

# RFP Questions and Clarifications Memorandum

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**To:** Vendors Responding to RFP Number 4671  
**From:** Craig P. Orgeron, CPM, Ph.D.  
**Date:** June 16, 2025  
**Subject:** Responses to Questions Submitted and Clarifications to Specifications  
**Contact Name:** EPL Team  
**Contact E-mail Address:** [EPL.Team@its.ms.gov](mailto:EPL.Team@its.ms.gov)

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**RFP Number 4671 is hereby amended as follows:**

**1. The ITS EPO RFP Summary and Response Checklist, Item 2, is modified as follows:**

Attachment B: *Vendor Submission Form for IT Hardware EPO RFP No. 4671*

There are ~~five~~four items covered by this form. These items are noted below

- ☐ a) Certifications and General Questions (Item 1)
- ☐ b) Company Profile (Item 2)
- ☐ c) Categories and Manufacturers (Item 3)
- ☐ d) References (Item 4)
- ☐ ~~e) Contact Information (Item 5)~~

The following questions were submitted to ITS and are being presented as they were submitted, except to remove any reference to a specific vendor. This information should assist you in formulating your response.

**Question 1:** Do we need to register and pay another fee \$150+ if we had registered and paid the fee for the 3760 contract?

**Response:** Yes, this RFP No. 4671 is entirely separate from RFP No. 3760.

**Question 2:** Is the due date the 16th or the 27th ?

**Response:** There is not a hard response deadline for this RFP. ITS will begin reviewing vendor submissions on June 16th. Vendors who provide ITS their response through the 27th will have the opportunity to be in the initial publication of the EPO. Vendors may continue to submit responses after the 27th and after initial publication of the EPO. Refer to Section VI, Item #3, Procurement Project Schedule.

**Question 3:** To confirm - as a manufacturer - we do not respond to this unless we plan to sell, accept PO, Invoice and accept payment directly. Is this correct?

**Response:** **Correct.**

**Question 4:** What is the vendor registration number and where do you pay the fee?

**Response:** **The registration number is how ITS validates that a responding vendor has paid their registration fee, which they must do before responding to the RFP. Section VIII, Item #1.2 of the RFP has the instructions for how to register and pay the registration fee.**

**Question 5:** Do we have to pay the registration fee if the agency pays us directly?

**Response:** **To join 4671, vendors must pay the registration fee. There is also a separate Administrative Sales Fee equal to 1% of sales which vendors must pay on all sales they make through this EPO.**

**Question 6:** Where in the RFP does it ask for us to list the mfg brands that we plan to sell?

**Response:** **Section VIII, Item #3, which will be provided to ITS in a vendor's response via Attachment B.**

**Question 7:** Can you confirm vendors who are approved can add additional manufacturer lines post contract award for the full contract term?

**Response:** **Correct. ITS, in Section VIII, Item #3, asks responding vendors to provide the manufacturers they intend to represent. This list is intended to be informational only so that ITS has an estimate of which manufacturers are or are not represented throughout the vendor pool. Vendors are not required to only provide products and solutions from the manufacturers listed in their response. ITS does request that if a vendor begins selling a new manufacturer that you update ITS.**

**Question 8:** If we're leveraging this contract with a customer and the customer prefers to purchase through one of our leasing partners, is that permitted under the terms of the contract? Or can they only utilize this contract by directly purchasing through the reseller?

**Response:** **Customers can only issue Purchase Orders to the vendor who responded to their solicitation, and only vendors who have a signed EPO Purchase Agreement may respond to the customer solicitations.**

**Question 9:** Regarding the finance question, would financial institutions also be able to submit for EPO participation as well?

**Response:** **Any vendor who wishes to provide the products and services specifically contemplated by this EPO may respond.**

**Question 10:** How would we go about including leasing options for the purchase of products?

**Response:** If a vendor wishes to propose leasing as an option in response to a particular customer's solicitation, they will do so in accordance with the rules of that solicitation.

**Question 11:** We understand that you are not taking exceptions to this RFP. What are our options if we are simply unable to accept the RFP and the EPO Agreement as-is?

**Response:** You may submit in writing what exact provisions of the RFP you cannot agree with.

**Question 12:** Which solicitation templates did you say were similar to what these would be like?

**Response:** The solicitation templates for RFP No. 4599, Public Safety Video and Communications (PSVC) EPL, utilizes templates that will be similar to what will be published for this EPO.

**Question 13:** When will 3760 be replaced officially by this EPO?

**Response:** ITS' plan is that 3760 will be terminated 30 days after publication of the 4671 vendor pool and associated instructions for use. This overlap period will allow for agencies to complete orders placed under existing 3760 quotes.

**Question 14:** Is this 30 days from June 27th?

**Response:** EPL 3760 will be terminated via an announcement sent to all EPL 3760 vendors which will give at least 30 days notice. ITS' plan is to send this announcement to vendors on the day the Instructions For Use document for EPO 4671 is published.

**Question 15:** Could you elaborate on Page 10 #10 about contractors accepting other products purchased by the customer under another contract and integrating those into our proposal?

**Response:** This item means that a vendor has no mechanism to force a customer to purchase a product or service from the vendor if the customer can get that product or services elsewhere and it would be in the customer's best interested to do so.

**Question 16:** Are there any exclusions of what can be offered in these categories?

**Response:** Yes, refer to Attachment A: Technical Specifications for the scope of each of the categories as well as Global Requirements.

**Question 17:** Are we able to provide more than one contact on the submission cover sheet?

**Response:** Yes.

**Question 18:** Page 16 #21 says prices good for 90 days. Standard quotes are good for 30 days - is there a way to revise the 90 day requirement?

**Response:** The 90 day requirement has been a standard requirement by ITS across our various RFPs, EPOs, and EPLs. As stated in the RFP, this is the baseline but the future solicitations issued by customers have the opportunity to change this requirement.

**Question 19:** Is it correct that we only need to list the Manufacturer's Name in section 3 of attachment B. No address, url or anything else?

**Response:** Correct, only the name of the Manufacturer is requested.

**Question 20:** Page 25 #4.12 Delivery intervals must be on the quote. Is that the same as estimated delivery dates?

**Response:** The answer to this would depend on the specifics of the solicitation released by a customer, but we expect that delivery intervals and delivery due dates will often be the same.

**Question 21:** If we are current 3760 vendor, are we required to respond by the first deadline?

**Response:** RFP No. 4671 is replacing 3760. If an EPL 3760 vendor wishes to join 4671, they will be required to submit a response to the new RFP. There is no deadline for when a vendor must submit their response. However, current 3760 vendors will no longer be able to sell products to customers after the termination of EPL 3760.

**Question 22:** Referencing the bullet point from the slide show at the vendor conference that stated a vendor could be removed/deactivated for being non-responsive - Are there any expectations on number/ratio of responses?

**Response:** There is no minimum number of solicitation responses required to remain a part of the 4671 vendor pool. Vendors may be removed or deactivated if communication becomes an issue between ITS and the vendor. This answer should not be construed to indicate that a breakdown in communication is the only reason a vendor could be deactivated or removed from the pool.

**Question 23:** Will there be any verification needed for the manufacturers we have listed or plan to sell referencing this contract?

**Response:** ITS is relying on the vendor's response to Section VIII, Item #1.4.2, wherein the vendor states that they have all necessary certifications to sell what they propose.

**Question 24:** Does ITS have any intentions to add security products to this contract in the future?

**Response:** Not at this time.

**Question 25:** What is the required timeframe for a solicitation to be "open"?

**Response:** The individual solicitation the customer issues will state exactly when it closes.

**Question 26:** Can you confirm that you only want returned as part of our submission the Cover Sheet and Attachment B as one combined pdf file?

**Response:** As noted on the RFP Checklist and in Section II, you will return the Cover Sheet, Attachment B, and any documents requested from Section VIII. ITS does not have a stated preference on the number of files submitted, only that they be properly labeled

**Question 27:** Thank you for your response about submitting exceptions for review. May we submit the exceptions with the response itself by 6/16 (start of the opening of proposals)?

**Response:** ITS will not accept any exceptions, as stated in Section II, Item 11.4. The latter half of 11.4 is intended to convey that if you wish to discuss any terms you may have issue with, ITS is willing to have those discussions, but it must be done separately and before the process of responding to the RFP. ITS' willingness to discuss the terms should not be construed to mean that any individual vendor will be allowed to take exception, as all vendors must accept the same terms.

**Question 28:** The Sales fee is still 1%?

**Response:** Correct.

**Question 29:** Is this EPO vendor direct only, or can authorized subcontractors fulfill orders on behalf of the OEM?

**Response:** The vendor that responds to the customer's solicitation must be the same vendor that will receive the Purchase Order, and only vendors who have a signed EPO Purchase Agreement are able to respond to customer solicitations. Vendors who are reselling products from an OEM are allowed to participate as long as all the aforementioned criteria are met.

**Question 30:** Will there be any purchasing limitations on this new EPL like on the 3760?

**Response:** Limitations imposed on the customers will be listed in the Instructions For Use document that will be published when the EPO is made available for use by customers. These Instructions will be posted to the ITS website.

**Question 31:** If we need to include a shipping clarification would that be emailed directly or submitted as part of the RFP?

**Response:** Vendors should submit any clarifying questions before submitting the response to the RFP.

**Question 32:** Are installation services covered under this contract, if the items being installed are on the solicitation?

**Response:** Yes, installation services are included. Please refer to Attachment A: Technical Specifications for the scope of products and services available through this EPO.

**Question 33:** Is there a limit on the number of vendors that can qualify for an award?

**Response:** No.

**Question 35:** Can you confirm who is eligible to respond? Specifically:

- a. Is this RFP intended only for resellers to respond and list manufacturer product lines?
- b. Is there an option for manufacturers to respond as prime and list a group of approved resellers to sell/fulfill through?
- c. Can distributors respond as prime and list manufacturers and resellers to sell through?

**Response:** a. We expect this scenario will represent the majority of vendors, but is not the only appropriate situation.

b. This could be an appropriate option if:

- the manufacturer signs the purchase agreement;
- the manufacturer responds to the customer solicitations; and
- the manufacturer receives payment from the customer

We would view this situation as the vendor utilizing subcontractors, and the manufacturer (vendor) is the responsible party for all terms and conditions of the RFP and the Purchase Agreement.

c. This could be an appropriate option if:

- the distributor signs the purchase agreement;
- the distributor responds to the customer solicitations; and
- the distributor receives payment from the customer

We would view this situation as the vendor utilizing subcontractors, and the distributor (vendor) is the responsible party for all terms and conditions of the RFP and the Purchase Agreement.

**Question 35:** Could you please explain the motivation behind changing to the Express Procurement Option versus the Express Product Lists model?

**Response:** The motivation behind this name change is not relevant to the RFP.

**Question 36:** can you elaborate on the registration fees to join EPO4761 and any additional fees when we get solicitations requests?

**Response:** To join 4671, vendors must pay a registration fee. There is also a separate Administrative Sales Fee equal to 1% of sales which vendors must pay on all sales they make through this EPO.

**Question 37:** How do I find our vendor registration number? How do I obtain the E-Verify Registration Documentation?

**Response:** Section VIII, Item #1.2 of the RFP has the instructions for how to register and pay the registration fee. The link provided in Section VIII, Item 1.13 directs vendors to the E-Verify website, information on obtaining that documentation should be available there, but ITS cannot provide detailed instructions because it is not an ITS program.

**Question 38:** Will this new IT Hardware Express Procurement Option (EPO) RFP 4671 replace our existing IT Hardware EPL 3760?

**Response:** **Yes, 4671 will replace 3760. There will be a short period of overlap where both procurement options are available.**

**Question 39:** Our current EPL 3760 includes only our manufacture-branded equipment. Does this new EPO allow us to include additional manufacturers that we resell in addition to our own branded products?

**Response:** **Yes.**

**Question 40:** Can you clarify what is meant by the term New Vendors? We want to make sure we are not misunderstanding.

**Response:** **The term "New Vendors" as used in the project schedule refers to vendors who have not yet joined 4671.**

**Question 41:** When using EPO, are customers able to choose solutions based on criteria other than price?

**Response:** **Yes, there will be a solicitation template available that will allow customers to determine which solution is lowest and best using a more complex evaluation process.**

**Question 42:** Attachment A Item 2.10 States "Products must be new". Please clarify that products must be new and purchased from the original manufacturer through an authorized manufacturer reseller and carry the manufacturer's standard warranties.

**Response:** **Correct.**

**Question 43:** Attachment A Item 2.10 States "Products must be new". Please clarify that all components and accessories must be new from the original manufacturer through an authorized manufacturer reseller and carry manufacturer standard warranties including SFPs, twinax cables, network cards, etc. No third party components or accessories will be accepted for the Enterprise Equipment category.

**Response:** **This is correct insofar as it overlaps with the previous question, but there is no restriction on third party offerings if those items meet all other requirements of the RFP and the individual customer solicitation.**

**Question 44:** Are there any named manufacturers excluded outside of what would be included in the exclusions listed in Attachment A?

**Response:** **This RFP does not exclude any specific manufacturers by name, however, Section VIII: Item 1.5: Compliance with National Defense Authorization Act, may exclude certain manufacturers products from being included.**

**Question 45:** Is this EPO considered a direct sales route to market, or can vendors engage resellers in fulfilling orders as well as providing any warranty repairs or other contractual obligations?

**Response:** **Vendors can sell their own products directly or they can resell other OEMs products as well.**

**Question 46:** Will a vendor be able to vet resellers that are not currently on their state contract when those resellers respond to the RFP?

**Response:** **ITS will not have control over the resellers that respond since reseller groups will not be a feature of 4671.**

**Question 47:** Does a vendor have the option to bid or no bid if we are already partnered in an account that submits a request?

**Response:** **Vendors are not required to respond to customer solicitations if they do not wish to. No bid letters are not required to be sent.**

**Question 48:** Is the customer going to be able to choose what vendor they would like to move forward with, or will ITS vet out quotes?

**Response:** **Customers will follow an ITS prescribed solicitation process in selection of the winning vendor. For solicitations under a specific dollar limit (the amount of which will be set in the Instructions For Use document), customers are delegated the authority to complete this process without further ITS involvement.**

**Question 49:** Will agencies add all vendors in the awarded pool to deals currently in place?

**Response:** **When a customer issues a solicitation to the vendor pool, they will be required to send it to all vendors in the relevant product category.**

**Question 50:** Will any software be included?

**Response:** **Please refer to Attachment A: Technical Specifications, Item 2.3 which states "Only software needed to manage or run the hardware may be proposed."**

**Question 51:** Which category does audio sound solutions for the classroom fit.

**Response:** **We expect these types of products will fall under the "Presentation and Conference Equipment" category, but without specific details about the individual products, ITS cannot give a definitive answer.**

**Question 52:** Specifications were referenced as part of a solicitation. Will these be technical specifications only or will there be other boiler plate type specifications as well?

**Response:** **The technical specifications for the EPO will define the scope of items that customers may then solicit vendors for. Minimum specifications for each customer's individual project will be set by the customer when issuing their solicitations.**

**Question 53:** Can you explain the templates mentioned again? Are they part of the bid process?

**Response:** Yes, the templates are part of the solicitation process. The templates are forms that customers will fill out that detail what they are trying to purchase, as well as laying out the procedures the solicitation process will follow. The goal of the templates is to make the bid process more uniform across various customers and to enhance transparency to that process.

**Question 54:** If a school district wants to add several PC labs, and use the EPO as the procurement vehicle, does the school district have to send the request to all vendors or can they pick their vendor?

**Response:** All customers using the EPO will be required to send their solicitation to all vendors in the relevant category.

**Question 55:** If a buyer's requirements span multiple technology categories, will that buyer be able to release their solicitation into multiple categories?

**Response:** Yes. The rules for how to accomplish this will be explained to customers in the Instructions For Use document.

**Question 56:** Are manufacturer accessories going to be required? EPL 3760 requires manufacturer optics, additional components etc. and not third party.

**Response:** On the new EPO 4671, ITS does not intend to prohibit vendors from proposing solutions that include items from multiple manufacturers.

**Question 57:** Will a bidder need to submit multiple proposals to receive awards in multiple technical categories? Or will a single bidder proposal allow for award under multiple categories?

**Response:** Only a single response to RFP No. 4671 will be required. When a vendor submits their response to join the EPL Vendor pool, the vendor will indicate which categories they wish to be part of.

**Question 58:** Will solicitations follow a reverse auction process?

**Response:** No, ITS is not imposing a reverse auction process on customers wishing to use this EPO.

**Question 59:** Can a customer specify a Manufacturers product when issuing the request to resellers?

**Response:** Customers can issue a Brand Specific solicitation by filling out a Brand Specific Justification Form. This form will be attached as part of their solicitation. The details for when Brand Specification is appropriate is defined in the ITS Procurement Handbook, and details about the process specifically for EPO 4671 will appear in the Instructions For Use.

**Question 60:** Do school districts, government municipalities, universities, have to use the EPL procurement vehicle?

**Response:** ITS is not imposing a requirement to use this EPO upon any customer, although for many customers (which includes State Agencies, K-12, Local governing Authorities, etc.), the EPO may be the most attractive procurement instrument to use.

**Question 61:** Will there be a piggybacking clause to the contract to expand who can purchase off of it?

**Response:** ITS will define who can use this EPO in the Instructions For Use document. This EPO will be available to the same customers that are currently able to use 3760 (State Agencies, K-12, local governing authorities, etc.).

**Question 62:** Will this EPO be E-Rate eligible?

**Response:** The RFP does not specifically contemplate E-Rate eligibility. Customer solicitations may or may not be E-Rate eligible, depending on the requirements of the E-Rate program, which ITS has not reviewed as part of answering this question.

**Question 63:** How long is the quote to a customer good for as far as overlapping from 3670 to 4671?

**Response:** Quotes provided for customers utilizing EPL 3760 will follow 3760's established rules and procedures for when those quotes expire. EPO 4671 is an entirely new procurement instrument, so a customer cannot use quotes provided under 3760 to complete a purchase using 4671.

If you have any questions concerning the information above or if we can be of further assistance, please contact EPL Team via email at [EPL.Team@ts.ms.gov](mailto:EPL.Team@ts.ms.gov).

cc: ITS Project File Number 48726