

Vendor Questions

Procurement

Q. Could Kentuckiana Regional Planning and Development Agency (KIPDA) please clarify whether this solicitation is a re-compete of an existing Managed IT Services contract or a new procurement?

A. This is a new procurement for Managed IT Services.

Q. If this is a re-compete, could KIPDA please clarify who the current incumbent is and whether a general estimate of the annual contract spend is available?

A. N/A

Q1. What is the anticipated contract term (initial term and renewal options)?

Q2. Contract term and renewal: What is the initial term length (12/24/36 months) targeted?

A. Initial term is one year with option to renew annually for up to 3 additional years.

Q1. What is the desired start date for managed services?

Q2. Current incumbent & transition: What is the desired transition start date?

A. Ideally, early March, as soon as contracts can be finalized and signed.

Q. For per-user or per-device services, does KIPDA require the ability to scale counts up or down mid-contract?

A. Not necessarily, but we do want the option to review the numbers annually and make adjustments at that time, if necessary.

Q. Could KIPDA please clarify whether an actual Certificate of Insurance must be submitted with the proposal, or whether a sample certificate is acceptable until the Notice of Intent to Award?

A. A sample certificate is acceptable.

Q. Can you please give us an extension of 1-2 weeks to submit our proposal?

A. We cannot extend the deadline for submissions.

Support

Q1. Could KIPDA please clarify whether the selected vendor is permitted to deliver services within the scope of work from offshore locations (e.g., India)?

Q2. Are you open to a hybrid delivery model with a mix of offshore and onshore resources?

A. Offshore support will not be considered.

Q. End user support - is Paul still going to be onsite and we just need to offer remote support or is the support for Paul directly?

A. Paul will still be on site for the next few years, but we want to know if you will provide end user support as backup to Paul if he is unavailable and later, when he retires.

Q1. Work will be onsite or remote?

Q2. Are there any on-site support expectations (scheduled or ad hoc), and if so, how frequently?

Q3. On-site expectations: Required on-site hours per week/month? Any required on-site response time?

A. We anticipate most, if not all, work to be done remotely. Currently, we have a technician (Paul) on site to help with anything that might be needed on location. You are also welcome to come onsite if necessary.

Q1. Is after-hours support required for server or security incidents, or is coverage during business hours acceptable?

Q2. What are the expected support hours (business hours only vs. 24x7)?

Q3. After-hours support: Is after-hours/holiday coverage required? If so, for which severities?

A. Business-hours support is acceptable for normal services. Please also include the cost of after-hours support for critical system failures.

Q. What is the average monthly ticket volume

A. We do not currently use a helpdesk ticket system, but we estimate the number of end user incidents to be 40-50 per month. We anticipate that Paul will handle most of these.

Budget

Q1. Could KIPDA provide a general estimated annual budget range for this Managed IT Services contract?

Q2. If this is a new Contract, what is the annual Budget for this?

A. Since this is a completely new area for us, we are unsure what to budget for it. Part of this process is to determine what to include in the budget.

Q. What was the annual spend for the previous year on this Project?

A. This is a new project.

Evaluation

Q. Could KIPDA clarify how vendor responses will be evaluated overall, including whether there are defined evaluation criteria or weightings, as these do not appear to be explicitly outlined in the RFP?

A. Vendors will be evaluated on the following criteria

25 Points - How well do the proposed methods meet the RFP requirements.

20 Points - Staffing model, escalation procedures, and support availability.

15 Points - Overall value, clarity of pricing, affordability, contract terms, and budget.

15 Points - Experience, knowledge, reputation, financial stability, and scalability.

10 Points - Data protection protocols, HIPAA & NIST alignment, certifications.

10 Points - Clarity, feasibility, delivery timelines, and minimal disruption during onboarding.

5 Points – Value added services

Q. Refer “**Section Response Information: Local references are encouraged and may be contacted regarding vendor’s work and/or equipment.**” Could KIPDA clarify whether any preference or evaluation weightage points are given to vendors with local references?

A. While KIPDA has no preference for and will not award evaluation points to vendors with local references, references, local or otherwise, will help to establish the experience and reputation portion of the evaluation criteria.

Q. Could KIPDA please clarify whether local references are assigned any specific evaluation weight or scoring consideration as part of the proposal review process?

A. Local references will not carry any specific or additional weight over not-local references; however, providing references will help to establish criteria associated with experience and reputation.

Q. Is KIPDA more focused on fixed monthly cost predictability or modular pricing transparency during evaluation?

A. Ultimately, we are looking for a bottom-line figure for firewall management, WAP management, server management, AD administration, Group Policy management, end-point security, and network troubleshooting. Your ability to assist with everything else will be factored into the scalability piece of the evaluation criteria.

Vendor

Q. Is this contract intended to be awarded to a single vendor or to multiple vendors?

A. It is not a requirement that this contract be awarded to a single vendor; we are merely exploring our options to see how these tasks can be completed. It is quite possible that we will need multiple vendors to complete the entire scope of work.

Q1. Who are previous incumbents on this project?

Q2. Is there an existing incumbent vendor, and if so, will transition support be provided?

A. Previously, these tasks were completed by in-house personnel. Due to a staff member's pending retirement, we are exploring other options to fulfill these needs. Ideally, there will be some overlap when the Managed Services begin and before the staff member retires at the end of April.

Q. Are proponents required to provide all "possible services for future consideration" mentioned in the Project Description?

A. No. We realize this is a broad list of services and it's quite possible that we will contract with multiple vendors to fulfill all requirements.

Hardware

Q. Can KIPDA confirm whether the two existing WatchGuard firewalls are expected to be replaced during the contract term or simply managed through their current end-of-life dates in 2028?

A. We expect the firewalls to be replaced prior to their EOL with the awarding vendor's preferred brand and device. We mentioned the current setup to make vendors aware of the need for separate network segments until the phone systems are replaced, and the EOL dates to define absolute deadlines. The existing firewalls can be used for as long as needed to coordinate all the moving parts.

Q. With Meraki access points reaching license expiration in May 2026 and end of life in July 2026, should replacement or renewal be included in base managed services pricing or proposed separately?

A. The WAPs will need to be replaced quickly. Please include this in your base pricing. If necessary, we will purchase new WAPs in consultation with the chosen vendor. If you provide the equipment, please indicate that as well.

Q1. Should modernization or replacement planning for the three Windows Server 2019 file servers be included within the managed services scope?

Q2. Are there any planned hardware refreshes during the contract term (servers, firewalls, WAPs)?

A. Yes. These servers will reach the end of their 5-year replacement cycle in 2026 and 2027. It is yet to be determined if they will remain on-site or move to the cloud. Either way, we will need help with configuration and placement.

The firewalls reach EOL in 2028, the WAP licensing expires in May of this year (EOL in July). We haven't replaced them because this equipment is often included in Managed Services offerings. If necessary, we will purchase new WAPs in consultation with the chosen vendor, prior to their expiration. The firewalls can remain in place for as long as needed, prior to their EOL. Again, if we need to make that purchase, we will.

Q1. Can you clarify the current roles of the three file servers, including what applications or data each supports?

Q2. Server scope: Are the 3 servers physical or virtual? Hypervisor? Any line-of-business apps hosted?

A. All five servers are physical, no hypervisor. Only our accounting software is hosted on the main file server, and this is in the process of being moved to a cloud-based solution. The file servers are mainly just that: file servers; they host files for specific divisions. One file server is also a DHCP and DNS/DC server, and another file server is also a DHCP server. The storage servers are for backups. Each storage server is also a DNS/DC server.

Backup/Recovery

Q. Is KIPDA open to replacing the two existing storage servers with a cloud-based backup and disaster recovery solution as part of the core service?

A. KIPDA is open to a cloud-based solution, but please price this separately.

Q1. Are there defined recovery time objectives or recovery point objectives that proposers should design to?

Q2. Backup/DR requirements: Required RPO/RTO targets? Any regulatory retention requirements?

A. Please plan for a 24-48-hour recovery time. Some divisions do have regulatory retention requirements but much of this information is also available in online databases that do not belong to us.

Q1. Which backup and DR platforms/providers are currently used?

Q2. How much data is currently being backed up, and what backup and recovery solution is in place today?

A. Backups are currently handled inhouse using storage servers, portable USB drives, Windows tools and BackupExec. We are backing up approximately 2.9TB of data.

Q. Is the MSP expected to lead, support, or observe annual DR exercises?

A. No, however, backups are currently tested at least quarterly, and we would expect some type of regular verification of backups to occur and be reported to us.

Security

Q1. We would recommend getting away from the different software solutions you have like ProofPoint, Vipre, KnowBe4, etc; would this be an issue for you or is there any reason you want to continue using these?

Q2. Does KIPDA intend to continue using ProofPoint, Vipre, and KnowBe4, or is consolidation of these tools desired?

Q3. Security stack intent: Is the organization wanting to keep Proofpoint/Vipre/KnowBe4 as-is, or open to replacing with an equivalent stack?

A. KIPDA is not opposed to adopting other solutions for email encryption, SPAM filtering, endpoint security, and end user security training, provided the products are comparable and the transition is managed smoothly; however, you should be aware that we find the encryption included with Microsoft 365 to be awkward and difficult to use. Also, we have annual contracts for these services so, ideally, we would like to phase them out and phase the replacements in at, or near contract's end, if possible.

Q1. Are there compliance or audit requirements that should influence security design?

Q2. Are there any regulatory or compliance requirements (e.g., CJIS, HIPAA, state cybersecurity mandates)?

A. We are subject to HIPAA regulations.

Q. What are the expectations from KIPDA for the End-Point Security services included with this RFP?

A. KIPDA currently uses a combination of antivirus (Vipre), Watchguard EDR Core, bios-level hard drive encryption, Windows and Dell patch-management tools, and location services to keep endpoints secure. We know there are more efficient ways to monitor and manage endpoint protection. We expect, but do not require, a different approach; however, we do need this service to be a part of the proposed solution.

Q. Is there an existing SIEM platform, or should the MSSP propose one?

A. We are not currently using SIEM and do not anticipate a need for it at this time.

Microsoft 365

Q1. Would KIPDA prefer the selected vendor to act as a Microsoft Cloud Solution Provider, or should licensing remain directly held by KIPDA?

Q2. Is KIPDA open to migrating all licenses under a Cloud Solution Provider (CSP)?

Q3. M365 administration boundary: Do you CSP/partner-of-record changes, or management-only?

A. Our Microsoft 365 licenses are currently held by a MS Cloud Solutions Provider (MSCSP). We are told that they can only be moved to another MSCSP. We are willing to move them if there is some advantage to doing so.

Q. Should vendors assume full administration of Microsoft 365, including security, licensing, and user lifecycle?

A. Initially, we are looking for help with day-to-day management of admin tasks associated with user lifecycle. This still might stay in-house, but we would like to know if this is something you can do.

Q. Are there plans to standardize license types or reduce overlap between Business Standard and Exchange Online licenses?

A. Not at this time.

Q. Are there expectations for Microsoft security hardening (Conditional Access, MFA policies, DLP, etc.)?

A. Not at this time, although this might be a future consideration, in particular if we adopt SharePoint.

Q. What is the current New Commerce Experience renewal date for Microsoft licensing?

A. The Business Standard licenses renew 11/29/26, the Exchange Online licenses renew 2/1/26, according to our current provider.

Q. How many active users are currently licensed in Microsoft 365?

A. Today (1/11/26) there are 96 of 105 licenses in use. Eleven or so of those are accounts of former employees whose accounts have not yet been closed. We typically keep an account open for 30-60 days to give a supervisor or the replacement employee time to monitor emails, review files and decide what to do with the data. There are some accounts that are held open for longer than that for a variety of reasons. There are 3 of 15 in use for the email-only licenses.

Q. Approximately how many service accounts exist today, and how many accounts are sign-in enabled?

A. To my knowledge, we do not have any service accounts set up unless this is something our MSCSP has done.

SharePoint

Q. SharePoint - when you say support and/or development what are your expectations?

A. KIPDA has a very new and basic SharePoint site. We want to know if you have the expertise to possibly expand that site and assist with transitioning our data from local servers to SharePoint; can you help us decide if we want to transition to SharePoint at all; if adopted, can you help us manage the space since it will be used primarily for file sharing.

Q1. Is SharePoint support expected to be administrative only, or does KIPDA anticipate workflow development, site design, and user adoption support?

Q2. Is SharePoint support limited to administration, or does KIPDA expect development, site design, and workflow automation?

A. For the purposes of this RFP, we just want to know what you can do and what it would cost.

Q. Should SharePoint services be priced as recurring support or project-based work?

A. Unless and until we adopt SharePoint, this should be project-based work. Right now, we just want to know the extent of your expertise.

Cell Phones

Q. You list Cell Phone Management as service - what are your expectations for that?

A. Many of KIPDA's cell phones get reassigned multiple times in their life (4 years). Each time they are assigned to a new person they need to be secured for HIPAA and to prevent tampering; they need to be patched; they need to be tracked for theft/loss; they need to be wiped clean if they aren't recovered. We want to know if you are familiar with tools like Simple MDM or InTune, and if you can take on this task.

Q1. Is MDM/MAM currently in use for mobile phones (e.g., Intune, Jamf)?

Q2. Is a mobile device management platform currently in use for laptops or mobile phones?

A. No, but we anticipate adopting an MDM solution (for phones) if it is not provided by the chosen vendor.

Q. Are vendors expected to manage BYOD devices, or only agency-owned hardware?

A. Just agency-owned hardware at this time.

Phone System

Q. Is KIPDA planning to retire the NEC SV9100 systems during the initial contract term?

A. There is no timeframe to replace the phone system; we just know it needs to be done in the near future, and we would prefer to do it proactively.

Q1. Should call group functionality be treated as a call center solution or standard cloud telephony queues?

Q2. Call center definition: Do you require contact center features (skills-based routing, supervisor dashboards, integrations) or if “call queues + reporting + recording” is sufficient.

A. It’s likely that standard queues will work for us, but for the purposes of this RFP, we are only interested in your level of experience, since it’s likely the phone system replacement will have to be procured through its own RFP. Our current system has call center features, but we have never used them beyond call groups, queues, and basic reporting for the month.

Q1. Are call recording and reporting requirements subject to regulatory retention policies?

Q2. What level of call recording retention and reporting is required?

A. We are not subject to recording, reporting or retention regulations at this time. Our current system keeps recordings and call data based on available storage, roughly 60 days. We run reports monthly and save them for historical purposes.

Q. Is KIPDA seeking advisory support only for phone system migration, or full implementation and management?

A. We want to know your ability to recommend, implement, and manage a new phone system.

Q. Are there preferred or incumbent cloud phone vendors under consideration?

A. No.

Future Projects

Q. Is KIPDA seeking a unified network architecture as part of this engagement, or should network consolidation be proposed as an optional project?

A. It should be proposed as an optional project.

Q. Can KIPDA share the approximate timeline for completing each of the proposed future projects mentioned in the RFP?

A. On the very near horizon is replacement of the WAPs. We will do that in the next few months if this equipment is not part of the chosen vendor's proposal. Same for the firewalls, prior to their EOL. The file servers will be replaced in the next 18 months, if needed. The phone systems have technically reached EOL but one has a maintenance contract until 2029, and we have a vendor that can support them for a few years with spare parts that they have. However, I believe those units will/should be replaced in the next two-three years. The storage servers are also due for replacement in the next year. If we adopt a cloud-based backup solution, they will just be phased out. SharePoint is something we're still trying to decide if we want to do. It's not urgent; it's just an option for the future.

Miscellaneous

Q1. Is endpoint lifecycle tracking (procurement to disposal) expected as part of managed services?

Q2. Procurement expectations: Do you require resale of hardware/software and manage renewals, or provide management while KIPDA procures?

A. That is yet to be determined, but it is likely that KIPDA will handle procurement and rely on you to spec the hardware and possibly manage the replacement schedule. Software renewals, for inhouse applications, are likely something that we will handle. In submitting your proposal, please indicate whether this is a task that you can undertake and what the cost will be.

Q. Does KIPDA currently carry cybersecurity insurance?

A. Yes.

Q. After selecting an IT partner, what role do you (J Wahle) anticipate continuing to play in IT oversight, vendor coordination, and day-to-day technology decision making?

A. I am the staff member who is retiring at the end of April. I plan to assist with the transition until I leave. Paul is our onsite technician. He will be here for the next few years to help with the onsite daily needs. We're still trying to determine what this will look like in the end and what additional staff will be needed on our end to coordinate with the managed services vendor.

Q. To confirm, are there 85 users who have dedicated workstations and an additional 35 users who are email only? Are there any shared workstations in the environment?

A. No. There are 85 users currently. That has the potential to grow to roughly 87 when we are fully staffed. We actually have more computers than users because we have some set aside for meetings, as temporary loaners when a computer repair takes a longer time, and because some divisions have laptops that are available for use by anyone in the division. The extra licenses that we have in M365 are to manage staff turnover and the extra time needed to close someone's

account after they leave. The email-only licenses are there for specific accounts where a Shared Mailbox isn't ideal and that we don't want to waste a whole Office license on. We may have to trim these numbers if it becomes too expensive to keep them active with a managed services vendor. We do not have any computers being shared by multiple users as their primary equipment.