ALL PROPOSALS MUST BE RECEIVED BY 8/21/26 4PM
PROPOSALS MAY BE EMAILED TO JILL.GORMAN@AG.NJ.GOV

STATE AGENCY

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

DIVISION OF FOOD & NUTRITION

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

CHILD AND ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM (CACFP)

ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW SERVICES

I. INTRODUCTION

The New Jersey Department of Agriculture (NJDA), Division of Food & Nutrition (Division), is responsible for administering United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Child Nutrition Programs. There are approximately 700 Institutions approved to participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP or Program) in New Jersey. The Division is responsible for ensuring that participating Institutions comply with applicable Federal and State regulations, Program requirements, financial management requirements, and USDA guidance.

The Division is seeking a qualified Contractor to provide CACFP Administrative Reviews. The Contractor shall conduct comprehensive Program compliance reviews of Institutions selected by the Division and shall provide all documentation, findings, corrective action follow-up, fiscal analysis, and reporting necessary to support the Division's oversight responsibilities.

II. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this RFP is to obtain professional services to assist the Division in conducting CACFP Administrative Reviews. The Contractor shall provide qualified personnel with expertise in CACFP Program administration, nutrition and meal pattern requirements, financial management, accounting, auditing, Federal grant requirements, procurement, internal controls, corrective action, and fiscal accountability.

The Contractor will be assigned Administrative Reviews. The Division will determine the type, scope and Institutions to be reviewed based upon Federal requirements, review cycles, risk, prior findings, financial activity, complaints, audit results, monitoring history, and other factors identified by the Division.

This procurement is intended to address a special and time-sensitive project to reduce and eliminate the backlog of outstanding FY26 CACFP reviews and ensure that required reviews are completed in a timely manner. The Contractor shall dedicate sufficient qualified personnel and resources to complete the outstanding reviews expeditiously, accurately, and consistently, while maintaining the level of quality, thoroughness, and documentation necessary to protect program integrity and ensure compliance with all applicable CACFP requirements.

The Division anticipates that up to 225 Administrative Reviews may be required under this special project. The total number of reviews assigned to any individual Contractor will be determined by the Division based on the Contractor's demonstrated capacity, proposed staffing and resources, ability to meet project timelines, and the Division's operational needs. The Division reserves the right to make awards to more than one Contractor in order to maximize the number of reviews completed, expedite the reduction of the backlog, and ensure that the required reviews are completed accurately and timely. The Division does not guarantee that any Contractor will be assigned a specific number of reviews or a minimum volume of work. Contractors may submit a proposal to complete less than the full 225-review workload and should clearly identify the maximum number of reviews they have the capacity and resources to complete within the required timeframe.

The Contractor shall work closely with a dedicated Division project manager, who will serve as the primary point of contact and provide overall coordination, direction, and oversight of the project. The Division will give additional consideration to proposals that demonstrate the Contractor's ability to maximize the number of fieldwork reviews (including the issuance of findings to each institution) completed prior to September 30. Reviews may continue to be finalized and closed after September 30, including the review and validation of corrective actions and completion of any required follow-up activities.

This procurement is intended to address the existing backlog of required reviews and should not be construed as the Division's procurement for routine FY27 CACFP reviews. The Division anticipates issuing a separate Request for Proposals (RFP) in the future for the completion of FY27 CACFP reviews. Any future procurement for FY27 reviews will be subject to the Division's procurement requirements and will be separately solicited.

The Contractor's performance under this special project shall support the Division's responsibility to ensure that required CACFP oversight activities are completed timely and effectively, safeguard federal funds, identify and address program deficiencies, ensure compliance with CACFP requirements, and maintain the overall integrity and effectiveness of the CACFP.

III. ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW REQUIREMENTS

The Contractor shall perform up to 225 Administrative Reviews of Institutions participating in CACFP. Reviews shall be conducted in accordance with 7 CFR Part 226.6, and applicable USDA policy and guidance. The Contractor shall utilize its own review forms and tools, which shall address all applicable federal review requirements. Institution and Facility Reviews, including a meal observation, must be conducted onsite. Review of claim-month records may be conducted by desk review prior to the onsite review and exit conference, as directed by the Division and permitted by USDA policy.

The Contractor shall conduct unannounced facility reviews as directed by the Division and in accordance with 7 CFR § 226.6. At least 15 percent of the total number of facility reviews required under the contract shall be conducted unannounced.

As part of each Sponsoring Organization review, the Contractor shall conduct statistical monitoring of 10% of the Sponsoring Organization's facilities located at different addresses. The review shall include verification of claim-month records for eligibility, attendance, and meal counts for the selected facilities. All other required Program compliance records shall be reviewed at 100% of the required records maintained. Required meal observations shall also be conducted at the facilities selected for the 10% statistical monitoring. If noncompliance is identified, the Contractor shall notify the Division, which will determine whether the scope of the statistical monitoring should be expanded.

Example: A Sponsoring Organization with 12 facilities would have a 10% sample of 1.2 facilities, which would be rounded up to 2 Facility Reviews.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW ACTIVITIES

For each Administrative Review, the Contractor shall, as applicable:

- Review claims for accuracy and supporting documentation.
- Review income eligibility and free/reduced-price meal documentation when applicable.
- Review training, monitoring, civil rights, recordkeeping, and Program management records.
- Evaluate compliance with CACFP meal pattern components and quantity requirements by participant age.
- Review milk purchases and complete a milk audit to verify that the correct type and portion size of milk were purchased, as well as review dated menus, meal counts, attendance records, and other meal service documentation.
- Determine creditable and non-creditable meal components.
- Review procurement practices and applicable Federal procurement thresholds.
- Review institution eligibility, nonprofit or for-profit status, and other participation requirements.
- Review Financial Viability, Program Capability, and Organizational Accountability as required by the CACFP Performance Standards for the Administrative Review.
- Review Food Service Contracts and Delivery Slip documentation requirements, if vended.
- Conduct entrance and exit conferences.
- Identify Program deficiencies and serious deficiencies.
- Assess fiscal action/overclaim amounts when applicable and in accordance with Division procedures.
- Prepare and issue findings letters, reports, technical assistance summaries, corrective action requirements, and closeout documentation.
- Review corrective action plans and supporting documentation and follow up on inadequate or missing corrective action.
- Identify and document potential serious deficiencies and notify the Division within 24 hours of identification for Division review and determination.
- Provide expert/witness testimony when required in connection with an appeal arising from a review performed under the contract.

V. QUESTIONED COSTS AND FINANCIAL FINDINGS

The Contractor shall identify and quantify questioned costs, including unallowable, unsupported, unreasonable, unnecessary, misallocated, duplicate, improperly charged, incorrectly reported, or potential overpayment amounts. Each questioned cost shall include supporting documentation and calculations sufficient for the Division to independently verify the amount.

The Contractor shall not make final determinations regarding recovery of funds, serious deficiency status, termination, disqualification, or other enforcement action. Such determinations shall remain with the Division.

VI. REVIEW COORDINATION AND OVERSIGHT

The Contractor shall coordinate document requests, interviews, review schedules, findings, corrective action, fiscal action, and closeout so that the Institution receives a consistent review process.

When financial findings arise during an Administrative Review, the Contractor shall promptly notify the Division and incorporate the applicable information into the appropriate review documentation.

VII. COMMUNICATION WITH INSTITUTIONS

The solicitation includes the complete list of Institutions and Administrative Reviews to be performed under this project. The Division will provide the Contractor(s), upon award, with a complete list of Institutions assigned for review under the contract, along with available contact information. Substitution by the Division after award of institutions and/or facilities listed on the review list may be needed, if an Institution listed is found to be no longer operating CACFP when contract commences. Substituted reviews should be of a similar size and type.

The Contractor(s) shall send the Division-approved initial notification letter by email to all Institution Responsible Principals within five business days of receiving the assignment.

Following initial notification, the Contractor shall conduct communications with the Institution relating to the assigned review, while keeping the Division informed of significant issues, delays, serious deficiencies, fiscal concerns, and other matters requiring State Agency attention.

The Contractor will be given third party view only access, including individual log in credentials to the NJDA CACFP CARES system to view application and claim records required to complete each review. State of New Jersey Information Technology Security Requirement documentation will be completed by the Contractor after award of contract.

The Contractor shall provide findings, corrective action requirements, technical assistance, follow-up communications, and closeout notices to each reviewed institution.

VIII. DOCUMENT COLLECTION AND RECORDS

The Contractor shall collect only documentation pertinent to the assigned review and shall provide all review documentation to the Division.

Administrative Review documentation shall include, as applicable:

- Initial Appointment letter
- Copies of email correspondence
- Completed Administrative and Facility Review forms.
- Supporting documentation collected from the Institution.
- Findings and serious deficiency letters and reports.
- Technical assistance summaries.
- Fiscal action/overclaim calculations.
- Corrective action plans and supporting documentation.
- Review closeout letter.

IX. TIMELINES AND PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

- The Contractor shall prioritize completion of fieldwork (including the issuance of findings to each institution) for assigned Administrative Reviews prior to September 30. Reviews may be finalized and closed after September 30, including completion of documentation, corrective action review, fiscal action, and other required follow-up activities.
- Administrative Review notification letters shall be sent within five business days of assignment.
- Administrative Reviews shall be completed and closed within the timeframe established by the Division, generally within 45 days of implementation unless corrective or fiscal action, Institution non-response, or other circumstances require additional time.
- Seriously deficient findings and significant financial concerns shall be reported to the Division within 24 hours of identification.
- Review reports and supporting documentation shall be submitted within the timeframe established by the Division.
- Delays caused by an Institution or Sponsor shall be promptly reported to the Division.

X. MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS

The Contractor shall answer whether it will comply with each mandatory specification. Where an explanation is requested, the Contractor shall describe how it will comply. Proposals shall identify all deviations.

- Complete CACFP Administrative Reviews and applicable Facility Reviews onsite, with desk review permitted only for the administrative review portion of claim-month records, as directed by the Division and permitted by USDA.
- Follow current USDA CACFP regulations, policy memoranda, FNS guidance, and NJDA policies.
- Notify the Division of seriously deficient findings and significant financial concerns within 24 hours.
- Provide bi-weekly status reports in the format established by the Division.
- Provide complete review documentation and supporting workpapers to the Division.
- Maintain sufficient staffing to meet deadlines.
- Provide follow-up and corrective action review until the Institution has fully corrected identified deficiencies.
- Maintain confidentiality and comply with NJDA data security requirements.

XI. STAFFING AND KEY PERSONNEL

The Contractor shall appoint a Contractor Representative responsible for day-to-day operations and communication with the Division. The Contractor shall provide sufficient qualified personnel to complete Administrative Reviews.

Key personnel shall be knowledgeable in CACFP requirements and shall respond to Division inquiries within two business days. Key personnel must be specifically assigned to the State Agency for performance of the contract.

The Contractor shall identify personnel for Administrative Review functions and explain the qualifications of each.

The Contractor and key personnel shall demonstrate, as applicable, at least five years of professional experience in CACFP monitoring, accounting, auditing, Federal grants, or related fields. Experience conducting State-level CACFP Administrative Reviews is strongly preferred. Experience with New Jersey CACFP review procedures or a similarly sized State Agency is preferred.

Reviewers shall demonstrate knowledge of:

- 7 CFR Part 226 and CACFP Performance Standards.
- Meal pattern and nutrition requirements.
- Financial viability and financial management, including FNS Instruction 796-2, rev. 4.
- Federal procurement requirements and 2 CFR Part 200, as applicable.
- Eligibility and participation requirements.
- Serious deficiency procedures.
- Fiscal action and overclaim requirements.
- Nonprofit and for-profit institution requirements.

XII. CONTRACTOR PROPOSAL – TECHNICAL RESPONSE

Proposals shall address the Contractor's ability to perform Administrative Review services. At a minimum, the Contractor shall describe:

- Experience conducting State-level CACFP Administrative Reviews.
- Approach to identifying and calculating allowable costs.
- Approach to evaluating financial internal controls and financial viability.
- Approach to reviewing CACFP meal patterns, claims, eligibility, training, monitoring, procurement, civil rights and facility operations.
- Approach to corrective action, fiscal action calculation, follow-up, and closeout.
- Approach to identifying and reporting serious deficiencies.
- Ability to provide expert/witness testimony in appeals arising from review work.
- Training and qualifications of each reviewer.
- Quality assurance procedures for review workpapers, findings, calculations, and reports.

XIII. IMPLEMENTATION

The Contractor shall provide an implementation plan including weekly milestones, staffing, training, review assignments, document transfer, communication procedures, and quality assurance. The Contractor shall identify any third parties involved in implementation.

XIV. DELIVERABLES

- Approved project/implementation plan.
- Bi-weekly Administrative Review status reports.
- For each institution - completed Administrative Review forms, Facility Review forms, supporting documentation, findings letters, technical assistance summaries, fiscal action calculations, corrective action documentation, and closeout letters. All documentation will be supplied in a mutually agreed upon electronic format.

- Corrective action and follow-up reports.

XV. PROJECT MANAGEMENT

The Contractor shall submit a project plan addressing personnel, management processes, tasks, timelines, resources, communication, quality assurance, reporting, and issue resolution. Within 10 calendar days of the effective date, the Contractor shall submit an updated plan for State Contract Manager approval.

The Contractor shall attend a kickoff meeting, weekly or twice-monthly status meetings as directed, and a closeout meeting. The Division may require additional meetings.

The Contractor shall submit bi-weekly tracking reports showing assigned reviews, contacts, review dates, exit conferences, findings, corrective action follow-up, fiscal action and closeout.

XVI. INVOICING AND PRICING

The Contractor shall submit monthly invoices consistent with the tracking report. The invoice shall identify the services performed, personnel or review type, deliverables completed, and applicable rates. The Contractor may bill a specified percentage of the review rate, as agreed upon with the Division, upon completion of the field review. The remaining percentage may be invoiced upon completion and Division acceptance of all required review documentation, findings, corrective action documentation, fiscal action calculations, and other applicable deliverables.

XVII. APPEALS AND TESTIMONY

Contract reviewers shall provide expert/witness testimony when necessary regarding appeals, litigation, or other proceedings resulting from Administrative Review work performed under the contract. This obligation may continue after expiration of the contract for reviews conducted during the contract term.

XVIII. QUALITY ASSURANCE

The Contractor shall maintain supervisory quality control over all review work. Workpapers, findings, fiscal calculations, questioned costs, and reports shall be reviewed for accuracy and completeness before providing them to each reviewed institution, and before submission to the Division.

The Division will review a sample of completed reviews and may return incomplete or erroneous review documentation for correction. Final payment for a review may be withheld until required documentation, corrective action, fiscal findings, and closeout materials are complete and acceptable to the Division.

XIX. CONTRACTOR EXPERIENCE

- Number of years in business.

- Number of years providing Administrative Review services.
- Experience with USDA Child Nutrition Programs and CACFP.
- Experience with State Agency monitoring.
- Experience with Federal grant financial management and 7 CFR Part 226.
- List of comparable contracts performed for governmental entities or other organizations.
- List of prior contract withdrawals or removal by a State Agency, with written explanation.

XX. LITIGATION, SUSPENSION, TERMINATION AND DEBARMENT

The Contractor shall disclose contract terminations, damages or penalties, litigation, administrative or regulatory proceedings, irregularities discovered in accounts maintained for others, and any order or judgment limiting the Contractor's right to conduct business. The Contractor shall provide documentation showing that the Contractor and applicable key personnel are not excluded, suspended, or debarred from State or Federal assistance programs.

XXI. CRIMINAL HISTORY AND BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION

The Contractor shall provide required documentation demonstrating that officers, directors, shareholders, partners, managerial/supervisory personnel, and key personnel involved in performance of the contract have completed required criminal history and/or background investigations.

XXII. REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

The Contractor shall provide an organizational chart identifying all assigned personnel by name and title and all subcontractors. Any subcontractor must be fully disclosed, including legal name, address, services, relationship to Contractor, prior working relationship, and specific contract activities to be performed.

In addition, the Contractor shall provide copies of USDA-compliant review forms that will be used to conduct the Administrative Reviews, including required Facility Reviews.

XXIII. DATA MANAGEMENT AND SECURITY

All data, technical information, materials, records, reports, workpapers, and other information gathered, developed, prepared, used, or obtained under this RFP shall remain the property of the State Agency.

- NJDA data shall only be exchanged as authorized by the State Agency and through secure means.
- Personally identifiable and confidential information shall be encrypted during transmission.
- State data shall be stored and processed only through systems approved by the State Contract Manager.
- State data shall not be stored or transferred outside the United States.
- State data shall be used solely for purposes of the contract.

- Unauthorized release or data breach shall be reported to the State Contract Manager within 24 hours.
- Upon expiration or termination, the Contractor shall return State data in a usable format and securely maintain Contractor copies as directed by the State, for three years beginning with the current contract year.

XXIV. EVALUATION PROCESS

If all mandatory requirements are met, proposals may be evaluated using the following criteria:

Evaluation Category	Points
Contractor experience with CACFP Administrative Reviews	20
Ability to maximize the number of fieldwork reviews completed prior to September 30	20
Quality of Contractor's Administrative Review forms	10
Technical approach to CACFP Administrative and Facility Reviews	15
Qualifications and experience of proposed key personnel	10
Combined review methodology, quality assurance, and corrective action	10
Price proposal	15
TOTAL	100

The State Agency reserves the right to reject any or all proposals when it is in the State's best interest to do so.

XXV. CONTRACT AWARD

A contract shall not be awarded until all required State approvals are obtained. No work may begin until a Purchase Order is issued. The Contractor shall submit all required compliance forms for applicable State procurement, waiver, and DPA transactions. All required forms may be found on Department of Treasury's website https://www.nj.gov/treasury/purchase/forms.shtml

XXVI. TERMINATION

The State Agency may terminate the contract in accordance with applicable State procurement requirements and the terms of the executed contract. If submitted work is not in accordance with the specifications or requirements of the contract, the State Agency may require correction and may take other action permitted under the contract.

XXVII. ANTI-DISCRIMINATION AND CIVIL RIGHTS

All parties to the contract shall comply with applicable Federal and State civil rights and nondiscrimination requirements, including USDA requirements applicable to federally assisted programs.

XXVIII. FINAL AUTHORITY

The Division shall retain final authority for interpretation and application of CACFP requirements, determination of findings, determination of questioned costs and recoveries, serious deficiency determinations, fiscal action, corrective action requirements, and administrative or enforcement action. The Contractor's role is to provide independent, objective, accurate, and well-documented Administrative Review services.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment A – Pricing Schedule
- Attachment B - NJDA CACFP Administrative Review List