



STATE OF FLORIDA

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI) # 10-DC-8266 Inmate Deposit and Release Cash

April 6, 2011

I. INTRODUCTION

The Florida Department of Corrections, herein referred to as "Department", is seeking information from experienced, qualified vendors for the provision of receipts processing for funds sent to inmates for deposit in the Inmate Trust Fund and sent by or on behalf of offenders in satisfying court ordered obligations. Information is also requested for the provision of discharge gratuity funds and inmate trust fund balance liquidations for released inmates using debit card technology.

The Department is requesting responses from established vendors with a proven track record in receipt processing activity/implementation and in debit card technology/implementation, who can provide a solution which can integrate with other existing systems (such as the Inmate Trust and Court Ordered Payment systems and Bank of America's Cash Pro and Inmate Trust Fund systems). Any solution must have the ability to adapt to future expansion and integration, as may become necessary.

The Department is also interested in subsequently placing the balance of an inmate trust account on that debit card through electronic means after the account has been reconciled.

The intent is to remove cash from the institution compound, promote security and to reduce administrative duties and costs associated with the current process.

Ideally, this will be a revenue generating solution for the Department. The intent is to offset some of the administrative and processing costs associated with maintaining inmate trust and court ordered payment accounts. These revenues and how they are structured should be identified and explained by the respondent in terms sufficiently specific to allow for Department analysis against current processing and administrative fees.

II. BACKGROUND

A. For Receipts Processing of Funds

Currently, the Department utilizes both internal money order processing and third party providers to receive funds to post in inmate accounts and to post against offender obligations within the Inmate Trust Fund and the Court Ordered Payment Systems. Primarily Other Personal Service (OPS) employees working in The Bureau of Finance and Accounting Central Office, perform a manual process for opening mailed money orders and confirming, completing and/or correcting the information necessary for accurate account application. This includes reviewing both the money order and the required deposit form to ensure the required information is readable by a high speed processing machine. Money orders received on behalf of inmates, generally sent by family and friends, are deposited into the inmates trust account usually within a day or two of receipt by the Department. Money orders received on behalf of offenders, generally sent by the offender, are deposited against his/her court ordered obligations within the same time frame.

Currently the Department's Inmate Trust Fund and Court Ordered Payment Sections receive approximately 880,000 money orders annually. We also receive approximately 860,000 electronic payments sent via third party providers for deposits into Inmate's Trust Fund Accounts and Offenders Court Ordered Payment accounts annually.

The money orders currently received must be accompanied by a deposit card in order to be processed using our high speed money order scanning machine. One labor intensive part of this process is opening each item and reviewing the submissions to ensure completeness and readability. Once that process is completed, the money orders and accompanying deposit slips are fed through a scanning machine and batch files are created. Each one of the batch files must then be reviewed to key in additions or corrections to the data not read correctly by the machine. The Department assesses a \$.50 administrative processing fee for each money order processed.

Those payments currently made through one of our third party providers are not as labor intensive for the Department. These providers are currently accepting payment via several means. These include payment at a cashier, payment through the internet and payment over the phone. The Department transfers a file of all active accounts to the providers daily and they in turn transmit collections and sufficient data to apply the collections back to the correct inmate or offender accounts on a daily basis. The funds are reconciled to the Bank of America accounts and to the Department systems to ensure accuracy. Our third party providers retain all risk associated with the negotiable instruments that they accept and the Department anticipates that risk would also be accepted in this solution.

B. For Discharge Gratuity Funds and Inmate Trust Fund Balance Liquidations

Currently, the Department's institutions maintain petty cash in a safe which is used to provide the inmate discharge gratuity funds to inmates upon release. The daily accounting of the petty cash funds is maintained by an assigned custodian and alternate custodian at each institution. The Department's Bureau of Finance and Accounting authorizes petty cash balances, processes fund replenishment and performs monthly reconciliations of the funds. When an inmate has been released, his Inmate Trust account is reconciled and the balance is mailed by check.

Currently the Department processes approximately 19,000 inmate release discharge gratuity payments per year.

The eligible inmates, upon release, receive a \$100.00 cash discharge gratuity. If they are not eligible but they do have sufficient funds available in their Inmate Trust Fund Account, the Department will provide those funds up to the \$100.00 gratuity. If the inmate trust fund account balance is less than \$100.00 the inmate may be issued the largest amount possible in \$20.00 increments. An inmate who is reinstated or restored to supervision receives discharge gratuity in the amount of \$20.00.

The cash used for discharge gratuity is kept in a safe at each Institution. The process of replenishing the cash is centralized and is the responsibility of the Bureau of Finance and Accounting. The Bureau's Central Office issues the cash pay cards for each institution releasing inmates to the Institutional Staff Custodian. To replenish the petty cash fund the custodian will obtain cash from an automatic teller machine (ATM) for placement in the safe for distribution.

After release, the Bureau of Finance and Accounting sends the remaining reconciled inmate trust balance to the address the inmate provides upon release via check. In accordance with Department rule, checks are mailed to inmates whose balance is \$1.00 or higher. During this fiscal year July 2010 through June

2011 the Department will send out approximately 6,800 checks totaling \$2.4 million dollars. The average amount per release check is approximately \$353.00.

III. STATEMENT OF NEED

The Department's goal is to review and explore possible receipt processing solutions for the collection of funds sent to the Inmate Trust Fund and Court Ordered Payments section, and discharge gratuity funds and inmate trust fund balance liquidations for released inmates using debit card technology.

- A. The solution shall interface with the Inmate Trust Fund and Court Ordered Payments accounting systems and Bank of America Cash Pro.
- B. The goal of the solution is to allow the Department to discontinue accepting and processing money orders internally by the implementation of a process system that will assist the Department in realizing its goal of maximizing technology to achieve paperless and efficient systems in the processing of funds received and the capability of activating and loading funds to a debit card.
- C. The solution provider shall retain all risk associated with all negotiable instruments that they accept and shall, at a minimum provide for the acceptance of cash payments at customer outlets; money orders by mail or at customer outlets; major debit and credit cards by phone, internet, kiosks and customer outlets; and bank transfers (i.e. draft from a checking/savings account) by phone, internet and at kiosks and customer outlets.
- D. The solution is to also replace cash upon release and create a more efficient means of transmitting reconciled balances by the implementation of a system that will assist the Department in realizing its goal of maximizing current technology.
- E. A summary of the solution shall, at a minimum, include the following key elements:
 1. A solution that has sufficient tools necessary to work in a correctional environment with special security needs.
 2. A solution that at its user interfaces is simple, user friendly and allows for rapid processing to avoid delays in the depositing of funds and/or delays in the loading of funds to the debit card. We would anticipate that funds would be transmitted within one to two days of receipt, with the goal of achieving one day as the norm.
 3. The solution shall have the capability to transfer information into the Inmate Trust Fund and Court Ordered Payments systems.
 4. The solution shall have the capability to allow the released inmate to activate a debit card 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by calling a toll free number.
 5. The solution shall have a toll free call center available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to answer released inmate's questions concerning the debit card.
 6. The solution shall have the capability to refund back to the Department the funds associated with any debit cards that were never activated for use.
 7. The solution shall have the capability to produce reports and database views via a secure interface that only authorized Department personnel (and certain solution staff) can access.
 8. The solution shall have the ability to allow the Department to transmit Inmate Trust Fund account balances via a secure transport method (SFTP, Secure Web Services, etc.) and have them added to the debit card issued at release.
 9. The solution shall have the capability for the Department to send data to and pull data from the solution via a secure transport method (SFTP, Secure Web Services, etc); furthermore, the data format should either be XML-based or delimiter-separated values
 10. The solution shall have the capability of interacting with customers in multiple languages to include but not limited to English and Spanish.

11. The solution in accordance with Federal Banking Regulations shall provide the capability to transfer deposit receipts by the second day following (but not including) the day of the transactions by means of an EFT to the Department's designated bank account.

IV. PURPOSE OF RFI

Pursuant to Rule 60A-1.042, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.), an agency may request information from the business community by issuing a written Request for Information (RFI). Agencies may use RFI's in circumstances including, but not limited to, determining whether or not to competitively procure a commodity or contractual service, determining what solicitation process to use for a particular need, or researching general, special, and/or technical specifications for a solicitation. A vendor's answer to a RFI is not an offer and shall not be used to justify a contract with that vendor without otherwise complying with Chapter 287, F.S., and Rule 60A-1, F.A.C. Vendors submitting answers to an agency's RFI are not prohibited from responding to any related subsequent solicitation. The Department reserves the right to use or reject any information supplied in response to this RFI.

Interested parties are requested to answer all questions contained in Section V of this RFI. Additionally, interested parties shall provide details of enhancements and other applications and systems that may apply to the delivery of services or technology described.

V. QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

1. Describe your receipts processing and your debit card processing solution and ensure you address the items identified in the statement of need above.
2. Describe what services are included with your receipts processing and your debit card processing solution.
3. Describe value added services which the department may be interested.
4. Provide a description of your company's profile including a general description of your corporate experience in the provision of receipts processing and debit card processing services.
5. Describe the type of technology used and procedures involved.
6. Describe the software components of your solution including the type of file transfers used between your business and the Department.
7. Describe any minimal technical software and hardware requirements needed for the solution.
8. Describe the network infrastructure required for the solution without utilizing the Department's network infrastructure and resources.
9. Describe the oversight, auditing, and managerial processes involved with the solution.
10. Describe any application programming interfaces that the solution provides.
11. Describe the user and technical support that the solution provides.
12. Describe the training that is offered with the solution.
13. Describe the security components required and utilized with the solution.

14. Describe the redundancy capabilities of the solution to overcome emergencies such as:
 - a. Power Outage
 - b. Network Outage
 - c. Solutions hardware/software failures
15. Describe how your receipt processing solution can transfer deposit information into the Inmate Trust Fund and Court Ordered Payment system.
16. Describe how your debit card solution can transfer funds to and from the Department
17. Describe your company's large-scale installations. Include name of entity, contact person, telephone number and email address. Include average number of receipts processed through the solution.
18. Describe your company's background and experience in implementing receipts processing and fund transfer solutions for large-scale public sector/governmental agencies. Provide a copy of each Contract(s).
19. How much time do you estimate it would take to implement your solution for a project of this magnitude? Include a timeline for each step required.
20. Are you willing to accept the risk associated with the negotiable instruments that you receive? Will you hold harmless the Department and the State for any fraudulent instruments you have accepted and subsequently sent the funds derived from those instruments for deposit by the Department?
21. In what languages is your solution capable of communicating with customers?
22. What additional information does the Department need to know about your company and the provision of services that may be beneficial?

VI. PUBLIC RECORDS

Vendors are cautioned that Florida law generously defines what constitutes a public record (see Section 119.07, F.S.). If a vendor responding to this RFI believes that its information submittal contains information that should not be a public record, the vendor shall clearly segregate and mark that information (for example, stamp each page "Confidential" and place it in an envelope marked "Confidential") and briefly describe in writing the grounds for claiming exemption from the public records law. The Department will not independently evaluate claims of exemption. If the Department receives a public records request related to this RFI, the Department shall notify the vendor in writing at least seven (7) days before making the information available for review by the requester. The vendor shall be solely responsible for taking whatever action it deems appropriate to legally protect its claim of exemption from the public records law. If the vendor fails to do so, the Department shall make the information available for review. In no event shall the Department or any of its employees or agents be liable for disclosing, or otherwise failing to protect the confidentiality of information submitted in response to this RFI. In addition, the Department will attempt to afford protection from disclosure of any trade secret as defined in Section 812.081, F.S., where identified as such in information provided in response to this RFI, to the extent permitted under Section 815.04, F.S. By submitting information in response to this RFI, a vendor acknowledges, however, that the protection afforded by Section 815.04, F.S., is incomplete, and it is hereby agreed by the vendor and the Department that no right or remedy for damages arises from any disclosure.

VII. SUBMISSION OF INFORMATION:

Responses must be in writing and submitted via mail and email no later than **5:00 p.m. ET, on April 29, 2011.** If responses are submitted via mail, an original and five (5) copies shall be submitted. Responses must reference the RFI number (RFI 10-DC-8266), the company name, address, telephone number, email address and contact person. Send responses to:

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The Department of Corrections sincerely appreciates your time and interest in responding to this Request for Information.