

REQUEST FOR QUOTES

RFQ # 2025-001

For

Information Security Audit Services

Responses must be submitted via e-mail to BERSProcurement@bers.nyc.gov

Submissions sent to any other email will be disregarded.

Responses are Due by No Later Than: **4:00 P.M. EST. June 13, 2025.**

LATE RESPONSES WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

This Request for Quotes (“RFQ”) solicitation is issued by the
New York City Board of Education Retirement System (“BERS”)
55 Water Street 50th Floor, New York, NY 10041

1. AGENCY OVERVIEW

The New York City Board of Education Retirement System (“BERS” or “the Agency”) is an approximately 160-person agency responsible for providing pension services to designated employees of the New York City Department of Education (“NYCDOE”) who are not eligible to participate in the New York City Teachers’ Retirement System. In addition, BERS is open to certain other covered employers, such as the New York City School Construction Authority, the New York City Police Department, and the New York City Transit Authority. BERS is governed by a 28-member Board of Trustees. The structure, procedures, and benefits of the system are established by law, rules, and regulations. BERS is administered by an Executive Director appointed by the Board of Trustees. BERS was chartered in 1921 and is one of five municipal pension systems within the City of New York.

BERS has approximately 50,000 active members and over 100,000 unique membership case files. BERS manages approximately US\$9 billion in member assets through various investment instruments under the supervision of the New York City Office of the Comptroller and the evaluation of the New York City Actuary. BERS is responsible for the management and administration of retirement funds and the disbursement of retirement, disability, and death benefits to its members and their designated beneficiaries. BERS offers both a defined benefit (traditional pension) plan called the Qualified Pension Plan (“QPP”) and a defined contribution plan known as the Tax Deferred Annuity (“TDA”).

2. PURPOSE OF THE RFQ

BERS is seeking the services of a qualified and experienced Information Technology (“IT”) audit firm to conduct a comprehensive Information Security (“InfoSec”) Audit. This audit aims to assess the security posture, identify vulnerabilities, and ensure compliance with regulatory standards across BERS’ IT infrastructure, policies, and operations.

3. NOTICE TO RESPONDENTS

3.1 Contact for this RFQ

Respondents are advised that from the date this RFQ is issued until the award of a contract, should a contract be awarded as a result of this RFQ, **NO contact** with Agency personnel related to this solicitation is permitted, except through the Agency’s designated contact email. Any inquiry regarding this solicitation must be made **in writing**. No telephone calls will be accepted regarding this RFQ.

All written inquiries, comments, questions and/or correspondence related to this RFQ must be submitted to the designated contact email at BERSProcurement@bers.nyc.gov. The email subject line must read: **RFQ 2025-001 Information Security Audit Services**.

3.2 Additional Information for Respondents

Except as noted, there shall be no communication between any responding vendor or prospective responding vendor and:

1. Any member of BERS’ Board of Trustees or their staff members.
2. Any employee of BERS (except as outlined herein); or

3. Any persons in a perceived position to influence decisions of BERS at any time during the process, and until the Agency makes its decision, except at times specified for oral presentations by selected firms, if any.

Direct communication with those persons referenced above, either in person, in writing, or by phone in regard to the requirements and/or scope of the RFQ, the RFQ response, or the eventual awarding of the contract (should a contract ultimately be awarded), shall result in the disqualification of the respondent.

BERS reserves the right, without prejudice, to reject any or all RFQ responses submitted. BERS will not reimburse proposers for any expenses incurred in preparing their responses to this RFP.

4. SUMMARY OF KEY DATES

- RFQ Issued / Release Date: **April 28, 2025**
- Deadline for vendors to submit written inquiries via email: **no later than 4:00 P.M. EST on May 12, 2025**
- Posting of Questions and Answers (“Q&A”) document: **on or about May 23, 2025.**
- RFQ Submission Due Date: **no later than 4:00 P.M. EST on June 13, 2025.**

5. MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS REQUIREMENTS

Respondents **must meet all** of the following **Minimum Qualifications Requirements** in order to respond to and be evaluated for this project. In **Appendix B – Minimum Qualifications Requirements**, Respondents **must submit** their response to **each** Minimum Qualification next to its corresponding subsection number. Proposals that fail to meet **all** Minimum Qualifications **will not** be considered.

- 5.1.** Evidence of being actively engaged in providing IT audit services as those described in this RFQ, preferably within the public sector or retirement systems.
- 5.2.** Respondent must have a minimum of five (5) years of successful experience in providing IT audit services, preferably within the public sector or retirement systems.
- 5.3.** Evidence of certified professionals such as Certified Information Systems Auditor (“CISA”), Certified Information Security Manager (“CISM”), Certified in Risk and Information Systems Control (“CRISC”), or equivalent.
- 5.4.** Freedom from actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest that could impair objectivity.
- 5.5.** Provide at least three (3) letters of reference from previous engagements within the last five (5) years where similar services were rendered. Each reference must include contact information (client’s name, contract person, title, address, telephone number, and email), state the dates, locations, description of the services provided, and any outcomes or results.

6. SCOPE OF SERVICES

BERS is seeking a qualified and experienced Information Technology (“IT”) audit firm to conduct a comprehensive Information Security Audit. This audit aims to assess the security posture, identify vulnerabilities, and ensure compliance with regulatory standards across BERS’ IT infrastructure, policies, and operations. The resulting audit report should detail potential weak spots, vulnerabilities, and specific implementable recommendations for improvements. All services are expected to be performed remotely and onsite (in-person), as needed.

6.1. AUDIT SCOPE

The Information Security Audit will cover, but will not be limited to, the following areas:

6.1.1. Governance and Compliance

- Evaluate BERS' IT governance framework, policies, and strategic alignment with the overall business objectives.
- Review of existing information security policies, standards, and procedures.
- Evaluation of compliance with relevant laws, frameworks, and regulations (e.g., NIST, CIS, SOC 2, NYC Cyber Command requirements).

6.1.2. Network and Infrastructure Security

- Vulnerability assessments and penetration testing.
- Review of firewall configurations, VPNs, intrusion detection/prevention systems (IDS/IPS).

6.1.3. Application Controls and Access Management

- Evaluate the internal controls over key systems and applications, including access controls, input/output data processing, and system integrations.
- Assessment of identity and access management ("IAM") processes.
- Review of privileged account management and multi-factor authentication ("MFA") controls.

6.1.4. Data Protection and Privacy

- Review of data encryption, storage, and backup mechanisms.
- Assessment of controls for personally identifiable information ("PII") and financial data.

6.1.5. Incident Management

- Review of incident response plans and reporting protocols.
- Evaluation of disaster recovery and business continuity plans.

6.1.6. Third-Party Risk Management

- Review of vendor risk management processes.
- Assessment of cloud service provider agreements and security controls.

6.2. AUDIT PHASES AND DELIVERABLES

The audit will be conducted in three (3) phases – Planning, Fieldwork and Reporting. Deliverables for the audit phases will include, but not be limited to the following:

6.2.1. Planning Phase:

- Engagement letter.
- Audit notification.
- Opening conference.
- Audit work program.
- Fieldwork request list.

6.2.2. Fieldwork Phase:

- Executed audit work program and related workpapers.
- Fieldwork closing meeting.
- Categorization of risks based on impact and likelihood.
- Overview of test results, findings, identified risks, and vulnerabilities.

- Practical remediation strategies for identified risks.

6.2.3. Reporting Phase:

- Draft audit report.
- Final audit report – Comprehensive report with management action plans.
- Presentation of key findings to BERS' Audit Committee and senior management.

7. PRICING PROPOSAL (BUDGET)

Respondents must submit a Pricing Proposal (Budget) that provides detailed line-item pricing for the proposed deliverables/services. The unit prices in this form will be the basis for all invoices. Prior to entering into a contract, BERS reserves the right to review the records used to calculate the costs associated with the prices depicted in the proposed budget for the selected proposal.

- 7.1.** The proposed budget must include **all** costs and/or fees, indicating hourly rate, fee schedule, or flat rate, to complete each deliverable based on the vendor's proposed services, including, but not limited to, preparation/pre-planning of services, materials, etc.
- 7.2.** Respondent must indicate whether pricing is based on consultant (staff) hours, fee for service, flat rate, a combination of these, or any other pricing model. Include any commissions and/or fees that the Respondent would expect to receive for their proposed services.
 - 7.2.1.** Irrespective of the pricing model, the proposed budget **must** provide details, where applicable, of the estimated number of staff, estimated number of staff hours, and hourly rate, per deliverable, and/or breakdown of the components of a fee for service or flat rate, or any combination thereof.
- 7.3.** The Pricing Proposal (Budget) must reflect all unit prices/fees, the extended total cost, **and** description of each line-item deliverable/service. Unit prices/fees must include **all the costs** associated with the services in the proposal for which a vendor will be charging BERS. The awarded vendor **will not** be able to invoice for items not included in the approved Pricing Proposal (Budget). Respondents may include additional pricing information, or budget narrative, if necessary, to clarify their pricing structure.
- 7.4.** Unit prices/fees are maximum, not-to-exceed amounts that will be incorporated into the contract. Unit prices/fees proposed (or any component thereof) are **not subject to upward adjustment.**
- 7.5.** Any materials offered through this contract must be ancillary to the services provided.

8. INVOICING / PAYMENTS

BERS makes payment via Electronic Funds Transfer ("EFT") through Automated Clearing House ("ACH") transfers only. Payment will be made within thirty (30) business days upon receipt of invoice following provision of services. The contracted vendor will be required to complete and submit a Vendor Electronic Fund Transfer Payment Enrollment Form along with a voided check and/or bank confirmation of the account information provided.

The awarded vendor shall be entitled to bill BERS for rendered services in three (3) installments as follows:

1. 30% of the total payment upon satisfactory completion of the Planning phase,
2. 40% of the total payment upon satisfactory completion of the Fieldwork phase, and
3. 30% of the total payment upon satisfactory completion of the Reporting phase.

9. SUBCONTRACTORS

The Respondent must represent in its RFQ submission any subcontractor(s) to be used in the provision of the required services if awarded a contract as a result of this solicitation. The name of the subcontractor(s) and contract information is required (address, telephone number, and email address), as well as description and details of the portion of the work to be performed by any subcontractor(s).

10. CONTRACT TERM

The resulting contract, if awarded, will be for a term of **six (6) months**. BERS reserves the unilateral option to extend the term of the contract for **one (1) additional one-month period**. All contract terms and conditions shall remain in effect for the full term of the contract and any extension(s) thereof. Services are anticipated to begin on or about August 2025 and are expected to be completed no later than December 2025, with the Final Audit Report Presentation taking place at the Audit Committee meeting following conclusion of the audit, at a date to be determined and confirmed at least one week in advance.

(meeting date is subject to change but will be confirmed at least one (1) week in advance).

11. REQUEST FOR CLARIFICATIONS / INQUIRIES

All inquiries regarding this solicitation must be made in writing, via email; no telephone calls will be accepted regarding this RFQ. All written inquiries must be emailed to the following authorized email address: BERSProcurement@bers.nyc.gov. Inquiries sent to any other email address will be disregarded. The email subject line must read: **RFQ 2025-001 Information Security Audit Services**.

The deadline for submitting inquiries related to this RFQ is **no later than 4:00 P.M. EST on May 12, 2025**. Inquiries submitted after this date and time **will not** be accepted.

All inquiries will be addressed in a written **Questions and Answers (“Q&A”) document**, which will be published on or about **May 23, 2025**, on the BERS website, link: <https://www.bers.nyc.gov/site/bers/notices/requests-for-proposals.page>.

12. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Responses to this RFQ must be submitted via email by no later than **4:00 P.M. EST on June 13, 2025** to BERSProcurement@bers.nyc.gov. Submissions to any other email address **will be disregarded**. The subject line of the submission email must include the RFQ number **and** the name of the submitting vendor, e.g.: **RFQ 2025-001 Company XYZ**.

Late submissions **will not** be accepted.

13. BASIS OF AWARD

Responses will be evaluated based on the program approach/plan, qualifications and cost proposal that is the best value to BERS. In **Appendix C – Basis for Award Criteria**, Respondents must provide their response to **each** of the below criteria next to its corresponding subsection number.

- 13.1. Experience and Expertise:** Experience in performing Information Technology audits in similar settings, including public sector and retirement systems. Respondents must provide details of prior successful experience related to the required services, including effective program design, management, outcomes, and evaluation, as well as in-depth knowledge of regulations impacting retirement systems and public sector IT environments and relevant cybersecurity frameworks.
- 13.2. Approach and Methodology:** The comprehensiveness of the audit approach, including the methodologies and tools proposed. Respondents must provide a detailed program plan describing the approach and methodology on how Respondent will successfully and effectively execute the required services.
- 13.3. Qualifications of Personnel:** Expertise and certifications of the team members assigned to the engagement are relevant and directly related to the required services.
- 13.4. Cost Effectiveness:** Pricing Proposal (Budget) reflects a reasonable relationship with the proposed work, and competitiveness and appropriateness of the proposed costs.

Award shall be subject to BERS' contract approval process, including the successful completion of background check review of the selected Respondent(s) and any subcontractor(s), if applicable, as well as the timely completion of contract negotiations between BERS and the selected Respondent(s).

A contract award resulting from this RFQ shall be subject to **Appendix A – BERS Terms and Conditions**. Respondents must thoroughly review **Appendix A** prior to submitting a proposal and must be willing to comply and accept **Appendix A** in its entirety should a contract award be offered.

14. NOTICE TO LOW OFFERORS

The fact that an offeror ("Respondent") submits the lowest offer does not constitute contract award. Other factors, such as conformity of the offer to the solicitation, that is, the offeror's responsiveness, must be considered. No contractual obligation or liability on the part of BERS shall exist unless and until the contract is awarded. Therefore, no offeror should begin work on the services called for in this solicitation until after formal notice of contract award has been made by BERS.

15. PROCUREMENT AND SOURCING SOLUTIONS PORTAL (PASSPORT) DISCLOSURE FILING FORMS OR CERTIFICATION OF NO CHANGE (CNC)

All organizations intending to do business with the City of New York should complete an online disclosure process to be considered for a contract. In anticipation of award(s), Respondents to **RFQ # 2025-001**, including any subcontractor(s) – if applicable, should create online accounts in the City's Procurement and Sourcing Solutions Portal (PASSPort) and file all disclosure information or, if previously filled, complete a Certification of No Change (CNC).

For more information about PASSPort, please visit: <https://www.nyc.gov/site/mocs/passport/about-passport.page>.

[End of Section]

APPENDIX A: BERS TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. Captions

The headings in this Agreement, the paragraphs, and subparagraphs of this Agreement, and of any attachments, are included solely for convenience and reference, and they shall not be used in any way to interpret this Agreement.

2. Compliance With Laws

In connection with the performance of this Agreement, the Contractor shall comply with all applicable laws, rules and regulations. The parties hereto agree that every provision of law required to be inserted herein be deemed a part hereof. It is further agreed that if any such provision is not inserted or is incorrectly inserted, through mistake or otherwise, this Agreement shall be deemed amended so as to comply strictly with the law.

3. Unlawful Provisions Void

If this Agreement contains any unlawful provision or portions thereof, they shall be deemed deleted from the Agreement and the remainder of the Agreement shall remain in full force and effect. If the deletion of such provision frustrates the purpose of this Agreement, either party may make application to the Evaluation Committee for relief.

4. Religious Activity Prohibited

There shall be no religious worship, instruction, proselytizing, or other religious activity in connection with the performance of this Agreement.

5. Political Activity Prohibited

No BERS property provided to the Contractor hereunder for the purpose of this Agreement shall be used for any political activity or to further the election or defeat of any candidate for public office. As used herein the term "BERS property" shall include, but not be limited to, supplies, work sites, funds advanced and services.

6. Publication And Publicity

The Contractor or anyone employed by the Contractor may not publish the results of its participation or findings in the performance of this Agreement without the prior written approval of the Chair of the BERS Board of Trustees or his/her designee. All approved publications shall acknowledge that the program is supported by funds from BERS. Ten (10) true copies of each approved publication shall be furnished to BERS without charge.

7. Copyright

If the Contractor or anyone employed by the Contractor shall write, record or otherwise produce copyrightable material within the scope or in furtherance of this Agreement, BERS shall be considered the author for purposes of copyright, renewal of copyright, and termination of copyright and, unless expressly waived in a written instrument signed by the Chair of the Board of Trustees or her designee, the owner of all of the rights comprised in the copyright.

8. Patents

Any invention or discovery arising out of or developed in furtherance of this Agreement shall be promptly and fully reported to BERS. BERS shall have the exclusive right to apply for patent protection on such invention or discovery and to determine how the rights in said invention or discovery, including rights under any patent issued thereon, shall be disposed of and administered.

9. Accounting for Property

If any property is acquired by the Contractor with funds provided by BERS under this Agreement, the property shall be deemed purchased by BERS for the use of the Contractor during the term of the Agreement and shall be permanently embossed "Property of New York City Board of Education Retirement System" and shall be returned to BERS, at the Contractor's expense, within thirty (30) days after the end of said term, unless the Contractor is otherwise notified in writing by the Executive Director or his designee.

10. Non-Reimbursable Expenses

The following items may not be claimed as a direct or indirect cost of the services provided under this Agreement:

- A. rental expenses of apartments;
- B. interest on loans;
- C. penalties for delinquent filing of tax returns;
- D. political or charitable contributions;
- E. advertising and promotions;
- F. legal expenses;
- G. key-man life insurance premiums;
- H. federal, state and city income tax; state and city franchise taxes; and costs for the preparation of such tax returns;
- I. expenses incurred in preparing for operations;
- J. cost of employee meals and lodging except when traveling outside the city and pursuant to the specifications of the contract;
- K. entertainment, gratuities, and any other items of a personal nature;
- L. long distance telephone calls unless directly related to the services provided under the terms of this Agreement;
- M. any expense not ordinary, necessary or reasonable in the performance of the Agreement.

11. No Extra Compensation

The Contractor shall not seek, ask for, demand, sue for or recover, as extra compensation or otherwise, any sum for labor, materials or services other than the compensation agreed upon and fixed.

12. Invoices And Payments

The Contractor shall furnish proof with each invoice, and shall comply with all BERS requirements concerning the manner in which invoices are to be submitted. The Contractor shall not be entitled to demand or receive full or partial payment, until each and every one of the provisions of this Agreement is complied with, and the Executive Director or his designee shall have given written certification to that effect. Nothing contained herein shall be construed to affect the right hereby reserved by BERS to reject the whole or any portion of the performance, should said certification be inconsistent with the terms of this Agreement, or otherwise erroneously given.

13. No Estoppel

BERS shall not be precluded or estopped by a statement or document issued by or on behalf of BERS, from indicating the true value of services performed by the Contractor or by any other person pursuant to or as a result of this Agreement.

14. Acceptance of Final Payment

Receipt and negotiation by the Contractor, or by any person claiming under this Agreement, of the Final Payment hereunder, notwithstanding whether such payment be made pursuant to any judgment or order of any court, shall constitute a general release of BERS from any and all claims and liability for anything done, furnished, or relating to the labor, materials or services provided, or for any act of omission or commission of BERS or its agents and employees. Said release shall be against the Contractor, the Contractor's representative, heirs, executors, administrators, successors and assigns.

15. Claims -Limitation of Action

No action at law or equity shall be maintained by the Contractor, its successors, against BERS on any claim based upon or arising out of this Agreement, or out of anything done in connection with this Agreement, unless such action shall be commenced within six (6) months after the date of filing of the voucher for final payment hereunder, or within six (6) months of the required completion date for the services performed hereunder, whichever is sooner. None of the provisions of Article 2 of the Civil Practice Law and Rules shall apply to any action against BERS arising out of this Agreement.

16. Notices

The Contractor's address stated on Page 1 of this Agreement is hereby designated as the place where all notices, letters or other communications directed to the contractor shall be served, mailed or delivered. Any notice, letter or other communication directed to the Contractor and delivered to such address, or sealed in a post-paid wrapper and deposited in any post office box regularly maintained by the United States Postal Service, shall be deemed sufficient service thereof upon the Contractor. Said address may be changed at any time by an instrument in writing, executed and acknowledged by the Contractor and delivered to the Executive Director's designee. Nothing herein contained shall be deemed to preclude or render inoperative personal delivery of any notice, letter or other communication, written or oral, to the Contractor. Whenever it shall be necessary or required to prove the delivery of any notice, an affidavit describing such delivery shall be conclusive evidence of such delivery.

17. Amendments and Waivers

A. This Agreement may be amended by a written Instrument signed by an authorized officer for the Contractor, and by the Chair or his/her designee. No amendment materially affecting the substance hereof shall be effective unless approved by a Resolution of the BERS Board of Trustees, and a copy of said Resolution is attached to the amendment and incorporated herein.

B. No waiver by BERS of any terms or condition hereof shall be effective unless in writing and signed by the Chair or his/her designee. Any waiver shall be specifically limited to its terms, and shall not be deemed applicable to subsequent like circumstances.

C. Any purported oral amendment or waiver shall be void.

18. Suspension of Deliveries

The Executive Director or his designee, may postpone, delay, or suspend the delivery of the goods or services, or any part thereof, without additional compensation to the Contractor. In such event, (A) the time established for performance by the Contractor of any duty during the term of this Agreement may, at the Contractor's option, be extended for the

number of days the Contractor was delayed by said suspension, postponement, or delay provided the term is not thereby extended; however, (B) the term may, at BERS' option, be extended for the number of days the contractor was delayed by said suspension, postponement or delay.

19. Cancellation

A. If the Contractor violates any provision of this Agreement, the Executive Director or his designee may pursue any legal or equitable remedies available to BERS. In addition, the Executive Director or his designee may seek to have the Contractor declared in default by the Evaluation Committee. In the event that the Contractor is declared in default, BERS may cancel this Agreement and shall thereafter be relieved of all liability hereunder. Upon a finding of default in violation of this contract, the Contractor shall be deemed not responsible and disqualified from bidding for a period of four years, unless in such finding of default, a lesser penalty is imposed by reason of mitigating circumstances.

B. In the event of breach of this Agreement by the Contractor, the Contractor shall have thirty (30) days time to cure the breach before being in default. BERS shall have the right to cancel and terminate said Agreement, and the Contractor shall be liable to BERS for any additional cost of completion of the within services, BERS' other cost in connection with the termination, reletting and completion of the services. All such costs, along with any liquidated damages for delay provided herein, may be assessed by BERS against the Contractor and deducted by BERS from payment to be made to the Contractor under this or any other Agreement at any time between the Contractor and BERS or the City. In the event that said cost exceed all sums owed at the termination date of the Agreement, the Contractor shall pay the amount of such excess to BERS upon notice from BERS of said amount, and in the event that said costs and liquidated damages are less than the sum payable under this Agreement, as if same had been completed by the Contractor, the Contractor shall forfeit all claims to the difference to BERS. If BERS undertakes to secure the services or any part thereof under this section of the Agreement, the certificate of the Executive Director or his designee indicating the amount of services secured, the cost and excess cost, if any, of completing this Agreement, and the amount of liquidated damages hereunder, shall be conclusive and binding upon the Contractor, its assigns and all other claimants.

20. BERS Determination

The Executive Director or his designee shall in all cases determine the acceptability of the labor, materials, or services which are delivered pursuant to this Agreement, including but not limited to their quality, delivery, and condition, and shall in all cases decide every question which may arise relative to the performance of this Agreement. The Contractor may not rely upon, and BERS shall not be bound by, any explanations, determinations or other statements by or from BERS which are not in writing and signed by the Executive Director or his designee.

21. Investigations

A. The Contractor agrees to cooperate fully and faithfully with any investigation, audit or inquiry conducted by a State of New York (State) or City of New York (City) governmental agency or authority that is empowered directly or by designation to compel the attendance of witnesses and to examine witnesses under oath, or conducted by the governmental agency which is a party in interest to the transaction, submitted bid, submitted proposal, contract, lease, permit, or license that is the subject of the investigation, audit or inquiry.

B (a) If any person who has been advised that his or her statement, and any information from such statement, will not be used against him or her in any subsequent criminal proceeding refuses to testify before a grand jury or governmental agency or authority empowered directly or by designation to compel the attendance of witnesses and to examine witnesses under oath concerning the award of, or performance under, any transaction, agreement, permit, contract, or license entered into with the City, the State, or any political subdivision or public authority thereof, or the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, or any local development corporation within the City, or any public benefit corporation organized under the laws of the State of New York, or;

(b) If any person refuses to testify for a reason other than the assertion of his or her privilege against self incrimination in an investigation, audit or inquiry conducted by a City or State governmental agency or authority empowered directly or by designation to compel the attendance of witnesses and to take testimony under oath, or by the governmental agency that is a party in interest in, and is seeking testimony concerning the award of, or performance under, any transaction, agreement, permit, contract, or license entered into with the City, the State, or any political subdivision thereof, or any local development corporation within the City, then;

C. (a) The commissioner or agency head whose agency is a party in interest to the transaction, submitted bid, submitted proposal, contract, lease, permit, or license may convene a hearing, upon not less than five (5) days written notice to the parties involved to determine if any penalties should attach for the failure of a person to testify.

(b) If any non governmental party to the hearing requests an adjournment, the commissioner or agency head who convened the hearing may, upon granting the adjournment, suspend any contract, lease, permit, or license pending the final determination to paragraph E below without the City and BERS incurring any penalty or damages for delay or otherwise.

D. The penalties which may attach after a final determination by the commissioner or agency head may include but shall not exceed:

I. The disqualification for a period not to exceed five (5) years from the date of the adverse determination for any person, or any entity of which such person was a member at the time the testimony was sought, from submitting bids for, or obtaining any contract, lease, permit or license with or from the City or BERS; and /or

II. The cancellation or termination of any and all such existing City and BERS contracts, leases, permits or license that the refusal to testify concerns and that have not been assigned as permitted under this Agreement, nor the proceeds of which pledged, to an unaffiliated and unrelated institutional lender for fair value prior to the issuance of the notice scheduling the hearing, without the City and BERS incurring any penalty or damages on account of such cancellation or termination; monies lawfully due for goods delivered, work done, rentals or fees accrued prior to the cancellation or termination shall be paid by the Board.

E. The commissioner or agency head shall consider and address in reaching his or her determination and in assessing an appropriate penalty the factors in paragraph I and II below. He or she may also consider, if relevant and appropriate, the criteria established in paragraph III and IV below in addition to any other information which may be relevant and appropriate:

I. The party's good faith endeavors or lack thereof to cooperate fully and faithfully with any governmental investigation or audit, including but not limited to the discipline, discharge, or disassociation of any person failing to testify, the production of accurate and complete books and records, and the forthcoming testimony of all other members, agents, assignees or fiduciaries whose testimony is sought.

II. The relationship of the person who refused to testify to any entity that is a party to the hearing, including but not limited to, whether the person whose testimony is sought has an ownership interest in the entity and/or the degree of authority and responsibility the person has within the entity.

III. The nexus of the testimony sought to the subject entity and its contracts, leases, permits or licenses with city and BERS.

IV. The effect a penalty may have on an unaffiliated and unrelated party or entity that has a significant interest in an entity subject to penalties under paragraph D above, provided that the party or entity has given actual notice to the commissioner or agency head upon the acquisition of the interest, or at the

hearing called for in paragraph C, part I above gives notice and proves that such interest was previously acquired. Under either circumstance the party or entity must present evidence at the hearing demonstrating the potential adverse impact a penalty will have on such person or entity.

F. The term "license" and "permit" as used herein shall be defined as a license, permit, franchise or concession not granted as a matter of right.

The term "person" as used herein shall be defined as any natural person doing business alone or associated with another person or entity as a partner, director, officer, principal or employee.

The term "entity" as used herein shall be defined as any firm, partnership, corporation, association or person that receives monies, licenses, leases or permits from or through the City or BERS or otherwise transacts business with the City or BERS.

The term "member" as used herein shall be defined as any person associated with another person or entity as a partner, director, officer, principal or employee.

G. In addition to and notwithstanding any other provisions of this agreement, the commissioner or agency head may in his or her sole discretion terminate this Agreement upon not less than three (3) days written notice in the event the Contractor fails to promptly report in writing to the Commissioner of Investigations of the City of New York any solicitation of money, goods, requests for future employment or other benefit or thing of value, by or on behalf of any employee of the City or BERS, or any other person, firm, corporation or entity for any purpose which may be related to the procurement or obtaining of this Agreement by the Contractor or affecting the performance of this agreement.

22. Reports, Inspection and Records

A. The Contractor shall promptly provide all reports required by BERS, including without limitation, financial, program, statistical, analytical, narrative and progress reports. Unless otherwise provided herein, the final payment hereunder shall not be made until all reports have been submitted and approved by BERS.

B. The Contractor shall, until six (6) years after completion of its services hereunder or six years after date of termination of this Agreement, whichever is later, maintain and retain complete and correct books and records relating to all aspects of the Contractor's obligation hereunder. Records must be maintained separately, so as to identify clearly the hours charged to this Agreement and be distinguishable from all other hours charged which are not related to this Agreement.

C. The Contractor shall make its staff, and premises, books, records, operations, and services provided under this Agreement, and those of its subcontractors, available to BERS and to any person, agency or entity designated by BERS, at any time, for program audit, fiscal audit, inspection, observation, sampling, visitation and evaluation, and shall render all assistance and cooperation for said purposes. The Contractor agrees to attend, upon demand, any investigation conducted by BERS to produce any records and other documents required by BERS at that investigation, to cooperate with BERS, and to give sworn testimony pertaining to those documents or the subject of the investigation; provided only that the investigation, testimony, records and documents relate to the subject of the Contractor's relationship with BERS. If a corporation, partnership or government agency, the Contractor agrees to require its officers, employees and partners to comply with the foregoing.

D. In its' record keeping the Contractor shall also comply with all federal, state and local laws and regulations pertaining to such records, including, without limitation, the regulations of the Comptroller, and shall require its subordinates to do likewise.

E. In the event that any federal, state or local government agency, or other public or private agency conducts an audit of any of the Contractor's operations which pertains directly or indirectly to the goods and services provided pursuant to this Agreement, within five (5) working days after the receipt by the Contractor of notice

of the commencement of such audit, the Contractor shall give notice of such commencement to BERS; and within five (5) working days after receipt by the Contractor of a copy of any resulting interim or financial audit report, the Contractor shall supply on copy thereof to BERS.

23. Non-Assignment Of Contract

The Contractor shall give its personal attention to the faithful performance of this Agreement. The Contractor covenants that it will not assign, transfer, convey, sublet or otherwise dispose of this Agreement or its right, title or interest therein or its power to execute such Agreement, to any other person or corporation without the previous written consent of the Executive Director or his designee. If the Contractor in any way violates the terms of this provision, BERS shall have the right to cancel and terminate this Agreement, and BERS shall thereon be relieved from all liability thereunder. Nothing contained herein shall be construed to effect an assignment by the Contractor for the benefit of its creditors made pursuant to the statutes of the State of New York. No right under this Agreement, or to any monies due to become due hereunder, shall be asserted against BERS or the City in law or in equity by reason of a purported assignment of this Agreement, or any part thereof, or any monies due or to become due hereunder, unless authorized as aforesaid.

24. Contractor's Staff

The Contractor shall employ or contract for the service of only competent workmen, consultants, independent contractors and other employees as are, or reasonably may be, necessary for the performance of the Services hereunder.

The Contractor warrants that it shall be solely responsible for its employees' work, direction, safety and compensation.

The Contractor agrees to replace immediately any employee, and not engage such employee in the performance of this Agreement, if the Contractor is notified in writing that, in the opinion of either the Executive Director, or his designee, such employee is incompetent or otherwise impedes the performance of the services hereunder.

25. Confidentiality Of Records

All personally identifiable member and staff information obtained by or furnished to the Contractor by BERS, and all reports and studies containing such information prepared or assembled by the Contractor, are to be kept strictly confidential by the Contractor and shall not be provided or disclosed to any third party without the express written permission of the Executive Director or his designee. The Contractor shall limit access to such material in its control to those of its employees performing services pursuant to this Agreement strictly on a need to know basis. The Contractor shall restrict its use of the information to its performance under this Agreement and shall return all such material to BERS upon the completion of the services herein.

26. Testimony

If the project which is the subject matter of this Agreement at any time becomes involved in a proceeding, to which BERS or the City is a party, before any court, board, tribunal, panel, arbitrator, referee or agency, the Contractor shall provide such knowledgeable witnesses as BERS shall require, free of additional compensation of any kind. Nothing herein shall require the Contractor to provide testimony in any proceeding in which it is a party with interests opposed to those of BERS.

27. No Personal Liability

Neither the members of BERS nor the Executive Director nor any officer, employee, agent or representative of BERS or of the City shall be personally liable, based upon any theory of law or equity, to the Contractor or to any party claiming on behalf of or through the Contractor, under this Agreement, or by reason of any individual's actions or failure to act in any way connected with this Agreement, whether or not the action shall have been within or without an individual's scope of authority. The scope of this provision includes personal injury to any personal interest (commercial or otherwise), physical injury (including death), property damages, and any pecuniary damages where such injuries or damages result from or arise out of negligence. The Contractor further waives any and all rights to make a claim or

commence an action or special proceeding, in law or equity, against any of the aforementioned individuals, and the Contractor hereby assigns its complete right, title, and interest in any such claim, action, or special proceeding to BERS.

28. Conflict Of Interest

A. Except in accordance with applicable provisions of law and regulations governing such conduct, the Contractor may not have on its Board of Directors (or comparable body), employ, or contract for the services of I) any present employee of BERS, or II) any person who is presently on leave from employment with BERS, or III) any former employee of BERS.

B. The Contractor warrants that, other than a bona fide employee or contractor regularly working as a sales representative for the Contractor, no person, selling agency, or other entity has solicited or secured this Agreement, or has been employed or retained to do so, for a commission, percentage, brokerage fee or contingent fee.

C. The Contractor shall not give, and warrants that it has not given or promised to give, any gift or thing of value to any officer, employee or other person whose salary is payable in whole or part from BERS or City funds, or other funds under this Agreement. The phrase "gift or thing of value" shall include, without limitation, money, tangible goods, services, loans, promises or negotiable instruments.

D. If the Contractor violates any provision of this paragraph, BERS may, at its option, I) cancel and terminate this Agreement and be relieved of all liability hereunder, II) deduct all amounts paid by the Contractor or other value given by the Contractor in violation of this paragraph, from payments made or to be made to the Contractor under this or any other Agreement at any time, III) require the refund of any funds paid hereunder, or IV) any combination of the foregoing. Any breach of the warranties or violation of the provisions of this paragraph shall be grounds to preclude the Contractor or its principals as a responsible bidder on other BERS or City contractors.

29. Antitrust

The Contractor assigns to BERS its right, title and interest in and to any claim or cause of action arising under the antitrust laws of New York State or the United States relating to the goods or Services purchased or procured by BERS pursuant to this Agreement.

30. Merger and Choice Of Law

This written Agreement constitutes the entire agreement of the parties, and not other prior or contemporaneous agreement, oral or otherwise, regarding the subject matter of this Agreement shall be deemed to exist or bind any of the parties hereto, or to vary any of the terms contained herein. This agreement shall be governed and construed in accordance with the laws of the State of New York without regard to its conflict of law rules.

31. Participation In An International Boycott

A. The Contractor agrees that neither it nor any substantially-owned affiliated company is participating or shall participate in an international boycott in violation of the provisions of the Export Administration Act of 1979, as amended, or the regulations of the United States Department of Commerce promulgated thereunder.

B. Upon the final determination by the Commerce Department or any other agency of the United States that the Contractor or a substantially-owned affiliated company thereof, participated, or is participating, in an international boycotting violation of the provisions of the Export Administration Act of 1979, as amended, or the regulations promulgated thereunder, the Executive Director or his designee may, at his option, render forfeit and void this contract.

32. No Discrimination

A. The Contractor will strictly comply with all applicable Federal, State and Local laws pertaining to the subject of discrimination on any ground, as they may now read or as they may hereafter be amended.

B. The Contractor is, and will remain, an Equal Opportunity Employer. In addition to the other requirements of this paragraph 32, the Contractor shall provide equal opportunity for all qualified persons, and shall not discriminate in employment because of race, creed, gender, color, age, sexual orientation, national origin, handicapping condition, marital status, or religion and shall promote the full realization of equal opportunity.

C. Pursuant to the provisions of the New York State Labor Law, the Contractor agrees, in its operations performed within the State of New York:

I. That in the hiring of employees for the performance of work under this contract or any subcontract hereunder, not any person acting on behalf of such contractor or subcontractor, shall by origin discriminate against any citizen of the State of New York who is qualified and available to perform the work to which the employment relates;

II. That no contractor, subcontractor, nor any person on his behalf shall, in any manner, discriminate against or intimidate any employee hired for the performance of work under this contract on account of race, creed, color, sex or national origin;

III. That there may be deducted from the amount payable to the contractor by the state or municipality under this contract a penalty of five dollars for each person for each calendar day during which such person was discriminated against or intimidated in violation of the provisions of the contract;

IV. That this contract may be canceled or terminated by the state or municipality, and all monies due or to become due hereunder may be forfeited, for a second or any subsequent violation of the terms or conditions of this section of the contract;

V. The aforesaid provisions of this section covering every contract for or on behalf of the state or a municipality for the manufacture, sale or distribution of materials, equipment or supplies shall be limited to operations performed within the territorial limits of the State of New York; and

VI. That BERS is, for purposes of this subparagraph C., a "state or municipality."

33. Equal Employment Opportunity Requirements For Professional Contractors

A. Definition of Terms for the Implementation of a Program of Affirmative Action.

The following terms, when used in this paragraph, shall have the meanings given for them

I. "Employee": Any person employed full or part-time in any capacity by the Contractor or sub-contractor.

II. "Minority Groups and Affected Classes": Blacks, Hispanics (Non-European), Asian Americans, American Indians, females and individuals with handicapping conditions.

III. "Program of Affirmative Action": A detailed, result-oriented set of written procedures submitted by a Contractor or sub-contractor which when implemented with conscious effort results in compliance with the Equal Opportunity Policy herein, through full utilization and equal treatment of minorities,

women and individuals with handicapping conditions at all levels and in all segments of the Contractor's or sub-contractor's work force. An effective Program of Affirmative Action shall include but not necessarily be limited to, the following elements:

- a. Development or reaffirmation of the Contractor's or sub-contractor's Equal Opportunity Policy;
- b. Dissemination of the Policy;
- c. Responsibility for implementation;
- d. A survey and analysis of employment at all levels and in all categories and aspects of the Contractor's or sub-contractor's work force, which determines if and at which levels, categories, and aspects there is an under-utilization of minority and female employees;
- e. Establishment of goals and timetables toward the attainment of which the Contractor's or subcontractor's good faith effort must be directed to remedy any identifiable underutilization of minorities and women;
- f. An analysis of employment policies and practices, including but not limited to seniority system, recruitment, training, promotion, insurance and job benefits and their effects upon minorities, women and individuals with handicapping conditions;
- g. Corrective actions taken, or to be taken, toward the elimination of any employment policy or practice having a discriminatory effect on minority group members and women; and
- h. Description of the Contractor's efforts to engage, as sub-contractors, bona fide minority business enterprises and female enterprises.

IV "Goals and Timetables": Projected levels of achievement resulting from an analysis by the Contractor or sub-contractor of its deficiencies, and of what it can reasonably do to remedy them within a specified time period.

V. "Underutilization": Having fewer minorities, women and individuals with handicapping conditions in a particular job classification than would reasonably be expected by their availability in the appropriate labor force.

VI. "The Office": The Office of Equal Opportunity of BERS.

B. Required Program of Affirmative Action

I. The Contractor is required to identify and eliminate overt and covert discriminatory practices and implement the Program of Affirmative Action. Upon demand of the Office the Contractor shall submit to the Office a detailed written Program of Affirmative Action (hereinafter referred to as a "P.A.A."). In the event the Contractor submits a P.A.A. not acceptable to the Office, the Office will require the correction or revision of the P .A.A. to its satisfaction.

II. In the event the Contractor fails to submit such an acceptable P .A.A. within the time specified in the demand, the Contractor may be declared in default. The Director shall be the sole judge of the P.A.A.'s acceptability.

The P.A.A. shall:

- a. Apply to all Board of Education professional services contracts with the Contractor;
- b. Encompass all phases of the employment process, including evaluation of job classification to ensure job relatedness, recruitment, selection, validity of examinations, retention, layoffs, seniority, assignments, training, promotion, salary and benefits;
- c. Fulfill the following requirements:
 - i. Include measurable goals, reasonable timetables and specific programs to be implemented by the contractor to identify and eliminate deficiencies in employment practices with respect to the manifest underutilization of members of minority groups and members of affected classes;
 - ii. Include a statement of the present utilization of minority group members and women in the Contractor's work force and a projection of the minority utilization in the Contractor's work force for the life of the Contract and for at least a one-year period succeeding its completion. This statement and projection shall include present and project 1) rates or hiring and promotion or minority group members and women in specific job categories at each wage rate within each level of employment and according to major organizational unit, and (2) percentages of minority group and women utilization in specific job categories at each wage rate within each level of employment, and according to major organizational work force;
 - iii. Include all of the Contractor's facilities within New York City as well as those facilities located elsewhere within the continental limits of the United States;
 - iv. Specify the union(s) or other employee organizations to which the Contractor's employees belong, and shall include commitments to good faith efforts to effect Equal Opportunity changes directly or indirectly, in programs by such unions or organizations to recruit, train, qualify or otherwise select members, if such changes are deemed necessary. The P.A.A. shall also include a copy of any agreement with an employee association which affects employment policies and practices;
 - v. Be submitted in such format as shall be specified by the Director of the Office; vi. Include a commitment to submit to the Director a separate P.A.A., of the form (i) to (v) hereof, for each subcontractor prior to approval of the subcontractor by BERS;
 - vii. Include a written evidence or proof which shows that minority entrepreneurs have been solicited and given an equal opportunity to submit proposals and that such proposals have been given equal consideration for award;
 - viii. Contain commitments as to goals for minority and affected classes employment and adoption of equal employment practices not less strict than the commitments contained in the Contractor's most recent P.A.A. which was approved by the Office.

C. Compliance Inspection Report

Upon demand of the Office, the Contractor shall, within the specified time, submit to the Office a Compliance Inspection Report. The completed Compliance Inspection Report must be returned to the Office within such time as is specified in the requisition for information accompanying the report form.

D. Conferences

The Contractor shall attend such conferences as shall be required by the Office for the purpose of acquainting it with the statutory and contractual requirements and what specific measures shall constitute an acceptable P.A..A..

E. Implementation of P.A..A..

During the Term of the Contractor, the Contractor shall successfully implement the P.A..A.. approved by the Office. F. Board of Review

If, in the opinion of the Office, the Contractor has breached any of the requirements of paragraphs 31 or 32 hereof, it may seek to have the Contractor declared in default by the Evaluation Committee as provided elsewhere herein.

For further information concerning these rules, regulations or procedures, contractors may consult with the Office of Equal Opportunity of BERS.

34. MacBride Principles Provisions for Board of Education Contractors

ARTICLE I. MACBRIDE PRINCIPLES PART A

In accordance with section 6-115.1 of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, the Contractor stipulates that such Contractor and any individual or legal entity in which the Contractor holds a ten percent or greater ownership interest and any individual or legal entity that holds a ten percent or greater ownership interest in the Contract either 1) have no business operations in Northern Ireland, or 2) shall take lawful steps in good faith to conduct any business operations they have in Northern Ireland in accordance with the MacBride Principles, and shall permit independent monitoring of their compliance with such principles.

PART B

For purposes of this section, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

1. "MacBride Principles" shall mean those principles relating to nondiscrimination in employment and freedom of workplace opportunity which require employers doing business in Northern Ireland to:

a. increase the representation of individuals from underrepresented religious groups in the work force, including managerial, supervisory, administrative, clerical and technical jobs;

b. take steps to promote adequate security for the protection of employees from underrepresented religious groups both at the workplace and while traveling to and from work;

- c. ban provocative religious or political emblems from the workplace;
- d. publicly advertise all job openings and make special recruitment efforts to attract applicants from underrepresented religious groups;
- e. establish layoff, recall and termination procedures which do not in practice favor a particular religious group;
- f. abolish all job reservations, apprenticeship restrictions and different employment criteria which discriminate on the basis of religion;
- g. develop training programs that will prepare substantial numbers of current employees from underrepresented religious groups for skilled jobs, including the expansion of existing programs and the creation of new programs to train, upgrade and improve the skills of workers from underrepresented religious groups;
- h. establish procedures to assess, identify and actively recruit employees from underrepresented religious groups with potential for further advancement; and
- i. appoint a senior management staff member to oversee affirmative action efforts and develop a timetable to ensure their full implementation.

ARTICLE II. ENFORCEMENT OF ARTICLE I.

The Contractor agrees that the covenants and representations in Article I above are material conditions to this contract. In the event the contracting entity receives information that the Contractor who made the stipulation required by this section is in violation thereof, the contracting entity shall review such information and give the Contractor an opportunity to respond. If the contracting entity finds that a violation has occurred, the entity shall have the right to declare the Contractor in default and/or terminate this contract for cause and procure the supplies, services or work from another source in any manner the entity deems proper. In the event of such termination, the Contractor shall pay to the entity, or the entity in its sole discretion may withhold from any amounts otherwise payable to the Contractor, the difference between the contract price for the uncompleted portion of this contract and the cost to the contracting entity of completing performance of this contract either itself or by engaging another contractor or contractors. In the case of a requirements contract, the Contractor shall be liable for such difference in price for the entire amount of supplies required by the contracting entity for the uncompleted term of its contract. In the case of a construction contract, the contracting entity shall also have the right to hold the Contractor in partial or total default in accordance with the default provisions of this contract, and/or may seek debarment or suspension of the Contractor. The rights and remedies of the entity hereunder shall be in addition to, and not in lieu of, any rights and remedies the entity has pursuant to this contract or by operation of law.

35. Non-Collusive Bidding

If this Agreement was awarded by BERS based upon the submission of bids or proposals, Contractor warrants under penalty of perjury, that its bid or price quotation was arrived at independently and without collusion aimed at restricting competition.

36. Set-Off Rights

The BERS shall have all of its common law, equitable and statutory rights of set-off. These rights shall include, but not be limited to, the Board's option to withhold for the purposes of set-off any moneys due and owing to the BERS with regard to this agreement, any other agreement with the BERS, including any agreement for a term commencing prior to the term of this Agreement, plus any amounts due and owing to the Board for any other reason. The BERS shall exercise its set-off rights in accordance with normal BERS practices including, in cases of set-off pursuant to an audit, the finalization of such audit by the BERS, its representatives, or the State or City Comptroller.

37. Fair and Ethical Business Practices

Fair and Ethical Business Practices shall be strictly adhered to during the term of this Agreement. During the term of this Agreement, Contractor shall not:

- A. File with a government office or employee, a written instrument which intentionally contains a false statement or false information;
- B. Intentionally falsify business records;
- C. Give, or offer to give, money, gifts or anything of value or any other benefit to a labor official or public servant with intent to influence that labor official or public servant with respect to any of his or her official acts, duties or decisions as a labor official or public servant;
- D. Give or offer to give, money, gifts or anything of value or any other benefit to a labor official or public servant for any reason;
- E. Give, or offer to give, money, gifts or other benefit(s) to an official or employee of a private business with intent to induce that official or employee to engage in unethical or illegal business practices;
- F. Knowingly participate in the criminal activities of any organized crime group, syndicate or "family," nor shall any person employed by or associated with any such organized crime "family," syndicate or group participate through criminal means in any of the business affairs of Contractor.

38. Indemnification

The Contractor shall defend, indemnify and hold BERS and the City harmless from and against any and all claims, suits, damages, judgments, liabilities, costs, and expenses, including reasonable attorneys' fees, to which they may be subject because of or related to any claim that the Copyrightable Materials or their use constitutes an infringement by

the Contractor or a violation by the Contractor of the copyright, patent, trademark, or any other property or personal right of any third party. For the purposes of this provision, "Copyrightable Materials" shall include any reports, documents, data, photographs, software, and/or other materials provided pursuant to this agreement, regardless of whether the copyright in such materials is or shall be owned by BERS, the Contractor, or third parties. This indemnification shall survive the termination or expiration of this Agreement. This indemnification provision shall not be limited in any way by the Contractor's obligations to obtain insurance as provided under this Agreement. Furthermore, Contractor shall defend and settle at its sole expense all suits or proceedings brought against Contractor arising out of the foregoing. However, in cases involving software, no such settlement shall be made that prevents BERS from continuing to use the software without BERS' prior written consent, which consent shall not be withheld unreasonably.

39. Notice to Bidders, Proposers, Contractors, and Contract Renewers

This contract includes a provision concerning the protection of employees for whistleblowing activity, pursuant to New York City Local Law Nos. 30-2012 and 33-2012, effective October 18, 2012 and September 18, 2012, respectively. The provisions apply to contracts with a value in excess of \$100,000.

Local Law No. 33-2012, the Whistleblower Protection Expansion Act ("WPEA"), prohibits a contractor or its subcontractor from taking an adverse personnel action against an employee or officer for whistleblower activity in connection with a City contract; requires that certain City contracts include a provision to that effect; and provides that a contractor or subcontractor may be subject to penalties and injunctive relief if a court finds that it retaliated in violation of the WPEA. The WPEA is codified at Section 12-113 of the New York City Administrative Code.

Local Law No. 30-2012 requires a contractor to prominently post information explaining how its employees can report allegations of fraud, false claims, criminality, or corruption in connection with a City contract to City officials and the rights and remedies afforded to employees for whistleblowing activity. Local Law No. 30-2012 is codified at Section 6-132 of the New York City Administrative Code.

40. NYC Earned Safe and Sick Time Act Contract Rider

A. Introduction and General Provisions.

1. The Earned Safe and Sick Time Act ("ESSTA"), codified at Title 20, Chapter 8 of the New York City Administrative Code, also known as the "Paid Safe and Sick Leave Law," requires covered employees (as defined in Admin. Code § 20-912) in New York City ("City") to be provided with paid safe and sick time. Contractors of the City or of other governmental entities may be required to provide safe and sick time pursuant to the ESSTA. The ESSTA is enforced by the City's Department of Consumer and Worker Protection ("DCWP"), which has promulgated 6 RCNY §§ 7-101 and 201 et seq. ("DCWP Rules").

2. The Contractor agrees to comply in all respects with the ESSTA and the DCWP Rules, and as amended, if applicable, in the performance of this agreement. The Contractor further acknowledges that such

compliance is a material term of this agreement and that failure to comply with the ESSTA in performance of this agreement may result in its termination.

3. The Contractor must notify (with a copy to DCWP at ComplianceMonitoring@dcwp.nyc.gov) the Agency Chief Contracting Officer of the City Agency or other entity with whom it is contracting in writing within 10 days of receipt of a complaint (whether oral or written) or notice of investigation regarding the ESSTA involving the performance of this agreement. Additionally, the Contractor must cooperate with DCWP's guidance and must comply with DCWP's subpoenas, requests for information, and other document demands as set forth in the ESSTA and the DCWP Rules. More information is available at <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/dca/about/paid-sick-leave-what-employers-need-to-know.page>.

4. Upon conclusion of a DCWP investigation, Contractor will receive a findings letter detailing any employee relief and civil penalties owed. Pursuant to the findings, Contractor will have the opportunity to settle any violations and cure the breach of this agreement caused by failure to comply with the ESSTA either i) without a trial by entering into a consent order or ii) appearing before an impartial judge at the City's administrative tribunal. In addition to and notwithstanding any other rights and remedies available to the City, non-payment of relief and penalties owed pursuant to a consent order or final adjudication within 30 days of such consent order or final adjudication may result in the termination of this agreement without further opportunity to settle or cure the violations.

5. The ESSTA is briefly summarized below for the convenience of the Contractor. The Contractor is advised to review the ESSTA and the DCWP Rules in their entirety. The Contractor may go to www.nyc.gov/PaidSickLeave for resources for employers, such as Frequently Asked Questions, timekeeping tools and model forms, and an event calendar of upcoming presentations and webinars at which the Contractor can get more information about how to comply with the ESSTA and the DCWP Rules. The Contractor acknowledges that it is responsible for compliance with the ESSTA and the DCWP Rules notwithstanding any inconsistent language contained herein.

B. Pursuant to the ESSTA and DCWP Rules: Applicability, Accrual, and Use.

1. An employee who works within the City must be provided paid safe and sick time¹. Employers with one hundred or more employees are required to provide 56 hours of safe and sick time for an employee each calendar year. Employers with fewer than one hundred employees are required to provide 40 hours of sick leave each calendar year. Employers must provide a minimum of one hour of safe and sick time for every 30 hours worked by an employee and compensation for such safe and sick time must be provided at the greater of the employee's regular hourly rate or the minimum wage at the time the paid safe or sick time is taken. Employers are not discouraged or prohibited from providing more generous safe and sick time policies than what the ESSTA requires.

¹ Pursuant to the ESSTA, if fewer than five employees work for the same employer, and the employer had a net income of less than one million dollars during the previous tax year, such employer has the option of providing such employees uncompensated safe and sick time.

2. Employees have the right to determine how much safe and sick time they will use, provided that an employer may set a reasonable minimum increment for the use of safe and sick time not to exceed four hours per day. For the use of safe time or sick time beyond the set minimum increment, an employer may set fixed periods of up to thirty minutes beyond the minimum increment. In addition, an employee may carry over up to 40 or 56 hours of unused safe and sick time to the following calendar year, provided that no employer is required to carry over unused paid safe and sick time if the employee is paid for such unused safe and sick time and the employer provides the employee with at least the legally required amount of paid safe and sick time for such employee for the immediately subsequent calendar year on the first day of such calendar year.

3. An employee entitled to safe and sick time pursuant to the ESSTA may use safe and sick time for any of the following:

- a. such employee's mental illness, physical illness, injury, or health condition or the care of such illness, injury, or condition or such employee's need for medical diagnosis or preventive medical care;
- b. such employee's care of a family member (an employee's child, spouse, domestic partner, parent, sibling, grandchild, or grandparent, the child or parent of an employee's spouse or domestic partner, any other individual related by blood to the employee, and any other individual whose close association with the employee is the equivalent of a family relationship) who has a mental illness, physical illness, injury or health condition or who has a need for medical diagnosis or preventive medical care;
- c. closure of such employee's place of business by order of a public official due to a public health emergency;
- d. such employee's need to care for a child whose school or childcare provider has been closed due to a public health emergency; or
- e. when the employee or a family member has been the victim of a family offense matter, sexual offense, stalking, or human trafficking:
 - 1. to obtain services from a domestic violence shelter, rape crisis center, or other shelter or services program for relief from a family offense matter, sexual offense, stalking, or human trafficking;
 - 2. to participate in safety planning, temporarily or permanently relocate, or take other actions to increase the safety of the employee or employee's family members from future family offense matters, sexual offenses, stalking, or human trafficking;
 - 3. to meet with a civil attorney or other social service provider to obtain information and advice on, and prepare for or participate in any criminal or civil proceeding, including but not limited to, matters related to a family offense matter, sexual offense, stalking, human trafficking, custody, visitation, matrimonial issues, orders of protection, immigration, housing, discrimination in employment, housing or consumer credit;
 - 4. to file a complaint or domestic incident report with law enforcement;
 - 5. to meet with a district attorney's office;
 - 6. to enroll children in a new school; or
 - 7. to take other actions necessary to maintain, improve, or restore the physical, psychological, or economic, health or safety of the employee or the employee's family member or to protect those who associate or work with the employee.

4. An employer must not require an employee, as a condition of taking safe and sick time, to search for a replacement. However, where the employee's need for safe and sick time is foreseeable, an employer may require an employee to provide reasonable notice of the need to use safe and sick time. For an absence of

more than three consecutive work days, an employer may require reasonable documentation that the use of safe and sick time was needed for a reason listed in Admin. Code § 20-914; and/or written confirmation that an employee used safe and sick time pursuant to the ESSTA. However, an employer may not require documentation specifying the nature of a medical condition, require disclosure of the details of a medical condition, or require disclosure of the details of a family offense matter, sexual offense, stalking, or human trafficking, as a condition of providing safe and sick time. Health information and information concerning family offenses, sexual offenses, stalking or human trafficking obtained solely due to an employee's use of safe and sick time pursuant to the ESSTA must be treated by the employer as confidential. An employer must reimburse an employee for all reasonable costs or expenses incurred in obtaining such documentation for the employer.

5. An employer must provide to all employees a written policy explaining its method of calculating sick time, policies regarding the use of safe and sick time (including any permissible discretionary conditions on use), and policies regarding carry-over of unused time at the end of the year, among other topics. It must provide the policy to employees using a delivery method that reasonably ensures that employees receive the policy. If such employer has not provided its written policy, it may not deny safe and sick time to an employee because of non-compliance with such a policy.

6. An employer must provide a pay statement or other form of written documentation that informs the employee of the amount of safe/sick time accrued and used during the relevant pay period and the total balance of the employee's accrued safe/sick time available for use.

7. Safe and sick time to which an employee is entitled must be paid no later than the payday for the next regular payroll period beginning after the safe and sick time was used.

C. *Exemptions and Exceptions.* Notwithstanding the above, the ESSTA does not apply to any of the following:

1. an independent contractor who does not meet the definition of employee under N.Y. Labor Law § 190(2);
2. an employee covered by a valid collective bargaining agreement, if the provisions of the ESSTA are expressly waived in such agreement and such agreement provides a benefit comparable to that provided by the ESSTA for such employee;
3. an audiologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, or speech language pathologist who is licensed by the New York State Department of Education and who calls in for work assignments at will, determines their own schedule, has the ability to reject or accept any assignment referred to them, and is paid an average hourly wage that is at least four times the federal minimum wage;
4. an employee in a work study program under Section 2753 of Chapter 42 of the United States Code;
5. an employee whose work is compensated by a qualified scholarship program as that term is defined in the Internal Revenue Code, Section 117 of Chapter 20 of the United States Code; or

6. a participant in a Work Experience Program (WEP) under N.Y. Social Services Law § 336-

D. **Retaliation Prohibited.** An employer shall not take any adverse action against an employee that penalizes the employee for, or is reasonably likely to deter the employee from or interfere with the employee exercising or attempting in good faith to exercise any right provided by the ESSTA. In addition, an employer shall not interfere with any investigation, proceeding, or hearing pursuant to the ESSTA.

E. **Notice of Rights.**

1. An employer must provide its employees with written notice of their rights pursuant to the ESSTA. Such notice must be in English and the primary language spoken by an employee, provided that DCWP has made available a translation into such language. Downloadable notices are available on DCWP's website at <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/dca/about/Paid-Safe-Sick-Leave-Notice-of-Employee-Rights.page>. The notice must be provided to the employees by a method that reasonably ensures personal receipt by the employee.

2. Any person or entity that willfully violates these notice requirements is subject to a civil penalty in an amount not to exceed \$50.00 for each employee who was not given appropriate notice.

F. **Records.** An employer must retain records documenting its compliance with the ESSTA for a period of at least three years, and must allow DCWP to access such records in furtherance of an investigation related to an alleged violation of the ESSTA.

G. **Enforcement and Penalties.**

1. Upon receiving a complaint alleging a violation of the ESSTA, DCWP must investigate such complaint. DCWP may also open an investigation to determine compliance with the ESSTA on its own initiative. Upon notification of a complaint or an investigation by DCWP, the employer must provide DCWP with a written response and any such other information as DCWP may request. If DCWP believes that a violation of the ESSTA has occurred, it has the right to issue a notice of violation to the employer.

2. DCWP has the power to grant an employee or former employee all appropriate relief as set forth in Admin. Code § 20-924(d). Such relief may include, but is not limited to, treble damages for the wages that should have been paid; statutory damages for unlawful retaliation; and damages, including statutory damages, full compensation for wages and benefits lost, and reinstatement, for unlawful discharge. In addition, DCWP may impose on an employer found to have violated the ESSTA civil penalties not to exceed \$500.00 for a first violation, \$750.00 for a second violation within two years of the first violation, and \$1,000.00 for each succeeding violation within two years of the previous violation. When an employer has a policy or practice of not providing or refusing to allow the use of safe and sick time to its employees, DCWP may seek penalties and relief on a per employee basis

3. Pursuant to Admin. Code § 20-924.2, (a) where reasonable cause exists to believe that an employer is engaged in a pattern or practice of violations of the ESSTA, the Corporation Counsel may commence a civil action on behalf of the City in a court of competent jurisdiction by filing a complaint setting forth facts relating to such pattern or practice and requesting relief, which may include injunctive relief, civil penalties and any other appropriate relief. Nothing in § 20-924.2 prohibits DCWP from exercising its authority under section 20-924 or the Charter, provided that a civil action pursuant to § 20-924.2 shall not have previously been commenced.

H. *More Generous Policies and Other Legal Requirements.* Nothing in the ESSTA is intended to discourage, prohibit, diminish, or impair the adoption or retention of a more generous safe and sick time policy, or the obligation of an employer to comply with any contract, collective bargaining agreement, employment benefit plan or other agreement providing more generous safe and sick time. The ESSTA provides minimum requirements pertaining to safe and sick time and does not preempt, limit, or otherwise affect the applicability of any other law, regulation, rule, requirement, policy or standard that provides for greater accrual or use by employees of safe and sick leave or time, whether paid or unpaid, or that extends other protections to employees. The ESSTA may not be construed as creating or imposing any requirement in conflict with any federal or state law, rule or regulation.

[End of Section]

APPENDIX B: MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS REQUIREMENTS

Vendors must include below their responses to each Minimum Qualification Requirement of Section 5 of the RFQ. Use as much space as necessary and/or attach any required and/or supporting documentation, if applicable, at the end of this section when submitting your response. Respondents must address **each** Minimum Qualification Requirement listed below. The entity submitting the Proposal must meet on their own, without the need to rely on any subcontractor(s) or other partners, all Minimum Qualifications. Proposals that fail to meet **all** Minimum Qualifications **will not** be considered.

- 5.1.** Provide evidence of being actively engaged in providing IT audit services as those described in this RFQ, preferably within the public sector or retirement systems.

- 5.2.** Provide evidence of having a minimum of five (5) years of successful experience in providing IT audit services, preferably within the public sector or retirement systems.

- 5.3.** Provide evidence of certified professionals such as Certified Information Systems Auditor (“CISA”), Certified Information Security Manager (“CISM”), Certified in Risk and Information Systems Control (“CRISC”), or equivalent.

5.4. Freedom from actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest that could impair objectivity.

- 5.5.** Provide at least three (3) letters of reference from previous engagements within the last five (5) years where similar services were rendered. Each reference must include contact information (client's name, contract person, title, address, telephone number, and email), state the dates, locations, description of the services provided, and any outcomes or results.

[End of Section]

APPENDIX C: BASIS FOR AWARD CRITERIA

Vendors must provide below their responses to each **Basis for Award Criteria** listed in **Section 13** of this RFQ. Use as much space as necessary and/or attach any required and/or supporting documentation at the end of this section when submitting your response to each subsection. Respondents must address **each** criteria listed below.

- 13.1. Experience and Expertise:** Experience in performing Information Technology audits in similar settings, including public sector and retirement systems. Respondents must provide details of prior successful experience related to the required services, including effective program design, management, outcomes, and evaluation, as well as in-depth knowledge of regulations impacting retirement systems and public sector IT environments and relevant cybersecurity frameworks.

13.2. Approach and Methodology: The comprehensiveness of the audit approach, including the methodologies and tools proposed. Respondents must provide a detailed program plan describing the approach and methodology on how Respondent will successfully and effectively execute the required services.

13.3. Qualifications of Personnel: Expertise and certifications of the team members assigned to the engagement are relevant and directly related to the required services.

13.4. Cost Effectiveness (Pricing Proposal): Pricing Proposal (Budget) reflects a reasonable relationship with the proposed work, and competitiveness and appropriateness of the proposed costs.

[END OF DOCUMENT]