



# Administrative Office of the Courts

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## Operations Division

### Questions/Responses No. 10 to the Request for Proposals (RFP) K21-0018-29 Cloud-Based Unified Communications Solution

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The following questions for the above referenced RFP were received by e-mail and are answered and posted for all prospective Offerors. The statements and interpretations contained in the following responses to questions are not binding on the Maryland Judiciary unless the RFP is expressly amended. Nothing in the Maryland Judiciary's response to these questions is to be construed as agreement to or acceptance by the Maryland Judiciary of any statement or interpretation on the part of the Offeror asking the question.

**1. Question:** Please elaborate on the security compliance with NIST 800-58? This standard is 15 years old and much of the older technology referred to in this standard has been superseded by newer technology.

**Response:** The security considerations in the publication coupled with the overarching considerations outlined in the Judicial Information Systems Security Policy cover the minimum expectations with the solution. The judiciary will review the Attestation (SOC) Report provided by the potential providers to affirm that the proposed solution has been evaluated and the controls are operating effectively.

**2. Question:** We have significant experience in deploying solutions that fully meet the requirements of the State of Maryland, and, based on this experience, we would like to request and recommend that the State make your security requirements more concrete. Ideally this might include requiring FedRAMP or requiring at a minimum a formal System Security Package (SSP) that demonstrates that the bidder's cloud platform has been formally audited for adherence to NIST 800-53. A cyber security risk management program is the only way to fully validate security controls and fully protect government systems and infrastructure, sadly a measure that is now absolutely necessary in our current world. Furthermore, without a well-defined requirement in the area of security, the State of Maryland will receive proposals for very different caliber solutions and will be challenged to compare apples to apples.

**Response:** The Maryland Judiciary will review the Attestation (SOC) Report provided by the potential bidders to confirm that the solution has been reviewed and tested by a third party and confirmed to be operating effectively.

**3. Question:** The RFP calls for the UCaaS service to be NIST 880-58 compliant. Is this a mandatory requirement or are you accepting other equivalent compliant security standards in lieu of the NIST 800-58 standards? We can provide SOC 2 Type 2 report.

**Response:** Generally speaking, the third-party testing to produce a SOC 2 Type II Report will use industry leading standards to affirm that the providers solution is operating effectively. A SOC Report will be required by potential bidders before a selection is made.

**4. Question:** State of Maryland Information Technology Security Manual.

While the Judicial Information Systems Information Security Policy referenced in the solicitation does not address specific security requirements to address the unique risks of cloud-based solutions, this vendor is familiar with “State of Maryland Information Technology Security Manual” which provides specific requirements for the type of solution being sought in this RFP. This document also states that cloud solutions must be FedRAMP authorized. We understood this document to apply to all IT procurements by the State of Maryland. Do the requirements of this document apply to this procurement?

**Response:** The Maryland Judiciary follows the Judicial Information Systems Information Security Policy. The judiciary will review the Attestation (SOC) Report provided by the potential bidders to confirm that the solution has been reviewed and tested by a third party and confirmed to be operating effectively.

**5. Question:** State of Maryland Information Technology Security Manual.

The Solicitation states that vendors are required to provide a provide a SOC 2 Type 2 report. SOC 2 typically applies to premise-based or dedicated hosted solutions, and this vendor understands the requirement to be for a Cloud-based solution. Also “State of Maryland Information Technology Security Manual” appears to state that FedRAMP Moderate is required for a cloud environment. Please confirm that a cloud-based solution is required and clarify whether FedRAMP authorization may be provided in lieu of SOC 2 compliance.

**Response:** The Maryland Judiciary follows the Judicial Information Systems Information Security Policy. The judiciary will review the Attestation (SOC) Report provided by the potential bidders to confirm that the solution has been reviewed and tested by a third party and confirmed to be operating effectively.

**6. Question:** State of Maryland Information Technology Security Manual.

The Maryland Security Manual referenced above also indicates that multi-factor authentication (MFA) is required for administrators and users of cloud-based systems. If this manual does apply to this solicitation, please confirm whether MFA is required and for which parts of the solution

**Response:** The Maryland Judiciary follows the Judicial Information Systems Information Security Policy.

**7. Question:** Regarding the MD Judiciary appendix 1.3 the questions regarding NIST800-53 compliance. We will be proposing using a Mitel solution on the Google Cloud Platform and are finding that Google is not willing to share copies of this information, especially in a public RFP or that would be subject to review by a freedom of information request. The only information we will be able to share is a white paper Mitel published on security in the Google Cloud Platform. Please let me know if this will meet the requirements.

**Response:** A whitepaper detailing the security control will not be sufficient. Potential bidders will be required to submit a SOC report which affirms that the security controls have been reviewed by a third party.

**8. Question:** In section 1.3 – Contract Type, Firm Fixed Price and Time & Material is noted. Will the government explain what portions of the RFP they anticipate as Time & Material? How do they want us to price miscellaneous materials that might come from a T&M situation?

**Response:** The Vendor should identify any work /specific tasks, that may fall outside of the pricing proposal submitted. The Judiciary understands that “pricing” is not possible at this time, a list of items is the requirement. The intent is to position the Judiciary to plan for possible expenses outside of normal operations.

Issued by Karen Hoang  
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