

Notice of Intent to Certify Sole Source

To: Interested Parties
From: Craig P. Orgeron, CPM, Ph.D.
CC: ITS Project Number 48760
Date: April 15, 2025
Re: Sole Source Certification Number 4676 for a criminal history data dashboard for the Mississippi Department of Public Safety (DPS)
Contact Name: Matthew Livingston
Contact Phone Number: 601-432-8244
Contact E-mail Address: Matthew.Livingston@its.ms.gov

Sole Source Certification Award Details

Regarding Information Technology Services (ITS) Sole Source Certification Number 4676 for the Mississippi Department of Public Safety (DPS), please be advised that ITS intends to award SEARCH Group, Incorporated as the sole source provider of a criminal history data dashboard for one year, in an amount not to exceed \$75,000.00. If DPS opts to renew the criminal history data dashboard, this sole source certification shall be valid for up to two additional years. Please be advised that ITS will determine if additional enhancements, upgrades, or support are within scope during the certification period and may increase the spending authority accordingly. Should SEARCH Group, Incorporated change their name during this certification period, then ITS will determine if a recertification is necessary. For an explanation regarding Mississippi state law, policy, and procedures for sole source procurements, refer to Attachment B: Sole Source Procurement Overview.

Sole Source Criteria

1. The product or services being purchased must perform a function for which no other product or source of services exist:

SEARCH, the National Consortium for Justice and Statistics, has unique access to state Computerized Criminal History (CCH) repositories through its Governor-appointed Membership Group, of which the Mississippi Bureau of Investigations is a member. SEARCH's unique experience supporting state CCH repositories, and its Membership Group of repository directors, provides readily available access to critical information and key decisionmakers. While other organizations may have experience in creating online dashboards and business intelligence tools, none have the depth of operational access to state repository managers throughout the nation that SEARCH maintains and can leverage in developing effective and

universal CCH data quality metrics. SEARCH's wide-ranging knowledge of repository operations and access to experts from around the country make it uniquely qualified to perform the CCH analytics work identified by the Mississippi Bureau of Investigations in this project. The metrics and dashboards developed for this project will allow criminal history repository staff at the Mississippi Department of Public Safety to actively monitor records submitted to repository for timeliness, accuracy, and completeness. These records are critical to support decision making within the criminal justice system to make determinations concerning bail, pretrial diversion, sentencing, parole eligibility and other decisions of those who have committed a crime.

2. The purchaser must be able to show specific business objectives that can be met only through the unique product or services:

The dashboard will allow secure access to criminal history metrics by authorized repository staff while allowing users to monitor the status of Mississippi's criminal history records without the need for computer programming by DPS, give repository staff real-time information that can be provided to stakeholders to ensure that statutory criminal history record reporting requirements are being met, and use off-the-shelf technology to avoid expensive development and implementation costs. These tools will allow DPS to work with criminal justice stake holders – including courts, district attorneys and criminal history repository staff – to improve Mississippi's disposition completion rate that is among the lowest in the country.

3. The product or services must be available only from the manufacturer and not through resellers who could submit competitive pricing for the product or services:

SEARCH Group, Incorporated has certified that they are the sole source provider of their proprietary loading module that will transform Mississippi's criminal history data into dashboards. SEARCH is the only company where the CCH Data dashboard services are currently available. The Vendor's sole source certification letter is included as Attachment A.

Schedule

Task	Date
First Advertisement Date	04/15/25
Second Advertisement Date	04/22/25
Response Deadline From Objectors	04/30/25 at 3:00 P.M. Central Time
Notice of Award/No Award Posted	Not before 05/01/25

Project Details

The Mississippi Department of Public Safety (MDPS) is looking to implement a data dashboard that will provide the Mississippi Criminal Information Center with operational metrics regarding its Computerized Criminal History (CCH) system to monitor the accuracy of arrest and disposition records reported to the repository.

Submission Instructions and Format of Response from Objecting Parties

Interested parties who have reason to believe that the data dashboard should not be certified as a sole source should provide information in the following format for the state to use in determining whether or not to proceed with awarding the Sole Source contract to SEARCH Group, Incorporated.

1.1 Interested Party Information

1.1.1 Contact Name, Phone Number and email address

1.1.2 Company Website URL, if applicable

1.2 Objection to Sole Source Certification

1.2.1 Interested parties must present specific objections to the Sole Source certification using the criteria listed above.

1.2.2 A statement regarding the Interested Party's capabilities as related to this Sole Source Certification Request.

1.3 Comments will be accepted at any time prior to Wednesday, April 30, 2025 at 3:00 p.m. (Central Time) to Matthew Livingston at Matthew.Livingston@its.ms.gov or at the Mississippi Department of Information Technology Services, 3771 Eastwood Drive, Jackson, Mississippi 39211. Responses may be delivered by hand, via regular mail, overnight delivery, e-mail or by fax. Fax number is (601) 713-6380. ITS WILL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR DELAYS IN THE DELIVERY OF RESPONSES. It is solely the responsibility of the Interested Parties that responses reach ITS on time. Interested Parties may contact Matthew Livingston to verify the receipt of their Responses. Responses received after the deadline will be rejected.

1.4 Interested Party responses should include the following information:

<p>SUBMITTED IN RESPONSE TO Sole Source Certification No. 4676-48760 Accepted until April 30, 2025 @ 3:00 p.m., ATTENTION: Matthew Livingston</p>

If you have any questions concerning the information above or if we can be of further assistance, please contact Matthew Livingston at 601-432-8244 or via email at Matthew.Livingston@its.ms.gov.

Attachment A: Vendor Correspondence

Attachment B: Sole Source Procurement Overview



JASON BRIGHT Chair

DAVID J. ROBERTS Executive Director

March 18, 2025

Ms. Shelia Miller
Mississippi Criminal Information Center
Mississippi Bureau of Investigations
3891 Highway 468
W. Pearl, MS 39208

SEARCH, the National Consortium for Justice Information and Statistics, is uniquely qualified to assist with the Computerized Criminal History (CCH) Data Quality Metrics project which will provide online monitoring tools designed to support and enhance CCH repository operations in the State of Mississippi.

SEARCH has over 50 years of experience and expertise working with federal, state, local, and tribal justice agencies to improve the effectiveness of criminal history background checks, including staff with substantial operational and practical experience managing and supporting state CCH repositories. Additionally, we have a proven track record of providing effective technical assistance to CCH repositories and criminal justice agencies throughout the nation. This includes conducting research; developing written guidance; organizing; hosting workshops, focus groups, and national conferences; and assessing criminal history programs to assist repositories with improving their operational capabilities.

SEARCH has unique access to state CCH repositories through its Governor-appointed Membership Group, of which the Mississippi Bureau of Investigations is a member. Most SEARCH Members are responsible for managing their state criminal history repositories and affiliated programs. Addressing the challenges of improving the accuracy, timeliness, and completeness of criminal history records requires a thorough understanding of CCH repository operations, the data requirements of the record of arrest and prosecution (RAP) sheet, and the underlying business processes and information management practices at every stage of the criminal justice enterprise. SEARCH's unique experience supporting state CCH repositories, and its Membership Group of repository directors, provides ready access to critical information and key decisionmakers.

Through its CCH Metrics Working Group, SEARCH is the only national membership organization actively working with CCH repositories in multiple states to identify universal data quality metrics that will inform and enhance the work of state CCH repositories. While other organizations may have experience in creating online dashboards and business intelligence tools, none have the depth of operational access to state repository managers throughout the nation that SEARCH maintains and can leverage in developing effective and universal CCH data quality metrics. SEARCH's wide-ranging knowledge of

Attachment A

Ms. Shelia Miller
March 18, 2025
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repository operations and access to experts from around the country make it uniquely qualified to perform the CCH analytics work identified by the Mississippi Bureau of Investigations in this project.

The process to transform Mississippi's Criminal History data into dashboards is accomplished through technology that is exclusive to SEARCH. SEARCH will use the extracts provided by Mississippi to transform Criminal History data into a Common Data Model (CDM) and then using a proprietary loading module, the data will be used to populate visualizations in data quality dashboards. Mississippi staff will then be able to use filters to quickly answer specific questions about its criminal history data. SEARCH is the only company where the CCH data dashboard services are currently available.

Additionally, on behalf of the Bureau of Justice Statistics within the United States Department of Justice, SEARCH is the author of the biannual *Survey of State Criminal History Information Systems since 1989*. Statistical data, as a result of the surveys, assists in efforts to develop and promote constitutionally balanced and effective law and policy governing the use and management of criminal history record information, as well as to inform and improve policy and practice in the administration of justice through evidence-based research and data. This data is used to support state and federal policy legislative efforts that involve the use of criminal history records by providing education on the state of criminal history records across the nation. Prominent among these is the Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act, which mandated the development of the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS). As SEARCH administers the survey, collects the data, and publishes the results, they are uniquely situated to create a dashboard able to provide a results format that meets the national standard. The nationwide goal is for each state CCH repository to have similar reporting metrics for this purpose, in which SEARCH is best suited to help the Mississippi accomplish this goal. The Mississippi Bureau of Investigations has indicated it would like to engage with SEARCH to complete the initial phase of the project. Phase 1 activities and deliverables include validating Mississippi's CCH data and developing a prototype dashboard. The specific Phase 1 tasks and deliverables are outlined in the enclosed statement of work.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions or for additional information. We look forward to a very productive relationship with you and in supporting the criminal history record improvement efforts of the Mississippi Bureau of Investigations.

Sincerely,



Derek Veitenheimer
Executive Director
derek@search.org

Attachment B

The acquisition of information technology for all state agencies and institutions of higher learning (IHLs) is within the scope of the ITS law, found in *Mississippi Code Section 25-53-1*, et seq., and the policies and procedures established in accordance with this statute, found in the ITS Procurement Handbook posted on the ITS website (www.its.ms.gov).

ITS enabling legislation requires that information technology hardware, software and services be acquired in a manner that insures the maximum of competition among all manufacturers and suppliers of such equipment and services. Accordingly, ITS promotes full and open competition through the issuance of open specifications and the objective evaluation of Interested Party proposals to determine the lowest and best offering to meet an agency or public university's business requirements. True competition protects the integrity and credibility of purchasing in the public sector and is essential in providing best value and adequate contractual protection for the purchasing entity. In certain limited situations, information technology acquisitions may be sole-sourced.

ITS utilizes the provisions of Public Purchasing Law for Sole Source and Emergency procurements of information technology. Mississippi Public Purchasing Law (*Mississippi Code Section 31-7-13*) specifies that noncompetitive items available from one source only be exempted from bid requirements (sole-sourced). ITS statute, in *Section 25-53-5 (p)*, permits ITS to utilize provisions in Public Purchasing Law or regulations, when applicable.

Per Public Purchasing law, acquisitions must meet the following criteria to be authorized as sole source:

1. The product or services being purchased must perform a function for which no other product or source of services exists,
2. The purchaser must be able to show specific business objectives that can be met only through the unique product or services, and
3. The product or services must be available only from the manufacturer and NOT through resellers who could submit competitive pricing for the product or services. The vendor's correspondence regarding this criterion for this project is included as *Attachment A*.

By policy as documented in the *ITS Procurement Handbook*, acquisitions of IT services must include the following information to be authorized as sole source:

1. An explanation about why the amount to be expended is reasonable, and
2. An explanation regarding the efforts by the purchaser to obtain the best possible price.

For state agencies, approval of all technology purchases with a lifecycle cost of \$5,000 or less, including sole source purchases, has been delegated to the agency. The ITS Procurement Limits Policies for Agencies (a section in the *ITS Procurement Handbook*) require a minimum of two competitive written bids or proposals for technology purchases with a lifecycle cost over \$5,000 but not over \$75,000 (not over \$25,000 for projects funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act). Since, for single source items, the procuring agency will be unable to obtain two written bids, ITS must certify all sole source acquisitions of information technology with a lifecycle cost greater than \$5,000.

Institutions of Higher Learning (IHLs) or public universities have been delegated the authority to certify sole source procurements up to \$250,000 lifecycle cost under the ITS Procurement Limits Policies for IHLs (a section in the *ITS Procurement Handbook*). For the certification of sole source procurements delegated to the CIOs at public universities, the public university must follow ITS' Sole Source Procedure, including advertisement of the intent to award as sole source. Institutions certifying a sole source purchase must ensure the criteria listed above are met and documented in writing by the institution and the Interested Party prior to certifying a product or service as sole source. Sole source documentation must be reviewed and approved by the IHL's CIO for any sole-source certification above \$5,000. All sole source documentation should be retained in the public university's procurement file. Sole source requests above \$250,000 lifecycle cost require ITS approval.

Other than the delegations outlined above, all sole source technology procurements must be certified by ITS.

ITS thoroughly reviews Sole Source Certification Requests, determining if competing products and/or services exist. If so, ITS conducts a competitive procurement. If ITS' review confirms the sole source, then a Sole Source advertisement is issued, giving other Interested Parties an opportunity to identify competing products and/or services. Based upon the results of the Sole Source advertisement, ITS will either certify the request as a sole source or conduct a competitive procurement.