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| **BUREAU OF FISCAL SERVICES**  **Procurement Unit** |  |  |

**Request for Information (RFI) 20-600**

**Modernization of Receivables, Collections, and Dispute Management systems**

The New York State Department of Taxation and Finance (the “Department” or “DTF”) is requesting qualified vendors to supply information which may be used when considering a solution to replace its current legacy systems that are responsible for the accounts receivable, collections, and dispute resolution functions; collectively referred to as the Case and Resource Tracking Systems (CARTS).

This is a request for information only. This RFI is issued solely for information and planning purposes – it does not constitute a Request for Proposals (RFP) or a promise to issue an RFP in the future. Responders are advised that the Department will not pay for any information or administrative costs incurred in responding to this RFI. All costs associated with responding to this RFI will be solely at the responders’ expense. Not responding to this RFI does not preclude participation in any future RFP, if issued.

**Timeline**

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| **Event** | **Date** |
| Issuance of RFI | February 24, 2021 |
| Deadline for Submission of Vendor Questions | March 10, 2021 |
| Department’s Response to Vendor Questions | March 24, 2021 |
| Vendor Response Due | April 7, 2021 |

**RFI Questions and Responses**

Vendors will have one opportunity to submit written questions regarding this RFI. All questions regarding this RFI should be submitted via e-mail (preferred), fax or mail and should be received by the date specified in the timeline. Questions received after this date may not receive a response.

The Department will provide a written response to all questions received by the date specified in the timeline. Responses to vendor questions will be posted on the Department’s procurement website at: <http://www.tax.ny.gov/about/procure/>.

**New York State Department of Taxation and Finance**

The Department of Taxation and Finance (DTF) collects tax revenue and provides associated services in support of New York State government operations. In fulfilling its responsibilities, the Department collects and accounts for $74 billion in State taxes and $40 billion in local taxes; administers 34 State and 12 local taxes, including New York City and City of Yonkers income taxes, as well as the Metropolitan Commuter Transportation Mobility Tax; and processes about 26 million returns, registrations, and associated documents.

**Objective**

The purpose of this Request for Information (RFI) is to identify and obtain information from qualified industry leaders that have the ability, capacity and experience to replace in a timely manner the functionality of the Department’s legacy Case and Resource Tracking Systems. The required transition of functionality corresponds to: Accounts Receivable, Collections Management, and Dispute Management.

The Department’s goal is to implement a cost-effective solution that provides a flexible and reliable platform with user friendly interfaces and enables the Department to expand functionality to meet the changing business and technological needs of the State and its taxpayers. The new system should contain the existing functionality and features of the current legacy systems. Additionally, the system should provide enhancements related to a modernization effort such as the increase of business process automation, improvement of operational efficiencies, and implementation of real-time transaction processing.

A brief description of the systems and the respective functionalities is provided below.

1. **Accounts Receivable system:**

The accounts receivable(AR) system maintains assessment information and includes a billing system for all taxpayer assessments from sources including processing, audit, collections and enforcement. It is responsible for the following business functions and processes:

* assessment creation
* penalty and interest
* billing and notice generation
* associated assessments
* adjusted assessments
* payment processing
* overpayment processing
* offset process
* revenue accounting and reporting

* **Assessment creation:** process that generates taxpayer liability assessments by receiving and processing transactions from various sources. These transactions can be facilitated manually through a user interface or systematically from internal tax processing and audit systems. The system will create a taxpayer assessment account for the tax liability owed. It is also responsible for generating the corresponding taxpayer notice with data received from various systems including taxpayer identification information, penalty and interest calculations, and assessment explanations based on various business rules.
* **Penalty and Interest (P&I):** process that provides the systematic calculation and imposition of penalty and interest on taxpayer liabilities per established table values and business rules. Systematic calculations of interest are also provided on payments, overpayments, or refunds, when required. The function facilitates the recalculation of P& I on taxpayer liabilities utilizing effective date processing and the calculation of P&I from a specified accrual date where users have manually calculated original amounts. It also provides users with the ability to manually calculate P&I based on user supplied information as well to project P&I on liabilities using past, present or future dates.
* **Billing and notice generation:** process that is responsible for the creation of new assessment billing notices at their initial bill stage based on values received from internal DTF systems. It also facilitates the aging of unpaid liabilities through subsequent billing stages and follow-up notices. The billing process will interact with DTF’s internal correspondence program to send the bills to the proper parties using the appropriate delivery method(s). It also facilitates the creation of assessment adjustment and assessment cancellation notices. An interface also exists with the Collections system, where assessments that have aged through billing progression to maturity are sent for inclusion on the collection case.
* **Associated assessments:** process that provides the ability to create responsible person tax liability assessments based on an eligible primary assessment. These transactions can be facilitated manually through a user interface or systematically from internal tax processing and audit systems. The system will create a responsible person assessment account and generate the corresponding taxpayer notice with data received from various systems including taxpayer identification information, penalty and interest calculations, and assessment explanations based on various business rules.
* **Adjusted assessments:** process that provides the ability to change tax liability assessment information, abate the liability balance, or cancel an assessment. These transactions may be facilitated manually through user interfaces or systematically from interfaces with the dispute management or processing systems. When an assessment is adjusted, any penalties, interest, and associated assessments are also updated. This business function will also initiate the proper notice to be sent to the taxpayer, when applicable.
* **Payment Processing:** process that provides the ability to collect and process taxpayer payment, bank adjustment, dishonored payment, and payment transfer transactions. It facilitates the systematic application of these financial transactions to tax liability assessments based on standardized business rules. The process also accounts for the simultaneous posting of payment transactions to associated assessments. It’s also responsible for processing financial transaction files from various sources. Payment transactions are applied using the rules outlined in the Department’s General Payment Application Algorithm, which also outlines rules for refund offsets and overpayments. Transactions may also be applied to specific targets such as a liability period or collection case. The payment process utilizes effective date processing to ensure the accurate distribution of tax, penalty, and interest.
* **Overpayment processing:** process that is responsible for the identification of assessments that are in an overpayment status, either due to an assessment adjustment or excess payments. The process facilitates the holding of identified overpayments for a specified timeframe while funds are applied to internal or external payment targets. After the holding period, any remaining balance is then refunded to the taxpayer. Interfaces exist for the transmission of refund information to an external agency for approval and payment to the taxpayer.
* **Offset Process:** process that creates files consisting of DTF taxpayer liability assessments that meet the criteria for offset. It also includes a process to generate and send taxpayer notifications of the intent to offset against outstanding liabilities. Established holding periods are maintained to provide the taxpayer with an opportunity to respond to the notice. Once elapsed, data files are created and sent to external agencies notifying them of the taxpayer’s outstanding debts. Offset payment files are also received from external agencies, processed and credited to the taxpayer’s assessment account.
* **Revenue Accounting** **and Reporting:** process that includes accurate financial record keeping and reporting of financial transactions, including application to assessments and distribution of revenue collections to taxing jurisdictions. CARTS revenue accounting data and financial reports are used in analysis, projection, reconciliation, and for the authorization of payments to taxing jurisdictions. When financial transactions such as payments, refund offsets, calculated interest, reversals, etc. are applied to a given assessment account liability period, the applied funds are recorded in revenue accounting, distributed according to the associated jurisdiction accounts and based on the representative percentage of the total liability. Comprehensive accounting reports are also provided in revenue accounting.

# **Collections Management System**

The Collections Management System supports the collection of outstanding tax debt of non-compliant taxpayers. It facilitates the creation of collection cases based on taxpayer identification and assessments that have matured to a collectable stage. The system administers various techniques based on recommendations derived from a collections model. It is responsible for the following business functions and processes:

* Create and Assign Collection Case
* Collection Letter
* Warrants
* Installment Payment Agreements (IPA’s)
* Levies
* Seizures
* Income Executions (Garnishments)
* Collection Vendor
* **Create and Assign Collection Case -** provides the ability to group all collectable assessments for a taxpayer into one case for collection. The collection case is unique for each taxpayer and a taxpayer can only have one collection case. Individual assessments can be excluded or removed from the case manually. The system allows for the manual or systematic assignment of a case to a specific employee or unit.
* **Collection Letter**: the creation of a collection letter facilitates collection by notifying a taxpayer of all outstanding assessments with balances that have matured to the collection stage. It also provides information regarding additional collection action that may occur. This process interfaces with several internal systems for the retrieval of taxpayer identification, address, and assessment information.
* **Warrants:** a warrant is the equivalent of a court-ordered judgment. It provides a lien against a taxpayer’s real and personal property to protect the Department’s legal rights to collect upon taxpayer debt. Warrants can be systematically created based on business rules or created manually through a user interface. Warrants may then be transmitted to County Clerks, either electronically, by mail, or in person. The individual county determines the transmission method. Warrants are also filed electronically with the New York Department of State. The process sends a copy of the warrant to the taxpayer once the warrant is recorded by the New York Department of State. Satisfactions are also transmitted to county clerks using the same method as the original warrant. Vacated warrants currently are transmitted manually, either in person or via mail.
* **Installment Payment Agreement (IPA)**: An IPA is a formal agreement between a taxpayer and DTF in which both agree to a payment schedule to satisfy a tax liability. Once the IPA is in place, it protects the taxpayer from other collection actions. IPA’s can be created via phone (IVR or call center representative) or through the Department’s website. The process builds and utilizes a qualification history, along with the terms and value of the IPA which are used to score the application. The score is used to determine the appropriate approval level. An automated process exists for the approval of IPA’s. The system is responsible for calculating the term and payment amount based on the current balance due along with any additional accrued penalty and interest. Once approved, the system will generate billing notices to the taxpayer as well as a copy of the formal agreement. Processes exist to monitor compliance on all IPA’s. Established rules determine whether an IPA should be defaulted or closed.
* **Levy:** an enforcement action used to legally seize a taxpayer’s assets. The process allows for the manual and systematic creation of a levy against financial sources that have been identified for the taxpayer based on file exchanges with external sources. Levies may be transmitted to financial sources electronically, by mail, or in person. Levy responses can be received and processed electronically or manually, via the mail.
* **Seizure:** the creation of a seizure is a manual action that records specific information regarding possible DTF action based on various criteria and rules. An automated process exists for the approval of a seizure by designated staff with proper authority levels. The application is also used to generate documents relating to a seizure. Updated information may be added to the record with specific seizure data for a specified period after the seizure is closed.
* **Income Execution** **(IE)**: provides a means to levy a taxpayer’s wages, commonly referred to as a garnishment. Income Executions can be created systematically based on business rules or manually through a user interface. An automated process exists for the approval of IE’s by designated department staff prior to the IE being served. The IE process contains two separate services. The first service involves notifying taxpayers of their requirements to comply with the IE. If the taxpayer fails to meet the requirements of the first service IE, a second service IE is then issued to the taxpayer’s employer. The second service IE notifies employers of their requirements to comply with the IE. For both first and second service IE’s, the process generates billing notices to the taxpayer or employer on a monthly basis. Processes also exist to monitor payment activity on all IE’s. Established rules determine whether an IE should be defaulted or closed. For closed cases meeting specified criteria, a release may be sent to the taxpayer and/or employer.
* **Collection Vendor:** The Department utilizes an outside collection vendor to assist with collecting on outstanding NYS tax debts. The collection vendor process begins with the assignment of the collection case to the unit that oversees the outside vendor. The process generates a notice to the taxpayer notifying them of the possible assignment to an outside collection agency for further collection. Case assignment to the vendor occurs after a specified holding period where any further communication with the taxpayer is accomplished by the vendor. A file transfer process between DTF and the vendor is used for the notification of cases assigned to the vendor inventory, as well as any updates for the collection case. A file transfer process is also used when cases are returned to DTF from the vendor.

1. **Dispute Management System:**

The dispute management system (a.k.a. protest application) is primarily an inventory management and tracking system. It facilitates the creation of a case on an assessment that is in dispute by the taxpayer. The dispute places a temporary hold on the assessment and prevents certain actions such as collections and billing from progressing until the taxpayer’s case is resolved and closed. It is responsible for the following business functions and processes:

* Create Dispute
* Assign Dispute
* Update/Resolve Dispute
* Close Dispute
* **Create Dispute:** function that facilitates the creation of a dispute case on a specific assessment for departmental review. This can be accomplished systematically using applied business rules or manually through a user interface. The creation of a dispute case will suspend further billing and collection activity until the department completes the review. An acknowledgment letter is also generated notifying the taxpayer of the case creation.
* **Assign Dispute:** function that provides the ability to assign dispute cases to a specific unit or employee. Cases can be assigned in one of two ways: systematically using automated assignment rules after the dispute has been created or manually, through a user interface. Cases that pass through automated assignment are only assigned to a unit. Employee assignment is a manual function and can be performed through either individual or batch case assignment.
* **Update/Resolve Dispute:** function that provides the ability to update or resolve a dispute case. Once resolution information has been entered, the system may create transactions which will cause adjustments on the taxpayer’s assessment account. Additionally, correspondence is generated notifying the taxpayer of the resolution.
* **Close Dispute:** Once the dispute has been resolved, the closure process validates that specified criteria has been satisfied to close the case. Once the dispute case is closed, billing and collection activity will resume.

It is the objective of this solicitation to obtain additional information concerning solutions which could be used for this initiative. The responses could encompass a solution(s) for one system or three disparate systems that will operate independently and in conjunction with existing Department systems. Responses may be used to assist the Department in a development of any future bid document.

**RFI Response**

Please respond to this RFI by April 7, 2021. Be sure to provide the name, address, contact person, phone number and e-mail address for your company. Your response to this RFI should be submitted via **e-mail (preferred)**, fax or mail:

**E-mail: bfs.contracts@tax.ny.gov**

Fax: (518) 435-8413

Written Correspondence:

New York State Department of Taxation and Finance

Attn: Amber Alexander / RFI 20-600

Procurement Services Unit

WA Harriman State Campus

Albany, NY 12227

A response does not bind or obligate the responder or the Department to any agreement of provision or procurement of any products or services referenced.

The Department may seek additional information or clarification during its review of RFI responses. This may be done through e-mail, phone discussions, meetings, demonstrations, and/or correspondence, and may be with an individual respondent or a group of respondents.

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| **Section I. Requirements**  **In addition to the existing system functionalities and requirements described in the narrative, additional requirements have been identified below. Describe how your product, capacity, and process can meet the DTF requirements. Make comments and attach additional information as needed.**   | **Requirements for Accounts Receivable System** | | **Solution meets this requirement in its existing form?**  **(Yes/No)** | | **Solution requires modification to meet this requirement?**  **(Yes/No)** | | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | Accounts Receivable System:   1. The solution provides an accounts receivable system that can create and maintain financial transactions which include assessment, billing, payment, refund, offset, adjustment, and their corresponding revenue accounting and jurisdictional distributions. | | Yes  No | | Yes  No | | | Accounts Receivable System:   1. The solution is reliable and effective when employed on extremely large volumes (millions per month) for the processing of financial transactions. | | Yes  No | | Yes  No | | | Accounts Receivable System:   1. The solution can apply complex formulas to calculate penalty and interest utilizing updatable reference tables. | | Yes  No | | Yes  No | | | Accounts Receivable System:   1. The system must utilize effective date processing for the posting of all financial transactions to taxpayer accounts. | | Yes  No | | Yes  No | | | Accounts Receivable System:   1. The system must provide real-time transaction posting. | | Yes  No | | Yes  No | | | Accounts Receivable System:   1. The solution must interface with internal tax processing systems for the automatic creation or adjustment of various transactions. | | Yes  No | | Yes  No | | | Accounts Receivable System:   1. The system must be able to create financial transactions using a primary key other than Taxpayer ID. | | Yes  No | | Yes  No | | | Accounts Receivable System:   1. The system includes a process to apply and maintain a hierarchy of rules as a general payment application algorithm. This is used for the application of payments and offsets. | | Yes  No | | Yes  No | | | Accounts Receivable System:   1. The system provides a mechanism to store and track payments that cannot be targeted to an assessment and posted. | | Yes  No | | Yes  No | | | Accounts Receivable System:   1. The system provides a flexible billing stage and maturation process that allows for assessments to move both forwards and backwards through the process. | | Yes  No | | Yes  No | | | Accounts Receivable System:   1. The solution provides an approval process for select accounts receivable transactions. | | Yes  No | | Yes  No | | | Accounts Receivable System:   1. The solution provides a workflow and inventory management system to facilitate the creation and adjustment of various financial transactions. | | Yes  No | | Yes  No | | | Accounts Receivable System:   1. The solution can interface with internal systems to facilitate various actions. | | Yes  No | | Yes  No | | | Accounts Receivable System:   1. Processes are driven by business rules or reference table values that can be adjusted by internal users. | | Yes  No | | Yes  No | | | **Describe, comment, attach additional information as needed:** | | | | | | | **Requirements for Collections Management System** | **Solution meets this requirement in its existing form?**  **(Yes/No)** | | **Solution requires modification to meet this requirement?**  **(Yes/No)** | | | Collections Management System:   1. The solution has the ability to perform the functions regarding levies, warrants, income executions, seizures and outside vendor collections. | Yes  No | | Yes  No | | | Collections Management System:   1. The solution provides the ability to create flexible Installment Payment Agreements which allows for various repayment options and the setting of start or effective dates. | Yes  No | | Yes  No | | | Collections Management System:   1. The solution can exchange electronic files with outside financial institutions, NYS counties, NYS agencies, and other non-NY state tax entities. | Yes  No | | Yes  No | | | Collections Management System:   1. The solution can interface with an external recommendation engine to facilitate various actions. | Yes  No | | Yes  No | | | Collections Management System:   1. The solution provides an established approval process for all collection techniques. | Yes  No | | Yes  No | | | Collections Management System:   1. The solution provides a case management system for collection techniques. | Yes  No | | Yes  No | | | Collections Management System:   1. The solution can interface with internal systems to facilitate various actions. | Yes  No | | Yes  No | | | Collections Management System:   1. Processes are driven by business rules or reference table values that can be adjusted by internal users. | Yes  No | | Yes  No | | | **Describe, comment, attach additional information as needed:** | | | | | |

| **Requirements for Dispute Management System** | **Solution meets this requirement in its existing form?**  **(Yes/No)** | **Solution requires modification to meet this requirement?**  **(Yes/No)** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Dispute Management System:   1. The solution provides a workflow and inventory management system to facilitate the creation and resolution of disputes. | Yes  No | Yes  No |
| Dispute Management System:   1. The solution can interface with internal systems to facilitate various actions. | Yes  No | Yes  No |
| Dispute Management System:   1. The solution provides an approval process for select dispute functions. | Yes  No | Yes  No |
| Dispute Management System:   1. Processes are driven by business rules or reference table values that can be adjusted by internal users. | Yes  No | Yes  No |
| Dispute Management System:   1. The solution can interface with an accounts receivable system for automated adjustments on disputed assessment based on resolution. | Yes  No | Yes  No |
| **Describe, comment, attach additional information as needed:** | | |

**Section II. Questions**

**Please respond to the following questions in relation to the solution. If you do not offer a solution for one of the systems identified below, please enter Not Applicable (N/A)**

| **Questions** | **Answers for**  **Accounts Receivable System** | **Answers for**  **Collections Management System** | **Answers for**  **Dispute Management System** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. What licensing options do you offer? If you don’t offer perpetual as a standard licensing term, would you be willing to? | Answer: | Answer: | Answer: |
| 1. Does your solution require either the use of the cloud or cloud-based technologies? If so, please describe how it’s used and information security protections. | Answer: | Answer: | Answer: |
| 1. Is there a specific database technology required to support this solution? If so, please describe the database technology required. | Answer: | Answer: | Answer: |
| 1. What deployment methods are available for your solution? What is the average implementation timeframe for your solution? | Answer: | Answer: | Answer: |
| 1. What levels of support and maintenance do you offer? Do you guarantee a response time? | Answer: | Answer: | Answer: |
| 1. How are upgrades of the software managed and supported? Are upgrades included in your maintenance and support plans? | Answer: | Answer: | Answer: |
| 1. How are changes and enhancements managed? Are there any restrictions on future changes/modifications (e.g., if the Department requires a change due to legislation, can the change be made for the Department only)? | Answer: | Answer: | Answer: |
| 1. Do you offer training for the solution? If so, please describe the training programs. | Answer: | Answer: | Answer: |

**Section III. Cost**

**Please provide information in relation to the costs of the solution. If you do not offer a solution for one of the systems identified below, please enter Not Applicable (N/A)**

| **Cost Items/Questions** | **Cost Amounts/Answers/Comments for**  **Accounts Receivable System** | **Cost Amounts/Answers/Comments for**  **Collections Management System** | **Cost Amounts/Answers/Comments for**  **Dispute Management System** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. What is the initial cost of your COTS solution? Please include costs for all ways in which your solution is licensed (i.e.: perpetual, RTU, etc.). | Software $ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Comments: | Software $ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Comments: | Software $ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Comments: |
| 1. What is the approximate cost of installation/implementation? | Installation $ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Comments: | Installation $ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Comments: | Installation $ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Comments: |
| 1. What is the approximate cost for configuration of the solution (if applicable)? | $  Comments: | $  Comments: | $  Comments: |
| 1. What is the cost of maintenance and support in relation to percentage of cost of the software?   If software upgrades are not included in your support and maintenance plans, do you offer a discount over list price for upgrading the software version? | Maintenance and support % \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Software upgrade % discount \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Comments: | Maintenance and support % \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Software upgrade % discount \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Comments: | Maintenance and support % \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Software upgrade % discount \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Comments: |
| 1. What are the job titles and hourly rates used for changes and enhancements? | List job titles and hourly rates. Provide a description of the qualification of each job title:  Comments: | List job titles and hourly rates. Provide a description of the qualification of each job title:  Comments: | List job titles and hourly rates. Provide a description of the qualification of each job title:  Comments: |
| 1. Are there any other costs? If so, please provide. | List other costs:  Comments: | List other costs:  Comments: | List other costs:  Comments: |

**Section IV. Experience**

| **Experience** | **Response** |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Please describe your firm and overall time in business. Please also describe your experience in relation to the solution including the number of deployments and type of entity engaged. Please attach additional information if needed. | Describe: |
| 1. Please provide your firm’s contact information for DTF to discuss the solution. | Contact name: Phone:  Title: Email: |
| 1. Does the solution have a proven track record (i.e., multiple year contracts for existing clients)? If so, please provide client(s) name, length of relationship and a description of the project scope. | Client name and contact information:  Length of relationship:  Description of project scope: |
|  | Client name and contact information:  Length of relationship:  Description of project scope: |
|  | Client name and contact information:  Length of relationship:  Description of project scope: |
| 1. Has your solution been proven to be substantially compliant with Federal and State Tax Laws where your solution is employed? If so, where is it currently employed? Please provide client contact information. | Answer: |
| 1. Has your solution been proven to be substantially compliant with the secrecy and confidentiality requirements of the IRS and the states where your solution is employed? If so, where is it currently employed? Please provide client contact information. | Answer: |