

DEPARTMENT OF STATE HEALTH SERVICES



Contract number 537-16-0127-00001 (Contract), is entered into by Department of State Health Services (DSHS) Vital Statistics Unit and **Hidalgo County** (Contractor). DSHS and Contractor are collectively referred to herein as the "Parties."

- I. **Purpose of the Contract.** DSHS agrees to provide access to the Texas Electronic Registration Remote System (TER Remote System) for the purpose of issuing individual birth certificates.
- II. **Term of the Contract.** This Contract will begin on September 1, 2015 and end on August 31, 2017.
- III. **Authority.** The Parties enter into this Contract under the authority of Texas Government Code Chapter 791.
- IV. **Statement of Work.**
 - A. DSHS agrees to provide on-line computer services in support of Contractor from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (CST) Monday thru Friday, except holidays. In the event of an emergency or computer application error, DSHS may temporarily suspend services without advance notice.
 - B. Contractor will search DSHS databases, locate data, and issue Certifications of Vital Records to authorized individuals requesting such data. The certifications will be in a format formally approved by DSHS. No limit will be established on the number of searches per month not resulting in issuance of a certification, provided the number is reasonable.
 - C. Contractor will acquire the necessary data processing equipment, communications, hardware or software, and purchase "bank note" paper, as specified by DSHS. DSHS will assist in connection of the equipment, furnish software program and provide technical assistance, if necessary.
 - D. Contractor acknowledges that records may not be located in the searching process instituted by Contractor or records, which are located, may have errors due to:
 1. Normal key-entry errors in spellings;
 2. Accidental failure on the part of the DSHS to update a file for an amendment or paternity determination; and
 3. The event year does not exist on the system.

- E. Contractor will notify DSHS in writing, at least monthly of errors or suspected errors that exist on the data base information.
- F. Contractor is to maintain an inventory control and account for each document produced on "bank note" paper, including voided documents.
- G. Contractor is responsible for maintaining a system of vital record keeping that is in accordance with Health and Safety Code Chapter 195 and the regulations adopted.
- H. The Parties are required to comply with all applicable state and federal laws relating to the privacy and confidentiality of this data and records, which includes Texas Government Code Section 552.0038.
- I. The Parties will maintain sufficient safeguards to prevent release or disclosure of any such records or information obtained under this Contract to anyone other than individuals who are authorized by law to receive such records or information and who will protect the records or information from re-disclosure as required by law.
- J. The Parties will use confidential records and information obtained under this Contract only for purposes as described in this Contract and as otherwise allowed by law.

V. Fees.

Contractor agrees to pay DSHS \$1.83 for each Certification of Vital Record printed as a result of searches of the database. Contractor agrees to charge the same base search fee for a birth certificate as DSHS. Additional fees may only be charged as authorized by Texas Health and Safety Code 191.

VI. Billing.

- A. DSHS will send an itemized billing to Contractor on a monthly basis for each certification of Vital Record printed. This billing will be sent through the U.S. Postal Service to the Contractor at:

Name: Hidalgo County Clerk

Address: P.O. Box 58
Edinburg, TX 78540

- B. Contractor will direct any billing inquiries either by phone to 512-776-7206 or email to vsubusinessservices@dshs.state.tx.us.

VII. Payment Method.

- A. Contractor will remit payment to DSHS within thirty days after a billing is received by them. Payment by the Contractor will be considered made on the date postmarked.
- B. Contractor will send payments to DSHS at:

Texas Department of State Health Services
Cash Receipts Branch MC 2096
P.O. Box 149347
Austin, TX 78714-9347

C. Contractor will make payment to DSHS out of its current revenues.

VIII. Representatives. The following will act as the Representative authorized to administer activities under this Contract on behalf of their respective Party.

| Hidalgo County | DSHS |
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| Arturo Guajardo, Jr. Hidalgo County P.O. Box 58 Edinburg, TX 78540 Phone: 956-318-2100 Email: priscilla.torres@co.hidalgo.tx.us | Texas Department of State Health Services Contract Oversight and Support Attn: Princess Lindsay Mail Code 1326 P.O. Box 149347 Austin, TX 78714-9347 Phone: 512-776-3713 Email: Princess.Lindsay@dshs.state.tx.us |

IX. General Terms and Conditions.

- A. Governing Law.** Regarding all issues related to this Contract's formation, performance, interpretation, and any issues that may arise in any dispute between the Parties, the Contract will be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of the State of Texas.
- B. Amendment.** This Contract may be modified by written amendment signed by the Parties.
- C. Confidentiality.**
1. The Parties are required to comply with all applicable state and federal laws relating to the privacy and confidentiality of patient and client records that contain Protected Health Information (PHI) or other information or records made confidential by law, which includes, but is not limited to the Data Use Agreement that will be executed by the Contractor by January 16, 2016.
 2. Contractor will maintain sufficient safeguards to prevent release or disclosure of any such records or information obtained under this Contract to anyone other than individuals who are authorized by law to receive such records or information and who will protect the records or information from re-disclosure as required by law.

3. Contractor will use confidential records and information obtained under this Contract only for purposes as described in this Contract and as otherwise allowed by law.
 4. Notwithstanding any provision relating to confidentiality, the confidential information held by DSHS may be disclosed to a third party pursuant to the Texas Public Information Act (Texas Government Code Chapter 552), any open records decision or ruling by the Attorney General that such information constitutes public information or as otherwise provided by law.
- D. Exchange of Client-Identifying Information.** If this Contract concerns client-identifying information, except as prohibited by other law, Contractor and DSHS may exchange PHI without the consent of clients in accordance with 45 Code of Federal Regulation § 164.504(e)(3)(i)(B), Texas Health and Safety Code § 533.009 and other applicable law or rules.
- E. Records Retention.** DSHS will retain records in accordance with DSHS State of Texas Records Retention Schedule at <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/records/schedules.shtm>, Department Rules and other applicable state and federal statutes and regulations governing medical, mental health, and substance abuse information.
- F. Severability.** If any provision of this Contract is construed to be illegal or invalid, the illegal or invalid provision will be deemed stricken and deleted to the same extent and effect as if never incorporated, but all other provisions will continue.
- G. Notice.** Any notice required or permitted to be given under this Contract will be in writing and sent to the respective Party's Representative in Section VIII. Notice will be deemed to have been received by a Party on the third business day after the date on which it was mailed to the Party at the address specified in writing by the Party to the other Party, or, if sent by certified mail, on the date of receipt.
- H. Waiver.** Acceptance by either Party of partial performance or failure to complain of any action, non-action or default under this Contract will not constitute a waiver of either Party's rights under the Contract.
- I. Assignment.** Neither DSHS nor Contractor will not transfer, assign, or sell its interest, in whole or in part, in this Contract without prior written consent by both Parties.
- J. Suspension of Services Under This Contract.** In the event of an emergency or information technology system failure, DSHS may temporarily suspend services without advance notice.

K. Termination.

1. **Convenience.** This Contract may be terminated by mutual agreement of both Parties. Either Party may terminate this Contract without cause by giving 30 days written notice of its intent to terminate to the non-terminating Party.
2. **Cause.** This Contract may be terminated for cause by either Party for breach or failure to perform an essential requirement of the Contract.
3. **Notice of Termination.** Written notice may be sent by any method that provides verification of receipt, which will be calculated from the date of receipt by the non-terminating Party's Representative provided in Section VIII.
4. **Transition after Termination.** At the end of the Term of this Contract or termination as provided for in this Section, the Parties will equitably settle their respective accrued interests or obligations incurred prior to termination.

By signing below, the Parties agree that this Contract constitutes the entire legal and binding agreement between them. The Parties acknowledge that they have read the Contract and agree to its terms, and that the persons whose signatures appear below have the authority to execute this Contract on behalf of their respective Party.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE HEALTH
SERVICES

HIDALGO COUNTY

Ed House
Chief Operating Officer
Department of State Health Services

Ramon Garcia
County Judge
Hidalgo County

Date

Date

APPROVED AS TO FORM:
Atlas, Hall & Rodriguez, L.L.P.

ATTEST:

Stephen L. Crain, Attorney

Arturo Guajardo, Jr., County Clerk