

Request for Proposal (RFP) of Professional Services to Identify the Administration of Socio-Economic Development of the Family's (ADSEF) Technology Needs to Transition Puerto Rico from the Nutrition Assistance Program (NAP) to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

BACKGROUND

Puerto Rico's most needed population has been receiving federal food nutrition assistance benefits from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), through the Food Stamps Program (FSP), currently known as the Supplementary Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) since 1974.

In an effort to control the Island's FSP escalating costs, the U.S. Congress legislated to replace Puerto Rico's participation with a block grant in 1982 allowing Puerto Rico to design and implement its own Nutrition Assistance Program (NAP) (known by its Spanish acronym PAN).

Different from the other 53 US states and jurisdictions, PAN is funded primarily through a block grant which covers the benefit costs, plus fifty percent (50%) of the agency's administrative costs. Since 1982 the PAN has been subject to temporary benefit increases, due to natural disasters, federal economic incentives and lately by the CARES and Family relief funds.

Besides these temporary benefit upsurges, NAP participants are at a disadvantage in comparison to the rest of the Nation's SNAP participants. A one person NAP household receives \$112.00 basic monthly benefit, while a one person SNAP household receives \$128.00 an average per month in nutrition assistance benefits.

The Department of the Family, in collaboration with external resources provided by the Food Coalition, and others, have been petitioning the Food and Nutrition Services Administration (FNS) and the US Congress to make justice for Puerto Rico's PAN participants by rivaling their benefits with the rest of the Nation's by transitioning to the SNAP benefits system.

To prepare Puerto Rico's administrative government entity, the "Administración para el Desarrollo Socioeconómico de la Familia" (ADSEF) for the NAP to SNAP transition, the agency is required to make significant program and administrative changes. These improvements and/or updates are basically related to program participants' certification and re-certification processes, casework, system data collection and management, among others.

Consequently, the US Congress approved the *Further Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2020 (Public Law 116-94)*, which provides additional funds for the Government of Puerto Rico to develop a study to identify the program's technology needs to successfully transition from the Nutrition Assistance Program (NAP, known in PR as PAN because of its Spanish acronym) to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

ADSEF's Information Technology systems may need to be replaced and/or modified due to the program's financial accounting and other reporting requirements. In addition, since SNAP's eligibility requirements differ from NAP, Puerto Rico would need to update its entire casemanagement system to conform to the new requirements and enable the EBT cards to be redeemable in all U.S. States.

PURPOSE

To identify gaps in the Government of Puerto Rico's current NAP technology solution, including infrastructure, business flow, capacity, case management, and accessibility that would require system replacement or modification to transition to the SNAP.

ELIGIBLE ENTITIES

1. Information Technology individuals, companies or corporations registered to do official businesses in Puerto Rico.
2. Information Technology individuals, companies, or corporations with previous experience in government Information Technology services
3. Individuals, companies, or corporations with experience assessing NAP and SNAP benefit and reporting systems and EBT systems and providing comprehensive reports of the studies.
4. Previous experience SNAP benefit delivery systems.
5. To be registered in PR General Services Administration (GSA) portal before the signing the contract.

AWARD INFORMATION

The Further Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2020 (Public Law 116-94), provides funds for the Government of Puerto Rico to develop a study to identify the technology needs to successfully transition from the Nutrition Assistance Program (NAP) to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

Funding available: Up to **\$2,000,000.00**
Grant awarded through RFP competitive process.
No cost sharing or matching required.
Anticipated number of awards: 1

KEY DATES

1. Application due: June 8, 2021 by 4:30 PM
2. Grant award announced: by June 22, 2021.

FUNDING PRIORITIES

1. ADSEF will be funding one proposal to identify the technology gaps and solutions required to replace or modify the agency's system in order to transition from NAP to SNAP.
2. The proposal should include analysis, technology alternatives, and a proposed system development approach. The study shall identify ADSEF, Department of the Family's technology needs to successfully transition from the Nutrition Assistance Program (NAP) to the SNAP. It is intended to identify gaps in the Commonwealth's current technology solution, including infrastructure, business flow, capacity, and accessibility that would require system replacement or modification to transition to the SNAP. The study should result in a plan that includes requirements analysis, technology alternatives, a proposed system development approach and schedule that would transition NAP to SNAP. The study shall also include a schedule for completing the replacement or modification of the system.
3. The commonwealth should include an Expected delivery date for completed assessment.

REVIEW CRITERIA

1. Organizational Experience with the PR Department of the Family, ADSEF, or a state or federal government agency evaluating comprehensive and complicated NAP and SNAP information and technology services and systems. (20 pts)
2. Staff Capability and Management to conduct a study of current technology solutions, including infrastructure, business flow, capacity, and accessibility

(10 pts)

3. Experience working with EBT systems, the NAP, and SNAP benefits programs. (25 pts).
4. Time table and schedule for completing the Study by xx.xx.xxxx (15 pts)
5. Methodology to conduct the study and develop comprehensive report (20 pts)
6. Budget (appropriateness and Economic Efficiency) (10 pts)

RFP REQUIREMENTS

The applicant shall include the following information as part of the proposal:

1. Abstract
 - a. RFP Title
 - b. Applicant/Company Name
 - c. EIN
 - d. Address
 - e. Point of Contact Telephone
 - f. Point of Contact Email Address
 - g. Specify any current contracts with the Department of the Family or any other Commonwealth? government agency.
2. Description of Methodology
 - a. Detail the methodology to be used to conduct the study to identify ADSEF, Department of the Family's technology needs to successfully transition from the NAP to the SNAP and provide a comprehensive report.
 - b. Detail the methodology to identify gaps in the Commonwealth's current technology solution, including infrastructure, business flow, capacity, and accessibility that would require system replacement or modification to transition to the SNAP and include in a comprehensive report.
 - c. The plan should include the conduct of a requirements analysis, and identification of technology alternatives and a proposed system development approach and schedule that would transition NAP to SNAP. The study shall also include a schedule for completing the replacement or modification of the system.
 - d. Detail the methodology to be used to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the current NAP benefit and reporting system in contrast to the technology requirements for a SNAP benefit and reporting system to endure the following requirements are met:
 - i. The SNAP Puerto Rico eligibility system must be capable of determining SNAP eligibility and benefits, interfacing with an EBT system, and producing standard and ad hoc reports. Specifically, the contractor will need to assess what is needed for Puerto Rico to:
 1. Have a method for storing information reported during a household's certification period that complies with SNAP's reporting requirements;
 2. Capture and store information in terms of financial (income, deductions, and resource eligibility);
 3. Capture and store the data to determine eligibility and calculate benefits, such as storing verifications from data matches, client submitted information, as well as interview notes;
 4. Capture and store information on non-financial eligibility, work registration, E&T information; track ABAWD time frames; maintain information on sanctions and overpayments and claims collection, etc.;
 5. Establish a paper/electronic SNAP application and recertification application, all applicable notices (e.g. reporting forms and eligibility notices), ; develop any client interfacing technologies (e.g. portals) and establish back-end integration of any portals with the eligibility system;
 6. Perform annual adjustments to the maximum benefit levels, standard deductions, excess shelter deduction cap, and income limits;
 7. Produce and maintain a monthly issuance Masterfile;
 8. Conduct quality control (QC) sampling and reviews;
 9. Support EBT interfaces; and
 10. Match against required databases.

- e. Detail the methodology to be used to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the current NAP Electronic Benefits System (EBT) and how a SNAP EBT System would need to meet the issuance and redemption of SNAP benefits under USDA regulations. The contractor should provide an assessment on how Puerto Rico would need to develop and maintain an issuance and accountability system that meets the following regulatory requirements:
 - i. Create EBT accounts for new cases;
 - ii. Issue benefits accurately and timely
 - iii. Reconcile transactions accurately and timely;
 - iv. Allow adjustments, storing, and expunging of benefits;
 - v. Provide a manual voucher and store and forward system for when system or phone lines are down;
 - vi. Reconcile daily and provide system reports;
 - vii. Issue replacement benefits accurately and timely for active households and have capacity for D-SNAP;
 - viii. Create procedures for issuing replacement of lost or damaged cards;
 - ix. Allow on-demand, free of charge household balance access;
 - x. Meet regulatory requirements for system reliability, availability, and processing speeds;
 - xi. Ensure interoperability and reconciliation of interstate transactions;
 - xii. Securely issue cards and PINs;
 - xiii. Use the FNS REDE file to ensure that only authorized retailers can perform transactions; and Transmit data timely to FNS for AMA, STARS and ALERT;
 - xiv. Perform daily and monthly reconciliation of EBT activity and balances; and
 - xv. Provide required data and reports on EBT required by FNS.

- f. Detail the methodology to be used to assess how Puerto Rico will meet requirements for developing a separate SNAP participation, issuance, cost and administrative reporting processes and systems in parallel with existing NAP processes and systems during the transition from NAP to

SNAP.

- g. Detail the methodology to be used to assess how a Puerto Rico SNAP system would meet requirements with regard to SNAP QC activities to track and measure errors in SNAP eligibility and benefit determination. The SNAP QC system measures the accuracy of eligibility and benefit determinations. Data collected by QC are also used for program improvement and analysis
- h. Detail the methodology to be used to assess how a Puerto Rico SNAP could coordinate with various National Databases. These databases include
 - i. The Death Master File, maintained by the Social Security Administration, provides information on deceased individuals. This verification helps to ensure program integrity by reducing over-issuance for deceased household member
 - ii. The Prisoner Verification System, maintained by the Social Security Administration, provides information on individuals in Federal custody. Like the Death Master File, this verification is designed to ensure only eligible household members receive benefits.
 - iii. The National Directory of New Hires, operated by the Office of Child Support Enforcement (within the Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services), provides information on new hires.
 - iv. The Income and Eligibility Verification System (IEVS) performs data matches against other agency databases to verify certain types of income.
 - v. The Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) program, maintained by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services and enables States to verify the immigration status of applicants.
 - vi. The Electronic Disqualified Recipient System (eDRS), maintained by USDA, provides information on individuals who have been disqualified from receiving SNAP benefits due to an intentional program violation.
- i. Detail the methodology to be used to assess how a Puerto Rico SNAP could meet State Reporting Requirements: State agencies are required to collect and report data on standardized forms through the Food Programs Reporting Systems (FPRS). State agency representatives perform systems checks for accuracy and certify the data as final in FPRS. Current required forms include:
 - i. Monthly Reporting:
 1. State Issuance and Participation (FNS-388)
 2. Issuance Reconciliation Report (FNS-46)
 - ii. Quarterly Reporting:
 1. Recipient Claims Against Household (FNS-209)
 2. Program Activity Statement (FNS-3668)
 3. Administrative Financial Status Report (SF-425/FNS-778/778A)
 4. E&T Participation (FNS-583)
 - iii. Semi-Annual Reporting:
 1. Project Area Issuance and Participation (FNS-388A)
 - iv. Annual Reporting:
 1. Budget Projection Request (FNS-366A)
 2. Project Area Racial Data (FNS-101)
 3. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education and Administrative Reporting System (FNS-759)
 4. Annual report of SNAP-Ed project activities, outcomes, and budget.
 5. E&T Outcome Measures

- j. Detail the methodology to be used to assess how a Puerto Rico SNAP would meet requirements found at: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/apd/fns-handbook-901-training-and-presentations>.
- k. Detail the methodology to be used to assess how a Puerto Rico SNAP would meet all federal requirements for operating a disaster SNAP.


3. Time Table/Schedule for Completing the Study and Submit Plan
 - a. Include proposed time table and comprehensive schedule to complete the Study.
 - b. Describe meeting schedules and staff resources dedicated to the project.
4. Organization and Staff Experience
 - a. Detail any experience working with EBT systems, the Nutrition Assistance Program (NAP) and SNAP benefits programs. Identify specific study team members who have the experience and expertise in each of these areas.
 - b. Detail any organizational experience with the PR Department of the Family, or ADSEF providing information and technology services.
 - c. Describe the Staff's Capability and Management

5. Budget
 - a. Include detailed budget of proposed services. Specify the appropriateness and Economic Efficiency of the proposal.
6. **REQUIRED DELIVERABLES**
 - a. A comprehensive study plan to identify the technology gaps and solutions required to replace or modify the agency's system in order to transition from NAP (PAN) to SNAP.
 - b. A comprehensive report detailing the gaps in the Commonwealth's current technology solution, including infrastructure, business flow, capacity, and accessibility that would require system replacement or modification to transition to the SNAP and include in a comprehensive report.
 - c. A comprehensive requirements analysis for a SNAP.
 - d. Technology alternatives for transitioning from NAP to SNAP.
 - e. A proposed system development approach for transitioning from NAP to SNAP.
 - f. A realistic, comprehensive schedule for transitioning a technology solution from NAP to SNAP.

APPLICATIONS

Proposals must be delivered in person to the following address:
800 Capitol Office Building Ave. Ponce de León
Office of the Administrator of ADSEF 9th Floor
Attention: Mr. Juan Avilés Alicea
(787) 289-7600 Ext.2433




Carmen A. González-Magaz, Psy.D.
Designated Secretary for Departamento de la Familia


Mr. Alberto Fradera Vázquez
ADSEF Administrator