



COUNTY OF ALAMEDA

Questions & Answers

to

RFP No. 2025-SSA-WBA-EPMD

for

Emergency Prepared Meals Distribution

**Bidders Conferences Held on
December 22, 2025 and December 23, 2025**

This County of Alameda, General Services Agency (GSA), RFP Questions & Answers (Q&A) has been electronically issued to potential bidders via email. Email addresses used are those in the County's Small Local Emerging Business (SLEB) Vendor Database or other sources. If you have registered or are certified as a SLEB, please ensure that the complete and accurate email address is noted and kept updated in the SLEB Vendor Database. This RFP Q&A will also be posted on the GSA Contracting Opportunities website located at [Alameda County Current Contracting Opportunities](#).



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Thank you for your participation and interest in the County of Alameda RFP for Emergency Prepared Meals Distribution.

All the questions are taken verbatim from written questions by email and in bidders conferences by potential Bidders. The County of Alameda shall be noted as “County” in the answers to these questions. The Questions & Answers are the final stances of the County. Please consider this document in preparation for your bid response.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

- Q1) Can we use the funding to reduce the cost of meals for EBT users?
A1) The intent of this RFP is to provide prepared meals distribution at no cost to targeted food insecure communities in the county.
- Q2) What is the rationale behind separating the urban unincorporated communities among the three different regions? Hayward area and Fairview were not included and San Lorenzo was noted but is unincorporated.
A2) There are four regions reflected in the RFP, as described on pp. 6-7. Because the unincorporated county is a large area, parts of the unincorporated area were associated with the geographically closest cities in the county when designating the four different regions. The County welcomes feedback on the distribution of regional services to inform ongoing work.
- Q3) In terms of page limits, are the page limits inclusive of the questions that we need to keep, or can we omit the questions when we consider the page limits?
A3) Include the section header and questions in the page limit and omit the instructions on the page.
- Q4) Do the signatures in the Bid Response need to be wet signatures on the original?
A4) Signatures on the Bid Response must follow one of two allowable formats described in the instructions provided on page 1 of the cover page of the Bid Response template: Submit one (1) original hardcopy bid (Attachment No. 1 – Bid Response Packet), including additional required documentation, with: 1) Original Ink Signatures; OR 2) Electronic DocuSign signature plus one (1) electronic copy of the bid in PDF file format (with OCR preferred) on a USB flash drive. OCR PDF files support optical character recognition that allows the file to be searchable by text.
- Q5) Is there an opportunity to provide more meals beyond the 1,400 monthly?
A5) Proposals submitted must provide a bid form, budget, scope of work and implementation plan that corresponds to the provision of 1,400 prepared meals per month, or 16,800 prepared meals per year, per region proposed to be served during the contract period. Following these guidelines allows the County Selection Committee to evaluate and compare all proposals consistently. However,

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quantities listed are estimates and are not to be construed as a commitment. No minimum or maximum is guaranteed or implied. Bidders are encouraged to demonstrate cost-saving mechanisms in the Cost Narrative/Budget Detail on pp. 11-12 of Attachment No. 1 – Bid Response Packet that would reduce the per meal rate and increase the number of meals provided, which would be advantageous to the County. Any clarifications should be listed on page 21, Exceptions and Clarifications, of the Attachment No. 1 – Bid Response Packet.

Q6) Are you saying there is a dedicated amount available and we cannot exceed that amount and you believe that amount is roughly 1,400 monthly?

A6) See A5.

Q7) Are you dividing the calculation of 16,800 annually to get 1,400 monthly?

A7) Yes. The County is soliciting emergency prepared meals distribution services in the quantity of 16,800 meals per region annually, which is 1,400 meals per region per month.

Q8) The title of this RFP has the words emergency meals. Is the service regulated or on demand or what does the emergency section of the title relate to?

A8) The word “emergency” in this case is referring to the fact that the County seeks to support food insecure residents to meet basic living needs such as nutritious food, that they may not otherwise be able to meet without additional resources and services. In this sense, these are emergency needs of the community, and not necessarily referring to a specific response to a federal or state emergency, although these needs are increased during a declared state of emergency. The County is not seeking service providers to provide prepared meals for an “on demand” order and delivery service for victims of natural disasters and other such emergencies.

Q9) Is there an expectation for the kitchen to be in Alameda County or can the kitchen be outside of Alameda County?

A9) The commercial kitchen in which meals are prepared can be located outside of Alameda County as long as your service population is in Alameda County. The organization or company preparing the food would need to meet all food safety guidelines and provide documentation of passing food safety inspections from the County regulating the commercial kitchen.

Q10) How many contracts will be provided?

A10) There is not a predetermined number of contracts that will be awarded. Between one and four contracts could be awarded, based on the strength of proposals received for all regions and available funding. Final selections will ensure that all four regions are served.

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Q11) How many contracts were issued from the prior EPMD RFP?

A11) Four contracts for emergency prepared meal distribution services were awarded through RFP #902206 Emergency Prepared Meals Distribution and CalFresh Outreach Services (2022) for services provided in 2023-2025.

Q12) Was funding allocated equally across each of the four (4) regions as not every region has the same level of food security needs?

A12) The funding breakdown was divided equally across the four (4) regions. The County welcomes feedback on the varying levels of need in different regions of the County to inform ongoing work.

Q13) How are referrals made to the prospective contractor? Or do we have to obtain our own referrals?

A13) Yes, the Bidder/prospective Contractor is expected to identify target food insecure populations who are in need of these services, and develop their own process for referrals and service delivery. Target populations for this RFP are vulnerable populations residing in the County of Alameda, including but not limited to unhoused individuals and families, seniors, and people with disabilities without access to complete kitchen facilities or physical abilities necessary to prepare their own meals. This should be reflected in the Bidder's Bid Response under Program Design/Description of Proposed Services, Knowledge and Understanding of Target Population's Needs, and Implementation Plan and Schedule.

Q14) Is there a current provider and if so who is that provider?

A14) The previous four contracts awarded under RFP #902206 Emergency Prepared Meals Distribution and CalFresh Outreach Services (2022) concluded their services in July 2025. Contracts were awarded to Fare Resources, Inc. dba Just Fare (Region 1), The Unity Council (Region 2), Korean Community Center of the East Bay (Region 3), and Eden United Church of Christ (Region 4).

Q15) Clarification on preferred submission. The cover sheet shows mail and also scheduling a personal appointment for submissions. Is there a digital submission?

A15) Digital submissions are not an option for this RFP. Although mail is an option, it is recommended to complete in-person drop off by the due date reflected in the RFP.

Q16) All American's Act and the Area Agency on Aging contractor have been made exempt from the requirement to have every staff member have a food handler certificate in the kitchen. And instead there must always be a supervisor with a ServSafe manager certificate and in addition to the annual Health Department inspection. There is a quarterly monitoring and audit by the AAS Senior Nutritionist. Will we be required to have all our staff members in the kitchen go out and get new food handler certificates or

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would a there be a similar exemption? We're currently a contractor with the Area Agency on Aging with that exemption currently.

A16) According to the 2026 California Retail Food Code, individuals involved in the preparation, storage or service of food in a food facility that provides food to members of the public are required to have Food Handler certificates. One designated owner, employee, or "person in charge" must also have a food safety manager's certificate. The County expects the Contractor to comply with the state code as described above in this response, unless it can be demonstrated that the Contractor meets an exemption in the code.

Q17) Can bidders expect Support from Social Services Agency to identify the target audience? And if not, why?

A17) Please see A13. This RFP solicits the subject matter expertise of the Contractor to identify target populations, unmet and underfunded needs, and viable proposals for meeting the needs of these populations, in order to further the impact of the County's work.

Q18) What constitutes an Emergency Meal and for, say an organization like ours? We have other contracts serving a specific kind of part of the community. What is the impact that you're looking for? Should we try to do more for those who are already being served or should the bidder try to find more people that we can get on these 16,800 meals?

A18) Regarding what constitutes an emergency prepared meal under this RFP, the requirements of a prepared meal are outlined on page 9 of the RFP, and include but are not limited to meals that are prepared in a commercial kitchen, that are nutritious and culturally appropriate, and that provide options for a wide range of dietary needs, such as diabetics, food allergies, halal, vegetarian, etc.

The RFP is expected to be an expansion of your current funded services, and should not supplant existing funding. The Bidder should identify which food insecure communities in the target population they have the capacity to serve, and what unmet or underfunded needs can be met with their proposal. This could be providing additional and enhanced services to an existing population, expanding the types of populations served, implementing updates to or expanding an existing service delivery model, or other forms of expansion of existing services. The Bidder should make the case for where there is greatest need and why the Bidder is best suited to help the County meet that need, to the extent that the target population and scope of services meets the guidelines of the RFP. .

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Q19) RE: Services. During the bidder's conference No. 1, we heard that we need to expand our current services. Can you be more explicit to what this means? How are organizations expected to be expanding services when current county funding has been cut and organizations are needing just to reinstate services back to their current food recipients? Where would we explain this, or explicate on expansion in the bid response (program design? Implementation plan?)

A19) The RFP is expected to be an expansion of your current funded services, and should not supplant existing funding or duplicate existing services. The funds must allow the Contractor to provide services that would not otherwise already be provided without the contract, so that County funds are maximized to increase the level of service to County residents above what they would otherwise have received without this funding. A description of how the Bidder's proposal expands on current services should be provided in the Bid Response under Program Design/Description of Proposed Services and Implementation Plan and Schedule. If appropriate, an explanation could also be included under Budget Detail/Cost Narrative and Relevant Experience.

Q20) Re: Proposals across regions. Is it required that we submit a bid to 2 or more regions? For proposals that are multiple regions, can these sections be the same?

- Knowledge of target population's needs
- Relevant Experience
- Data Collection
- Table of Personnel (if personnel is same)
- References

A20) On pp. 6-7 of the RFP, the Bidder is encouraged but not required to submit a proposal for more than one region in the county, and Section D of the Scoring Criteria on page 19 of the RFP includes additional points for Bidders who propose services in more than one region.

The Attachment No. 1 - Bid Response Packet provides these instructions under some sections of the packet and not other sections: "If Bidder is proposing to bid on more than one (1) region, Bidder shall clearly list each region and provide details requested below for each region separately." It is recommended that Bidders follow instructions in the Bid Response Packet, as this instruction was provided in sections where this distinction between regions is most needed for clarity of the proposal for reviewers. Any lack of clarity about services proposed to be offered in each region may negatively impact the Bidder's score if this is difficult to evaluate.

Q21) Re: References. Bidders must currently be providing goods and/or services for at least two of the references or have done so within the last five years. To clarify, two references are those we are providing similar services to currently or within the last five

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years. Additional references-Can they be food vendors whom we have worked with?
Can they also be other funders who have funded us for meal services?

- A21) Yes, in addition to the minimum of two references to which the Bidder is currently providing similar goods and services or has provided similar goods and services within the last five years—the other references may be food vendors with whom the Bidder has worked, funders who have provided funds to the Bidder for similar services, and other relevant partners, stakeholders and clients with direct experience with the Bidder, who can speak to their work with the Bidder as it relates to the types of services proposed in the Bid.**