

Unemployment Insurance Appeals Board (CUIAB)



REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

No. 1931902

Appeals Systems Modernization (ASM)

Release Date: **August 15, 2019**

Responses Requested no later than: **September 9, 2019**

ISSUED BY:

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Unemployment Insurance Appeals Board

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1. Purpose

To: Interested Respondents

Subject: Request for Information No. 1931902, Appeals Systems Modernization (ASM)

The California Unemployment Insurance Appeals Board (CUIAB) is providing the opportunity for interested Respondents to participate in a Request for Information (RFI). The objective of this RFI is to:

- Gather information about appeals system solutions and to collect information from Respondents related to the availability of software and services that can meet the Department's business and technical requirements.
- Gather industry best practices information to identify the best approach to implement an ASM solution at CUIAB.
- The CUIAB may use any or all this information to develop and finalize requirements to be placed in a future solicitation for the ASM solution.

2. Background

The CUIAB receives, investigates and adjudicates appeals from California workers and employers for their disagreement with Employment Development Department (EDD) determinations for claims of Unemployment Insurance (UI), Disability Insurance (DI) and employer payroll tax assessments. The CUIAB meets its statutory obligation to offer two levels of appeals to all California workers and employers.

Per state law, the EDD receives first right of review to any request for benefit appeals. California workers and employers mail a hard/paper copy appeal form to EDD. The UI and DI staff at EDD review the requests for appeal to determine whether they may resolve the request or forward to a CUIAB field office as a formal appeal.

In State Fiscal Year 2017/18, CUIAB processed about 210,000 first level appeals, 11,222 second level appeals, and tracked over 40 third level appeals or court cases (for all benefit programs). Approximately 92 percent of this caseload was for UI benefit appeals and five percent were DI-related benefit appeals. CUIAB processes about 20% of the nation's overall UI benefit appeals at about a dozen offices throughout California.

Appeals are received by CUIAB in the following ways:

- a) Each night EDD's UI and DI branches send an electronic flat file of preliminary appeal data
- b) EDD mails hard copy appeals forms and case documentation to CUIAB
- c) Petitioners submit tax appeals directly to CUIAB

The CUIAB processes caseload for employer tax appeals as well. About 3% of the appeals are related to payroll taxes where employers mail a hard copy appeal form directly to CUIAB. The CUIAB notifies the EDD tax branch by US mail of the appeals filed. The EDD tax branch then mails tax case documentation, data and when required, a formal answer to petition to CUIAB prior to an appeal hearing being calendared. Once the appeal decisions are completed, they are electronically transmitted nightly to the EDD via flat file for implementation in Tax Branch's systems.

California offers two levels of appeals at CUIAB, the first level is to an Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) in Field Operations (FO) who conducts an appeal hearing. If an appeal party disagrees with the field judge's decision, a second appeal may be sent to the Appeals Board. Second level appeals are processed by Appellate Operations (AO) and reviewed for due process and decided on by a panel of Board Members. The first and second appeals are offered without fee to the public. All appeals must be completed expeditiously as there may be an economic impact to the worker or employer. The next recourse, or the third appeal level for parties who disagree with the Board's decision, is to file a Writ of Mandate for their case to be heard before California's Superior courts or Courts of Appeal.

The CUIAB Information Technology Branch staff maintains and supports the following seven disparate technology systems that are used throughout the various appeals processes. They are:

Enhanced California Appeals Tracking System (eCATS)

Designed and built internally at CUIAB, this system was implemented in 1999 to track the location, jurisdiction, and status of first and second level appeals. A nightly flat file from EDD provides some basic information that is uploaded to create a new appeal and then staff key enter additional data elements at each step in the appeals processes. This system's database maintains only demographic, tracking and status data of each appeal. Staff generate data reports to help manage the caseload and remit data reports to the US Department of Labor for federal grant reimbursement.

Automated Case Scheduling System (ACSS)

Designed and built internally at CUIAB, this system was implemented in 2012 to automate the scheduling of hearings to ALJs calendars. Based on an ALJ profile of appeal experience, work schedule, hearing locations, leave schedules, classification level, age of appeal, etc., this system automatically assigns appeals to ALJs in a nightly batch process based on case parameters with modifiable percentages.

Court Case System

Designed and built internally at CUIAB, this system was implemented in 2015 to track third level appeals (court cases) only. Legal Office staff key data into this system throughout the third level appeals process to track the status of court appeals (Superior, Appellate and/or Supreme).

Electronic Decisions (E-Dec)

Designed and built internally at CUIAB, this SharePoint site was implemented in 2012 to finalize second level appeal decisions only. Appellate Operations ALJs use the site to post draft board appeal decisions and AO typists finalize documents by formatting and editing the decisions for the ALJs.

Electronic File (E-File)

Designed and built internally at CUIAB, this system was implemented in 2003 for Board Members to review second level appeal case files and decisions electronically. This allowed Board Members to telecommute from anywhere with an internet connection. Executive Office staff must transfer (undesirable duplication) board appeal case files and documents from FileBound and E-Dec into this system in order for the Board Members to review case artifacts. Board Members also may deliberate amongst the panel members via a messaging component. When a board appeal decision is complete, the staff must transfer the correct version of the decision back into FileBound so that the correct version is printed for mailing.

FileBound System

CUIAB implemented this COTS Electronic Document Management System (EDMS) in 2011 for second level appeals only. This system is used to receive scanned board appeal case files from each of CUIAB's 11 Field Offices at Appellate Operations. AO staff use FileBound to manage case workflow and process cases through the board appeal steps. FileBound allows the review of board appeal case files electronically.

Winscribe

CUIAB implemented this COTS system in 2017 to audio record all appeal hearings, for ALJs to dictate their appeal decisions, and provide typists with dictation recordings to type appeal decisions or transcripts of hearings, if needed. In addition, the audio hearing files (MP3) are available for AO ALJs and board

members to access the hearing audio in the event a second level appeal is filed. The system also allows for MP3 download of the audio hearing files to be prepared for appeal parties who request copies.

Most of these legacy systems were built years ago and have exceeded their useful lives. In addition, many of these systems and components do not communicate with each other, and the associated subsystems and related databases must also be maintained resulting in duplicate or inconsistent data and time-consuming and inefficient workarounds. For first level appeals, the paper case file is the official file of record.

The CUIAB's goal is to modernize the appeals systems by implementing a single integrated appeals digital case file management solution that will provide customers with a consistent, intuitive, single entry into CUIAB's services and will deliver the CUIAB a more agile and responsive solution for deployment of enhancements and mandatory legislative and Department of Labor driven changes. This digital case file is to be the official file of record.

Project Approval Lifecycle (PAL)

In November 2018, the ASM Project was initiated with the approval of the Stage 1 Business Analysis of the California Department of Technology's (CDT) Project Approval Lifecycle (PAL) process. The CDT's PAL consists of the following four stages:

- **Stage 1:** Business Analysis (S1BA)
- **Stage 2:** Alternatives Analysis (S2AA)
- **Stage 3: Solution Development (S3SD)**
- **Stage 4: Project Readiness and Approval (S4PRA)**

The CUIAB is currently developing the necessary information for the S2AA which will include documentation to reflect the results of the market research performed by the CUIAB.

The tables below identify the estimated schedule of activities associated with the CDT's PAL stages and the key action dates for the CUIAB's RFI.

Table 1 - High-Level ASM PAL Schedule

PAL Activity	Estimated Completion Date
Stage 1 – Business Analysis (S1BA)	November 2018
Stage 2 – Alternative Analysis (S2AA)	October 2019
Stage 3 – Solution Development (S3SD)	November 2019
Stage 4 - Project Readiness and Approval	February 2020

3. RFI Key Action Dates

Table II – RFI Key Action Dates

RFI Activity	Due Date
Release of RFI	August 15th, 2019
Last Day to Submit Questions on the RFI	August 27st, 2019
State Responds to Questions by	August 30th, 2019
Last Day to Submit RFI Responses	September 9th 2019
Confidential Discussions, if requested by the State	September 11th-20th, 2019

4. Contact

The official CUIAB contact for all matters pertaining to this RFI is listed below:

Mark V Smith

Mark.smith@cuiab.ca.gov

Phone: 916-263-8815

5. Questions

All RFI questions must be submitted via email to the Contact above. Respondents are encouraged to use the State's template found in Appendix E.

6. Response Format and Content

Respondents should submit one (1) electronic version of their complete response via email to the Contact listed above by the date listed in the RFI Key Action Dates table above.

- i.) Response to RFI Appendix A: Vendor Profile - Intent to Respond
 - a. Please carefully review, complete and return Appendix A with your firm's response.
 - a. Address ii.) Response to RFI Appendix B:

ASM Requirements

- a. ASM requirements document indicates Mid-Level requirements and features that may be required in the final system. Detailed requirements based on these features are being developed and will be included in a subsequent procurement package.
- b. Please carefully review, complete and respond to the Appendix B attachment.

- iii.) Response to RFI Appendix C: ASM General Questionnaire
 - a. Please complete the Appendix C attachment.
 - b. The State will also consider suggestions and/or recommendations. If you have recommendations concerning this effort which have not been addressed by the questions in Appendix C, or which you believe are relevant to this project effort, please provide them in your Cover Letter.
 - c.
- iv.) Response to RFI Appendix E: ASM Rough Order of Magnitude Cost Worksheet
 - a. The CUIAB asks willing Respondents to share non-binding Rough Order of Magnitude (ROM) pricing information for their proposed solution where requested. By sharing the ROM pricing information, Respondents will help ensure that the State develops an accurate budget forecast for the ASM solution. The ROM is only for planning purposes. Any pricing provided in a response to this RFI will not be considered a proposal/bid on the part of a Respondent. Please complete the Appendix D attachment.

The CUIAB may contact Respondents to invite them to attend confidential discussions to obtain clarification or ask questions about the responses received.

7. General Provisions

The following terms and conditions, or their successor, will be incorporated into any solicitation resulting from this RFI. The State will not modify these terms and conditions. The following General Provisions are not included in hard copy but may be viewed at the website link provided below:

Form GSPD 401, IT General Provisions Effective 9/5/2014

<http://www.documents.dgs.ca.gov/dgs/FMC/GS/PD/DGSPD%20401IT.pdf>

8. Disclaimer

This RFI is issued for information and planning purposes only and does not constitute a solicitation. A response to this RFI is not an offer and cannot be accepted by the State to form a binding contract.

Responders are solely responsible for all expenses associated with responding to this RFI.

Responders are advised that upon the State opening of the RFI responses, all documents submitted in response to this RFI will become the property of the

State of California and will be regarded as public records under the California Public Records Act (Government Code Section 6250 et seq.) and subject to review by the public. The state cannot prevent the disclosure of public documents.

Please do not include any proprietary information in response to this RFI.

Responding to this RFI creates no obligation on the part of any Respondent to the State. Conversely, issuing this RFI and considering the responses creates no obligation on the part of the State to any Respondent.

Submitting a response to this RFI will not enhance the review of that Respondent's proposal(s) to any future solicitations. Not submitting a response to this RFI will not prohibit a response to any future solicitation, nor disadvantage the evaluation of a response to any future solicitation. By submitting a response to this RFI a Respondent is implicitly agreeing with these conditions.

9. Appendices

Appendix A – Vendor Profile and Intent to Respond

Appendix B - ASM Requirements

Appendix C - ASM General Questionnaire

Appendix D - ASM RFI Question and Answer Log

Appendix E - Rough Order of Magnitude Worksheet

Appendix F- Concept of Operations

Appendix G- Sample Reports