

Drafting or Reviewing a Statement of Work

Prior to submitting the SOW to legal for final review, ensure all checkboxes below have been completed.

Introduction/Preamble

When drafting a Statement of Work (SOW), it is essential to begin by clearly identifying the parties involved. The master agreement (MA) should be referenced, as well as the MAs underlying agreement, if applicable. The SOW should also have its own contract number. If a reseller is being used to reach the vendor, the preamble should state

Key Points:

- All parties are identified.
- The master agreement and any underlying agreement(s) are referenced, if applicable.
- The SOW has a contract number.

Project Scope

The Project Scope is a description of the work to be performed. State the scope broadly, following up with specific statements. For example, you might say, “Vendor shall perform all tasks associated with operating the Medicaid Provider Services call center. This includes, but is not limited to: . . .” SOWs are for defined projects that require implementation or some kind of defined work; licensing or SaaS subscriptions should not be included within the description of the SOW.

Key Points:

- There is a broad statement about the work to be performed.
- Ensure a list of tasks includes the introductory phrase, “This includes, but is not limited to . . .”.
- Neither licensing nor subscription terms are included or incorporated.

Deliverables

List specific products, services, or results that the vendor is expected to deliver. Each deliverable should be described clearly, typically starting with a verb to indicate the action required. All deliverables **MUST** be within the scope of the project. Consider creating a chart to clarify the payment structure (see accompanying SOW template).

Key Points:

- Deliverables are specific and begin with action verbs.
- Avoid lists; be precise in descriptions.

Timeline and Milestones

Include a project schedule with start and end dates, major milestones, and any phases or stages of the project. The timeline should be realistic and account for any potential constraints.

Key Points:

- Start and end dates are defined.
- Include major milestones and deadlines.
- Project is broken down into phases, if applicable.

Roles and Responsibilities

This section should outline the responsibilities of both the agency and the vendor. Use clear, action-oriented language to specify who is responsible for each task, ensuring no ambiguity.

Key Points:

- Responsibilities for each party are clearly identified.
- Action verbs are used to specify tasks.
- Avoid lists; be explicit about which party is responsible for the task.

Term

The term may not begin before the date of last signature. For work beginning immediately, the term may begin “as of last date of signature.” The end date should be defined; either an actual date or a calculation of days/months from one deliverable to the next. Because the SOW is for work to be performed, renewals should not be necessary. If the SOW does require renewals, automatic renewals are not permitted. The agency should track SOWs needing renewal, and affirmatively renew in advance.

Key Points:

- Ensure the term of the contract is defined.
- Term does not begin prior to contract execution.
- Do not allow automatic renewals.

Assumptions

List any assumptions made in preparing the SOW. These might include conditions that are expected to exist for the successful completion of the project. Ensure all assumptions are realistic and agreed upon by both parties.

Key Points:

- Assumptions are clearly stated.
- Both parties understand and agree to stated assumptions.

Payment Terms

Outline the payment schedule and terms, linking payments to specific milestones or deliverables. Payment for time and materials is not permitted. Avoid language that ties payment solely to the completion of deliverables; instead, use 'payment upon Acceptance of deliverables.' This ensures the agency has the opportunity to approve ("Accept") the deliverable prior to invoicing. Do not permit reimbursement for travel. If reimbursement for travel is required, such travel charges may never exceed the amounts allowed under DAS-SAE travel policy.

Key Points:

- Payment schedule is clearly defined.
- Payments are tied to deliverables or milestones.
- Ensure language permits payment upon Acceptance (not completion).
- No reimbursement for travel.

Change Order Procedure

A change order is simply an amendment and should be used sparingly. To the degree possible, all aspects of an SOW should be contemplated and memorialized in the SOW in order to avoid future change orders/amendments. Detail the process for handling changes to the scope, schedule, or other aspects of the project. Specify who has the authority to approve changes. This process may already be addressed in the MA or underlying agreement; compare and adjust as appropriate.

Key Points:

- The change order process is clearly defined.
- The person having authority to approve changes is identified.
- Compare to the procedure in the MA or underlying agreement.

Terms and Conditions

Include any legal or contractual terms that are not already addressed in the MA or that differ from the MA. If the vendor is offering terms, ensure that these terms do not conflict with the MA or Iowa law. Do not allow language that purports the SOW is proprietary or confidential; it likely is not. Agencies planning to use grant funds must also comply with any applicable grant requirements or special conditions imposed by the underlying grant award that will fund the procurement. If federal funds are being used to pay for any part of the SOW, additional language must be included (See Attachment A Federal Certifications and Iowa Code Ch. 8F).

Key Points:

- Any additional terms and conditions have not already been addressed in the MA.
- No proprietary or confidential language.
- Limitation of liability and governing law are in accordance with state law.
- Additional terms are included if grant or federal funds are being used for payment.

Signatures

Ensure that signature blocks are provided for authorized representatives for all parties to sign and approve the SOW. In some cases, a signature block for the DOM director will be required in addition to the contracting agency. The vendor should sign the SOW first. When purchasing via a reseller, the contract is between the contracting agency and the reseller (not the vendor providing the good/service).

Key Points:

- Signature blocks for all parties are included.
- If a reseller is used to reach the vendor, the contract is signed between Iowa and the reseller.

Additional Considerations for Reviewing Vendor-Supplied SOWs

When reviewing SOWs on vendor paper, ensure every section and subsection is enumerated for easy reference. Strike any language that indicates things will be figured out after the SOW is signed—everything should be contemplated and memorialized in advance. Avoid provisions that require mediation, payment of taxes, or advance payments. Strike provisions that include hyperlinks to additional terms or waiver of jury trial.

Key Points:

- Sections and subsections are enumerated.
- Strike 'to be determined' language.
- Strike provisions requiring mediation, tax payments, or advance payments.
- No hyperlinks or jury trial waivers.

Conclusion

A well-drafted SOW is crucial for the successful execution of a project. It sets clear expectations, defines deliverables, and outlines the roles and responsibilities of both parties. By following this guide, you can ensure that your SOWs are comprehensive, clear, and enforceable, leading to smoother project execution and better outcomes.

Note: Always consult the underlying contract before drafting or finalizing an SOW and ensure that the SOW is consistent with the terms of the existing agreement.