

Answers to Questions about Invitation for Proposals

Real Estate Property Tax Relief Task Force

Questions received by 11:59 p.m. October 6, 2025

1. Does the scope of work include examining personal and business equipment property taxes? Does the scope of work include any other types of property tax aside from real estate property?

Answer: The focus of the Task Force is on real estate property taxes. In accordance with the ongoing services described in Appendix A, section II, the Task Force, through the chairs, may request additional information regarding personal and business equipment property taxes to develop a more complete picture of the real estate property tax landscape in Maine. The selected contractor and the Task Force chairs will be able to negotiate the scope of additional research requests as they are developed.

2. **Unfunded mandates** – Are you looking for quantitative or qualitative data? Does this include all local education and municipal mandates?

Answer: The Task Force’s priority is on quantitative data. Unfunded mandates as described in Appendix A, section I is intended to include municipal and county mandates, but does not include local education mandates. In accordance with the ongoing services described in Appendix A, section II, the Task Force, through the chairs, may have specific requests for additional information that could relate to local education mandates.

3. **Nontaxable Property** – On page 6, the IFP mentions, “[t]he effect of nontaxable property within a municipality.” We presume this includes the property of governmental entities, school systems, and other nonprofit organizations and institutions. Does it also include exemptions for homesteads, veterans, people who are legally blind, and renewable energy equipment? Does it include property in Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts and the Business Equipment Tax Reimbursement (BETR) and Business Equipment Tax Exemption (BETE) programs?

Answer: “Nontaxable property” as used in this section of the Invitation for Proposals means property of governmental entities, school systems, and other nonprofit organizations and institutions. In accordance with the ongoing services described in Appendix A, section II, the Task Force, through the chairs, may have specific requests for additional information that could relate to other types of nontaxable property.

4. **Nontaxable Property** – Does DAFS have information on the valuation of tax-exempt properties? In aggregate? By municipality?

Answer: Yes, municipalities submit annual municipal valuation returns (MVR) to Maine Revenue Services (MRS) Property Tax Division that provide aggregate values. More information is available at: <https://www.maine.gov/revenue/>

5. **Federal Funding** - Can you provide more clarification on what you are looking for with regards to federal funding impact on property taxes?

Answer: The Task Force chairs understand that the indirect impact on municipalities due to future state responses to federal funding changes cannot yet be known, and the direct impact may also be difficult to fully characterize at this time. Selected contractor insights regarding "potential federal funding changes and how those could potentially impact property taxes in the State" may be gleaned through other areas of research and should be included as part of the Appendix A, section I work product. More detailed requests for information on this topic would be directed by the Task Force chairs as part of Appendix A, section II tasks, if determined useful for Task Force deliberations.

6. Page 6 of the IFP suggests analyzing data "within the state, for each municipality or each municipality within a representative sample of municipalities by county." If a sample is acceptable, are there any preferences or requirements from the Task Force on sample size, stratification (e.g. by population, geography, total valuation, or municipal characteristics)?

Answer: A sample is acceptable. If the selected contractor is using a sample, the Task Force chairs anticipate that a representative sample will include at least three municipalities from each county (approximately 50 municipalities total). The Task Force chairs will be available to help the selected contractor determine the appropriate stratification for representative sample selection.

7. Can you elaborate on the desired parameters of "a representative sample of municipalities by county"? Would the Task Force want to approve the proposed sample before work commences?

Answer: See answer to question 6, above, for more information regarding "a representative sample of municipalities by county". The Task Force chairs will approve the proposed sample before work commences.

8. Item D.1 -3. Of the municipal property tax data requested here, are any of these data available from DAFS? What data are available?

- Average property tax value
- Average property tax bill
- Average length of homeownership
- What properties are waterfront and nonwaterfront properties
- The types of property
- Municipal mill rates
- Date of last valuation
- Number of households eligible to claim and actually claiming the Property Tax Fairness Credit
- Number of homesteads eligible to participate in and actually participating in deferred collection of homestead property taxes
- Which municipalities have municipally funded and administered tax relief programs
- The percentage of homes that are primary residences
- The percentage of commercial property
- The percentage of vacant commercial property

- How has the municipality used state-provided property tax relief funding?

Answer: Please see below for responses in red from Maine Revenue Services (MRS):

- Average property tax value **Municipal valuation returns (MVR) for homestead properties only.**
- Average property tax bill **MVR for homestead properties only.**
- Average length of homeownership **May be available from municipality but quality will differ across municipalities.**
- What properties are waterfront and non-waterfront properties **Working waterfront data is available from MRS, but municipalities should have more detailed information.**
- The types of property **Some information is available in state valuation (SV) spreadsheets.**
- Municipal mill rates **MVR and full-value mill rates from SV.**
- Date of last valuation **Self-reported at end of MVR.**
- Number of households eligible to claim and actually claiming the Property Tax Fairness Credit **Have tax data on actual claims.**
- Number of homesteads eligible to participate in and actually participating in deferred collection of homestead property taxes **Have data on actual claims.**
- Which municipalities have municipally funded and administered tax relief programs **Yes, reported on MVR.**
- The percentage of homes that are primary residences **Municipalities may have this data, but the quality will differ across municipalities.**
- The percentage of commercial property **Available data from the SV forms may be used to estimate the percentage of commercial property.**
- The percentage of vacant commercial property **Certain towns may have this information, but this is not generally tracked.**
- How has the municipality used state-provided property tax relief funding? **Some information is provided on MVR tax rate calculator form and in combination with information on ME Dept. of Education website this may be able to be estimated.**

9. Item D.1 asks for the contractor to report property tax values, property tax bills, and length of homeownership separately for waterfront and non-waterfront properties. Does the state have GIS or other tax map datasets that could be provided to the contractor to enable this type of analysis?

Answer: Maine Revenue Services doesn't have this information, but some municipalities may have this information. The GIS Library may have this information.

10. Item D.1 also requests the contractor to report the average property value and property tax bill. Is the intent that the contractor report these elements for all taxable properties within a municipality or only for residential properties within a municipality?

Answer: This data should include all taxable properties.

11. Item D.2. Can you provide more clarity about what you are looking for with regards to types of property? Does this mean commercial vs. residential? Homestead vs. nonhomestead? Information on type of use or ownership?

Answer: Some information is available in state valuation spreadsheets. The Task Force is interested in as much granularity in property types as can be achieved via existing datasets

12. Item D.2. Can you provide more clarity about what you are looking for with regards to property tax valuation practices?

Answer: Property tax valuation practices may include how often the revaluations are being conducted, whether the municipality performs the revaluation or contracts with an assessing firm, and whether any adjustments in property values are based on full revaluations, other methods of market rate adjustments, or across the board percentage adjustments.

13. Certain data elements may be collected by municipalities but not collected by the State. In this case, a survey of municipalities may be an effective strategy to compile and analyze these elements. Will the Task Force and DAFS provide support to the contractor to implement a survey of municipalities? Support would include sharing contact information for all municipalities in the state and encouraging municipalities to complete the survey.

Answer: The Task Force chairs anticipate that Task Force staff, Department of Administrative and Financial Services, Bureau of Revenue Services and the Office of Tax Policy, and other interested parties, such as Maine Municipal Association, would be able to provide assistance subject to availability and if they determine that such a survey would be an effective strategy to compile and analyze these elements.

14. For data elements that are not publicly available, are case studies of one or several towns acceptable replacements?

Answer: Case studies would be acceptable subject to prior approval by the Task Force chairs.

15. In the event that certain data elements are not publicly available, will there be opportunities to refine the list of data elements once a contract is signed, or should we assume that every data element in Appendix A is required as part of the final report?

Answer: The Task Force chairs' expectation is that the elements in Appendix A, section I will be a part of the final report; however, if certain data elements are not publicly available, the scope of work could be refined by mutual agreement between the Task Force chairs and the selected contractor. The Task Force chairs anticipate that the selected contractor will report any challenges in obtaining information to the chairs in accordance with Appendix A, section II.

16. Item E.4. Can you provide more specificity about what changes in property tax values are needed here? Aggregate? Median home price, commercial?

Answer: This item is intended to include, at least, the average and median values for residential and commercial properties. If the available data allows for greater specificity, this should be included in the report (e.g., waterfront and nonwaterfront, homestead and non-homestead,

current use program participation, ownership type).

17. Item E.5. When you say average, does that mean median or something else?

Answer: Average in this context means “mean;” however, if the selected contractor is able to provide additional statistical analysis such as median, that would be helpful.

18. Can you provide more clarity about what work will be needed to provide ongoing assistance to the Task Force?

Answer: The selected contractor will provide ongoing assistance in the form of data and information gathering, fulfilling specific requests for analysis, and providing updates to Task Force members at Task Force meetings.

19. Will the selected contractor have access to confidential tax data?

Answer: In general property tax data is public information and Maine Revenue Services doesn't have confidential property tax information other than applications for the Senior Deferral Program. Individual income tax information is confidential.

20. Does the Task Force expect to be a resource for the contractor, to the extent that there is expertise on the task force?

Answer: Yes, the Task Force chairs anticipate that Task Force members may serve as a resource for the selected contractor subject to member availability and any constraints that may exist as a result of their outside employment.

21. Will DAFS have dedicated staff resources to support the work of the contractor? Will DAFS have staff and/or IT resources to support data collection from municipalities? How frequently will DAFS be able to meet with the contractor?

Answer: DAFS will not have dedicated resources, staff or IT resources to support the work of the selected contractor. In accordance with Resolve 2025, chapter 108, however, the Department of Administration and Financial Services, Bureau of Revenue Services and the Office of Tax Policy within the bureau shall provide assistance to the selected contractor to ensure the contractor obtains the required information.

22. After the project is finished and if the Task Force submits legislation, can the contractor lobby those bills as a registered Maine lobbyist or would there be a conflict of interest?

Answer: Resolve 2025, chapter 108 does not prohibit the selected contractor from engaging in lobbying activities after the completion of the selected contractor's contract work.

23. Can you make the forms in Appendix B available in a word document?

Answer: Yes, please see the additional link provided here:
<https://legislature.maine.gov/execdir/bid-opportunities/9074>.

24. By what date do you expect to award the contract?

Answer: The Task Force chairs anticipate awarding the contract by the end of October.

25. Once the contract is finalized, how much involvement will the Task Force have in directing the contractor's work?

Answer: The Task Force chairs will be directing the work of the selected contractor. As described in the Invitation for Proposals, regular meetings with chairs will provide an opportunity to discuss the progress of the selected contractor's work. The Task Force chairs can be available to provide additional direction as needed.

26. Approximately what percent of the overall project effort is expected in the period between contract award and December 1, 2025?

Answer: Please refer to the Invitation for Proposals. Bidder submissions must specifically identify which statewide property tax data and information listed in subsections A - F of Appendix A, section I the selected contractor is able to gather and analyze by December 1, 2025.

27. Do you anticipate in-person presentations to the task force? If yes, how many are in-person versus virtual? If some are in-person, do you expect proposals to budget for this travel as a part of the \$150,000 maximum or as a separate line-item?

Answer: Task Force meetings are conducted in hybrid format, so the selected contractor is able to participate remotely. If a bidder plans to present in-person and expects travel costs, those costs are a part of the \$150,000 maximum and should be specifically identified in the cost proposal.

28. The RFP indicates the Task Force has an end-date of December 15, 2026. Do you anticipate the contractor's work to end on that date or on some other date?

Answer: The Task Force chairs anticipate that the selected contractor's work would conclude on or prior to December 15, 2026.

29. The RFP indicates the legislation for the contractor's services authorizes funding of \$125,000 until 7/1/2026. Does this \$125,000 need to be billed by that date, or can it be carried over beyond that date?

Answer: Any funds appropriated for the Task Force's work not expended in fiscal year 2026 will carry forward into fiscal year 2027.

30. When would the Task Force expect a final written report to be made available by the contractor?

Answer: The Task Force chairs anticipate the final written report required by Appendix A, section I no later than May 1, 2026. The presentation of that report will occur after that date based upon Task Force members, staff and contractor availability.