



Introduction

On October 15, 2019, State of Maine’s Vendor Self Service (VSS) system will be upgraded with several new features.

Two of these changes may have an impact on how vendors respond to bids, and should be reviewed. This guide covers both of these enhancements in detail:

1. Clarification Questions – the buyer on a solicitation may request a clarification on the response submitted by the vendor. When this occurs, the vendor will have a chance to review the clarification question and submit a response.
2. Solicitations Re-opening for Bid – if the buyer does not receive any qualifying bids on a solicitation, or have changed the specifications, they may choose to re-open the solicitation after it has closed.

Clarification Questions

When the Buyer receives a bid for a solicitation, they may determine they need additional information from the vendor. If this occurs, you may receive an email requesting that you provide a clarification.

1. An email is received with the subject:
ADVANTAGE SELF SERVICE
CLARIFICATION REQUESTED ON
YOUR RESPONSE

The **Response Status** of your response under the **Solicitation Response** tab in your VSS account will also show as “Clarification Requested”

The screenshot shows the 'Solicitation Responses' tab in the VSS system. The 'My Responses' section is active, displaying a search bar and a table of responses. A yellow box highlights the 'Response Status' column, which shows 'Clarification Requested' for a specific response.

Link to Response	Created By	Response Status	Response Date	Solicitation ID
SR-05A-ESR190904000000000004-1		Clarification Requested	09/04/2019	REQ-05A-00000000000000000020-2



Vendor Self Service (VSS) Enhancements

2. Log into your VSS account and go to Solicitation Responses tab
3. All responses will show by default. If necessary, use the Keyword Search box to narrow the results and find the response you are looking for
4. Open the response by clicking on the SR number

Account Information Financial Transactions Business Opportunities **Solicitation Responses** Catalog Management Grant Opportu

My Responses

Search For My Responses

Show Me ... All Responses My Recent Responses In Progress Items Closing Soon My Awards My Intentions

Keyword Search : '*004*' Go Advanced Search

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My Responses

Search For My Responses

Show Me ... All Responses My Recent Responses In Progress Items Closing Soon My A

Keyword Search : '*004*' Go

From 1 to 10 Total: 10+

Link to Response	Created By	Response Status	Response Date	Solicitation ID
SR-05A-ESR190904000000000004-1		Clarification Requested	09/04/2019	REQ-05A-00000000000000000020-2

5. If a clarification has been requested, you will see:
 - a. Clarification Due Date
 - b. Clarification Details

My Response

Clarification Request **1 Respond To Lines** **2 Criteria Response**

Clarification Request

Clarification Due Date : 04/09/2019

Allow Pricing Update : No

Allow only Attachment Updates : No

Clarification Details : What is the delivery timeframe

Vendor Response :



Vendor Self Service (VSS) Enhancements

- Respond to the clarification request using the Response field.
- Submit your response.

Your clarification response will be sent back to the buyer.

You will receive an email confirming that the response was submitted.

My Response

Clarification Request **1** Respond To Lines **2** Criteria Response

Clarification Request

Clarification Due Date : 04/09/2019
Allow Pricing Update : No
Allow only Attachment Updates : No
Clarification Details :
What is the delivery timeframe?

Vendor Response : 2 to 5 business days **6**

Re-opened Solicitation

A Buyer may choose to re-open a solicitation after it has closed if no bids were received, or if none of the submitted bids were selected. If this occurs, you will be able to submit a bid on the re-opened solicitation as you would with any other.

If you previously responded to the original solicitation, you will have to submit another response to the Re-Opened bid in order for your bid to be considered.

- A solicitation is posted to VSS, and the status is set to CLOSED once it expires.

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Solicitations My Watchlist Purchase History Bulletin Board

Search for Solicitations

Show Me ... All Solicitations My Commodities Open Solicitations Closing Soon Recently Published Recent Amendments Recent Intents

Keyword Search : "00000000000000000020" Status : Closed Type :

First Prev Next

Solicitation	Doc Dept/Buyer/Category/Solicitation Type	Dates
test	DEPT OF EDUCATION	Published On : 9/4/19
RFQ - 05A - 00000000000000000020		Amended On :
		Closing On : 9/4/19 3:00 PM EDT
		Time Left: Expired
		Intent Posted On:

Summary Details

Request for Quotes(RFQ)

First Prev Next Last

1 Closed



Vendor Self Service (VSS) Enhancements

2. The buyer chooses to re-open the solicitation. It is now available on the Business Opportunities tab with a status of REOPENED.

The screenshot shows the 'Business Opportunities' tab selected. The 'Solicitation Responses' section is active, displaying a list of solicitations. The 'Recently Published' filter is selected. The 'Advanced Search' button is visible. The 'Buyer/Category/Solicitation Type' column shows 'EDUCATION'. The 'Dates' column shows 'Published On : 9/4/19', 'Amended On : 9/4/19', 'Closing On : 9/13/19 3:00 PM EDT', and 'Time Left: 8 Days, 23:14:22'. The 'Status' column shows 'Reopened' in red text. A yellow box with the number '2' is placed over the 'Reopened' status.

3. The solicitation can be viewed and responded to like all other solicitations. To view or respond, click Details.

The screenshot shows the 'Business Opportunities' tab selected. The 'Solicitations' section is active, displaying a list of solicitations. The 'Show Me ...' button is visible. The 'All Solicitations' filter is selected. The 'Keyword Search' field is empty. The 'Solicitation' column shows 'test' and 'RFQ - 05A - 0000000000000000000020'. The 'Doc Dept/' column shows 'DEPT OF E'. A yellow box with the number '3' is placed over the 'Details' button.