



REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

2024-185-01

SNAP & FIP ELIAS Integration RFI

Notice to Vendors

Responses Due: April 26, 2024, 4:00 p.m. CST

NOTE: This Request for Information is managed by the State of Iowa Department of Management, Division of IT on behalf of the Department of Health and Human Services.

SECTION 1 -- OVERVIEW

1.1 Purpose

SF 494 requires the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (HHS, “Agency”) to do the following no later than July 1, 2025:

1. Receive all applications for initial public assistance program benefits and determinations of ongoing recipient eligibility through an electronic system.
2. Electronically obtain and receive financial and non-financial eligibility data of every member of the applicant’s household utilizing federal, state, and miscellaneous resources prior to determining eligibility.

The Agency wants a single-entry, streamlined, eligibility system that is developed through integration or development of new interfaces that will integrate additional Agency benefit programs into the current eligibility system. The Agency will leverage new technology for automation and higher program integrity which will modernize the eligibility system and make the Agency’s assistance programs more efficient.

ELIAS Integration

Iowa Medicaid currently utilizes a customized off-the-shelf (COTS) product for eligibility determinations the Agency has named ELIAS. ELIAS is currently maintained by Accenture.

The Agency is seeking information about adding eligibility programs, such as SNAP and FIP to ELIAS or building a new solution for these programs that will interface with ELIAS.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Iowa’s cash assistance program, Family Investment Program (FIP)

Presently, the self-service portal has the integrated eligibility application available and there is base functionality in the worker benefit calculation system that already exists within ELIAS to allow for SNAP and FIP utilization. This functionality has not been activated. Whichever proposed solution is utilized, the integration must meet the requirements of USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) and Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).

Due to requirements established in SF494, the Agency has a need to add the SNAP and FIP programs and find a vendor to work closely with the Agency. Federal partners, and other ELIAS related vendors (all referred to as the ELIAS Team) will need to either (1) enable the out-of-the-box programs or (2) enable a new solution as well as design the Iowa specific functionality for those programs. Some of this functionality would include, but is not limited to, rules updates, notice of action creation, and new interfaces to SNAP, FIP, and Medicaid specific sources. The Agency also expects there to be one public facing interface for Medicaid, SNAP, and FIP.

The vendor needs to coordinate the SNAP and FIP work into the existing agile work methodology that is currently being used for maintenance and operations on ELIAS. In addition, the vendor will be required to work with the ELIAS Team to incorporate the requirements listed in SF494. The Agency is seeking information about what could be involved with such an endeavor and having this work completed later than July 1, 2025.

1.2 Background Information

Iowa Health and Human Services (HHS, “Agency”) is seeking responses from the vendor community to obtain information about meeting the requirements set forth in [2023 Iowa Acts Senate File 494 \(SF 494\)](#). In this Request for Information (RFI), the Agency is seeking information about the following:

The Agency is seeking information about solutions for integration of additional Agency benefits programs into the Agency’s existing Iowa Medicaid eligibility system called ELIAS (Eligibility Integrated Application Solution). Information sought includes information about solutions that integrate directly with ELIAS and/or information about a new DDI (Design, Development, and Implement) solution that interfaces with ELIAS. Benefits programs to include in the integration/interface are: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Iowa’s cash assistance program, Family Investment Program (FIP), funded by Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).

The Agency is aware that not all vendors may be able to address all questions. Respondents to this RFI need only to provide information to those questions that pertain to the area of expertise that they hold. RFI responses should consider the Agency guiding principles:

- Data Driven: Use evidence-based decisions to drive quality improved results.
- Accountability: Use public resources responsibly to improve the programs and services provided.
- Integrity: Generate trust through honest, respectful, and reliable work.
- Equity: Actively identify and remove barriers for program access.
- Communication: Communicate in a thoughtful, intentional, and coordinated way.
- Collaboration: Facilitate meaningful partnerships that focus on the individuals and communities that we serve.

1.3 Response Instructions

The Agency requests that responses adhere to the following instructions:

1.3.1 RFI responses should address the questions listed in Section 2 of this RFI.

Respondents may reference user manuals or web pages as long as an electronic copy or weblink is provided and no sign-on or registration is required to access the referenced materials.

1.3.2 Communication and responses shall be submitted **via email** to the Issuing Officer listed in Section 1.4 below.

- 1.3.3 Respondents shall provide a signed transmittal letter on company letterhead that includes the company and the main contact's information such as name, title, telephone, and email.
- 1.3.4 Responses shall include budgetary costs with general price ranges in their cost information, where applicable, to be used for reference only. No formal quotations shall be received or awarded in the RFI process.
- 1.3.5 The agency expects respondents to provide demonstrations of the system. Please expect to keep demonstrations to under 30 minutes.

Any references to cost in the attachments or following sections are intended to be requests for an informal estimate of costs.

1.4 Communication

For information regarding this notice and throughout this process, interested vendors shall contact only the issuing officer below.

Mike Nolan
Department of Management, Division of IT
200 E. Grand Ave., Ste. 200
Des Moines, IA 50309
515-954-5458
mike.nolan@iowa.gov

1.5 Requests for Information Responses

Responses to this RFI must be received no later than 4:00 p.m., Central Standard Time, on April 26, 2024, by the issuing officer at the email account listed in Section 1.4 above.

1.6 Right to Duplicate

Respondent agrees that the Agency may duplicate its response information for the purpose of facilitating the review or to respond to requests for public records. The Respondent consents to such duplication by submitting a response and warrants that such duplication will not violate the rights of any third party. The Agency will have the right to use ideas (or adaptations of ideas) presented in the response in development of a future procurement.

1.7 Review of RFI Responses

Responses to this RFI will be reviewed by Agency staff.

1.8 Gratuities

The laws of Iowa provide that it is a felony to offer, promise, or give anything of value or benefit to a state employee with the intent to influence that employee's acts, opinion, judgment, or exercise of discretion with respect to that employee's duties. Evidence of violation of this statute will be turned over to the proper prosecuting attorney.

1.9 Costs to Vendors

The costs of preparation and delivery of the response to this RFI are the Respondent's

sole responsibility.

1.10 Response Property of the State

All responses become the property of the State of Iowa and shall not be returned to the Respondent. At the conclusion of the project, the content of the responses will be placed in the public domain and open to inspection by interested parties. Do not include confidential or proprietary information as part of your RFI submission.

1.11 Source of Information Used in Addition to Responses

The Agency reserves the right to contact vendors after the submission of responses for the purpose of clarification and to ensure mutual understanding. Such contact does not obligate the State to any future commitment with vendors.

1.12 State's Obligations

Issuance of this RFI in no way constitutes a commitment by the State to award any contract(s) or conduct business with any Respondent.

1.13 Public Records and Requests for Confidentiality

The release of information by the Agency to the public is subject to Iowa Code Chapter 22 and other applicable provisions of law relating to the release of records in the possession of a State agency. Respondents are encouraged to familiarize themselves with these provisions prior to submitting a response. All information submitted by a Respondent may be treated as public information by the Purchasing Division unless the Respondent properly requests that information be treated as confidential at the time of submitting. If a request is received by the state to view information identified as confidential by a Respondent, the Agency shall notify the Respondent of the request. It shall be the Respondent's sole responsibility to defend the claim of confidentiality in an appropriate legal venue. The Agency will withhold release of the subject information until the matter is settled.

Any requests for confidential treatment of information must be included in a cover letter with the Respondent's submittal and must enumerate the specific grounds in Iowa Code Chapter 22 or other legal reasons which support treatment of the material as confidential and must indicate why disclosure is not in the best interests of the public. The request must also include the name, address and telephone number of the person authorized by the Respondent to respond to any inquiries concerning the confidential status of the materials.

Any documents submitted which contain confidential information must be marked on the outside as containing confidential information, and each page upon which confidential information appears must be marked as containing confidential information. The confidential information must be clearly identifiable to the reader wherever it appears.

All copies of the submission, as well as the original, must be marked in this manner. In addition to marking the material as confidential material where it appears, the

Respondent must submit one copy of the RFI information from which the confidential information has been excised. The confidential material must be excised in such a way as to allow the public to determine the general nature of the material removed and to retain as much of the document as possible. These pages must be submitted with the cover letter and will be made available for public inspection.

The Respondent's failure to request in the RFI confidential treatment of material pursuant to this Section and the relevant laws and administrative rules will be deemed by the Agency as a waiver of any right to confidentiality which the Respondent may have had.

SECTION 2 -- RFI RESPONSES

2.1 Vendor Information

2.1.1 Provide the name and principal place of your business.

2.1.2 Provide the name, address, email address, and telephone number of the vendor representative to contact regarding all matters concerning this RFI.

2.2 System Description Questions

2.2.1. What processes, resources, and timelines are required to successfully integrate with SNAP, FIP, and other benefit programs into or with the existing ELIAS Medicaid eligibility system within the parameters outlined below?:

- a. Meets FNS and TANF program requirements;
- b. Meets state reporting requirements;
- c. Is fully automated;
- d. Processes data in real time or near real time;
- e. Timeframe includes but is not limited to start up, development, testing, implementation, and rollout timeframes.

2.2.2. What is the feasibility of integrating additional benefits, such as WIC, into the recommended solution and what resources would it require?

2.2.3. What are the recommended team structure and associated resources needed for integration of SNAP, FIP, and other benefit programs into or with the existing ELIAS Medicaid eligibility system?

2.2.4. What does the vendor need from HHS in order to successfully integrate FIP and SNAP programs into or with the existing system?

2.2.5. What are the "cost drivers" that affect State Agencies when integrating eligibility programs into or with a single-entry eligibility system?

2.2.6. What are the pricing methodologies that work best for integrating new functionality into or with an existing COTS eligibility system?

2.2.7. What are key priorities for successfully implementing this integration on a short timeline?

- 2.2.8. What is necessary to have FHIR APIs understanding, implementation, and maintenance?
- 2.2.9. What is needed to have a strong interoperability feature set that can receive data from sources like the State HIE?
- 2.2.10. What is needed to deliver a solution that is prepared to receive SDOH data by way of the questions in sections 2.2.7 and 2.2.8 above to include food insecurity in the future?

2.3 Security Breaches

2.5.1 Describe your system's security.

2.5.2 Describe your incident response procedure in the event of a security breach.

2.4 Customer Support

Describe customer support services available for the system.

2.5 Costs

Describe costs for services and payment structure, including any up-front, one-time costs, implementation costs, and recurring maintenance and support costs. If there are additional modules/functions available from Respondent's solution that Respondent believes would be beneficial to the Agency please provide them in your submission.