

Mississippi Department of Finance and Administration

**OFFICE OF PROCUREMENT AND
CONTRACTS**

**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION
FOR
PROCUREMENT CARD SERVICES**

RFx #: 3150003927

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Contact information for this Request for Information:

Procurement Card Services RFIN
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SECTION 1. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

1.1 Purpose and Goals

The Mississippi Department of Finance and Administration (DFA) Office of Procurement and Contracts (OPC) issues this Request for Information (RFIN) to solicit information related to industry standards and best practices related to procurement card (P-Card) services. Information gathered during this RFIN process may be used in the development of a Request for Proposals (RFP) to be issued for the State of Mississippi's P-Card program. This is a request for information only and no preference will be given to the responding vendors during the RFP process. Vendors who do not participate in the RFIN will be allowed to submit proposals. The requested information is for industry, not company specific information. These services are to be provided for the Office of Purchasing, Travel and Fleet Management (OPTFM) within DFA. The services include, but are not limited to, procurement cards, travel cards, declining balance cards (including agency clothing cards and Education Enhancement Fund cards (EEF), and other applicable services for use in making small dollar purchases by governmental entities. The contract will be available for use by all state agencies, some universities, and all governing authorities within the geographic limits of the State of Mississippi.

Because this is a RFIN, questions will not be accepted during this process. However, the RFP, when released, will allow for questions and answers. Responses should be submitted on the attached form.

The Scope of Services provided in this RFIN is the scope of services used in the 2016 RFP to procure P-Card services. Minor updates have been made based on changes in the DFA OPTFM's procedures. DFA may or may not make additional updates based on information gathered during this process. DFA requests input such as stating if a specific requirement is not clear, if the requirement no longer meets the industry standard or is an antiquated process, etc. DFA is not requesting information related to how responding companies would provide the service or what option the respondent offers related to a requirement. Because this is not the competitive procurement for these services, financial or pricing information shall not be included.

It is the intent of DFA to issue a RFP at a later date for these services which will result in a contract for three (3) years with two (2) optional renewal years which may be exercised at the discretion of DFA. The effective date of this contract is anticipated to be March 1, 2022.

1.2 Information Submission Requirements

Responses must be submitted using the attached form, Appendix A – Informational Response Form, no later than 1:00 PM CST on November 15, 2021 to procurement@dfa.ms.gov. OPC will not offer any replies to the information submitted. However, OPC reserves the right to correspond with vendors who submit information to clarify their response. Timely submission of the information is the responsibility of the respondent.

All documentation submitted in response to this RFIN and any subsequent requests for information pertaining to this RFIN shall become the property of DFA and will not be returned to the respondent.

Respondents are requested to put “RFIN 0 – P-Card Services” in the subject line of the email. Paper copies of responses to the RFIN are not required and will not be accepted.

1.3 Amending RFIN or Issuing Additional Information

DFA reserves the right to amend or provide additional information related to this RFIN at any time. Should DFA elect to provide additional information, it will be posted to the Office of Procurement and Contracts page on the DFA website at <http://www.dfa.ms.gov> under the “Bid/RFP Notice”.

1.4 Cost of Information Submission

All costs incurred by the respondent in preparing and delivering its response, shall be borne exclusively at the respondent’s expense.

1.5 Right to Reject, Cancel and/or Issue Another RFIN

DFA specifically reserves the right to reject any or all information received in response to the RFIN, cancel the RFIN in its entirety, or issue another RFIN.

It is the intent of the DFA to modify the RFP where information provided by respondents is in the best interest of the State and its card programs, in DFA’s sole discretion. However, DFA does not guarantee any changes will be made to the requirements included in the subsequent RFP. Adjustments to the Scope of Services based on information received in response to this RFIN will only be made if it is determined to be in the best interest of the State to do so.

SECTION 2. PROPOSED SCOPE OF SERVICES

This section contains information on services and procedures the selected P-Card Contractor must provide, or adhere to, in fulfilling the terms of the Contract, either directly or through identified subcontractors. The descriptions are not all-inclusive, but are provided to alert you to services or procedures that may require additional planning or programming on your part.

The selected P-Card Contractor is expected to provide the following services:

DFA OPTFM reserves the right to request additional support from the Contractor in the event that more streamlined oversight is necessary. Examples of additional requests include:

- Requests for additional data to be submitted to the Program Administrator each month
- Notification of purchases over a certain dollar amount or from a certain vendor

1. Representation

The DFA OPTFM will designate a representative who will act as the State's primary contact with the Contractor during the course of the contract – also known as the Program Administrator. This representative will be responsible for conferring with any and all parties necessary to resolve unanticipated issues or requirements that might occur. This representative will also be the state liaison for implementing or initiating change to the program, including new authorization strategies, trials and pilots, new techniques or uses for the program. The assigned representative will communicate to Contractor on behalf of procurement card users from state agencies and governing authorities.

2. Account Types

All Accounts are to be made visible to those persons with the State of Mississippi Program Administrator Access. Overall transaction and credit limits may vary from card to card, agency to agency.

- Regular procurement cards - Carded accounts for purchases of commodities and some services (transaction limits of up to \$5,000); Agencies may also require multiple strategies (i.e. transaction limits) within their organization. Cards can either be assigned to an individual or to a department/agency that multiple employees can utilize. Transaction limits start at \$100. At this time all cards are limited to \$5,000 per transaction; however, the State may delegate authority to some participating entities to authorize larger transactions.
- Travel cards – Carded accounts for purchases of all travel related expenses such as airfare, hotel fees, transportation fees – rental vehicles, toll fees, taxi fare, fuel for rental vehicles, etc. Cards can either be assigned to an individual or to a department/agency that multiple employees can utilize.
- Cardless Accounts – These accounts will have the same parameters as regular carded plastic cards but these accounts will not have a tangible, plastic card. All information

for cardless accounts will be transferred to the appropriate parties via encrypted/protected email. Cards can be either be assigned to an individual or to a department/agency that multiple employees can utilize.

- Declining Balance Cards – issued to approved agencies with a set dollar amount that declines over time. Cards are not renewed from year to year. Cards will be reissued every year with a new account number.

All Procurement and Travel cards are to be EMV chip protected.

3. **Transaction Validation**

DFA OPTFM specifies overall program parameters, including the specification and approval of valid strategies for the State of Mississippi small purchase card program. For example, cash advances and entertainment type expenditures are strictly prohibited.

The procurement card coordinators of participating agencies specify how each agency's procurement cards are used, within the parameters of the statewide procurement card program:

- Account Credit Limit - Credit limit assigned to each account, based on usage needs and internal control considerations
- Agency Credit Limit - Credit limit assigned to each control / billing account, based on usage needs and internal control considerations

4. **Card Format**

The following information shall be placed on the front of the card:

- STATE OF MISSISSIPPI (OR UNIVERSITY NAME)
- FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY
- Tax-Exempt
- The name of the State agency (or a second line of embossing specified by agency) and the cardholder's name
- The seal of the State of Mississippi –Travel Cards
- A picture of the State Capitol Building for all other procurement cards
- Institutions of higher learning may substitute unique university logos and/or pictures to replace the State Seal/State Capitol Building

The following information shall be placed on the back of the card:

- Contractor's toll free contact number

The vendor should propose a card design to be used for the State of Mississippi small purchase card program purchasing cards which conforms to the requirements above.

5. Card Issuance and Program Functionality

The offeror shall be responsible for the embossing and printing of the procurement cards. The offeror will be required to mail all cards issued within five (5) to ten (10) business days or sooner after the offeror receives cardholder account set-up information. The proposal must provide detailed information on the proposed card processes including, but not limited to:

- Card generation, paper process/electronic online process
- Restrictions on how many lines or characters that can be embossed on a card
- Card delivery (time frames) and activation process
- Card security
- Card cancellation, temporary suspension, card termination and replacement (lost and stolen cards) – including reporting
- Card re-issuance (time frame)
- Card reporting and notification process
- Card issuance and expiration time periods
- Addition of new cardholders within an established program
- Fraud, Disputes and Charge backs
- Billing Statements (Methods of how bills may be received; online, email, mail, etc.)
- Declining Balances
- Issuing a card to a new cardholder
- Editing hierarchy levels
- Allowing Manager of a specified agency (with no card) to view cards
- Making Changes Online – Real-time
- Setting transaction limits and increasing transaction limits electronically
- Increasing monthly limits electronically
- Number of transactions per day before the card declines
- Address Change
- Name Change
- Closing accounts in real-time
- Checking Authorizations against card – Real-time
- Checking Current Status of Card
- Checking Current Balance
- Editing or lifting restrictions on Merchant Category Codes (MCC) or other codes
- Online Reconciliation of transactions

6. Contractor's Electronic Operating System

The Contractor shall have and maintain an electronic operating system(s) that would support the State's procurement card program. The system utilized shall be maintained current during the life of the contract including any renewals. Upgrades to the system shall be performed in a manner that provides a transparent implementation or minimizes the impact to the State's program.

7. **Compatibility with Operating Systems**

The State of Mississippi has implemented e-procurement financial management systems. The Contractor must be willing to provide procurement card information and transaction detail to this system in a format compatible with all systems utilized by any state agency/governing authority that is a part of the procurement card program. Those systems include, but are not limited to: any SAP system (including the State's primary ERP system - MAGIC), or Banner, Oracle, or PeopleSoft systems.

Some state agencies have their own financial management systems and the Contractor must provide downloads, data transmissions, and integration in support of each of these systems. A statement of understanding and willingness to support these types of systems must be included with submission of any Contractor's proposal.

The awarded Contractor shall be able to provide data downloads of all transactions on cards within each agency in the following file outputs but not limited to: CSV (comma delimited) format and XLS.

The program utilized to manage the State of Mississippi small purchase card program shall allow the Program Administrator to extract/download data **at any given time** so that a report can be generated. The data can be downloaded by the following areas:

- All Transactions (a data dump filtered by the date of transaction)
- Merchant Category Group
- Merchant
- Merchant Spend
- Card Spend

The data download file should be electronic and should include the following information:

- Vendor Name
- Charge Amount
- Accounting String (Fund, Organization, Account, Program, Activity, etc.) minimum 30 characters – each part is 6 characters
- Travel or Equipment Code
- Date transaction processed
- Date transaction occurred
- Merchant Category
- Last 4 digits of Credit Card number
- Merchant Transaction Number
- Agency Name
- Department Name
- Card Holder first name
- Card Holder last name
- Transaction Reference Number
- City of which the transaction occurred

- State of which the transaction occurred

An online reconciliation program should also be integrated with the program management system so that 100% audits can occur on a daily basis that can be managed on a hierarchical level. The reconciliation program should also be compatible with any state agency financial management system in order for a complete payment process to occur online.

8. **Program and Transaction Data Reports**

Critical to the operation of the State is the ability to obtain required transaction data as well as overall procurement card program information. The offeror will be required to provide versatile and comprehensive reporting capabilities. The State will also be looking for a system that has the most reporting capabilities at all hierarchical program levels and that is deliverable through various media. The proposal must provide detailed descriptions of all on-line query and reporting capabilities including standard and optional reports and any electronic means by which they can be transmitted to the State, including but not limited to:

- Ability to download transactions into excel spreadsheet
- Transaction Detail Report
- Decline Report
- Authorizations Report
- Cardholder Status Report
- Central Reconciliation Report
- Transaction Detail report for cardholder to verify transactions and receipts
- Ability to review reports that show a count of all active cards
- Ability to schedule various reports to run specific days
- Non-Activation Report
- Delinquency Reports
- Customized Reports (if applicable)
- Cardholder Statement (view online and print)

9. **Card Acceptance**

The intent of the State of Mississippi small purchase card program is to allow state agencies and other participating entities to make purchases easily and economically. Card acceptance at a wide variety of merchants throughout the State of Mississippi and the nation, as well as international transactions, is of utmost importance in maintaining a successful procurement card program.

10. **Training**

The Contractor shall be prepared to provide training at various levels during the contract period. This will include transition training, new cardholder training, training on new system capability, recertification training, fraud training for program oversight, and so forth. Upon notification by an authorized user agency that they will be utilizing the procurement card services contract, the Contractor will be expected to make arrangements with that entity to provide training. Transition training shall be provided to agencies who are joining the

program immediately no later than April 1, 2022. Training must be tailored to meet the needs of individual agencies.

Contractor will be required to provide training that will meet the specific needs of individual agencies to support implementation of the statewide procurement card program, including training conducted at various locations throughout Mississippi. Topics to be addressed include, but are not limited to, the proper use of the card, the responsibilities of the cardholder, agency/university/governing authority, and the DFA, procedures for setting up accounts, payment process, how to report lost/stolen cards, development of purchase restrictions, understanding billing and management reports, dispute resolution process, how to change account information, and etc.

Each proposal should include information on the type of training materials, the location of training sessions, and an estimate of time to budget for the training for each individual, and any other item necessary for training not already mentioned.

The offeror must provide training and any ongoing training for cardholders who utilize any systems offered in the contract. Cardholder training should be developed as a web-based training platform with abilities to create learning modules and testing capabilities.

11. Adding New Entities to the Statewide Procurement Card Program

The addition of new participants throughout the life of the program may also include new governing authorities in the program for the first time which will require audited financial statements to fit into the established program. In addition, it should be anticipated that new accounts will be added within an existing account as well as new cardholders within an account.

All of these needs will be required to be supported in the program structure utilized by the Contractor.

12. Account Maintenance, Organizational Support, and Staffing

Card account support, maintenance and troubleshooting is required on a “24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year” basis. This activity will include assistance for reporting lost or stolen cards, account inquiries, disputed transactions, and limiting override authorization.

The State expects a dedicated (i.e., a primary individual or group of individuals) service group or contact person to act as customer service representatives. This service group or person shall be able to work with the State on an ongoing basis to improve and manage the program and shall be able to help facilitate change and resolve problems. While the State understands that turnover occurs, frequent turnover rates of every few months would be unacceptable. It is also expected that the Contractor will provide the availability of dedicated toll free telephone, and e-mail contacts for the account maintenance function and the availability of an electronic account maintenance system.

An entity's procurement card coordinator is authorized to request account changes from the

State Program Administrator in order to change individual procurement cards, including credit limits, transaction dollar limits, and number of, account strategy, cardholder name and termination of a card, within the parameters of the overall Mississippi procurement card program. **Individual entity coordinators may not contact the Contractor directly to make such changes.** The State of Mississippi small purchase card Program Administrator shall be able to make any changes to established accounts on the card program and to any new account set ups.

The offeror must provide highly skilled personnel in sufficient number to support the State of Mississippi's Procurement Card Program. In supporting the operation of the Procurement Card Program, the offeror must provide the following information regarding their organizational staffing:

- Identification of the account managers assigned
- Identification of all key support personnel assigned
- A statement indicating the responsibilities each staff member will have while supporting this program

The Contractor shall communicate with the DFA OPTFM when significant problems occur (including fraudulent purchases, delinquent accounts, and disputes).

All accounts over 60 days delinquent shall be suspended until the delinquent amount has been paid in full by the agency.

The Contractor shall reissue cards no less than 15 days prior to a card's expiration date.

13. Disputed Transactions

The Contractor shall support multiple methods of handling and resolving disputed transactions which may include issuing a temporary credit pending dispute resolution.

14. Billing/Reporting

Each cardholder shall receive a monthly statement by mail or electronic statement. Each participating entity shall receive a consolidated master billing statement by mail (or electronic statement) and by the online system set in place for administrators to utilize. The cardholder reviews and verifies the expenditures and forwards the statement and supporting transaction documents to the program coordinator and entity's accounts payable personnel. Each entity then issues payment(s) for all, or part, of the cards within that entity.

The Contractor shall support a hierarchy access structure to data and reports which allows the DFA OPTFM (Program Administrator) to view and run reports on all program data, an entity to view and report on only entity data.

The Contractor shall be able to report transaction volume and dollars by vendor, by type of vendor, by minority or woman owned businesses, 1099 reportable transactions, sales tax reporting for those transactions that are not tax exempt, etc.

The Contractor shall make available transaction data for both billed and unbilled transaction data.

15. Cardholder Information

It is the State's expectation that the Contractor shall not sell, distribute or otherwise make available the list of participating entity addresses, or any other information to any person, firm or other entity for any purpose.

16. Contract Succession/Transition

The State expects the Contractor to furnish phase-out training to a successor Contractor and to exercise its best efforts to effect a cooperative, orderly, and seamless transition to a successor. The Contractor would also be expected to provide sufficient and experienced personnel to ensure that the quality of services during the phase out period are not diminished or sacrificed.

The Contractor would be expected to provide the State with a complete, current and accurate master copy of all non-proprietary account data in hard copy or other agreed upon medium in a format agreed upon by the State.

The Contractor would be expected to settle all transaction disputes within 180 calendar days of the completed transactions.

17. Migration and Implementation Schedule

Offerors must propose one (1) implementation schedule that addresses all activities necessary to achieve a successful implementation on or around April 1, 2017. The implementation schedule shall include a time line for the various steps required, as well as risk mitigation strategies, to ensure that the implementation stays on schedule. DFA OPTFM will, through the contract negotiation process, choose the implementation date(s) that it deems to be in the best interest of the State. At its discretion, the State may reduce or extend the transition period. Items to be addressed in the implementation schedule should include but not be limited to:

- Contact information and roles and responsibilities for all Contractor Program Support Staff
- Schedule with dates and locations for program and technology solution training
- Information that will be discussed and estimated hours required
- Entity training methods and training materials
- Entity hierarchy establishment (i.e., Administrators, Coordinators, Liaisons, Reviewers, Cardholders, etc.)
- Billing process flow and associated reports
- Card controls and issuance options

- Card/account set-up
- Card/account production and distribution
- Card/account activation
- Electronic access set-up and testing
- Mapping for interface with the State's accounting system(s)
- Sample instructional guidebooks
- Review of state-specific policies and procedures
- Contractor's Guidelines (Policies and Procedures)
- Costs associated with migrating from one provider to another provider, if applicable.

18. Liability

The State of Mississippi and its governing authorities will not accept any liability or financial responsibility for a state employee's charges that have been incorrectly authorized by offeror, including but not limited to those that:

- Exceed any of the limits specified to the Contractor by a cardholder's agency or the Office of Purchasing, Travel and Fleet Management, or
- Violate any of the standard Industry Classification Code and/or Merchant Category Code restrictions specified to the Contractor by a cardholder's agency or the DFA OPTFM.

19. Program Information

All program information concerning the State of Mississippi Small Purchase Card program including but not limited to card spend, transactions, vendors associated with those transactions, and etc. shall be kept on file with the Contractor for the duration of the contract. If DFA OPTFM requests said information, the Contractor shall be able to submit the information within five (5) to seven (7) business days. At the end of each calendar year, the data for that year shall be electronically sent to the Program Administrator. At the end of the contract, the Contractor shall send all transaction data for the duration of the entire program to the Program Administrator electronically.