

Questions & Answers (Q&A)

Request for Proposal – North County Regional Fire Authority (NCRFA) 2025 Human Resources Information System (HRIS) and Implementation Project *Incorporates Q&A completed through June 9, 2025 June 20, 2025 (Evergreen List)*

On June 3, 2025, NCRFA published a Request for Proposal (RFP) on the ncrfa.com website. Vendors must submit proposals on or prior to June 26, 2025 at 2:00 pm PDT. The RFP included notice of an optional Q&A Teams session June 9, 2025 from 9:30 am to 10:30 am. The below summarizes the questions asked by prospective vendors and NCRFA's responses, which are being published on the NCRFA website for the benefit of all interested parties.

In addition to the Q&A from the June 9 session, this evergreen Q&A list will be updated with any additional vendor questions or internally-generated clarifications emailed to Human Resources Director Allison Jubb at ajubb@ncrfa.com. Emails will be responded to in Q&A format, and the same information will be provided as updates to this evergreen Q&A list. No emails will be responded to that are received after 12:00 (noon) on June 24, 2025, PDT.

Questions June 20, 2025

1. In Section V., it indicates that in order to be responsive we must submit 2 original printed copies and 1 complete electronic proposal and later indicates we have the option to choose between physical or electronic submission. May you please clarify which is the correct way we should submit?

- A. Thank you for identifying the misprint in Section V, p. 18. As a consequence of the misprint, we will accept any of the following: Electronic copy, via email as specified on p. 18, by 2:00 p.m. on June 26, 2025; OR at least 4 full printed copies of the proposal, sent via courier to be received no later than 4:30 pm on June 26; OR submit 4 full printed copies of the proposal by USPS or other mail carrier (UPS, Fed Ex, etc.), provided the package is clearly post marked on or prior to June 26, and provided it is received no later than 4:30 pm on July 1, 2026.

As long as one of the above three options are met in the time constraint identified, you may also choose to submit additional courtesy copies, such as: You may choose to provide more than the 4 minimum copies; you may choose to submit the *electronic* version *in addition to* the "official submission" of 4 printed copies; or you may choose to submit courtesy printed copies in addition to your "official submission" of the electronic version.

2. Are the interviews/presentations set to be held virtually or in-person?

- A. Virtually.

3. What is the proposed contract length?

A. See prior response to Q&A Question 4.

4. Would the organization like to see pricing for products that aren't outlined in scope of work (i.e. Employee Document Management, etc.)?

A. The vendor may include products not outlined in the scope of work. The vendor should articulate how/why the additional product would help achieve the vision and value NRRFA articulated in the RFP is being sought by implementing an HRIS. Additionally, please refer to the RFP for additional information. For example, page 5 addresses employee records retention and page 13 does as well.

5. What information needs to be integrated both imports/exports? Would this need to be an API or SFTP transfer?

A. Vendor may articulate how one or both options are best suited to our legacy systems, organization size, technical staff limitations, budget, etc. Without hearing proposals and options, SFTP (Secure File Transfer Protocol) appears to be a more likely methodology for data transfer. However, an ongoing communication channel via API (Application Programming Interface), may be appropriate, such as, for data transfer from the legacy CrewSense time system into the payroll administration system, and to transfer data from the HRIS payroll administration side to the accounting/GL.

A.

6. Does this bid allow for pricing/functionality for Payroll & Payroll Services? If so, will you need to print paper checks onsite? (Payroll)

A. NCRFA intends to continue to staff and administer payroll in house. The HRIS solution must include payroll administration functionality, which is our priority for implementation in 2025. Printing paper checks is not necessary (and all payroll is direct deposited).

7. Do you require physical time clocks? If so, how many? (Time & Attendance)

A. No, we do not require physical time clocks. Please also refer to prior response in Q&A Question 5.

8. Do you conduct training for any learners that aren't employees? If so, how many external learners? (Learn)

- A. See RFP page 6, identifying workforce highlights and different workgroups. As specified on page 6 and as elaborated on elsewhere in the RFP, "Respondents must articulate in their proposal how their HRIS solution will address NCRFA's need to manage multiple employee and non-employee groups, customizing to the different requirements for each unique workgroup".

9. Where/How are you currently conducting training for employees? (Third Party vendor, existing courses, etc.) Do you have a need for importing historical training records and if so how many? (Learn)

- A. Training is conducted on-site, virtually, and at other regional facilities, as well as some hybrid training delivery. Some trainers are internal, others are external contractors, some is purchased content. Virtual training is often asynchronous, as we are a 24X7 operation; a significant number of trainings are outside offerings (CEs for certified individuals attending a conference, etc.) and the employee must be able to upload verification of their attendance (certificates from the course, etc.) in the LMS as system of record. In person and virtual is also synchronous. Content is linked from our current LMS to other sites, imported to our LMS, or may be internally created content. See RFP page 5, 15, and elsewhere in the RFP for additional information on legacy systems and collaboration with other county fire and pre-hospital medical service agencies. We are open to options on importing legacy data.

10. Do you have a need for importing historical certifications & licenses? Will you need this ongoing from external sources? (Learn)

- A. Ideally, the LMS will be a single system of record, and ongoing importing (with or without integrations) is desired, to ensure a single system of record despite the ongoing need for records to originate in other agencies' systems. Please review RFP for additional information regarding this concept.

11. We offer 3 EDI's included in our standard pricing. Would NCRFA need additional EDI's?

- A. It is unknown at this time how many EDIs beyond 3 will be needed. This will depend on the selected vendors functionality deployed by NCRFA and whether it replaces or augments existing systems. You may choose how to propose this to clearly identify.

12. Is a January 2026 "Go-Live" a mandatory requirement?

- A. The vendor should clearly identify reasons in their proposal why the January 1, 2025 "go live"/cutover date to the new payroll system is not feasible, not recommended, etc. The January 1 date has business and logistical value for us, but we understand there may be other reasonable options.

Additionally, as answered on the Q&A posted on our website June 9, 2025, we anticipate 2025 implementation will include core Human Resources and Payroll Administration. We want to start parallel payroll testing October 2025, to ensure we have three payroll cycles in (using Springbrook/Bias for actual employee payroll administration, and the new HRIS running payroll in parallel). This will allow us time to address any discrepancies and ensure the cutover January 1, 2026 is seamless. Importantly, the HRIS payroll administration will be implemented as a twice-monthly cycle, whereas NCRFA currently uses a once monthly payroll cycle (payday is the last business day of the month for the current month). We are choosing a 1st -15th and 16th -end-of-month (pay days 5th and 20th) pay cycle starting January 1, and parallel testing should be easier to reconcile than it would be in a bi-weekly payroll cycle.

Questions June 9, 2025:

- 1. Will NCRFA be retaining the current Financial system? Is the selected HRIS required to integrate with NCRFA's Financial system (NCRFA uses Springbrook/Bias) General Ledger (GL)?**

NCRFA will be retaining Springbrook/Bias for the financial needs of NCRFA at this time. The selected HRIS vendor is not required to have a full integration solution with Springbrook/Bias for payroll-related GL. Respondents must clearly articulate their proposed solution for GL information/data transfer from the HRIS to Springbrook/Bias following a payroll administration cycle, including whether it is through a "built in" standard integration utilized by the HRIS vendor, or an alternate approach.

- 2. When does NCRFA want to be "live" with the new HRIS system?**

We anticipate 2025 implementation will include core Human Resources and Payroll Administration. We want to start parallel payroll testing October 2025, to ensure we have three payroll cycles in (using Springbrook/Bias for actual employee payroll administration, and the new HRIS running payroll in parallel). This will allow us time to address any discrepancies and ensure the cutover January 1, 2026 is seamless.

Importantly, the HRIS payroll administration will be implemented as a twice-monthly cycle, whereas NCRFA currently uses a once monthly payroll cycle (payday is the last business day of the month for the current month). We are choosing a 1st-15th and 16th-end-of-month (pay days 5th and 20th) pay cycle starting January 1, and parallel testing should be easier to reconcile than would be in a bi-weekly payroll cycle.

- 3. Describe NCRFA's expectations of the selected vendor for post-go-live implementation engagement as part of the initial implementation project.**

NCRFA anticipates the vendor will remain engaged for up to three months post go-live, to assist with validating payroll is accurate, and make any adjustments that may emerge once we cut over to the new

system. This would also include validating the integration/data transfer to GL is operating without issues. Assuming a robust parallel testing has already happened during the last 3 months of the year, theoretically there will be few post-cutover challenges.

4. What is the anticipated duration of an initial contract for the HRIS selected? NCRFA has certain obligations as a public agency when it comes to contracting?

At this time, a 3 year initial contract with option to renew for some period of time is what we anticipate. However, in compliance with our purchasing requirements, the vendor should know that the contract will include a provision that continuation is contingent on budget approval each year. Although not anticipated to happen, our Board of Commissioners approves our budget each year, and continuation of the HRIS contract is subject to budget approval. Therefore, the vendor should also include their approach to transitioning from them to another HRIS or other contract end. This would include elements such as ending the contract with a defined notice period, during which time the vendor would be expected to export the data directly to a new vendor, if applicable, and/or transfer the data in a usable electronic format (Excel, for example) directly to NCRFA.

5. Currently NCRFA uses CrewSense (Vector Scheduling) for scheduling and time keeping. Does NCRFA require a vendor to provide a scheduling/time and attendance system as part of their package proposed?

We do have contracts coming to the end with Vector Scheduling (CrewSense). At this time, we have not decided on renewal. NCRFA is open to a vendor offering a different time and attendance/scheduling option as part of their proposal/HRIS, but it is not a requirement. If the vendor proposes NCRFA retain CrewSense or another time and attendance/scheduling solution outside of their proposed HRIS, their proposal should address how integrations have worked/will work with their HRIS, so that final, approved time can come in to the HRIS to commence a payroll administration cycle.

Alternatively, a vendor may propose NCRFA retain CrewSense for a period of time, then transition at a later time to the HRIS solution's time and attendance/scheduling functionality. The vendor should be clear whether this is part of delivered technology/functionality, or if it is an additional purchase.

6. What is the anticipated next functionality to deploy, after the core HR and payroll administration is implemented in 2025?

NCRFA expects the core HR and payroll as the non-negotiable implementation priority. After that, there are priorities in functionality, and we recommend the vendor identify any critical paths required to deploy other functionality. For example, both Learning Management System (LMS) functionality and performance management are high priorities for NCRFA. The vendor should identify if there is a *required* sequence, such as, whether in their proposed system, the vendor's LMS functionality *must* be (or is strongly *recommended* to be) implemented *prior* to performance management functionality, etc.

7. Is performance management functionality as high of a priority as the learning management functionality is?

NCRFA does consider performance management a high priority, but sequencing that with LMS and other functionality will be part of a conversation with the selected vendor. Again, are there implementation constraints, where we must deploy certain modules or functionality prior to deploying other functionality? Performance management will require considerable process redesign outside of the HRIS functionality, as it needs a “refresh”.

For example, NCRFA is interested in more of a “continuous” performance management model versus annual cycles. This may include feeding the ongoing updates between employee and manager into an “evaluation” form, to ensure performance is captured along the way not just once per year. Additionally, this may include a strong link in philosophy and process between ongoing performance conversations and ongoing development conversations. From a technology standpoint, is the vendor proposing a solution which captures individual employee development plans/goals in the *LMS* or in the *performance management* functionality? The technology path options and limitations will be a key consideration in deciding the sequence of creating new or improving existing administration processes.

In addition to the vendor sharing insights into this full deployment roadmap as part of their proposal (*NCRFA does not expect a fully developed deployment roadmap as part of their RFP the proposal; this is something to be developed jointly*), the vendor should clearly identify where functionality or modules are an *additional* cost to NCRFA (whether in licensing/subscription and/or in implementation/consulting time).

8. Aside from performance management and LMS, what are other priorities for NCRFA as far as functionality and sequencing future implementations?

NCRFA anticipates onboarding and offboarding as well as application/recruiting as part of the applicant tracking system (ATS) functionality as high priorities.

- The onboarding/offboarding processes in place with NCRFA are labor intensive and require considerable cross-departmental coordination; HRIS functionality could significantly improve administrative efficiency and end-user experience.
- The ATS at NCRFA is non-existent, creating an administratively burdensome external and internal recruitment/promotion process.

Additionally, because both the ATS and onboarding processes are subpar when it comes to applicant experience, NCRFA may projecting a potentially negative assumption with applicants/new hires of the level professionalism of NCRFA in *all* aspects of our operation. Our processes have not kept up. We are far behind the efficient and professional technology applicants can expect from our labor competition because we rely on a manual, dated recruitment and onboarding processes.