

## Print to Mail RFP Questions and Answers

- Can Dakota County provide additional details regarding the current architecture of the internally developed mailing solution and any third-party processing applications currently in use?
  - Dakota County currently utilizes an internally developed web-based application to create and manage mailings. Mailing data and document content are processed through a third-party composition/application layer that combines the mailing components and generates XML output files for downstream processing by the County's print and mailing vendor. Dakota County is open to modifying or modernizing how cover letters and related mailing components are generated as part of the proposed solution. Additional technical architecture and workflow details can be provided during implementation discussions and discovery sessions with the selected vendor.
- What systems will serve as authoritative sources for document generation, client data, and metadata?
  - OnBase
- Are APIs available for integration with OnBase and other County systems, or should integration assumptions be based on file-based exchanges (XML, CSV, PDF, etc.)?
  - Dakota County can support both API-based integrations and file-based exchange methods, including XML, CSV, PDF, and similar formats, depending on the capabilities of the proposed solution and the business process requirements. Hyland OnBase and other County systems may provide data through APIs, database access, scheduled exports, or other agreed-upon integration methods. Dakota County will work with the selected vendor to make required data available for use within the process; however, it shall be the vendor's responsibility to ensure all data transmissions, integrations, storage, and processing are secured in accordance with County security requirements and applicable regulatory standards.
- Does the County require real-time integration, batch processing, or support for both models?
  - Dakota County can support both real-time and batch integration models. However, packet creation and document generation must support real-time, on-demand processing.

- Are there existing middleware, ESB, or integration standards currently used within the County environment?
  - The vendor is responsible for all components processed that meet HIPAA compliance.
  
- Approximately how many document templates are currently maintained across the department?
  - We use 3 cover letter templates, but all cover letters are fed by the same XML. XML also contains instruction on how to print and attach document to cover letter.
  
- How many overall impressions/page counts for output annually?
  - In 2025, 754,000 sides were processed
  
- Are templates centrally governed or maintained individually by business teams? If yes, how many business users/individuals would require access/seats?
  - Currently templates are maintained by an IT staff. We would like 2-3 staff from the vendor to have access and maintain templates. Clear pricing at this level access needs to be included.
  
- How many individuals will create main templates?
  - Currently templates are maintained by an IT staff. We would like 2-3 staff from the vendor to have access and maintain templates. Clear pricing at this level access needs to be included.
  
- Are communications generated exclusively from structured data sources, or must the solution support ad hoc document inclusion?
  - The current solution creates a cover letter with instruction on how to print and attach documents.
  
- Does the County require support for dynamic inserts, conditional messaging, or household-level packaging rules?
  - Not at this time. But if an option is available, please explain and include pricing option.
  - For larger mailings, it'd be nice to include a larger return envelope.
  
- Are barcode-based workflows or OMR controls still required in any portion of the process?
  - We currently do not use barcode for outgoing mailings.
  
- Does the scope include PDF remediation?
  - Please clarify your question.

- Is there a preferred deployment model for the proposed solution (e.g., government cloud/SaaS, hosted managed services, hybrid, or on premises)?
  - Government cloud or on premises.
  
- Does the County require authenticated or anonymous access for client responses submitted through the portal?
  - No authentication is required but an option to have a user account or authentication can be proposed but should be separate options in the proposal. However, no matter the authentication certain fields are required based on the document type or program area the upload is for.
  
- What identity verification or authentication methods are preferred (MFA, PIN, case number validation, etc.)?
  - We're not asking for authentication. But user will be required to provide their name and case number when submitting document.
  
- Should the portal support save/resume functionality for partially completed submissions?
  - It's not a requirement, but it can be proposed and should be a separate option in the proposal.
  
- Are multilingual capabilities required for portal content, forms, or communications?
  - For portal content (forms and communications) must be translatable and ADA compliant.
  
- What browser and mobile device support standards should vendors assume?
  - Please provide what you're set up to support. Any public facing content should be universally supported by common browsers.
  
- Does the County require accessibility testing documentation in addition to VPAT/ACR submissions?
  - Contractor warrants that the following deliverables provided to the County in digital form ("Digital Content") as part of the Services must meet or exceed the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1, Level AA at the time of delivery to the County:
    - All information, media, or material, including electronic documents (such as Word, PDF, and Excel formats) that is created or distributed in a digital format or content designed for interactive formats such as websites, mobile applications, social media platforms, kiosk content, and other digital platforms.

- What are the current and projected peak print volumes by day/month/year?
  - The current daily volume is between 250 and 300 mailings.
  
- Are there specific SLA requirements for job acknowledgment, print completion, mail induction, or exception handling? If so, please provide details
  - Print two times daily (7 a.m. and noon).
  - Go out the the postal service by end of the day.
  
- Does the County require Intelligent Mail Barcode (IMb) tracking or USPS integration services?
  - See Requirement section F-A-32.
  
- Are there certified mail, return receipt, or electronic notification requirements vendors should include?
  - See Requirement section F-A-31.
  
- Are there restrictions regarding print production locations or data residency requirements?
  - Printing production be done in the continental US and preferably in MN.
  
- What percentage of outbound communications contain mixed paper stock, color pages, or special handling instructions?
  - The current process is that we print on regular paper.
  
- Can Dakota County provide peak daily/monthly print volumes and expected annual growth rates?
  - Current volume is 250-300 mailing daily. It's expected to increase to in the future.
  
- Are there required SLA targets for:
  - job ingestion: same mailing day
  - print completion: Same mailing day
  - USPS induction: mailings need to be dropped off at USPS location by USPS daily cut-off time.
  - Exception handling? Any mailing that was unable to print and send due to invalid address, send a report to Dakota County for review. It's expected that all mailing will be complete for all file attached.

- Will vendors be required to complete a formal security assessment, penetration test, or County security review process?
  - There is a security review that will be performed during the contracting process. Much of what will be evaluated is covered in other questions around security that are covered below.
  
- Are there specific encryption standards required for data at rest and in transit?
  - AES 256, Avoid legacy ciphers such as 3DES, DES or RC4
  
- Does the County require audit logging of all user interactions, submissions, and administrative actions?
  - Support separate retention periods for attachments, PDFs, print artifacts, and data. Attachments, PDFs, and print artifacts used for printing and reprints should be retained for approximately seventy-two (72) hours after successful transmission to the print/mail vendor and then automatically removed. Data used to generate cover pages, mailing records, and related transaction information should be retained in accordance with Dakota County standard retention practices, with an estimated retention period of six (6) years.
  
- What incident response notification timelines are required in the event of a security or privacy incident?
  - Mn Statute 16E.36 defines incident reporting requirements. Report must be given within 72hrs for non CJIS data and should be reported to Dakota County and the State of MN. Additional information can be found at the MN.IT page for [Cybersecurity Incident Reporting](#).
  
- Are CJIS, IRS Publication 1075, or other compliance frameworks applicable to any portion of the data processed?
  - The data for this project would require HIPAA compliance but not IRS 1075 or CJIS compliance. But it would be a nice to have in the event we wanted to expand this service to other departments.
  
- What operational reporting metrics are considered critical for the County (e.g., SLA adherence, submission tracking, returned mail, turnaround times)?
  - We need a report detailing number of mailings printed, sent, expectations and reason for exceptions, pages, postal cost, and cost by cover letter template ID.
  
- Does the County require real-time operational dashboards, scheduled reports, or both?
  - Real-time dashboard to reconcile daily report for printing and mailing.

- For auditing purposes, dashboard should include the number of mailings sent by worker ID and to whom.
  - Scheduled reports: daily reports for printing and mailing
- Should reporting data be exportable to existing County reporting or BI tools?
  - Yes
- Will the County provide development, test, and production environments for integration and validation?
  - Specify your need from Dakota County. We have two environments: Development and Production.
- Does the County anticipate a phased rollout by functionality, department, or communication type?
  - We would like the printing and mailing rollout first. Then other components can be rollout by end of 2026.
- Will parallel processing with the existing solution be required during implementation?
  - No. After testing, the process is expected to work.
- Are there blackout periods or operational windows vendors should account for during deployment?
  - During elections, there may be a lockout.
- What level of County technical resources will be available during implementation and testing?
  - Please specify resources needed/expected.
- Can Dakota County clarify destruction certification requirements for printed and digital materials retained during the permitted 4-day processing period?
  - There are no certification requirements. PDF files are to destruct within 72 hours.
- Are there County-approved destruction standards vendors must follow?
  - Deleted so that the files are no longer accessible.
- Can the County clarify acceptable “Government Cloud” hosting environments (e.g., Azure Government, AWS GovCloud)?
  - If it is Gov Cloud version of Azure, AWS and would be a requirement for Criminal Justice Information. Commercial Cloud could be used but would require additional screening for HIPAA Compliance.

- Are hybrid-hosted models acceptable if protected data remains within approved environments?
  - See above
- Can the County clarify Recovery Time Objective (RTO) and Recovery Point Objective (RPO) expectations?
  - Any unscheduled outage is considered downtime.
- How does the County define the required 99.999% uptime measurement window and maintenance exclusions?
  - Downtime is considered as unscheduled fix of critical issues or handling of other issues during the business hours (7 a.m. to 5 p.m.). Schedule maintenance does not count as downtime.
    - Example: AWS down from 12 a.m. to 6 a.m. wouldn't consider a downtime, if it's down from 7 a.m. to 12 p.m. it's a 5 hours downtime.
- Can Dakota County provide sample operational and reconciliation reports currently used today?
  - The mailing process generates detailed batch- and piece-level tracking records for each package created. The system currently captures and stores information including, but not limited to: Batch ID, Piece ID, Run Date, Run Time, Template ID, Number of Documents, Mail Type, Number of Pages, postage-related values, processing status indicators, Client Name, Client Reference/Identifier, recipient address lines, City, State, ZIP Code, document identifiers, update/source fields, and Staff/User IDs associated with the mailing process.
  - This summary and tracking information may be generated either in real time at the time the package is created or through scheduled batch processing. The County expects the solution to retain detailed processing, audit, and reporting information for all records, including records that are rejected from print production. For example, if a USPS address validation failure occurs, the item may be marked as rejected and excluded from printing, while all associated detail remains available within the database, audit logs, and reporting/reporting extracts.
  - Report from printing vendor include the following data fields: Date, time and time, number of mailings by cover letter template, total sides printed, postage cost.
- Are real-time dashboards required, or are scheduled reports acceptable?
  - Real-time dashboards would be ideal but are not required. Data must be accessible for reporting purposes, and daily reports supporting reconciliation and validation with the County's printing and mailing vendor are required.

- What are the County's expectations for audit logging retention periods?
  - Number of packets processed align with the number of packets sent to clients
  - Retention: see above
  
- What is Dakota County's definition of "government approved cloud infrastructure"? The RFP uses multiple terms, including "Government Cloud" (N-A-3) and "government-approved cloud environment" (Attachment B, p. 75). Please clarify the specific standard or certification required.
  - Government cloud environment designed specifically for government agencies and regulated for public sector workloads.
  
- Would a solution hosted in a commercial cloud environment that is already approved and in use by other government entities satisfy this requirement?
  - If it is Gov Cloud version of Azure, AWS and would be a requirement for Criminal Justice Information. Commercial Cloud could be used but would require additional screening for HIPAA Compliance.
  
- What system or process is currently used for address validation at the point of entry? Specifically, what is the source of truth for client addresses, what validation method or tool is used, and when does validation occur in the current workflow?
  - We leverage USPS database and Planet Press Software to validate address.
  
- What functionality is desired in the Customer Portal? Is the portal intended only for clients to submit forms and documents to the agency, or should it also allow clients to retrieve information such as case alerts, communications, and statuses?
  - Intended goal is for client to easily send documents to Dakota County.
  
- In addition to documents uploaded through the Customer Portal, does Dakota County intend to use this solution for scanned document workflows, including OCR and indexing?
  - The portal would only be used for clients to submit documents. All OCR and processing would happen either in-house before OnBase or within OnBase itself.

We're open to proposals that include pre-sorting and indexing solutions, but if a vendor offers that, they must also include both options so we can fully understand the cost differences.

If any processing occurs on external servers, the proposal must clearly state this and include details about secure data transfer and the associated costs.

We need Option 1 and Option 2 outlined for both cost and feature comparison.

- Can the County confirm the intended availability target and how it will be measured? The RFP references 99.999% availability measured monthly, which equates to approximately 26 seconds of unplanned downtime per month.
  - Downtime is considered as unscheduled fix of critical issues or handling of other issues during the business hours (7 a.m. to 5 p.m.). Schedule maintenance does not count as downtime.  
Example: AWS down from 12 a.m. to 6 a.m. wouldn't consider a downtime, if it's down from 7 a.m. to 12 p.m. it's a 5 hours downtime.
- Are there SLA financial penalties, credits, or other performance consequences if the availability SLA is not met?
  - Yes
- Is a vendor demonstration required as part of the evaluation process? If yes, when would demonstrations occur (e.g., shortlist/best and final offer stage), and how will they be scored relative to the written proposal?
  - Demonstration is not a part of the initial scoring.
- What version of OnBase is Dakota County currently running?
  - We're on version 22.1.25. We will be going to 25.1.xx this year.
- Can Dakota County describe the current address and person lookup interfaces and how they are used by staff today?
  - We leverage API to return address and person using case number, staff ID, and system.
- For the printing and mailing component, what is the current average monthly mail volume, and how does it fluctuate seasonally?
  - In 2025, the average monthly volume is about 5,500 mailings (min: 4,800, max: 6,200)
- What is the estimated budget range (monthly and/or yearly) for this initiative, including printing/ mailing services and the software components?
  - Our intent with this RFP is to first understand the available solutions, their capabilities, and associated cost structures. Once we have a

clearer picture of the options, we will determine which components best meet our needs and allocate budget accordingly.