

**QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS (COMPLETE LIST)**  
**RELEASE No. 2 of 2 - DATED: JUNE 1, 2023**

**RFI No.:** DCRB-2023-RFI-0100

**Caption:** Implementation of a Benefits Administration Pension System for the District of Columbia Teachers, Police Officers, and Firefighters' Retirement Plans

**Issue Date:** May 3, 2023

**Closing Date:** June 19, 2023, at 2:00 p.m. (EST)

**Question 1:**

Please clarify if DCRB is considering Solution-as-a-Service (SaaS) solutions that are fully hosted in the public cloud, such as Amazon Web Service (AWS) or Google Cloud Platform (GCP).

**Response 1:**

DCRB data contains confidential and sensitive information that categorizes the system being implemented as "Moderate" under the Federal Information Security Modernization Act (FISMA) guidelines. Your solution must meet or exceed the requirements to protect such information in the cloud and mitigate the security risks in addition to being in compliance with National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) system controls as described in 800-53 revision 5 manual.

**Question 2:**

Please provide additional background information on why DCRB desires to implement a pension system using a phased approach rather than an all-encompassing one. What is driving the multiple phases? Does DCRB have a vision for what functionality is to be implemented in each phase?

**Response 2:**

We administer pension benefits for multiple employers with various retirement plan designs. Because of the complexity of each plan, we believe that a phased in implementation will be less disruptive to our business operations.

**Question 3:**

In review of Page 8 of the RFI, Section III, Submission of Responses, the response must be limited to twenty (20) pages that when printed will fit on an 8/12 x 11 sheet and must include, etc. Additionally, and under Section III, 1. General vendor information, subsection e, Company brochures/literature, if available, I have the following question. Are Company brochures/literature, inclusive in the twenty-page limitation, or in addition to the twenty-page response?

**Response 3:**

Company brochures/literature are inclusive in the twenty-page limitation, and NOT in addition to the twenty-page response?

**Question 4:**

Can you please elaborate on how members are currently receiving retirement “counseling”? Most of our clients prefer to log in to our software and perform calculations with our retirement planning tool. Are you envisioning in-person counseling, in what location would this counseling take place? Are you also envisioning a call center?

**Response 4:**

Retirement “counseling” is currently performed by the active employment agencies for members inquiring about retirement benefits or process of retiring from the departments. DCRB currently provides online calculators for members to self-estimate their annuity at dates they input themselves. We do not envision the contractor would perform any counseling or operating a call center.

**Question 5:**

The RFI mentions “provide and maintain Health insurance Plans”. Are you foreseeing the maintenance of a comprehensive benefits database which possesses all the critical information on all the benefit programs offered by the District?

**Response 5:**

DCRB expects the system to be able to correctly deduct health and life insurance premiums for retirement annuities. The plan sponsor (annual rates and surrounding policies) are not the responsibilities of DCRB. The sponsors of the OPEB offering are both the District (DCHR) and Federal Government (OPM). The contractor in this case must develop a system that can accommodate member changes through self-service portals and allow for health and life rules to be incorporated in the system.

**Question 6:**

We are trying to understand the primary impetus for the DC retirement board moving away from your internally developed system (STAR), can you please provide the main factors driving this change?

**Response 6:**

The STAR system is not an integrated or user-friendly pension administration system. (it is more alone calculation system, not the full administration of a pension plan). It was built using the Oracle PeopleSoft hiring module in order for payment to be processed by the U.S. Treasury. This “system” is not integrated with employer data, a very manual system, does not have the full library of services (integration of CRM, records mgt, case workflow management, self-service compliance function, refunds, deferred retirement and communication functions). Finally, any changes to the system are both lengthy and costly.

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**Question 7:**

Who is the current payroll vendor and how is that information integrated with the STAR system?

**Response 7:**

The current payroll vendor is the U.S. Treasury, bureau of Fiscal services. Both STAR and Fiscal Services are part of U.S. Treasury, but a separate payroll system is utilized independent STAR.

**Question 8:**

How does STAR currently perform tax withholdings?

**Response 8:**

STAR currently performs tax withholdings for Federal, State of MD, State VA, and Washington DC only. A new system should allow for tax withholding from all the US and territories. Included future administration would be the ability for members to submit proper tax documentation and complete tax withholding changes online.

**Question 9:**

The RFI mentions demonstrations to be held following the RFI for further discussions, do you have an estimated timeframe for when those are likely to be held? On a similar note, do you have any target timeframe for when a potential solicitation might follow the RFI period or is any next step going to depend more on the vendor discussions and RFI response information?

**Response 9:**

The agency will review the responses upon receipt. Should the agency feel necessary to request product demonstration and discussion after the review of the response, we shall conduct these meetings during July and August. Currently, we do not have a timeframe for a potential solicitation, and it depends on the RFI response information we receive.

**Question 10:**

Plans: Except for Judges, the plans seem closed to new members. Is the plan frozen for those still active, or is service still accruing for them? Please confirm.

**Response 10:**

There are over 4,800 retirees and survivors receiving or entitled to a benefit under the frozen Police/Fire Plan (funded by the U.S. Department of the Treasury). There are no active employees with 100% District liability, but there are a little over 550 active employees with split benefits.

**Question 11:**

Data: We understand that all of the electronic data in Payroll, Access & Excel will be migrated to the new Pension Administration System (PAS), as well as all of the documents in FileNet. Can you please estimate the number of individuals that have data in FileNet & Microfiche that will be needed going forward to be keyed into the PAS database in electronic format (not just residing in the documents themselves – e.g., keying in historical pay/hours)?

**Response 11:**

DCRB has not yet determined if ALL the data from FileNet and the Microfiche will be migrated. DCRB would like to know if the PAS system can be integrated with the FileNet/Kofax system. Access & Excel data should be migrated and will need to be determined.

**Question 12:**

On page 5, under Case Management, there is a section on Health Insurance and it says to “maintain health insurance”. Can you expand on what is desired here? Is this storing the deductions from monthly annuitant checks for the member’s elected health coverage (derived from another separate process handled by someone else), or do you want the PAS to be able to handle an “annual enrollment” and handle insurance elections, deductions, remit eligibility and payment to carriers?

**Response 12:**

The new PAS system should have the ability to compute deductions based on plan sponsor eligibility and premium rules. Every month, after tax deductions occur and premiums are will be sent to plan sponsor the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and District carriers. Associated reports, logic checks, and plan rules will need to be enforced for health care administration (aged out dependents, reconciliations, out of coverage area, etc.). The system should be planned to have a member portal with the ability to allow life events and annual open enrollments change to be administered by DCRB or plan sponsors. Open enrollment also includes changes in the PAS for new plans, rates, and premium rules developed by the plan sponsor (not DCRB).

**Question 13:**

Besides sending data from DCRB payroll to the PAS bi-weekly, are there any other interfaces needed by your organization with the new PAS?

**Response 13:**

DCRB receives data via the Secure File Transfer Protocol (SFTP) transmissions, Email, and the System to Administer Retirement (STAR) system. The PAS system should be able to receive the same transmissions. DCRB also anticipates bi-directional data exchange with the custodian bank (Northern Trust) and receives data from the three employer organizations.

**Question 14:**

Does DCRP strictly require a single-tenant system, or is a multi-tenant system with logical/secure separation of data acceptable to DCRB?

**Response 14:**

DCRB is considering three platforms which are a single-tenant system, a hybrid platform, and DCRB will consider a multi-tenant with logical/secure separation; the solution in place must show that the National Institute of Standards (NIST) controls can be implemented to provide data protection.

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