural settings spread across Tennessee. The total inmate capacity for these facilities is approximately 15,700. TDOC also offers meals to staff at the facilities. Over 4,000 staff are eligible for one meal a day.

Nine of the ten TDOC facilities serve three meals a day on weekdays and two meals a day on weekends. The site with no kitchen facilities uses 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. 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 of the ten 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 of the ten 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. Included as an attachment are figures on numbers of staff food service workers by site.

**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 can not 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

- 3.3. Please reference RFI # 32901-31282 with all communications to this RFI.
- 3.4. A Pre-Response Conference will be held at the time and date detailed in the RFI § 4, Schedule of Events. Please contact the main point of contact, referenced in RFI § 3.2., to RSVP for the Pre-Response Conference. Your response is necessary to ensure that there is adequate space to accommodate overall attendance. The Conference will be held at:

Ground Floor Conference Room  
Tennessee Department of Correction  
320 Sixth Avenue North  
Nashville TN 37243

**4. RFI SCHEDULE OF EVENTS:**

EVENT		TIME (Central Time Zone)	DATE (all dates are State business days)
1.	RFI Issued		May 18, 2015
2.	Pre-Response Conference (If Applicable)		N/A
3.	Deadline for Written Respondent Questions to State (If Applicable)		N/A
4.	State's Responses to Written Respondent Questions and Comments (If Applicable)		N/A
5.	RFI Response Deadline		May 30, 2015

**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:

**TECHNICAL INFORMATIONAL FORM**

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.

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 dieticians, 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.

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.

### **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?

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

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

### **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

### **Security**

Describe your security practices in correctional settings.

Describe your practices on inmate supervision.

Describe your practices on reducing contraband.

**Reporting**

Do you have 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.

**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 time lines.

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

<b>COST INFORMATIONAL FORM</b>
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.

<b>ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS</b>
1. Please provide input on alternative approaches or additional things to consider that might benefit the State:

