

**STATE OF WASHINGTON**

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES**

**PO Box 45811, Olympia WA 98504-5811**

DATE: May 15th, 2025

TO: RFX # 2423-868 Interested Parties

FROM: Donna Beatty, Solicitation Coordinator

DSHS Central Contracts and Legal Services

SUBJECT: Amendment No. 02 – Supersedes Amendment 1 in its entirety.

Qs & As to date; Change to the RFP Document and Change to Attachment D

DSHS amends the RFX # 2423-868 procurement documents to include:

* Reposting of RFP 2423-868 in a format that ensures all links to websites are fully functional;
* Modifications to two website links referenced in Attachment D – Bidder Response Form
* Questions and Answers posed prior to and during the Pre-Bid Conference held on May 13, 2025 at 10:00 AM.

This Amendment 2 replaces Amendment 1 in its entirety as the Amendment 1 files were corrupted and unreadable.

**RFP 2423-868 is hereby amended as follows:**

The document entitled RFP 2423-868 is posted in an alternate format. Although no changes have been made to the text of the document, the additional file format allows readers to access website through clickable, functional links.

**Attachment D to RFP 2423-868 is hereby amended as follows:**

The links provided in questions 3-SB and 4-VO to the Department of Enterprise Services known as WEBS have been updated.

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**Answers to Questions posed prior to and during the Pre-Bid Conference held on May 13, 2025**

**RFP 2423-868**

**NOTE: Some Questions & their Answers will appear in more than one category.**

**RFP PURPOSE & CONTRACT AWARDS**

**Q: Are you looking to purchase a new LMS through this procurement effort?**

A: No. This procurement is seeking to acquire new licenses for course content that is compatible for use with our current LMS.

**Q: Do you have a goal for the number of contractors you will choose?**

A: The administration has no goal of amount of awarded contracts. There is an upper limit on the amount that DSHS can spend to acquire licenses for these courses, but the number of awarded contracts is not restricted. DSHS will purchase courses add value to the LMS, from vendors that qualify, up to the spending limits that have been adopted.

**RFP TIMELINE**

**Q: How soon will bidder be announced and negotiations begin? What is the expected time for contract execution? When are accessibility requirements to be met?**

A: We expect that the apparently successful bidders will be announced on July 24, 2025. There are required timeframes for certain processes, and no contracts can be signed until the later of: the post-award protest period has expired or all pending protests have been resolved. Assuming all protests, if any are filed, can be resolved within the required protest period, contract execution should be expected around August 25th.

**COURSE LIST SUBMISSION**

**Q: If we offer a library of courses that are interrelated, should each course be listed individually, or can they be grouped as a single library entry?**

A: All courses must be listed individually.

**ACCESSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

**Q: Are courses expected to meet the accessibility requirements immediately?**

A: DSHS has some flexibility as far as meeting accessibility requirements until July 1, 2026 when the requirements must be met in order to comply with state and federal mandates. Bonus points are awarded if a course already meets the accessibility requirements. If a course is selected as a result of this competitive procurement but it does not yet meet the accessibility requirements, the course may still be purchased provided the timeline for bringing the course into compliance is reasonable and the deadline dates are included in the final contract. No course licenses can be used or renewed if the course does not meet all mandatory accessibility requirements as of July 1, 2026.

**Q: What are the expectations for the graphics, colors, and branding for courses?**

A: Color, text, graphics and formatting must meet accessibility requirements, otherwise it is left up to the content creator. For additional information please see:  [Online Training Standards | DSHS](https://teams.microsoft.com/l/message/19%3Ameeting_MTM0MmMzNjQtZjhhNS00NGZlLWI1NjAtNjg4OGEwNDI3ZDg1%40thread.v2/1747157680268?context=%7B%22contextType%22%3A%22chat%22%7D).

**PRICING QUESTIONS:**

**Q: Should we calculate our license prices based on 15,000 as the number of users who could be registered as users of the CareLearn LMS system?**

A: Yes. We do not believe that we will reach 15,000 registered CareLearn LMS users in the next year, but we wanted to ensure that Bidders base their prices on the maximum number of users we anticipate ever accessing the system.

**Q: Will the cost proposal be scored ONLY based on the cost calculations within the spreadsheet (e.g., cost per course X course duration)? Or is there a way to submit other costs not related to the courses themselves (e.g., maintenance, professional services, etc.)?**

A: All related costs should be rolled in to the per course price listed on the course submittal spreadsheet. No separate administrative, indirect, maintenance & operations, professional costs calculations will be considered. We understand that there are other costs involved, but they need to be included in the license price to ensure a fair comparison across bids.

**Q: Do you allow indirect costs (i.e., facility & administrative costs) and if so, do you have a published cap on the percentage allowed?**

 A: All related, indirect, tangential costs should be reflected in per course cost submitted in the Couse Listing spreadsheet. Therefore, DSHS would have no way of knowing what your indirect costs are.

**Q: Would you consider a subscription model for pricing? Where price is based on number of users rather than the number of actual courses.**

A: DSHS is not considering subscription model pricing at this time. The license price should be for an unlimited number of views by up to 15,000 registered LMS users. That is a number that is far higher than the expected number of registered users over the next 16 to 18 months, so DSHS is confident that the number of registered users will not exceed that threshold. However, prior to any renewal of the contract, the Contractors will be updated as to the maximum number of projected number of users expected during the renewal contract term.

**Q: If a course is priced differently based on the language offered, should each language version be submitted as a separate line item in the course list?**

A: Yes, if a course is offered individually for each language in which it is presented, it must be listed as a separate course. If a submitted course is offered in multiple languages for one price, it can be listed as a single course. The scoring will enable a fair comparison of per-course-minute cost. If a course is listed at a cost of $300, is 60 minutes long, and is available in three languages for the $300 price, the calculated length of the course for pricing purposes will be 180 minutes and the cost per course minute will be calculated as 300 divided by 180 for a total of $1.67 per course minute. If the same course is offered as three separately priced courses of $100 each, the cost per minute would be $100 divided by 60 minutes will also be $1.67 per course minute.

This is why it is crucial for Bidders to list the languages in which a course is presented and specify the total number of languages (inclusive of the primary language) included in the price when filling in the Course List spreadsheet.

**COURSE CONTENT REQUIREMENTS**

**Q: Will new courses submitted in a proposal need to be structured like other DSHS approved courses are?**

A: The requirements for CE approval must all be met, but the presentation of the course is up to the publisher. It is important to note, however, that it should be impossible for caregivers to “fast forward” through the presentation. If PowerPoint slides are being used, for example, the viewer should not be able to skip to the next slide before a reasonable amount of time has passed, and that time should be commensurate with the complexity of the material presented.

**Q: Are there any specific expectations regarding the interactivity level of the courses? For example, does DSHS prefer interactive, scenario-based content over passive, lecture-style modules?**

A: All varieties of interactivity level will be considered. Everyone has different learning styles and DSHS hopes that a variety of course presentations will enable individuals to find courses that are suitable for them.

**Q: What are the expectations for the graphics, colors, and branding for courses?**

A: Color, text, graphics and formatting must meet accessibility requirements, otherwise it is left up to the content creator. For additional information please see:  [Online Training Standards | DSHS](https://teams.microsoft.com/l/message/19%3Ameeting_MTM0MmMzNjQtZjhhNS00NGZlLWI1NjAtNjg4OGEwNDI3ZDg1%40thread.v2/1747157680268?context=%7B%22contextType%22%3A%22chat%22%7D)

**WASHINGTON BUSINESSES - PREFERENCE POINTS AND INCLUSION PLANS**

**Q: Will bonus points for WOSB certification be awarded similarly to those for Veteran-Owned or Small Business status, or is there a separate consideration for WOSB firms?**

A: For clarification, this question pertains to Washington Owned Small Businesses. Preference points are given for certain businesses, as allowed by state law. This includes businesses that meet the statutory criteria of women-owned and veteran-owned business, those that meet the criteria for small businesses. The criteria are discussed in Attachment D as well as in the RFP document. You will also find working links in the Word version of the RFP document (published as part of Amendment 1 to RFP 2423-868) so that you can review the statutory requirements directly.

**Q: Are Washington businesses given preference over businesses located in other states?**

A: Only certain Washington businesses can be given preference points, according to Washington state law. Businesses that do not qualify for preference points are not subject to any special consideration regardless of where those businesses are located.

**Q: When evaluating proposals, what is DSHS looking for in content and Bidder qualifications (i.e. Washington business given precedence?)**

A: While it is true that certain Washington businesses will be granted preference points, these points are allowed only if the business meets certain statutory qualifications. Those requirements are addressed thoroughly in Attachment D and there are (now) working links to the applicable statutes in the newly posted Word version of the RFP document.

 Bidders are free to include whatever qualifications and attributes they see fit to provide. The evaluators will be assessing evidence of a Bidder’s reliability, professionalism, and knowledge of what is required to ensure a successful relationship with DSHS.

As far as course content is concerned, the content must meet the criteria for approval of CE credits. Any content that does not fall into one of the course topics listed in the drop down menu in the Course List spreadsheet will not be considered. There are other disqualifications as well.

**Q: While the Inclusion Plan is not scored, are there any specific expectations regarding the minimum percentage of work to be performed by qualifying small, veteran-owned or women-owned businesses?**

A: No. The preference is to award contracts to qualifying small, women-owned, and veteran-owned business, and that any subcontracts that are awarded by the selected vendors are in keeping with the same philosophy, but there is no minimum percentage of subcontracts that must be awarded to qualifying firms.

**EVALUATION CRITERIA**

**Q: When evaluating proposals, what is DSHS looking for in content and Bidder qualifications (ie. Washington business given precedence?)**

A: While it is true that certain Washington businesses will be granted preference points, these points are allowed only if the business meets certain statutory qualifications. Those requirements are addressed thoroughly in Attachment D and there are (now) working links to the applicable statutes in the newly posted Word version of the RFP document and the newly posted Attachment D.

**CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDITS**

**Q: I understand that CE credits are awarded based on the length of the course. Is there a set number of credit hours or courses being targeted?**

A: The minimum length should be .25/hour or 15 minute increments. No real size limits (ie.12 hour courses are acceptable). However, to qualify for CE credits, there is a minimum length of 15 minutes per course.

**QUIZZES**

**Q: Do you want the quizzes to be included in the SCORM itself? Or can the quizzes be separate from the SCORM file so that it can be managed as a quiz activity in the LMS? If separate, would you like us to format the quiz in a compatible format (XML?) so that it can be uploaded to the LMS?**

A: The quizzes can be in separate files but must be in one of the two acceptable SCORM formats.

**Q: What are the requirements for the quizzes?**

A: There are no requirements for what the quizzes ask, although the questions need to be related to the course content, of course. The number of questions, or the types of answers required (such as True/False, multiple choice, etc.) is up to the publisher. The primary consideration for evaluation of whether CE credits are approved for the course is the requirement that LMS users must receive a score of 80% or higher on the quizzes in order to successfully complete the course.

**Q: Does "Course Length" capture the course's runtime only, or can we include the estimated time learners spend completing knowledge checks embedded within the modules/course?**

A: Course Length includes the estimated time learners spend completing knowledge checks embedded within the modules/course.

**FILE FORMATS AND DELIVERY**

**Q: What** **version of SCORM is the preferred version?**

A: While SCORM 1.2 and SCORM 2004 are both acceptable, SCORM 1.2 is the preferred version.

**Q: Do you want the quizzes to be included in the SCORM itself? Or can the quizzes be separate from the SCORM file so that it can be managed as a quiz activity in the LMS? If separate, would you like us to format the quiz in a compatible format (XML?) so that it can be uploaded to the LMS?**

A: The quizzes can be in separate files but must be in one of the two acceptable SCORM formats.

**Q: What is the expectation for how course SCORM files must be submitted for inclusion in the CareLearn LMS?**

A: SCORM files will be delivered to DSHS electronically through a service that allows the exchange of large files. The particulars of that service will be disclosed at the time of contracting.

**LANGUAGES**

**Q: Is the administration looking for any specific languages?**

A: No. Demand for courses in Spanish, Russian, Tagalog and Chinese is increasing, but DSHS will consider all languages.

**Q: If a course is priced differently based on the language offered, should each language version be submitted as a separate line item in the course list?**

A: Yes. If a course is offered individually for each language in which it is presented, it must be listed as a separate course. If a submitted course is offered in multiple languages for one price, it can be listed as a single course. The scoring will enable a fair comparison of per-course-minute cost. If a course is listed at a cost of $300, is 60 minutes long, and is available in three languages for the $300 price, the calculated length of the course for pricing purposes will be 180 minutes and the cost per course minute will be calculated as 300 divided by 180 for a total of $1.67 per course minute. If the same course is offered as three separately priced courses of $100 each, the cost per minute would be $100 divided by 60 minutes will also be $1.67 per course minute.

 This is why it is crucial for Bidders to list the languages in which a course is presented and specify the total number of languages (inclusive of the primary language) included in the price when filling in the Course List spreadsheet.

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**MISCELLANEOUS QUESTIONS**

**Q: What is DSHS’s definition of ‘caregiver”?**

**A:** DSHS has a somewhat flexible definition of the term caregiver because there are so many programs that address a variety of needs and each uses a slightly different definition of caregiver. For the purposes of this RFP, a caregiver is defined more narrowly as a long-term care worker (“LTCW”) which is defined as a person who provides paid, hands-on personal care services for the elderly or persons with disabilities. LTCW includes among others, individual providers of home care services, direct care workers employed by home care agencies, providers of home care services to persons with developmental disabilities under [RCW 71A](https://app.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=71A).

**Q: Am I able to register as a user of the CareLearn LMS in order to view currently offered courses in order to better understand the DSHS requirements?**

A: That depends, but most likely not. Only individuals that are active, long-term care workers qualify to register as users of the CareLearn LMS system.

**Q: Are vendors provided with any of the course learner completion and/or evaluation data?**

A: Such data will be provided to vendors upon request or per negotiated terms in the contract. The frequency of such requests must be reasonable.

**Q: We already have a number of courses approved by WA DSHS. Are you seeking that we submit just those, or can we submit additional courses beyond those that meet the content/format requirements?**

A: Part 1: **We already have a number of courses approved by WA DSHS. Are you seeking that we submit just those?**  If we already have a contract with you to purchase a license for a particular course and that license will still be active as of August 24, 2025, we do not want you to include that course in your proposal.  If, as of August 24, 2025, DSHS will not have an active license from you for a course and the course meets the qualifications for approval for CE credits, you may include that course in your submittal.  If you submit a course that DSHS has previously approved for CE credits, that course will be awarded bonus points.

A: Part 2: **Can we submit additional courses beyond those that meet the content/format requirements?**  Any submitted course that does not meet the requirements for CE credit approval will not be scored.

**Q: Will DSHS provide access to a testing environment within the CareLearn LMS (SumTotal) prior to finalizing the content delivery to ensure full compatibility?**

A: No. DSHS cannot provide any sort of advance testing of the submitted files. Ideally the contractor should already have tested and finalized courses before engaging with the administration for this project. Submitting files in SCORM 1.2 or 2024 format should ensure compatibility. There are free and paid resources available that can assist vendors with testing their files. If DSHS purchases content that turns out to be incompatible, and cannot be made compatible within a short period of time, DSHS will return the course materials and deduct the cost of the course from the contract price.