

JACKSON HOUSING AUTHORITY
125 Preston Street
Jackson, TN 38301

Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (“RFP”)

For

HOUSING QUALITY STANDARDS (HQS) INSPECTION SERVICES

Issued: October 27, 2021

Proposals Due: November 29, 2021, by 4:00pm

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Request for Proposals

Housing Quality Standards Inspection Services

Introduction

The Jackson Housing Authority (JHA) is a local Public Housing Agency whose mission is to provide quality housing and supporting services for low and moderate-income persons, which promote upward mobility and a better standard of living. JHA manages public housing developments, Housing Choice Voucher programs, and is the contract administrator for three (3) Project-Based Section 8 developments, for a total of 1450 vouchers.

As a Public Housing Agency (PHA), JHA is required to inspect Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher units for compliance with HUD's Housing Quality Standards, and other related standards to show that housing units are decent, safe, and sanitary.

JHA currently administers subsidy to multiple residential housing units under various components of the Tenant Based Rental Housing Assistance Programs, including the Housing Choice Voucher Program, the Project Based Voucher Program and the Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) Program.

Beginning January 1, 2022, JHA will begin biennial inspections to the units that qualify. Qualifying units will be those who, at initial or annual inspection, met Housing Quality Standards on the first attempt. Qualifying units will be inspected every two calendar years. This strategy is meant to incentivize compliant landlords who maintain HQS certified units. As such, the number of inspections for the initial year is estimated to be as follows: 1005 Annual/Biennial, 300 Initial, 100 Special/Quality Control, for a total of 1405. This number includes units that are owned and/or managed by JHA. All inspection sites are located in Jackson/Madison County, Tennessee.

HUD has designated the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program as a high performing program during our last SEMAP submission. Our continued success will, in part, be contingent upon the successful operation of its Section 8 Housing Assistance Programs and its ability to quickly place its Section 8 participants into safe, decent and sanitary housing units.

JHA will enter into one or more contracts with the successful Respondent(s) and negotiate a two-year contract with two one-year options to extend for the inspection of housing units assisted under the various Tenant Based Assistance and Project Based Assistance Programs as described further in this RFP.

RFP Instructions

The RFP is being issued, as well as any addendum by the JHA. The contact person for the JHA RFP is:

Jerome Cephus III, Administrative Assistant
Jackson Housing Authority
Post Office Box 3188/125 Preston Street
Jackson, Tennessee 38301-0188
icephus@jacksonha.com

The deadline for submissions in response to the Request for Proposals is no later than **4:00 p.m. CST on Monday, November 29, 2021**. Late submittals will not be accepted.

Questions regarding this proposal must be submitted in writing to Jerome Cephus III at icephus@jacksonha.com, no later than **5:00 pm CST on Thursday, November 11, 2021**. For those firms without email capacity, questions may also be faxed to Jerome Cephus III, at (731) 425-4605. Responses to all appropriately submitted questions will be faxed or emailed to all interested parties no later than **Wednesday, November 17, 2021**.

Proposals must be submitted by mail with one signed original and three copies. Any general information not specifically relevant to the proposal shall be omitted or bound in a separate document. Proposals shall include the following:

- Identification of the company or individuals including name, address, telephone number, fax, and email address.
- Name, title, address, and telephone number of contact person during the period of the evaluation process.

Proposal shall be submitted by mail to:

Jackson Housing Authority
Attn: Jerome Cephus III, Administrative Assistant
Post Office Box 3188/125 Preston Street
Jackson, Tennessee 38301-0188

The envelope must be sealed and include the following notation on the envelope, "Request for Proposal for Housing Quality Standards Inspection Services Enclosed." Please include company name on outside of envelope. The proposals will be evaluated based on the criteria established in this document. **No proposals will be accepted after the deadline.** JHA reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to waive any informality whenever such rejection or waiver is deemed to be in the best interest of JHA.

RFP Questions for Providers

Please include responses to each of the topics below in your proposal.

Organization and Personnel Background

- Provide an overview of your company, emphasizing its qualifications and major organization strengths.

Experience

- Discuss your experience, in serving as a provider of Housing Quality Standards (HQS) inspection services.

Miscellaneous Discussion Questions

- Identify the specific individuals who would be assigned to work with JHA and specify which person would be the primary contact person with JHA.
- Provide an estimate of the time that will be required to begin HQS inspection services as outlined in Exhibit A.

Minimum Requirements of the Job

- Coordinate a schedule for all annual/bi-annual inspections based upon renewal dates provided by JHA.
- Coordinate and conduct initial inspections after JHA receive RFLA's in such a manner as to ensure regulatory compliance.
- Provide inspection results (summary and HUD 52580) to JHA in computer-generated form within 24 hours after an inspection is performed and notifying tenants/landlords of results.
- Coordinate the scheduling of re-inspections and quality control inspections as necessary, notifying tenants/landlords of the date and time.

Price

- Please provide fees required for the various types of inspection services needed: Initial, Annual, Re-Inspections, Special, and Quality Control.
- Fees for "no shows", "no adults" and "no access" should also be identified.
- Fees for data entry of the inspection results into the Emphasys/Elite Inspection Software.
- Fees for rent reasonableness determinations.

- Responding firms should also indicate unit costs for any additional reimbursable expenses.

PLEASE NOTE: The price and unit cost information MUST BE placed in a separate, sealed envelope included with the remainder of the submission package.

References

- Provide detailed information on references, as well as background and experience with projects of a similar type and scope to include, at a minimum, the name of the organization, contact person, address, email, and telephone number.

Section 3

The purpose of Section 3 of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Act of 1968 and its associated regulations (24 C.F.R. Part 75) is to ensure that employment and other economic opportunities generated by certain HUD financial assistance, shall, to the greatest extent feasible, and consistent with existing federal, state, and local laws, be directed toward low and very low-income persons.

Low income is defined as a single person or family whose income does not exceed 80% of the median income for the area. A very low-income person is defined as a family or single person whose income does not exceed 50% of the median income for the area.

Section 3 is applicable when funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development are used on a project and when a Section 3 worker, who is any worker that currently fits, or when hired within the past five years, fits at least one of the following categories, as documented:

1. The worker's income for the previous or annualized calendar year is below the income limit established by HUD;
2. The worker is employed by a Section 3 business concern; or
3. The worker is a YouthBuild participant.

For information regarding our Section 3 Program, contact the JHA Section 3 Coordinator. The Section 3 FAQs may also be reviewed at: <https://www.hud.gov/sites/documents/11SECFAQS.PDF>

Affirmative Action

JHA requires that each respondent be an Equal Opportunity Employer and state that the proposer complies fully with all government regulations regarding nondiscriminatory employment practices.

Contractor Qualifications

Proposals shall be considered from responsible organizations or individuals engaged in the performance of Housing Quality Standards (HQS) Inspection Services and Rent Reasonableness Determinations.

Proposals must include information on competency in performing HQS Inspection Services, including performing Rent Reasonableness Determinations, and staffing. The proposer shall furnish detailed information on references, as well as background and experience with projects of a similar type and scope to include as a minimum:

- A. Brief history of the company.
- B. A listing of three references where similar services were performed. The responder shall include the name of the organization, contact person, address, email, and telephone number.
- C. Responder shall describe their understanding of the project scope, their proposed approach to performing the services, and submit a proposed schedule.
- D. List and resume of key staff proposed as contact persons to JHA.
- E. A copy of the Housing Quality Standards Certifications for each inspector.
- F. Detailed methodology for delivering proposed services.
- G. A certification that proposer will provide a copy of the Driver's License for each inspector and DMV background check each year of the contract. This information must be forwarded on or before January 1 and prior to renewal of the contract.
- H. A certification that proposer will perform criminal background checks for each inspector each year of the contract and provide a copy to JHA. This information must be forwarded on or before January 1 and prior to the renewal of the contracts.

Scheduling of Inspections

JHA will be responsible for identifying units to be inspected and any respective deadlines. The proposer will be responsible for scheduling all inspections in accordance with industry best practices, standard operating procedures, and the parameters provided by JHA. The contractor must have a "call in/call out" center for the landlords, tenants and JHA. The contractor team must be qualified to respond to questions/problems that may occur. In addition, the firm selected will be responsible for telephone, vehicle, insurance and other costs associated with inspection services.

Inspection Standards

Inspections must comply with HUD regulations and guidance on Housing Quality Standards including, but not limited to, 24 CFR 982.401, Lead Based Paint Regulations at 24 CFR Part 35, the Housing Choice Voucher Program Guidebook, Inspection Checklist (HUD-52580), City of Jackson Housing Codes, and JHA Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Administrative Plan.

The proposer will be required to provide the following:

- Digital photo documentation of initial units and any unit conditions (extraordinary or questionable conditions only) for all inspections.
- Upon completion of each inspection, the proposer will submit an Inspection Performance Summary Report on a monthly basis in a format as prescribed by JHA.
- Completion of all data entry into designated software applications is required by JHA. JHA currently utilizes Emphasys/Elite Software. The successful respondent shall provide data using the same format as was provided to the contractor within 36 hours of performing the inspection activity. The Contractor shall transmit an inspection results letter indicating deficient items/areas attached, if applicable, to the property owner/agent and provide a copy to family via USPS first class mail or express mail. The Contractor shall provide JHA with a copy of the letter forwarded to the owner and tenant with the HUD 52580, JHA will accept all notices via email and via USPS first class mail.
- Submit invoices once monthly on or about the 8th of each month for work performed in the prior month in accordance with Exhibit B.

Photo Imaging

For each unit inspected, the contractor will provide a digital picture of the exterior of the building which houses the unit to be inspected (across the street, front elevation). The firm will also provide viewable digital photos with corresponding inspection data for the inspected unit. All digital inspection photos are to be provided via email to JHA on a monthly basis for cataloging. Provided files should use the following Electronic File Identification Format: each file name will be composed of the House/Unit Number, Street Name (Apartment Number if applicable) and zip code. Attach a digital image of each inspected unit (across the street, front elevation) to the corresponding HUD Form 52580 as the last page. Attached photo must have a minimum viewable area of 8 inches wide by 6 inches high and be printed at resolution of 600 dpi. The House/Unit Number, Street Name (Apartment Number if applicable) and zip code of the corresponding property must also appear on page.

Hours

The hours of operation must occur between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except for holidays as specified by JHA.

Upon completion of any inspection, print and hand-deliver, or email, to JHA a complete package of all documents for each inspection within three (3) business days (excluding weekends and JHA observed holidays) from the inspection attempt. JHA recognizes there are occasions the inspector may be unable to gain access to a property.

This information will be sorted alphabetically by tenant name. These documents are as follows:

1. A properly completed HUD Inspection Form 52580 (Checklist)
2. Completed JHA Rent Reasonableness Determination
3. Copies of any deficiency reports and letters
4. Copies of any notes, emails forwarded to agent/owner/tenant
5. Copies of any letters sent to contact landlord
6. Copies of door hangers or other form(s) left at unit for inconclusive “no show” inspections
7. Digital photo of inspected unit – see *Photo Imaging*

JHA shall not be billed for those inspections that receive an inconclusive rating for any reason other than the unit is vacant or the designated family has moved/relocated. The firm selected shall provide JHA with a monthly report identifying those inspections attempted and completed. All reports will be submitted in the format prescribed by JHA.

Selection Criteria

The firm determined by JHA to be the most qualified in terms of actual demonstrable experience, knowledge, and perceived benefit to JHA’s objectives, will be selected and contract negotiations with said firm commenced.

Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated to determine the extent to which the firm’s plan meets the needs of JHA. Evaluation will include review of proposal, reference checks, or other methods sufficient to decide in the best interest of JHA.

The following point values will be used for evaluation purposes:

Cost	The proposal should state the fees for services outlined in this RFP.	20 points
Relevant Experience & Past Performance	The proposal should state the firm's relevant experience over the last five years. Information should include job size, number of personnel, certifications, compliance with schedules, client names and contact phone numbers.	20 points
Qualifications	Proposals should state their qualifications for consideration, both the firm and personnel.	20 points
Methodology	Describe in detail the firm's approach to performing this contract. This should include schedule, staffing notification methods, report generation, deliverables, etc. <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Please provide a detailed methodology that describes every aspect of the services to be provided. Explain if work is automated, what work will be done manually.2. Knowledge of HQS and Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program	30 points
Section 3 Plan	Detailed Section 3 Activities/Plan	10 points

RFP Requirements and Conditions

Minimum Requirements

This RFP sets forth the minimum requirements that all submissions shall meet. Failure to submit proposals in accordance with this request may render the proposal unacceptable.

Cost of the Proposal

Costs incurred by any proposer in the preparation of its responses to the RFP are the responsibility of the proposer and will not be reimbursed by JHA. Respondents shall not include any such expenses as part of their proposals.

Clarification to Proposals

JHA reserves the right to obtain clarifications of any point in a company's proposal or to obtain additional information necessary to properly evaluate a particular proposal. Failure of a proposer

to respond to such a request for additional information or clarification could result in rejection the company's expense.

Cancellation of the RFP

JHA reserves the right to cancel the RFP at any time, for any reason, and without liability if cancellation is deemed to be in the best interest of the JHA. The respondent assumes the sole risk and responsibility for all expenses connected with the preparation of its proposal.

Collusion

Proposer, by submitting a proposal, hereby certifies that no officer, agent or employee of the JHA has a pecuniary interest in this Proposal; that the Proposal is made in good faith without fraud, collusion, or connection of any kind with any other proposer, and that the proposer is competing solely in its own behalf without connection with, or obligation to any undisclosed person or company.

Contacts

All questions concerning the RFP shall be directed to Jerome Cephus III, whose contact information is provided herein.

Insurance Requirements

Certificate of Liability Insurance, minimum policy coverage of \$1,000,000.00 with the Jackson Housing Authority named as an additional insured on the policy.

The limits of liability for the insurance required under this contract shall not be less than as follows:

Workman's Compensation Employer's Liability	\$1,000,000.00
Contractor's Liability Insurance General Aggregate	\$1,000,000.00
Products – completed operations aggregate	\$1,000,000.00
Personal Injury	\$1,000,000.00
Each Occurrence (Bodily injury/property damage)	\$1,000,000.00
Excess Liability	
General Aggregate	\$1,000,000.00
Each Occurrence	\$1,000,000.00

Contract Conditions

Contract Terms and Final Selection

The selected firm will be expected to sign the JHA Contractual Agreement, which will specify the term of service, likely to be annually. If the selected applicant and JHA cannot come to terms with respect to the contract, JHA reserves the right to select the next most qualified applicant or to terminate this RFP and to re- issue a new RFP if no Proposer is acceptable to JHA.

Exhibit A: Housing Quality Standards (HQS) Inspection Services Scope of Work

The Contractor shall furnish sufficient organization, personnel and management staff with the necessary skill and judgement to perform all the duties and responsibilities normally associated with the inspection function of prospective units and dwelling units currently under Housing Assistance Payments contracts for the Housing Choice Voucher Programs. The contractor shall perform all services as described below:

A. Initial Inspections

1. Complete the first attempt to perform each Initial Inspection within five (5) business days of receipt of scheduling information from JHA (excluding JHA observed holidays).
2. For Initial Inspections and Initial Re-inspections, call the owner/designee 30 minutes prior to arriving at property. If owner/designee is not at the property at the scheduled time, the inspector shall wait 10 minutes before leaving the property. This will constitute one scheduled attempt in two scheduled attempt maximum inspection criteria. If the unit does not pass at the second scheduled attempt, the Request for Tenancy Approval (RFTA) shall be voided. Notify JHA, in a manner acceptable to JHA, of all voided RFTAs on a daily basis. The notification shall include the reason for voiding each RFTA (i.e., unable to contact owner, two failed inspections, etc.).
3. Successful respondent shall photograph the exterior of property, provide JHA, owner and tenant with a result letter for each initial inspection performed within 48 hours of the inspection. At this time, JHA shall also receive a completed HUD 52580.

B. Notifications

1. All notifications, regardless of type, must at a minimum contain the following information:
 - Date notification was printed

- Name and complete mailing address of landlord/agent
- Name and complete mailing address of client and census tract
- Type of dwelling and number of bedrooms
- Type of Inspection/Re-inspection
- Date of Inspection and Re-inspection date, if applicable
- Scheduling Timeframe of Inspection/Re-inspection (military time will not be accepted)
- If this is a “Deficiency Notification”, provide a complete detailed listing of all deficiencies identified during the inspection. (Vague or general comments will not be accepted.)
- Name of the Inspector (list on 52580 respondent name and name of person who performed the inspection)
- Contact telephone number for contractor

Include any JHA provided insert(s) with all Annual Inspection notifications at no additional cost to JHA. Examples of these inserts include, but are not limited to, “Common Fail Items” and any changes to the JHA Administrative Plan that affect the HQS inspection process. JHA provided inserts will not exceed two front and back sheets of paper that equal four pages.

C. Annual Inspections

1. Mail all notices by U.S. 1st Class Mail (postmarked) no less than 15 days prior to the scheduled inspection date.
2. Provide a type-written or computer-generated report (minimum 8-1/2 x 11 inches) of the inspection deficiencies or inspection result letter (one for the owner/agent and one for the tenant) to JHA upon completion of the inspection.

D. Re-Inspections

1. Conduct all initial re-inspections within five (5) business days (excluding JHA observed holidays) of notification by the owner that the unit is ready for re-inspection.
2. Schedule all non-emergency annual re-inspections within 365 calendar days from the date of the last inspection. In the case of a failed annual, schedule follow-up within 30 days of the date of the failed inspection.
3. Notify owner and tenant appropriately and conduct re-inspection of all life-threatening fail items within 24 hours of first inspection, on annual, special and quality control inspections.
4. Any additional failing items identified during a re-inspection that are not considered life

threatening 24-hour emergencies must be immediately approved by the contractor's site manager. For each occurrence, the site manager must provide JHA with a written report outlining the additional items and the reason for omission from the initial inspection.

E. All Inspections

1. Conduct physical inspections in accordance with Federal Housing Quality Standards, the Lead Safe Housing Regulations, City of Jackson Housing Codes and JHA Administrative Plan. The contractor may use paper inspection forms or handheld data collection devices, as approved by JHA.
2. Schedule inspection, prepare and issue all inspection appointment notification letters in accordance with a required inspections report provided by JHA.
3. Schedule all inspection by speaking only to or corresponding with the owner or their designee and tenant. No inspections may be scheduled by leaving messages on voice mail. No inspections may be scheduled with the tenant independent of the owner/agent. The contractor must provide notice to all parties, JHA, owner/agent and tenant.
4. Schedule all inspections, regardless of type, with an inspection appointment window time 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. No inspection shall be performed outside of the scheduled appointment window.
5. Complete the last inspection, regardless of the type, by 5:00 p.m. each day, unless another time is agreed upon by the contractor and the tenant/landlord.
6. Any inspection attempted outside of the designated time frame, will be done at the contractor's own risk.
7. The contractor shall not bill JHA for those inspections that receive an inconclusive rating for any reason other than the unit is vacant or the designated family has moved. The contractor will also provide to JHA a monthly report identifying those inspections attempted outside the designated time frame that received an inconclusive rating.
8. Assess who is responsible for damages (tenant responsibility or landlord/agent responsibility) for every failed item listed on all deficiency reports or correspondence. Any deficiency not designating who is responsible will not be considered a failing item at any reinspection if the deficiency has not been repaired by either the tenant or landlord.
9. Send all notifications and related follow-up correspondence, to both landlord and tenant by US Postal Service 1st Class Mail, postmarked within 48 hours of completion of the inspection appointment, including pass/fail notifications, reschedule notification and no-show notifications. Forward similar copies electronically to the email addresses of both landlord and tenant. Include re-inspection date/time and deficiency notice in all inspection results correspondence. If owner repairs a portion of the items listed, not the date of final approval on the deficiency notice.

10. Complete one attempt for each no-show inspection prior to issuance of “intent to terminate assistance” notice to the tenant. If the tenant resides in a multi-family development with on-site management, visit the management office to obtain an escort to gain entry to the unit.
11. Complete one attempt for each non-emergency “fail” inspection prior to issuance of abatement notification to the owner.
12. Upon completion of initial inspections, collect and report rent reasonableness information utilizing Emphasys/Elite software rent reasonable form in the Inspection Module.
13. Submit Inspection Performance Summary Reports on a monthly basis format as approved by JHA (MS Excel Spreadsheet).
14. Complete all data entry, using Emphasys/Elite software, as required under the MIS system prescribed and provide data using the same format as was provided to the contractor by the 8th day of each month. (JHA currently uses Emphasys/Elite Inspection Module Software)
15. Complete and deliver to JHA all reporting requirements for inspections under the Section Eight Management Assessment Program (SEMAP) by the close of business of the 8th day of each month.

F. Other Duties

1. Develop and submit JHA for approval, within 14 calendar days of contract execution, Standard Operating Procedures for all inspection processes described herein, including all forms and form letters to be used. SOP must demonstrate to JHA’s satisfaction the contractor’s ability to provide all services as requested.
2. Develop and submit to JHA for approval, within 30 days of contract award, training and support plan for JHA employees who will coordinate the services of the contractor selected. Provide on- going telephone and/or email support to resolve owner and staff concerns.

Exhibit B: Contact Information Form

To: Jerome Cephus III, JHA Administrative Assistant

Fax: 731-425-4605

This fax is to acknowledge that we are in receipt of your RFP for Housing Quality Standards Services Inspections and Rent Reasonableness.

From _____

Company/Individual Contact _____

Title _____

Phone _____

Fax _____

Email _____

Exhibit C: Proposal Form

Proposal: Housing Quality Standards (HQS) Inspection Services

Vendor Name: _____

To: Jackson Housing Authority
 Post Office Box 3188/125 Preston Street
 Jackson, TN 38303-0188

1. The undersigned, having familiarized themselves with the local conditions affecting the cost of the work, and with the specifications, hereby propose to furnish all labor, materials, equipment and services required to provide such services described in the scope of work in accordance therewith, for the sum of:

Initial Inspections	_____
Annual Inspections	_____
Special Inspections	_____
Quality Control Inspections	_____
Re-Inspections	_____
No Shows/No Adult/No Access	_____
Data Entry of Results into Emphasys/Elite Inspection Software	_____
Rent Reasonableness Determinations	_____
Inspection Mailings to Tenant/Owner by U.S. Postal Service	_____

2. In submitting this proposal, it is understood that the right is reserved by the Jackson Housing Authority to reject any and all proposals. If written notice of the acceptance of this proposal is mailed or faxed to the undersigned within 30 days after the opening thereof, or at any time thereafter before this proposal is withdrawn, the undersigned agrees to a contract/agreement in the prescribed form and furnish any required insurance requirements within 10 days after the contract is presented for signature.

Company Name _____

By _____

Title _____

Date _____

Exhibit D: Other Required Forms and Attachments

Attachments List Order

1. Instructions to Offerors (HUD 5369-B)
2. Certifications and Representations of Offerors (HUD 5369-C)
3. General Conditions for Non-Construction Contracts (HUD-5370-C)
4. Equal Employment Opportunity Certification (HUD 92010)