

**Request for Proposals OCA-DGCP-066 Judiciary Civil Legal Services, Eviction Defense,
Statewide
*Questions and Responses***

The New York State Unified Court System (UCS), Office of Court Administration (OCA) thanks the vendors that submitted the questions below concerning the OCA-DGCP-066 Judiciary Civil Legal Services (JCLS), Eviction Defense, Statewide Request for Proposals (RFP) issued on February 25, 2026.

Responses to questions are in *red italics* below. Similar questions are grouped together.

Questions related to the purpose of the RFP

- I wanted to confirm whether this RFP is the renewal for our current contract or if it is a separate contract opportunity.
- Does the Eviction Defense funding supplement the general JCLS funding described above? Or does it replace or supplant the general JCLS funding?
- Just to make sure I am understanding this correctly- it looks like this RFP is only for eviction defense and not immigration legal services. Am I correct?
- Is this proposal restricted to solely tenant representation? Will there be another opportunity for pro bono immigrant representation?

This RFP is for eviction defense services. Contracts awarded under the RFP will not replace existing JCLS contracts. Other funding opportunities will be the subject of separate procurements.

- Does this eviction defense funding supplement other JCLS funding contracts that cover all "essentials of life" areas, including "housing matters?" For example, if an organization has an existing contract that covers all essentials of life areas, including housing matters, through December 31, 2026 - would this new eviction defense funding (estimated to commence on or about July 1, 2026) be in addition to that or will this specific eviction defense funding replace the more broad contracts?

Awards under this RFP will be in addition to current JCLS funding.

- Can you confirm current JCLS grantees may apply for this RFP.

Yes, current JCLS grantees are eligible to apply for funding under this RFP.

Questions related to county/district funding allocations

- The RFP specifies the total funding available per Judicial District in Exhibit 7 and notes that awards will be made on a county-by-county basis. Could OCA provide guidance on the anticipated funding range per award or per county to assist applicants in developing realistic program budgets and staffing models?
- The RFP references maximum available funding by Judicial District in Exhibit 7, but the methodology used to determine those allocations is not described. Could UCS provide additional information regarding the methodology used to determine funding allocations by county (e.g., eviction filings, population size, poverty levels or other factors)?
- In “Exhibit 7 – Maximum Available Funding by Judicial District,” how are the maximum allocations for each judicial district determined? Is it based on poverty population, evictions filed in the J.D., or some other metric?
- Is the bidder required to provide services to all locations within the district for which we are applying, as outlined in Exhibit 7? If so, Is the total proposed budget required to match the exact amount listed in Exhibit 7 for the district to which we are applying? If not required to provide services in the entire district, is there a maximum funding request by county, or suggested guidance to determine the appropriate request?
- Will proposals be considered if an organization serves a single dedicated county?
- Can you confirm whether bidders can propose providing services to counties within different districts?

The funding amounts reflected in Exhibit 7 are allocated at the Judicial District level to allow for maximum flexibility in structuring awards based on the needs and proposals received within each district. Because awards will be made on a county-by-county basis and may vary depending on factors such as the scope of services proposed, the number of counties served, and the needs identified within a particular district, OCA is not able to provide a predetermined funding range per county or per award. Applicants are encouraged to develop budgets and staffing models that are reasonable and proportionate to the services proposed for the county or counties they intend to serve, while remaining mindful of the total funding available within the applicable Judicial District.

Accordingly, applicants should develop a budget based on the proposed staffing structure, anticipated service demand, and overall scope of services for the counties included in the application.

Applicants can propose providing services in one county. Applicants need not propose providing services in all counties in a Judicial District. Applicants can propose providing services in more than one Judicial District.

Question related to funding allocations

- There is a breakdown in the RFP of how much funding is available sorted by county; are the amounts given available each year or spread over the entire contract term?
- Could you please confirm that the dollar amounts per Judicial District in Exhibit 7: Maximum Available Funding by Judicial District reflect ANNUAL amounts available as opposed to 5 year amounts available? We are reasonably sure that they are meant to be annual amounts but because the chart does not specify.
- Is the funding allocated to Bronx County per year or per contract term?

The amounts articulated in Exhibit 7 represent the funding available for the initial 12-month period.

- Will the new OCA potential award include language on future COLAs? How should bidding organizations account for currently unknown future COLAs / PS expense adjustments in their proposals?

Subsequent period allocations after the initial 12-month period may include inflationary adjustments subject to available appropriations.

- Is there guidance on determining the appropriate funding amount when applying for only some counties within a Judicial District? Specifically, should applicants prorate the Judicial District maximum based on the counties included the number of eligible individuals in the counties, or the proposed staffing and service delivery costs for the counties?

Applicants should not prorate the Judicial District maximum based solely on the number of counties included in their proposal. Funds are allocated at the Judicial District level to allow for maximum flexibility in designing service delivery models that reflect local needs and operational realities. Accordingly, applicants should develop a budget based on the proposed staffing structure, anticipated service demand, and overall scope of services for the counties included in the application. The total requested amount for each Judicial District must not exceed the maximum allocation set forth in Exhibit 7; however, within that cap, applicants have discretion to determine an appropriate funding level based on their proposed approach.

- In the RFP in Section III, Awards, Paragraph two, it states "preference will be given to applicants demonstrating the ability to provide services in a greater number of counties." Please provide additional information of how that preference will be applied (i.e., what will be the difference in weight given to an applicant that only serves one county versus two counties versus multiple counties).
- The RFP notes that preference may be given to applicants able to serve a greater number of counties. Will applicants be disadvantaged in scoring or competitiveness if they apply for only certain counties within a Judicial District rather than the entire district? If so, could UCS clarify how this preference is incorporated into the evaluation process?

This preference is considered as part of the overall evaluation and competitiveness of proposals, particularly in assessing the breadth and efficiency of proposed service delivery. Applicants

serving more counties within a Judicial District may be viewed more favorably under this consideration, but all proposals will be evaluated holistically based on the established scoring criteria.

- Are joint proposals from multiple organizations that cover all counties preferred over separate proposals that cross-reference each other to cover all counties?

Joint proposals will not be given preference. Preference may be given to proposals that demonstrate the ability to serve a greater number of counties through a cohesive and well-coordinated service delivery model. Submissions will be evaluated based on the overall quality and effectiveness of the proposed approach in accordance with the stated evaluation criteria.

Questions related to external funding

- If we receive other grant funding for eviction prevention cases but that funding does not fully cover our costs of representation in those cases, can we use this funding to cover the shortfall in cost per case and report those cases?

The applicant's program plan should clearly outline the services that will be provided with funding awarded as a result of this RFP.

- If we receive other grant funding for eviction prevention cases but that funding does not fully cover the cost of client supports necessary to prevent evictions in those cases, can this funding be used to cover that work and can we report on that work? For example, the work of social workers in nuisance cases or the work of Housing Benefits Advocates to secure rent arrears grants and housing subsidies.

The applicant's program plan can include supplemental services that enhance the capacity of its organization to provide eviction defense services.

- May staff be funded through a combination of the existing JCLS grant and this opportunity, limited to their total FTE?

Yes, staff may be partially funded by an award under this RFP and other sources of funding, but the proposal budget and budget narrative should only include items that will be directly funded by an award under this RFP.

- For providers with existing Right to Counsel contracts with New York City, will this State contract require new deliverables that are in addition to the cases we handle for our City contract?

This RFP is designed to expand overall service delivery and capacity of eviction defense services. Applicant's program plans should describe services that will be funded under this RFP award. Program plans may include the expansion or enhancement of existing services, provided that applicants clearly identify the additional capacity or improvements supported by this RFP award.

Proposals should describe how the applicant's program will prioritize services to vulnerable populations and promote housing stability outcomes.

Questions related to program deliverables

- Does the application proposal need to include specific deliverable/goal numbers across the service areas described in the RFP?
- Will the contract awards include specific deliverable/goal numbers across the service areas described in the RFP?
- Are there any specific number of deliverables or proportion of services (full representation vs. Limited scope vs. Brief advice) that JCLS expects from bidders?
- Will the different types of cases (nonpayment proceedings, holdover proceedings, illegal lockouts, and habitability-related matters) be weighted the same in evaluating proposals? Or is there a preference for proposals which prioritize specific types of cases? If so, which cases are considered the highest-priority?

Proposals will be evaluated based on the overall quality and effectiveness of the proposed approach in accordance with the stated evaluation criteria.

Proposals should include descriptions of the services to be provided and those descriptions can include estimates of relevant metrics.

Proposals should describe how the program will prioritize services to vulnerable populations and promote housing stability outcomes.

Priority may be given to services that, in accordance with the stated evaluation criteria:

- *Provide effective representation in proceedings where tenants face a high risk of displacement, including nonpayment and holdover cases; and*
 - *Address urgent or high-risk situations, such as illegal lockouts, habitability issues, and housing subsidy terminations; and*
 - *Intervention to prevent default judgments.*
- Section VIII.b. “Proposed Service Delivery” separate section, “Deliverables, Reporting, and Data Collection” states, “in Exhibit 9... Award Contractors must describe program goals and objectives in a manner consistent with quarterly Progress Reports and annual Grantee Activity Reports.” Are applicants required to describe and quantify the items in Exhibit 9, or is this task reserved for grantees, once award notification is sent? If applicants are required to describe and quantify the items in Exhibit 9, should the projections be by county and incorporated into each county’s narrative or if they are to be included in the application as an additional attachment, should it contain projections by judicial district?

Exhibit 9 is a sample report and is illustrative of the type and level of programmatic reporting that may be required of Awarded Contractor(s). Applicants are not required to complete this form.

- Will the contract include required rotations and/or referral duty in housing court? In other words, will contract awardees be required to staff hours in housing court? If yes, must the contract awardees accept cases arising from such intake shifts and/or referrals for full representation?

No such requirements are mandated in the RFP.

- Section II limits eligible tenants to “at or below 200% of the poverty threshold.” Section V states, “Provide quality free legal services to vulnerable individuals at or below 200% of the federal poverty threshold and other indigent households facing eviction or housing instability.” Please define the criteria for determining “other indigent households” that can be eligible for services.

The language “and other indigent households facing eviction or housing instability” is being stricken pursuant to Amendment 1 to the RFP.

- Section V for Project Services requires, “representation in...habitability-related matters.” Do “habitability related matters” include RPAPL Article 7-D proceedings?

Yes.

Questions regarding program budgets

- Will the resulting contract budget be performance-based or line-item reimbursement?

Awarded contracts will be reimbursed based on allowable expenses incurred against a line-item budget.

- Are there any matching fund requirements for this grant?

No.

- For the RFP, will we be required to submit a budget for each year of the grant, just the first year, or the total cost over the entire grant period?
- Does the budget and narrative need to cover the entire 5-year period of the contract or just Year 1? If it covers all 5 years, does each year need to be broken out separately or do we average the salaries for example over the 5 years and the FTE’s and just show the 5-year total?

The applicant’s budget and budget narrative must cover the initial 12-month period.

- Article VIII(c) requires a separate line-item budget for each Judicial District, with total costs not exceeding the maximum allocation in Exhibit 7. [Our agency] serves thirteen counties spread across three Judicial Districts. We are applying for only a subset of counties within the three Judicial Districts.

Under this circumstance, the proposal should include three budgets, one for each Judicial District.

- We intend to enter into a subcontract agreement with another legal services organization in our area for approximately half of the requested funding, which they will use primarily for staffing. May we allocate the partner's expenses to the appropriate budget categories, including salary and fringe, rather than listing the total subcontract amount as a single non-personal services item?
- If an organization is subcontracting a portion of the award, how should that portion be entered or described in the budget narrative? Would it be preferable to list in each category: salaries, fringe, equipment, etc. and note what portion is for the lead applicant and what portion is for the subcontractor?
- If the subcontract is presented under OTPS under contracting, will the subcontractor personnel expenses still be allowed to count towards the total personnel % on the rating sheet?

The lead applicant should include the subcontract as a non-personal service line item on its budget proposal.

In the budget narrative, note the overall percentage of personnel service costs (salaries and fringe benefits), inclusive of any amounts allocated in subcontracts. UCS will use this information in developing the cost score.

- The budget file references an additional tab to detail “Other” budget items; however, this tab does not appear in the Excel file. Should we create a new tab, or is there a separate file we should be using?

Please ignore the asterisk. Information regarding “Other” can be entered in the budget narrative.

- Does JCLS have a list of allowable vs. disallowed costs for this opportunity?

Guidelines regarding allowable costs are published in the [UCS Financial Planning and Control Manual: Chapter on Contracts with Non-Profit Organizations](#) available on the nycourts.gov website.

Questions related to programmatic reporting

- Will providers be expected to allocate specific cases to JCLS' Eviction Defense grant? Or will providers report the aggregate work of their housing programs?
- We report our legal services - including housing - on our current OCA 2022 - 2026 grant that covers essentials of life areas. Would we still be reporting all our housing legal services work on the OCA 2022 - 2026 grant if we were to get this housing-specific grant?
- Would any eviction defense work only be reported on one and not both of the latter contracts?
- Will the contract award require the organization to report on all tenant eviction defense work provided by the organization (in the way that JCLS reporting includes all organizational civil legal services work, beyond what is done by the individuals included on the budget/invoices)
- If a case or project is partly funded by non-JCLS sources, could that work be reported and funded through this program?
- Given that the New York City Right to Counsel funds, in part, the same scope of work as the Request for Proposals, does the proposed scope of work need to be work reported exclusively to this program?
- When reporting under this contract, will we be able to report those cases that we're reporting to other public funders to support the current under-funded work?
- Our existing reporting for our JCLS contract allows us to separately count benefits advocacy as its own case alongside a client's housing case. Will we be able to count that work as two separate cases under this contract?
- Will we be able to count our Social Work cases as separate cases, in addition to a client's housing case?
- If brief services are allowed to be reported under this contract, is each brief service case counted as one unit of service or a percentage of a full representation case?
- Will this contract's deliverables only count full representation cases or can we also report brief services?
- How will roll-over cases (i.e., cases initiated in one contract year that continue to be worked on in subsequent contract years) be handled for the contract deliverables?

Reporting will be specific to services supported under the contract resulting from an award under this RFP. Detailed reporting requirements will be provided following award.

Questions related to proposal structure/process

- Upon reviewing Exhibit 8 (Judicial District/County Selection Form), it appears that certain counties are not listed within their respective Judicial Districts. For example, Steuben County appears to be missing from the 7th Judicial District listing. We assume this is an error. Should applicants write in the missing counties on the Exhibit, or will an amended Exhibit be issued?

Yes, this is an error. An amended Exhibit 8 is being released as part of Amendment 1 to the RFP.

- We would appreciate clarification regarding the narrative page limit for proposals covering more than one county. If an applicant is submitting for multiple counties, should the proposed service delivery narratives for each county be included consecutively within a single eight-page narrative, with continuous page numbering throughout the proposal, or does each county receive a separate eight-page narrative allowance?
- Section VIII b states a required “Narrative Description – Proposed Service Delivery (up to 8 pages) If applying for more than one County, a separate Proposed Service Delivery tailored to each County is required.” There are 8 elements required to be described for each county’s service delivery. Does the 8-page limit refer to the narrative description for a single county? Or if applying for several counties in a judicial district, does each county’s separate proposed service delivery narrative, when totaled all together, cannot exceed 8 pages.

Applicants must submit separate Proposed Service Delivery narratives for each county for which they are applying. The eight-page (8) limit applies to each county’s Proposed Service Delivery narrative.

- Will you please explain what distinct responses you are expecting between questions 1 and 8 in the organizational capacity sections as those questions seem to overlap significantly?

While questions 1 through 8 in the Narrative Description - Organizational Capacity section address related topics, applicants are expected to respond to each question as written. The questions are intended to elicit distinct information. Applicants should address the specific elements raised in each question.

- How many printed copies of the application should we submit?

One (1) signed, hard copy original complete proposal is required.

- Should we provide a table of contents, and should it be included in the page count?

A table of contents is not required. If a table of contents is included with the proposal, it will not count toward any page limits stated in the RFP.

- Should the pages of our submission be held together by a binder clip or can we use a hole puncher with removable fasteners?

Pages can be held together by a binder clip or removable fasteners. Documents should not be permanently bound (i.e. stapled).

- If the application is hand-delivered, can a courier access the delivery address? Are we able to use FedEx or UPS, or only USPS?

If a proposal is hand delivered, it must be hand delivered to 2500 Pond View, Castleton-on-Hudson, NY, Suite 104 between the hours of 9am and 5pm, Monday through Friday, and not on UCS holidays. Applicants may use common carriers such as FedEx, UPS, or USPS, as well as other professional delivery services.

- On Exhibit 1, Attachment III notes that the Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire may be filed online through VendRep if current within six months. In that case, should applicants include only the signed certification in Exhibit 3, or also attach proof of the current online filing in the hard-copy proposal?

If the Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire was filed online through VendRep and certified within six months of the bid opening date, applicants only need to include the signed certification in Attachment III.

- What types of resumes and how many resumes are required to be submitted with the proposals?

Resumes must be submitted for all staff who will provide project services. For positions that are currently vacant, submit detailed job descriptions.

- In “ATTACHMENT I Standard Request for Bid Clauses & Forms,” is it correct that only pages 3 and 4 need to be completed and submitted with our application?

Yes, only pages 3 and 4 of Attachment I need to be completed and submitted with the application.

- In “Exhibit I – Document Enclosure Checklist,” for an application in which the lead is proposing a subcontractor, which of the required documents, if any, are required of both the lead and the subcontractor for submitting a complete application? We are trying to determine if each of the following documents that are required of the lead contractor should also be submitted on behalf of the subcontractor in the application process and if this list is exhaustive. Kindly advise on each:

- a. Vendor Assurance and Conflict of Interest Disclosure?
- b. Staff resumes?
- c. Is a line-item budget document required from the subcontractor for this Application?
- d. Certificates of insurance from the subcontractor?
- e. IRS Determination letter?
- f. Attachment I’s Non-collusive Bidding Certificate and acknowledgment, Pages 3 and 4?
- g. Attachment III’s vendor responsibility statement of an online submission being current?

h. The two forms under Attachment IV, namely Procurement and Lobbying?

The Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire needs to be submitted and certified by any subcontractor that an applicant is proposing to utilize where the subcontract is valued at \$100,000 or more over the life of the contract awarded under this RFP. Such subcontractor will also need to complete and submit with the applicant's proposal Attachment III if its Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire is filed online via the New York State Comptroller VendRep System. All other documents listed in this question only need to be submitted for the lead applicant. All other required subcontractor information will be collected post award during the contracting phase.

- For “Section VIII. Required Documents d. Budget Narrative,” We have two collective bargaining units, and our salary scales comprise several pages. Can we provide the salary scales as an attachment to the narrative, as the narrative itself is limited to 3 pages? If that is allowed, would those documents be submitted under section e. Additional Documents?

The salary scales can be included as an attachment/appendix to the budget narrative and will not be counted as part of the 3-page limit.

Other Questions

- Will current JCLS grantees get any preference?

Not directly, although an applicant's experience will be evaluated in accordance with the stated evaluation criteria.

- During the application review/evaluation process, what will the discussions with applicants look like if they are moved from Tier 1, to Tier 2 and then from Tier 2 to Tier 3?
 - a. Done over email?
 - b. Scheduled virtual or in-person meetings?
 - c. Other format?

Applicants (both awardees and non-awardees) will be notified when awards are issued. In accordance with the RFP General Specifications, UCS may request clarification from the applicant on its application, but generally, no discussions are anticipated with applicants as UCS progresses through the Tiers.

- If you're able to share, we are also wondering if there is an estimated date by which responses will be posted.

Contracts are estimated to commence on July 1, 2026. Award notices will precede the contract start date.

- How will we be expected to verify income eligibility for clients?

The applicant's program plan should describe how income eligibility will be verified as part of the intake screening process.