



Administrative Office of the Courts

Operations

Amendment #1

Request for Proposals

K21-0035-40

Maryland Court Help Centers

This Amendment is being issued to amend and clarify certain information contained in the above named RFP. All information contained herein is binding on all Offerors who respond to this RFP. Specific parts of the RFP have been amended. The following changes/additions are listed below; new language has been underlined and language deleted has been marked with a ~~strikeout~~ (ex. ~~language deleted~~)

1. **Replace Pages 65-69, Attachment H, Knowledge Base Governance Agreement with the following:**

DO NOT SUBMIT WITH PROPOSAL- FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY

ATTACHMENT H – KNOWLEDGE BASE GOVERNANCE AGREEMENT (REVISED)

Purpose

The **CONTRACTOR** will collaborate with the Maryland Judiciary’s (“the Judiciary”) Access to Justice (“ATJ”) department on the development of a digital Knowledge Base. This agreement formalizes the governance, usage, and maintenance of the Court Help Center¹ Knowledge Base. The Judiciary shall exercise control over the access, usage, and administration of the Knowledge Base. **CONTRACTOR** shall be responsible for developing and maintaining the content for the Knowledge Base and its daily administration.

CONTRACTOR will develop the Knowledge Base for use by Court Help Centers statewide. **CONTRACTOR** will write and upload articles offering practice considerations for different case types. The Knowledge Base will act as a training tool for new Court Help Center staff. The Knowledge Base will provide Court Help Center staff with a central repository of legal information to assist both new and veteran staff in the performance of research for Court Help Center clients. Attorneys providing pro bono services to Court Help Centers may also use the Knowledge Base as a resource.

¹ Court Help Centers are programs either directly operated by the Judiciary or operated by a 3rd party pursuant to a contract with the Judiciary, for the purpose of providing short term legal services but not representation, by attorneys and paralegals to litigants representing themselves in Maryland Courts.

Software Platform

The Judiciary has adopted the Flowlu software platform for the development of the Knowledge Base. The Judiciary will be responsible for all costs associated with the Flowlu software. The articles **CONTRACTOR** uploads to Flowlu may be saved and transferred into a different platform agreed upon by ATJ and **CONTRACTOR**.

Access

The Knowledge Base is not open to the public. Its contents shall not be shared with persons not employed by the Judiciary, **CONTRACTOR**, or other Judiciary approved court help legal services providers.

The Judiciary shall determine who may view, edit, and supervise the Knowledge Base. Before extending access to the Knowledge Base to other parties, the Judiciary shall notify **CONTRACTOR'S** director ("the Director") by email. The Judiciary may delegate its authority to grant access to the Knowledge Base to the Director to facilitate programs such as the recruitment of pro bono attorneys.

The Flowlu platform allows the designation of users as "administrator," "author," or "user." ATJ staff, the Director, and Supervising Attorneys that work for **CONTRACTOR** shall be designated as "administrators." Administrator privileges shall not be granted to any other users unless otherwise agreed by ATJ and the Director. Other **CONTRACTOR** staff shall be granted "author" or "user" privileges at the Director's discretion. The Judiciary may determine the designation of newly added users as the need arises.

The Judiciary may grant access to the Knowledge Base to attorneys performing pro bono Court Help Center services. Pro bono attorneys shall sign a Pro Bono Access Agreement before being granted access to the Knowledge Base. **CONTRACTOR** shall be responsible for ensuring that pro bono attorneys comply with the conditions outlined in the Pro Bono Access Agreement. Pro bono attorneys shall be designated as "users" within the Flowlu program. A copy of the Pro Bono Access Agreement is attached herewith as Addendum 1. The Judiciary may update the Pro Bono Access Agreement upon notice to **CONTRACTOR**.

Development

CONTRACTOR shall be responsible for writing the articles in the Knowledge Base. **CONTRACTOR** shall be responsible for the continued review and development of articles consistent with this agreement. **CONTRACTOR** shall collaborate with ATJ regarding the ongoing expansion and development of the Knowledge Base. ATJ may add articles to the Knowledge Base upon notice to the **CONTRACTOR**.

CONTRACTOR shall use a standardized page structure for all articles in the Knowledge Base, and ATJ has provided **CONTRACTOR** with a template for the articles. See Addendum 2. **CONTRACTOR** shall adhere to the template as much as is practical. When writing articles, ATJ requires hyperlinks to statutes and case law that direct users to webpages accessible outside paid legal research databases. Authors must include any cited statutes in the article's "tags."

Review Process for New Articles

CONTRACTOR shall maintain a review process for new articles. **CONTRACTOR** must complete the review process for each article before adding it to the Knowledge Base. The process shall occur in three phases.

1. **CONTRACTOR** shall designate an attorney² to write an article. The attorney will write one complete article. The attorney may write the article in a digital format outside the Knowledge Base. The attorney may also write the article within the Knowledge Base provided that the attorney does not publish the article before completion of this review process.
2. The attorney will forward the completed article to a second staff member who need not be an attorney. The second staff member will perform a citation check and review for typographical errors.
3. The second staff member will forward the article to a supervising attorney. The supervising attorney shall review the article for legal accuracy, completeness, and clarity. If the supervising attorney is satisfied that the article is ready for inclusion in the Knowledge Base, they shall publish the page in the Knowledge Base.

Updates to the Knowledge Base

CONTRACTOR shall make updates to the Knowledge Base. Updates shall occur as specified:

Periodic – **CONTRACTOR** shall conduct a periodic review of all articles in the Knowledge Base. An attorney shall review each article at least once every six months. **CONTRACTOR** shall track when each article was last reviewed in a separate spreadsheet. **CONTRACTOR** may distribute responsibility for the review of articles among staff attorneys so that each staff attorney is responsible for a group of articles. The periodic review should ensure that each article's information remains legally accurate and that hyperlinks in the article are still functional. Additional content may be added to the article if needed.

Ongoing Review – It is critical to ensure that the Knowledge Base provides useful, relevant, and accurate information. **CONTRACTOR** shall work proactively to identify articles that need improvement and topics that require the creation of new articles.

Legislative – **CONTRACTOR** shall review and update the Knowledge Base following the General Assembly's legislative session. **CONTRACTOR** shall identify changes in the law affecting articles in the Knowledge Base and assign staff to update affected articles.

² **CONTRACTOR** may designate attorneys providing pro bono services to **CONTRACTOR** and attorneys working for other Judiciary sponsored Court Help Centers to write articles.

Addendum 1

Court Help Center Knowledge Base – Pro Bono Access Agreement

I, _____, am an attorney providing pro bono assistance to self-represented litigants through **CONTRACTOR**. **CONTRACTOR** offers pro bono attorneys access to the Court Help Center Knowledge Base (“Knowledge Base”). The Knowledge Base is a training tool and legal research assistance database hosted within the software platform Flowlu.

I agree to follow all conditions and restrictions listed in this Court Help Center Knowledge Base – Pro Bono Access Agreement (“Agreement”). I will abide by the following conditions and restrictions:

1. Access to the Knowledge Base is restricted to authorized persons. **CONTRACTOR** may decide who may and may not access the Knowledge Base. My access to the Knowledge Base may be removed at any time.
2. I will not share my Flowlu username and password with anyone.
3. I will use the Knowledge Base solely as a research tool to advise and assist *pro se* litigants. I will not share the Knowledge Base articles with litigants or any other person not expressly authorized by **CONTRACTOR** to access the Knowledge Base.
4. I will not use the Knowledge Base for any other purpose, including, but not limited to, assisting clients in private practice.
5. **CONTRACTOR** does not authorize pro bono attorneys to edit the Knowledge Base. Requests for additions, corrections, or other changes to its contents may be made by email to **CONTRACTOR** at **EMAIL** or the Director’s designee
6. **CONTRACTOR** may modify this agreement at any time.
7. Failure to abide by the terms of this agreement may result in the removal of my access to the Knowledge Base and termination of my pro bono service engagement with **CONTRACTOR**.

Signature

Date

Printed Name

Addendum 2 - Template Article

Please use this page as a formatting guide to constructing Court Help Center Knowledge Base pages.

Standard Page Topics

A Knowledge Base page should be formatted and organized so that it is easy for others to read. Organize each page with headings for each section. Use the following topics as a guide for each article:

- Overview
- Procedural steps
 - Pre-filing considerations
 - How is the case filed?
 - What is the timeline like after filing and will there be additional steps before trial?
 - What will trial look like and are there any special steps or considerations?
 - Post-trial issues
 - What appellate or motion rights will a party have?
 - How will the court's decisions be enforced?
- Substantive law considerations
 - What must the Plaintiff/Petitioner prove?
 - What defenses are available?
- Special or unusual considerations
- Common pro se issues
 - What questions do pro se litigants commonly ask and what are the answers?
 - Are there issues pro se litigants encounter in this type of matter that are not clearly addressed in case law or statute?
- List statutes and case law
- Further reading/Resources – Link any articles or webpages that may contain helpful information

General Article Writing Guidelines

- **Include a hyperlink whenever possible** - Common items you should regularly link to include: statutes, case law, court forms, legal service providers, government agency pages, government databases such as land records, the State Department of Assessments and Taxation (SDAT), and the estates search. Assume your reader does not know where to look for lead certificate registrations, debt collectors' licenses, a child support guidelines calculator, etc.
- **Links to statutes and case law must be publicly accessible** – The Knowledge Base may be used by Court Help Center attorneys other than the **CONTRACTOR**. Links to statutes and case law must direct them to public pages so that users who may not have a paid legal database can still access the content.
- **Tag articles thoroughly** – Flowlu's search feature relies heavily on article tags. When you complete your article try to include keyword tags that will help aid a user searching for that article.
- **Tag every statute cited in the article** - This will aid in making updates to the Knowledge Base when legislative changes occur.

Issued by: Joeshia Brawner
Procurement Officer
February 4, 2021