



Alameda County Employees' Retirement Association

Request for Information for:

PENSION ADMINISTRATION SYSTEM AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Issued by:

Alameda County Employees' Retirement Association

Issue Date: February 20, 2018

Response Date: March 30, 2018

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Section 1 - General Information

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this Request for Information (RFI) is to evaluate the current product offerings for Pension Administration Software and implementation services that will allow Alameda County Employees' Retirement Association (ACERA) to continually improve its operating processes using technology.

This RFI is being issued for informational and planning purposes only and should not be construed as a solicitation nor does it constitute a commitment to issue a request for bids/proposals, award a contract, or pay any costs incurred in preparation of a response to this RFI. ACERA requires that all responding vendors abstain from providing actual quotes or bids in response to this RFI.

Any information received in response to this RFI will assist ACERA's project team in finalizing the scope of work and requirements which may be used at a future date in the issuance of a Request for Proposal (RFP). Submitting a response to this RFI is not a guarantee in any way that a vendor will be selected for any subsequent RFP, nor does it preclude any vendor from responding to future opportunities.

1.2 Submission Instructions

Please submit all responses and refer all inquiries to:

2018 PAS RFI
Alameda County Employees' Retirement Association
475 14th Street, Suite 1000
Oakland, CA 94612
Phone: (510) 628-3000
Email: vjagar@acera.org
Website: www.acera.org

You may withdraw your response at any time up to the response deadline noted below simply by notifying ACERA in writing.

Pertinent Dates:

All questions, clarifications, and other comments regarding this RFI must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. PST on **March 16, 2018**.

The deadline to respond to the RFI is 5:00 p.m. PST on **March 30, 2018**.

1.3 Information Requested from Vendors

Please describe the desired functionality identified in Section III. Vendors are encouraged to recommend alternatives to the requested functionality if the vendor determines, based on their experience, that there is a better approach.

1.4 Vendor Presentations

ACERA may request vendors to provide a presentation of some of the functionality described in this RFI. All costs associated with such presentation will be borne by the vendor. The vendor shall not provide promotional items at these presentations.

1.5 Confidentiality and ACERA Ownership

This RFI is both confidential and proprietary to ACERA and ACERA reserves the right to recall the RFI in its entirety or in part. Vendors agree that they will not duplicate, distribute, or otherwise disseminate or make available this document or the information contained in it without the express written consent of ACERA.

Vendors shall not include or reference this RFI in any publication without prior written approval of ACERA. All responses to the RFI will become the property of ACERA and will not be returned.

1.6 Disclosure of RFI Contents

ACERA has the right to use any or all ideas presented in any reply to the RFI. Should the vendor deem it necessary to include confidential or proprietary information in response to this RFI, the vendor must specifically mark each page/section in large bold type (**PROPRIETARY INFORMATION**).

1.7 California Public Records Act

All materials submitted in response to this RFI may be subject to disclosure should ACERA receive a request for documents under the Public Records Act (Gov. Code 6250 et seq.) If you specifically designate documents in your response to this RFI as confidential or proprietary information, ACERA will notify you that we have received a PRA for your information but will not withhold production of documents on your behalf. If you believe that your information is not subject to disclosure under the PRA, you may seek a court order preventing such production.

Section 2 – Description of the Organization

2.1 Organization of ACERA

ACERA is a government defined benefit pension plan that provides retirement, disability, and death benefits to the General and Safety members employed by Alameda County and other Participating Employers. ACERA is governed by the County Employees' Retirement Law of 1937 (CERL), contained in CA Government Code §§ 31450 – 31899.10, and other relevant state and federal laws.

2.2 Current Structure

ACERA is currently supported by over 90 employees, the majority of whom rely on the current Pension Administration System (PAS) to support their job function. The current PAS is a client-server application placed in production in 2001 using Oracle as a back-end database. Outside of the PAS, ACERA relies on a document management system that provides an imaging solution to ACERA. Currently the PAS and document management system are two separate systems which are integrated.

ACERA currently sends a subset of PAS data to the PAS vendor who hosts a portal called Web Member Services (WMS) for ACERA Members. WMS is a secure web-based tool that helps Members plan for retirement and conduct business with ACERA.

WMS Features for Active and Deferred Members:

- Get a real-time retirement estimate using the Benefit Estimator
- See how many years of service credit you've earned
- Request a service credit purchase
- Review your beneficiaries
- Create and print a member statement
- Create and print an account balance letter
- Request a manual retirement estimate via submission of a form
- See the balance of your contributions to the retirement system plus the interest you've earned
- Deferred members can change their name and address (active members must make these changes with their employer)

WMS Features for Retired Members:

- View and print your retirement allowance pay statement and all past pay statements
- Change your address, name, or email address
- View and print your 1099-R income statement for your taxes
- View and makes changes to federal and state withholding
- View your insurance deductions from your check
- Review your nominated beneficiaries
- Opt in or out of mailed paper pay statements

Section 3 – RFI Response Submission

3.1 Vendor Profile

1. Provide detailed information about your organization as well as business status.
2. Please provide the details of projects you have worked on similar in scope to this RFI, including a contact name and e-mail address for the contracting agency. Please specifically identify any public agencies among your references.
3. Provide cost information for the last two implementations of similar scope to ACERA.
4. Provide any other details that may be of interest to this RFI.

3.2 Vendor Methods/Approaches

ACERA is seeking to understand the following aspects of available vendor line of business solutions, and/or services, and software vendor's preferred methods/approaches:

- a. How does the vendor solution address the existing WMS functions listed in items #2.2, above? Are these functions delivered in the tool or would they require customization?
- b. What is the vendor's experience in the public pension space?
 - a. How many public pension implementations? Please provide member base size, number of checks cut each month, and number of retirees for each implementation.
 - b. Ratio of public pension versus private pension implementations.
- c. What are the vendor's perceived value differentiators of their solution in the pension administration space?
- d. What were the last two completed implementations?
- e. Any implementation in progress currently?
- f. What platform is the solution built on?
- g. What is the vendor's record of timeliness of implementations?
- h. What options, including the availability of a support team, are available for on-going support?
- i. How are future change requests handled?
- j. Vendor's preferred methods/approaches for:
 - Project management and communications
 - Product development and deployment
 - Data conversion
 - Testing/validation
 - System & user training

3.3 Desired Functions

ACERA has put together a list of some of the system functionalities that are considered essential to a pension administration system as well as functionalities of interest.

- Member tracking from the start of their employment and eligibility to their retirement or termination of benefits

- Payroll transmittal and storage of payroll information needed for retirement purposes
- Interfaces with external systems such as: HR/Payroll, General Ledger, Payment/Custodian systems, document management system, and *call center software*
- A configurable base product that can be modified to fit ACERA's needs
- Flexible benefit calculations and estimates based on business rules that can be modified by a user interface without the need of vendor support
- Flexibility in systems operations to allow for use of both the data contained in the database and to allow for use of data not included in the database, but needed to perform calculations, allowing staff to provide the additional data as required in completing operations in the system and have this data and the calculations stored within the system
- Security administration, including the ability to add/delete/modify user's access to particular pages, reports, views, and actions
- An all-encompassing activity monitoring system that tracks and logs all of a user's actions while logged into the system
- Workflow driven pension administration processes that allow for fully customized workflow rules
- Browser based design
- Database running on Microsoft SQL Server. Ability to extract data as needed.
- Willingness to participate in intrusion testing periodically
- Option to choose where production data is hosted (on-site, in the cloud, off-site, or vendor hosted)
- Full control of all fields that have built in context restrictions and drop down menu selections
- Member web Self Service
- Ability to import member salary, service, employee and employer contributions, and demographics data from the employer
- Compliance with tax laws including IRC Section 401(a)(9), 401(a)(17), 415(b), 415(c).
- The ability to separately track accrued service, continuous service, service credit, and various types of sources for such credits, such as purchased service
- The ability to report changes in member accounts for contributions, interest, and service accrued for a given period in summary and by detail to allow periodic reconciliation
- Posting of interest and/or investment return to member accounts
- The ability to setup service purchase contracts and track payments
- Automate service purchase cost calculations if relevant data is in the system
- The ability to record reciprocity information and process pension benefits under the reciprocity agreement
- Benefit estimate functions with reports
- Benefit distribution capabilities, including lifetime annuities for Normal, Vested, Disability, Continuance benefits (to spouse, domestic partners, or designated beneficiaries) and voluntary additional annuities, one time lump sum payouts, limited benefit payouts due to court ordered payouts, and manual payouts

- The ability to calculate and distribute death and survivor benefits with the ability to update and modify business rules to adhere to changes in local and federal law
- The ability to process annual cost of living adjustment (COLA) to specified benefits and ad hoc COLA as needed, and maintain the COLA bank for each member
- The ability to manage and maintain health benefits, including adding and dropping Members and dependents from health plans, calculating monthly subsidies and reimbursements for eligible members not enrolled in an ACERA's sponsored plan, and Medicare eligibility and compliance
- Batch processing of open enrollment transactions
- Batch processing of deductions if necessary
- The ability to generate monthly eligibility files for health insurance carriers
- The ability to generate monthly deduction files for deduction vendors according to vendors' specifications
- The ability to report change in payroll records for a given month in summary and by detail to allow full reconciliation with payroll of current and prior month
- The ability to manually enter and track non-members of ACERA who are receiving pension benefits due to domestic relations orders
- The ability to divide community property by time rule
- Disability case tracking and re-examination alert
- The ability to setup receivables for benefit overpayments and track repayments and defaults
- Due to limitations in the historical handling of data and limited data conversion, the new PAS will have to allow for the user to adjust the data within the system
- Death verifications file preparations for auditing for deaths through third party vendors
- Determination of the existence of California taxable income when benefit payments are made according to source tax law
- Tax accounting and record retention in relation to 1099-R's and W4-P's along with the ability to generate 1099-R's, Form 945, and California DE 6 form for tax reporting purposes
- The ability to generate year end, annual member statements, actuarial valuation extractions, and membership reconciliation reports
- The abilities to perform actuarial adjustments and allow for changes in actuarial assumptions to be built in for easy maintenance and integration into all benefits requiring actuarial adjustments, including the ability to update the system with annual employee and employer contribution rates.
- The abilities to provide output to members on the specific factors and adjustments used in calculating member benefits
- The ability to send individual correspondence and mass distribute correspondence, monthly direct deposit statements, annual member statements, 1099-R's by e-mail, and have them be accessible through a member web self service
- Effective reporting and data export functionality, including financial reports, statistical summaries, actuarial data, annual statements, and ad-hoc reporting, with the ability to customize and modify built-in base reports

- Data warehousing, and management information systems to interface with a performance management system and provide for the flexibilities to modify such reporting
- Claims monitoring operations, to allow for tracking of ad hoc claims regarding member services and benefits, such as claims for exceptions based on special facts for a member's situation
- Integration with digital signature software
- Ability to have test environments that are duplicates of the production environment with the ability to refresh data

3.4 Questions Regarding This RFI

If you have questions or need clarification of any aspect of this RFI, submit your questions to Vijay Jagar at vjagar@acera.org by 5:00 p.m. PST on March 16, 2018. All questions received will be responded to in writing and both questions and answers will be posted on the ACERA website at <https://www.acera.org/rfp>.