Question	Answer
Is there any incumbent/recompete or this is a brand-new project? If yes, could you please provide us with their award number or even if the customer bought similar services in the past.	This is a new requirement. There is no incumbent.
The base period is identified as six months, from September 5, 2026, through March 4, 2027. However, CLIN 0003 includes a quantity of 12 months for Administration. Should the quantity for CLIN 0003 be six months or 12 months?	See amended Price Schedule.
PWS Section 4.1 states that VA INS will provide a minimum of 1,000 cases during the base period, while the price schedule includes 1,500 Designated Beneficiary cases and 750 Alternate Beneficiary cases. Are the CLIN quantities minimums, estimates, maximum quantities or anticipated quantities?	PWS Section 4.1 states that a minimum of 1,000 cases will be provided during the base period. If the Contractor is successful at locating a beneficiary for these 1,000 cases, further cases will be provided from the total inventory listed in PWS Section 1.0.
Are the case quantities listed for each option period guaranteed minimum quantities, estimated quantities or maximum quantities?	The 1,000 cases for the base period is guaranteed. The other case quantities listed are estimated quantities. The total pending inventory of cases is listed in PWS Section 1.0.
Please clarify the services and costs that should be included in the monthly Administration CLIN. Is the Administration CLIN payable monthly regardless of the number of cases referred or successfully completed?	See amended Price Schedule.
Will the contractor receive payment for a documented and compliant search when the contractor exhausts required research sources but cannot locate the beneficiary, identify an alternate beneficiary or confirm a death?	Per PWS Section 5.2.5, the Contractor will receive payment for either locating the named beneficiary, identifying an alternate beneficiary, or confirming death. Payment will not be made when none of these conditions is met.
What documentation must be provided for VA to determine that a locator case has been successfully completed and accepted for payment?	VA Form 29-4125, along with a copy of the Veteran's death certificate.
For Alternate Beneficiary cases, PWS Section 5.2.5.B references a claim-form payment not to exceed 10% of the per-case rate established under Section 5.2.5.A.1. Should the Alternate Beneficiary claim-form payment be based on the Designated Beneficiary rate or the applicable Alternate Beneficiary rate?	PWS updated to reflect that the Alternate Beneficiary claim-form payment will be based on the applicable Alternate Beneficiary rate.
Are the Claim Form Submission CLIN quantities estimates only? If multiple eligible beneficiaries are identified under one case and each submits a valid payable claim, will each accepted claim be counted as a separate payable unit?	If multiple beneficiaries are eligible for payment, payment will be made for each eligible beneficiary that submits a valid, payable claim.
1. Please identify the required turnaround time for: a. electronic address Searches b. Death determinations c. Designatured beneficiary cases d. Alternate beneficiary and genealogy searches e. Initial outreach f. Final case reporting	There is no required turnaround time; however, per PWS Section 5.2.4.D, Monthly Progress Reports are required to be submitted to the VA to track progress on the cases.
PWS Table 1 identifies two service classifications: Designated Beneficiary Locator and Outreach and Alternate Beneficiary Locator and Outreach. However, the QASP references Tiers 1, 2 and 3 and success criteria of 90% for Tiers 1 and 2 and 70% for Tier 3. Please define all three tiers and identify the applicable performance standard for each CLIN.	PWS updated to remove reference to Tiers 1, 2, and 3 in the QASP.
Is the contractor responsible only for identifying and documenting potential alternate beneficiaries, or must the contractor make a legal determination regarding which individual is entitled to benefits under the laws of the Veteran's state of domicile?	The Contractor will be required to follow federal laws for identifying and documenting potential alternate beneficiaries, specifically, Public Law No. 117-313 (Faster Payment to Veteran's Survivors Act of 2022). State laws are not applicable.
If state succession or domicile law must be analyzed, is the contractor required to use licensed attorneys or other legally qualified personnel?	The Contractor will be required to follow federal laws for identifying and documenting potential alternate beneficiaries, specifically, Public Law No. 117-313 (Faster Payment to Veteran's Survivors Act of 2022). State laws are not applicable.
Will VA provide the permissible-purpose documentation or other authorization necessary for the contractor to use commercial financial or credit-reporting databases for beneficiary-location purposes?	No
Are there any prohibited commercial databases, genealogy resources, social-media sources or public-record sources that contractors may not use?	No.
Is the contractor responsible for all costs associated with establishing and operating the required mailing address or PO Box and processing returned mail?	Yes, per PWS Section 5.2.4.C, the Contractor will set up and process return mail.
Please confirm whether every contractor and subcontractor employee who accesses case information must complete a Low Risk/NACI investigation.	Please refer to VA Handbook 6500 for Security Requirements
May personnel begin work under interim suitability approval while the NACI is pending?	Please refer to VA Handbook 6500 for Security Requirements
Will VA accept a current reciprocal federal background investigation completed for another agency?	Please refer to VA Handbook 6500 for Security Requirements
Will the Government initiate and fund the required investigations and fingerprinting, or must those costs be included in the contractor's pricing?	Please refer to VA Handbook 6500 for Security Requirements
Are there citizenship, residency or geographic-location restrictions for contractor and subcontractor personnel who will access Veteran or beneficiary information?	Contractors are required to adhere to the requirements of Clause 52.222-54, as included in this solicitation. See RFO 22.1802-1
Will VA provide an encrypted file-transfer environment, or must the contractor establish and maintain the secure SFTP, HTTPS or encrypted shared-folder solution?	File-transfer can be completed via secured email, secured shared site, or other method, at the discretion of the Contractor, as long as the method meets applicable federal and VA security requirements. The method of file transfer should be included in the Contractor's quote.
May PII be stored in a contractor-operated cloud environment that meets applicable federal and VA security requirements, or must all information remain within a VA-provided environment?	PII may be stored in a Contractor-operated cloud environment that meets applicable federal and VA security requirements.
The PWS requires the prime contractor to perform no less than 51% of the total work. Will compliance be measured by labor cost, total contract value, labor hours, case volume or another method?	Limitations on Subcontracting compliance is measured based off total contract value. At least 51% of total contract value for this requirement must go to Small Business concerns.
May the prime use a specialized genealogy or next-of-kin research subcontractor for complex Alternate Beneficiary cases, provided the prime maintains the required workshare?	No.
The quote instructions appear to require the VAAR 852.219-75 certification when an offeror seeks SDVOSB or VOSB evaluation consideration. The attached certification states that an offer will be ineligible if the form is not completed and returned. Please confirm whether the certification is required from every small-business offeror or only offerors seeking SDVOSB/VOSB evaluation credit.	The certification at VAAR 852.219-75 is only required if the vendor is seeking SDVOSB/VOSB evaluation factor credit. If vendor is not an SDVOSB/VOSB, or is not seeking credit for SDVOSB/VOSB subcontractor, the certification is not required.
Page 1 identifies Option 4 as March 5, 2030, through March 4, 2031. The CLIN schedule identifies March 4, 2030, through March 5, 2031. Please confirm the correct Option 4 period of performance.	See amended Price Schedule.

The solicitation states that the applicable wage determination will be determined at award. Please provide the anticipated wage determination and applicable labor classifications before the quotation deadline so offerors can develop compliant firm-fixed prices	Wage Determinations are based upon the physical location of the work being performed. Until an awardee is selected, and their physical location is known, the applicable Wage Determination cannot be identified. Vendors may search for the applicable SCA Wage Determination for their locality at the following website: https://sam.gov/wage-determinations
Please confirm which proposed positions are expected to be covered by the Service Contract Labor Standards and whether any professional-employee exemptions are anticipated.	Vendors are responsible for identifying labor classifications and occupation codes applicable to staff engaged in performance of services under the requirements of the contract. For more information, see the DOL Website: https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/government-contracts/prevailing-wage-resource-book/sca-wage-determinations
The Performance Work Statement references a minimum workload of approximately 1,000 beneficiary cases during the initial six-month Base Period. However, the Price Schedule identifies the following quantities: •1,500 Designated Beneficiary Locator and Outreach cases •750 Alternate Beneficiary Locator and Outreach cases •2,250 Claim Form Submission cases Please clarify whether: •The Government anticipates a guaranteed minimum of 1,000 total beneficiary cases during the Base Period; or •Offerors should price and staff based solely on the quantities listed in the Price Schedule. Additionally, if the initial 1,000-case workload is intended for start-up planning purposes, should offerors include staffing and infrastructure costs for the full quantities shown in the Price Schedule?	PWS Section 4.1 states that a minimum of 1,000 cases will be provided during the base period. If the Contractor is successful at locating a beneficiary for these 1,000 cases, further cases will be provided from the total inventory listed in PWS Section 1.0.
The Price Schedule lists Claim Form Submission quantities that are equal to the combined quantities of Designated and Alternate Beneficiary cases. Please confirm whether every successful beneficiary location is expected to result in one Claim Form Submission, or whether these quantities represent estimated maximums for pricing purposes.	The quantities represent estimated maximums for pricing purposes.
The estimated workload changes significantly between the Base Period and each Option Period. Please confirm that the quantities shown for each Contract Line Item (CLIN) represent the Government's estimated ordering quantities for pricing purposes.	PWS Section 4.1 states that a minimum of 1,000 cases will be provided during the base period. If the Contractor is successful at locating a beneficiary for these 1,000 cases, further cases will be provided from the total inventory listed in PWS Section 1.0.
Does the Government anticipate that contractor staffing levels remain constant throughout the contract, or should staffing be adjusted based upon actual workload during each Contract Period?	The Government expects the contractor will maintain staffing levels appropriate to meet all performance requirements within the applicable period of performance.
Is one consolidated monthly report required for all Contract Line Items, or should separate reports be submitted for Designated Beneficiary Outreach, Alternate Beneficiary Outreach, Claim Form Submissions, and Contract Administration?	One consolidated monthly report is recommended; however, the VA does not have a preference between one consolidated monthly report or separate monthly reports.
Will the Government confirm whether telework and/or remote work will be permitted under this contract? If permitted, will the Government please clarify the extent to which Contractor personnel may perform work remotely?	The Government has not identified that any of the agency's requirements, to include security requirements, cannot be met if telecommuting is permitted. In accordance with 41 U.S.C. 3306(f), telecommuting is not restricted.
Will the Government please clarify the intended pricing structure for the CLINs? Specifically: Should CLIN XXX3 (Administration) be priced as a firm-fixed-price labor CLIN, while all other CLINs are priced as firm-fixed-price per-transaction CLINs?	firm fixed price labor clin
Will the Government please clarify whether the anticipated increase in case volume during the option periods is expected to require additional staffing beyond that needed to support the 1,000 cases released during the base period? If so, should Offerors account for the associated increase in staffing and contract costs in their pricing proposals?	PWS Section 1.0 provides the total pending inventory of cases that may require locator and outreach services. Once the initial pending inventory has been completed, which may take multiple years, the ongoing estimate is 2,000 additional cases per year.
Will the Government please clarify whether Offerors should exclude labor escalation from proposed pricing in accordance with FAR 52.222-43 and pursue any applicable increases through a request for equitable adjustment during contract performance, or whether Offerors are expected to include anticipated labor escalation in their pricing at the time of proposal submission?	Vendors should price in accordance with standard industry practice. Equitable Price Adjustments under FAR 52.222-43 will be conducted in accordance with the language of the clause.
PWS Section 4.2 states that work will be performed at the Contractor's facility. Will the Government clarify how cases will be provided to the Contractor for processing, including the method and frequency of case transmission?	File-transfer can be completed via secured email, secured shared site, or other method, at the discretion of the Contractor, as long as the method meets applicable federal and VA security requirements. The method of file transfer should be included in the
Will the Government please clarify the Contractor-furnished equipment requirements for this effort, including any applicable Government specifications, minimum technical standards, or configuration requirements that must be met to perform the work?	The Contractor is expected to use their own furnished equipment.
Will the Government please clarify whether the Contractor is expected to procure and maintain any required subscription-based software licenses, or whether the Government will provide access to the necessary software and systems for contract performance?	The Government will not be providing any equipment, software, or software licenses to contractors in support of this requirement.
If research-related software subscriptions are required for contract performance, will the Government please provide guidance regarding the types of subscriptions or tools it expects Contractors to utilize?	The types of subscriptions or tools used is at the discretion of the Contractor.
Will the Government please provide information regarding the market research conducted in support of this requirement, including any assumptions, workload analyses, or historical data used in developing the solicitation? If available, can this information be provided to Offerors to assist in proposal preparation and pricing?	No.
Will the Government please provide the methodology and assumptions used to develop its staffing estimates, including any recommended Service Contract Act (SCA) labor categories and labor mix associated with those estimates?	No.
PWS Section 1.0 (Background) states that VA INS estimates an additional 2,000 claims. Will the Government please clarify whether this estimate represents 2,000 additional claims annually or 2,000 additional claims over the entire period of performance?	The VA estimates an additional 2,000 claims annually beyond the total pending inventory found in PWS Section 1.0.
Will the Government please clarify whether the Contractor will be required to provide telecommunications capabilities, such as a telephone system, dedicated phone lines, callback numbers, or mobile phones to receive and respond to communications from family members, beneficiaries, or other contacts? If so, will the Government please identify any applicable requirements or specifications?	The Contractor is not required to provide a dedicated inbound call center for beneficiary inquiries.
The Position Sensitivity and Background Investigation Requirements table in PWS Section 6.2.1 lists Tasks 5.1 through 5.4 but does not indicate which risk tier (Low/NACI, Moderate/MBI, or High/BI) applies to each task. Could the Government confirm the required background investigation tier for personnel performing each of these tasks?	Under PWS Section 6.2.1, personnel require Low-Risk NACI background checks.

The PWS states that VA INS will select and refer cases at its sole discretion, with a minimum of 1,000 cases referred during the base period. Could the Government provide additional detail on the expected referral cadence during the base period and option years — for example, whether cases are referred in a steady weekly or monthly volume, in batches, or on another schedule?	During the base period, an initial list of 1,000 cases will be referred to the Contractor. The VA will send subsequent lists of cases in batches to the Contractor on a schedule to be agreed upon by the VA and the Contractor.
Multi-Beneficiary Unit Pricing Structure: Under PWS Section 5.2.3 (Alternate Beneficiary Locator), an investigation into a single deceased Veteran may identify multiple eligible alternate beneficiaries. Is payment under CLIN 0002 structured per located individual beneficiary or per assigned Veteran case file?	CLIN002 is payable for each valid, payable beneficiary; however, once payment is made to an eligible alternate beneficiary, no further claim forms received for alternate beneficiaries would be considered payable, as no further life insurance proceeds would be available to pay out.
Personnel Onboarding & Interim Suitability: Under PWS Section 6.2.1, personnel require Low-Risk NACI background checks. Can contractor personnel begin performing casework immediately upon successful eApp submission and fingerprinting, or is full NACI final adjudication required prior to receiving encrypted case files?	Please refer to VA Handbook 6500 for Security Requirements
Unlocatable / Exhausted Research Cases: PWS Section 5.2.5 conditions payment on a confirmed locate or verified death. If a contractor completes an exhaustive search across all public, court, and commercial databases and provides verifiable proof that all avenues are exhausted without a locate, is the case billable upon COR review?	Per PWS Section 5.2.5, the Contractor will receive payment for either locating the named beneficiary, identifying an alternate beneficiary, or confirming death. Payment will not be made when none of these conditions is met.
Claim Form Submission Pricing Format (CLIN 0004): PWS Section 5.2.5.A.2.b caps the Claim Submission incentive at 10% of the per-case locate rate. Should offerors input an explicit unit price up to 10% on the Section B.3 Price Schedule, or will the government auto-calculate this line item based on the offered locate price?	Vendors are responsible for providing a complete Price Schedule with their quote that adheres to the solicitation instructions. Failure to do so may result in a quote being deemed incomplete, and being removed from consideration.
Outbound vs. Return Postage Responsibilities: PWS Section 5.2.4.C states that outreach letters will be printed and mailed by the VA's enterprise fulfillment vendor. Please confirm whether outbound postage is fully covered by the VA and whether return postage (Business Reply Mail) must be provided by the contractor.	As VA will utilize the VA's enterprise fulfillment vendor for printing and mailing outreach letters, the Contractor does not need to provide postage.
Dedicated P.O. Box Direct Cost Recovery: PWS Section 5.2.4.C mandates establishing a dedicated P.O. Box for returned mail. Is the cost of establishing and maintaining this dedicated P.O. Box reimbursable as a direct expense, or should it be incorporated into the monthly Administration CLIN (0003)?	This cost should be included in CLIN003.
Inbound Beneficiary Call Support Scope: When conducting outreach, are contractors required to maintain a dedicated inbound call queue/call center for beneficiary inquiries, or will outreach communications direct beneficiaries to the primary VA Insurance Service Call Center?	The Contractor is not required to provide a dedicated inbound call center for beneficiary inquiries.
Base Period Quantity Discrepancy: PWS Section 4.1 references a minimum startup allotment of 1,000 cases, while Section B.3 lists Base Period CLIN quantities totaling 2,250 cases. Should offerors build operational capacity for 1,000 cases or 2,250 cases during the 6-month base period?	PWS Section 4.1 states that a minimum of 1,000 cases will be provided during the base period. If the Contractor is successful at locating a beneficiary for these 1,000 cases, further cases will be provided from the total inventory listed in PWS Section 1.0.
Signature Requirements on VAF 29-4125: Does VA INS accept digitally executed (e.g., DocuSign) VA Form 29-4125 submissions, or are physical wet ink signatures mandatory for claim validation?	The VA encourages beneficiaries to submit VA Form 29-4125 electronically through the following website: https://www.benefits.va.gov/INSURANCE/file_death_claim.asp#Non-SGLI_VGLI. VA Form 29-4125 claim forms are also allowed to be submitted by paper/regular mail.
Legal Heirship Order Validation: When identifying alternate beneficiaries under PWS Section 5.2.3, is the contractor required to legally audit and certify the order of statutory precedence, or will VA INS validate heir eligibility upon receipt of the claim?	The Contractor is required to follow Public Law 117-313 (Faster Payment to Veteran's Survivors Act of 2022) when determining the order of precedence. Upon receipt of VA Form 29-4125, VA will validate that the claim form received is from a valid, payable beneficiary.
Death Determination Authority Standards: PWS Section 5.2.4.B requires cross-referencing two or more sources to verify death. Does an official state vital statistics record or SSDI entry satisfy this requirement on its own, or are two distinct secondary sources strictly mandatory for all cases?	A state issued death certificate satisfies the requirement. If that cannot be obtained, VA requires two sources to verify death. An SSDI entry is not acceptable on its own.
30-Day Outreach Timeline Reset: PWS Section 5.2.4.C requires two outreach attempts at least 30 days apart. If an initial outreach letter is returned as undeliverable and a new address is identified via skiptrace, does the 30-day waiting period reset from the date the letter is re-mailed to the new address?	Yes. If the initial outreach letter is returned as undeliverable and a new address is identified, the 30-day waiting period resets from the date the letter is re-mailed to the new address.
In-Flight Outreach Reconciliation: The VA will notify the contractor bi-weekly when a beneficiary submits a claim form. If a beneficiary independently submits VA Form 29-4125 while contractor outreach is actively in-flight, is the contractor eligible for full per-case locate payment under CLIN 0001/0002?	Yes. The VA will pay the full per-case payments under CLIN001/002 when a VA Form 29-4125 is received for a valid, payable beneficiary that is on the list of cases sent to the Contractor, as once a case is sent to the Contractor, the VA will cease internal outreach efforts.
Proposal Page Limits: Is there a maximum page limit for Volume II (Technical Quote) or the Contractor Project Management Plan (CPMP) attachment?	There is no maximum page limit for Volume II (Technical Quote) or the Contractor Project Management Plan (CPMP) attachments.
Past Performance Evaluation: Will past performance evaluating complex commercial, corporate, or probate/legal skip-tracing investigations be evaluated equally against federal CPARS past performance?	Past Performance will be evaluated in its totality. Note: In order to be eligible for award, potential vendors must be determined to be responsible in accordance with the requirements of RFO 9.1.
Subcontracting Labor Calculation (51% Rule): Under VAAR 852.219-75, the prime contractor must perform at least 51% of the cost of performance. Please confirm that proprietary database subscriptions and software tool licensing costs are classified as Other Direct Costs (ODCs) and excluded from the prime labor calculation.	Classified as other direct costs
Post-POP Invoicing Window: PWS Section 5.2.5 permits claim submission payments for forms received up to 45 days after a performance period ends. How should contractors submit invoices for claim forms validated during this 45-day post-POP window?	Detailed reports from VA to contractor will confirm successful claim forms received. Invoices should be submitted based on the detailed reports from VA.
Data Destruction Standards: What specific data sanitization standards (e.g., NIST SP 800-88) are required for purging localized PII caches upon completion of assigned case batches?	Please refer to VA Handbook 6500 for Security Requirements
Encrypted Email Standards: Will the VA mandate S/MIME encryption for email transmission of PII, or will standard TLS / AES-256 encrypted file attachments be accepted?	Yes, emails containing PII must be encrypted
SCLS Wage Determination Adjustments: Will Service Contract Labor Standards (SCLS) wage rate adjustments under FAR 52.222-43 be applied automatically upon the exercise of each 12-month option period?	Wage Determinations will be updated annually in accordance with 52.222-43(c). The instructions to request an Equitable Price Adjustment in connection with a new Wage Determination are contained at 52.222-43(c-g).
P.O. Box Location Constraints: May the contractor's dedicated P.O. Box for returned mail be established in the contractor's primary state of business, or must it be located near the VA INS facility in Philadelphia?	The PO Box may be established in the Contractor's state of business.
Documentation Threshold for Alternate Heirs: For Alternate Beneficiary locates (PWS 5.2.4.E), is the contractor required to procure certified physical vital records (birth/marriage certificates), or does a verified genealogical research report with public record citations satisfy the deliverable?	A verified genealogical research report with public record citations is sufficient to satisfy the deliverable.
Invoice Dependency on Monthly Reports: Does monthly invoice payment approval for completed case locates depend on formal final approval of the Monthly Progress Report, or are completed locates invoiced independently upon delivery?	Yes, all deliverables must be met for invoice approval

SDVOSB Subcontractor Evaluation Preference: What specific documentation (e.g., Letter of Intent or Teaming Agreement) is required in Volume II to qualify for the SDVOSB/VOSB subcontractor evaluation preference under Section E.1?	See VAAR 852.215-70(c) Non-Veteran offerors proposing to use certified SDVOSBs or VOSBs as subcontractors will receive some consideration under this evaluation factor. Offerors must state in their proposals the names of the certified SDVOSBs and VOSBs with whom they intend to subcontract and provide a brief description of the proposed subcontracts and the approximate dollar values of the proposed subcontracts. In addition, the proposed subcontractors must be listed at the time of submission of offers and at time of award, as a certified SDVOSB/VOSB in the SBA certification database.
Best-Value Evaluation Trade-offs: Will the government favor a higher-rated Technical/Past Performance proposal over a lower-priced offer if a trade-off determination is required?	Updated: Technical Ability and Past Performance, when combined, are Equal to Cost or Price
The SAM.gov notice states offers are due August 14, 2026 at 10:00 AM EDT, while SF 1449 Block 8 and the Section A continuation page state August 18, 2026 at 10:00. Please confirm which date and time governs.	Quote submission deadline has been updated to August 20th, 2026 at 10:00AM EST.
The Option 4 CLINs state "POP Begin: 03-04-2030, POP End: 03-05-2031," while the SF 1449 continuation page states Option 4 runs 03/05/2030 - 03/04/2031. Please confirm the correct Option 4 period of performance.	See amended Price Schedule
Base-period CLIN quantities total 2,250 cases (1,500 Designated and 750 Alternate), while PWS Sections 4.1 and 5.2.1 state VA INS will provide "a minimum of 1000 cases" including 300 Alternate Beneficiary cases. Please confirm whether the CLIN quantities are estimated maximums for pricing and evaluation purposes, or guaranteed quantities, and identify the guaranteed minimum quantity for each CLIN.	PWS Section 4.1 states that a minimum of 1,000 cases will be provided during the base period. If the Contractor is successful at locating a beneficiary for these 1,000 cases, further cases will be provided from the total inventory listed in PWS Section 1.0.
Option Period 1 quantities (4,000 Designated and 2,500 Alternate) are approximately 2.9 times the annualized base-period rate, then decline to 3,250 total cases in Options 2 through 4. Please confirm this profile reflects a planned one-time reduction of the existing claims backlog, so that offerors can appropriately size staffing, ramp-up, and database capacity.	PWS Section 1.0 provides the total pending inventory of cases that may require locator and outreach services. Once the initial pending inventory has been completed, which may take multiple years, the ongoing estimate is 2,000 additional cases per year.
Please confirm the payment treatment for cases in which the Contractor completes all required research but cannot locate a current address and cannot confirm death - i.e., unsuccessful cases. Please confirm such cases are not payable, and clarify whether they nonetheless count against the CLIN quantity ordered.	Per PWS Section 5.2.5, the Contractor will receive payment for either locating the named beneficiary, identifying an alternate beneficiary, or confirming death. Payment will not be made when none of these conditions is met.
PWS Section 5.2.4.E, "In-Depth Expert Search / Research Services, to include Next of Kin Search and Genealogy Search," consists of a heading followed by no definition text. Because this is the principal service for the Alternate Beneficiary tier and is an evaluated technical element, please provide the definition and the minimum required research steps, sources, and documentation for this service.	PWS Section 5.2.4.E updated.
PWS Sections 7.3 and 7.5 refer to success criteria for "Tiers 1, 2, and 3" and establish Acceptable Performance Levels of 90 percent for Tiers 1 and 2 and 70 percent for Tier 3. Table 1 defines only two classifications, which are not numbered. Please map the tier numbers referenced in the QASP to the classifications in Table 1 and confirm the Acceptable Performance Level applicable to each.	PWS updated to remove reference to Tiers 1, 2, and 3 in the QASP.
To support realistic pricing and staffing, please provide, to the extent available: (a) the percentage of the current claims inventory that includes SSN, date of birth, and last known address; (b) historical locate/success rates achieved on comparable cases; and (c) historical rates at which contacted beneficiaries submit a valid, payable VA Form 29-4125.	VA does not have this information available to provide at this time
PWS Section 5.2.1 requires the Contractor to "implement a solution to allow VA INS to securely transmit and receive data files ... through an encrypted method (i.e. SFTP, HTTPS, etc.)," but the same paragraph states that "system integration with VA platforms is neither required nor permitted" and directs the use of "encrypted email or an encrypted shared folder." Please clarify whether a Contractor-hosted SFTP site or secure file transfer portal is acceptable and whether VA will permit outbound connections to it, or whether the Government requires transmission exclusively by encrypted email or a VA-provided encrypted shared folder.	File-transfer can be completed via secured email, secured shared site, or other method, at the discretion of the Contractor, as long as the method meets applicable federal and VA security requirements. The method of file transfer should be included in the Contractor's quote.
Given that PII will be received, stored, and processed on Contractor systems, please confirm whether any Contractor system requires an Authority to Operate, FedRAMP authorization, or a VA Assessment and Authorization package, and whether a Security Control Assessment, System Security Plan, or Privacy Impact Assessment is a required deliverable. If VA Handbook 6500 controls apply only to VA-hosted environments, please confirm the specific security requirements applicable to the Contractor's off-site environment.	Please refer to VA Handbook 6500.6 for Security Requirements
PWS Section 5.2.4.C states outreach letters will be printed and mailed by VA's enterprise fulfillment vendor. Please confirm that print production and postage costs are borne by the Government and are not to be included in the Contractor's per-case pricing.	As VA will utilize the VA's enterprise fulfillment vendor for printing and mailing outreach letters, the Contractor does not need to provide postage.
The Contractor must establish and process a dedicated PO Box for returned mail, re-search returned addresses, and provide updated outreach letters. Please confirm these activities are included in the per-case rate with no separate payment. Please also confirm whether a re-issued letter to a newly located address constitutes a separate attempted contact for purposes of the two-contact requirement.	Processing of return mail, locating a new address, and providing updated outreach letters is included in the per-case rate with no separate payment. A re-issued letter to a newly located address found after mail was returned will constitue a separate attempted contact for payment requirements.
Please confirm that the per-case payment is earned when a current mailing address is located and outreach is completed in accordance with VA-approved procedures, regardless of whether the beneficiary responds to that outreach.	CLIN001 is payable for locating a current mailing address and completing outreach in accordance with VA-approved procedures; however, CLIN002 is only payable if a valid, payable VA Form 29-4125 is received from a beneficiary.
Commercial database, public records, and genealogy research subscriptions are a significant cost element of this requirement. Please confirm whether payments to such data providers count toward the subcontracted percentage for purposes of the limitations on subcontracting, or whether they may be treated as other direct costs excluded under 13 CFR 125.6 because they are not the principal purpose of the acquisition.	Treated as other direct costs
PWS Section 5.1.2 states Monthly Progress Reports shall reflect data as of the last day of the preceding month, while Section 5.2.4.D states the report will be provided no later than the last business day of each month. Please confirm the intended reporting convention as a report may be due before work from that month has been completed.	PWS Section 5.2.4.D updated to reflect that the monthly progress report will be provided to VA no later than the third business day of each month.
Section E.1 lists six evaluation factors (Technical Ability; Understanding of the Requirements; Project Management Approach; Staffing, Expertise and Key Personnel Experience; Past Performance; and Price), while FAR 52.212-2 at Section E.2 lists three (Technical Ability, Past Performance, and Price). Please confirm which listing governs, whether the Section E.1 items are subfactors of Technical Ability, and the relative order of importance among factors and subfactors.	Understanding of the Requirements; Project Management Approach; and Staffing Expertise and Key Personnel Experience are sub-factors under Technical Ability. Subfactors will have equal weight in determining final evaluation results for the Technical Ability factor.

Is there a page limit for Volume II, Technical Quote? If so, please state the limit and confirm whether the cover page, resumes/CVs of key personnel, past performance information, certifications, and any draft Contractor Project Management Plan are excluded from that limit. Please also state any required font, font size, and margin specifications.	See amended Section E.1
The technical evaluation states the Government will assess the offeror's ability to manage the project "through a detailed and compliant Contractor Project Management Plan (CPMP)," while PWS Section 5.1.1 establishes the CPMP as a post-award deliverable. Please confirm whether a draft CPMP must be submitted with the quote or whether a narrative management approach addressing the CPMP elements is sufficient. If a draft CPMP is required, please confirm whether it counts against any Volume II page limit.	Can be provided as a narrative management approach
Section E.1 requires one relevant and recent contract reference. May offerors submit more than one reference (for example, up to three) for consideration? Please also confirm whether past performance of a proposed subcontractor performing a material portion of the locator and research work will be considered.	Vendors may provide up to a total of 3 references for Past Performance that are relevant to this requirement.
VAAR 852.237-75, Key Personnel, is incorporated into the contract, but neither the solicitation nor the PWS identifies key personnel positions. Please identify the positions the Government considers key, or confirm that the offeror may designate its own key personnel in its technical quote.	VAAR 852.237-75 removed from solicitation.
PWS Section 4.1 states that VA will provide a minimum of 1,000 cases during the six-month base period, including 300 Alternate Beneficiary Locator and Outreach cases. However, the Price/Cost Schedule includes 1,500 Designated Beneficiary cases and 750 Alternate Beneficiary cases, for a total of 2,250 cases. Please confirm whether the CLIN quantities are guaranteed minimums, estimates for evaluation, maximum quantities, or anticipated ordering quantities. If the minimum commitment is 1,000 cases, please identify the expected distribution between the two classifications.	PWS Section 4.1 states that a minimum of 1,000 cases will be provided during the base period. If the Contractor is successful at locating a beneficiary for these 1,000 cases, further cases will be provided from the total inventory listed in PWS Section 1.0.
For Designated and Alternate Beneficiary Locator and Outreach CLINs, is the unit of payment one referred VA case regardless of the number of designated or potential alternate beneficiaries researched and contacted, or is payment made separately for each beneficiary located and contacted? Please provide a pricing example for a case involving multiple primary beneficiaries, descendants of a deceased child, or multiple potential next of kin.	The unit of payment is for each beneficiary for a case. For example, if a case includes three designated beneficiaries and the Contractor completes outreach to all three designated beneficiaries, the Contractor is eligible for three units of payment for CLIN001 and a potential for three units of payment for CLIN002 if all three designated beneficiaries submit valid, payable VA Form 29-4125 claim forms.
If the contractor completes all required database searches, research, verification, documentation, and outreach activities but cannot locate a beneficiary, cannot establish a qualifying alternate beneficiary, or finds only information that does not satisfy the Government's success criteria, will any payment be made for the completed work? If not, should vendors incorporate the cost of unsuccessful cases into the successful-case unit prices?	Per PWS Section 5.2.5, the Contractor will receive payment for either locating the named beneficiary, identifying an alternate beneficiary, or confirming death. Payment will not be made when none of these conditions is met.
For purposes of case acceptance and payment, does "outreach is completed" mean that two compliant attempts were transmitted to the latest validated contact information, or must the beneficiary affirmatively respond or acknowledge receipt? Please confirm whether a returned letter, undeliverable email, unanswered telephone call, or disconnected number counts as an outreach attempt when properly documented.	When properly documented, one completed outreach attempt can include a returned letter, undeliverable email, unanswered telephone call or disconnected phone number.
PWS Sections 5.2.5.A and 5.2.5.B state that the Claim Form Submission payment may not exceed 10% of the per-case rate established under Section 5.2.5.A.1. Please clarify whether the Claim Form Submission rate for an Alternate Beneficiary case is limited to 10% of the Designated Beneficiary rate or 10% of the applicable Alternate Beneficiary rate.	PWS updated to reflect that the Alternate Beneficiary claim-form payment will be based on the applicable Alternate Beneficiary rate.
To support accurate staffing and pricing, can VA provide a de-identified sample referral file, expected file layout, data dictionary, representative Beneficiary Designation Form, and sample desired return file showing required fields, permissible values, and evidence requirements?	The government is unable to provide an sterilized example at this time.
Will the Government accept separate unit prices reflecting materially different levels of complexity within the Alternate Beneficiary category, or must all alternate cases be priced at a single blended rate?	CLIN 002 for each period should be priced at a single rate.
Will the government consider changing the procurement to full and open to allow large businesses with pre-built, industry-leading, commercially-deployed solutions the opportunity to provide the requested services with both maximum efficiency and low cost?	The Contracting Officer has determined that there is a reasonable expectation of obtaining competitive fair and reasonable offers from two or more responsible small business concerns. Therefore, it is required to set-aside this solicitation for Small Business in accordance with RFO 19.104-1.
International beneficiary locates- Will we be required to investigate internationally?	Yes