Uniforms Today
34-24 Hunters Point Avenue
Long Island City, NY 11101

April 13, 2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

Attn: Melinda Tomlinson
State Procurement Manager

Department of Administration
Division of Purchase & Contract

Re: Response to RFP #DPC-1677864747-MT-R – Promotional Items

Dear Ms. Tomlinson:

Uniforms Today, LLC respectfully submits this proposal in response to Request for Proposal (RFP) #DPC-1677864747-MT-R – Promotional Items, issued by the State of North Carolina, Department of Administration, Division of Purchase & Contract.

Uniforms Today hereby confirms that we have read the RFP in its entirety, including all referenced links and all addenda issued in conjunction with this solicitation.

Uniforms Today further affirms that we agree to perform in accordance with the scope of work, requirements, and specifications as outlined in the RFP. We understand the expectations of the State and are fully prepared to deliver a comprehensive, compliant, and scalable solution that meets the needs of all participating agencies and eligible entities.

In addition, Uniforms Today agrees to comply with all instructions, terms and conditions, and attachments associated with this RFP. We acknowledge and accept all provisions set forth by the State of North Carolina and confirm our commitment to full compliance throughout the duration of the contract.

With more than 40 years of experience supporting public-sector institutions, higher education systems, municipalities, and school districts, Uniforms Today is uniquely positioned to provide a streamlined, technology-enabled procurement solution. We look forward to the opportunity to serve as a trusted partner to the State of North Carolina.

Please do not hesitate to contact us should you require any additional information or clarification regarding our proposal.

Sincerely,

Dan Berkowitz
Uniforms Today, LLC

Failure to execute/sign bid prior to submittal may render bid invalid and it MAY BE REJECTED. Late Proposals cannot be accepted.

COMPLETE/FORMAL NAME OF VENDOR: Uniforms Today, LLC			
STREET ADDRESS: 34-24 Hunters Point Avenue		P.O. BOX:	ZIP: 11101
CITY & STATE & ZIP: Long Island City, NY		TELEPHONE NUMBER: 718-784-1166	TOLL FREE TEL. NO:
PRINCIPAL PLACE OF BUSINESS ADDRESS IF DIFFERENT FROM ABOVE (SEE INSTRUCTIONS TO VENDORS ITEM #21):			
PRINT NAME & TITLE OF PERSON SIGNING ON BEHALF OF VENDOR: Dan Berkowitz			
VENDOR'S AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE:	**DATE:** 4/13/26	E-MAIL: dan.berkowitz@uniformstoday.com	

VALIDITY PERIOD

Offer shall be valid for at least one hundred and twenty (120) days from date of bid opening, unless otherwise stated here: ______ days, or if extended by mutual agreement in writing of the parties. Any withdrawal of this offer shall be made in writing, effective upon receipt by the agency issuing this RFP.

BID ACCEPTANCE

If your bid is accepted, all provisions of this RFP, along with the written results of any negotiations, shall constitute the written agreement between the parties ("Contract"). The NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS are incorporated herein and shall apply. Depending upon the Goods or Services being offered, other terms and conditions may apply, as mutually agreed.

FOR STATE USE ONLY: Offer accepted and Contract awarded on date of June 26, 2026 as indicated,

by PandC - Melinda Tomlinson.

(Authorized Representative of Department of Administration, Division of Purchase & Contract)

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1.0 PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The Department of Administration (DOA) serves as the business manager for North Carolina State government and provides leadership to State government for the effective, efficient, economical, and equitable delivery of services to the public. The department also aids and services several advocacy programs that serve diverse segments of the State's population that have traditionally been underserved. The Division of Purchase & Contract (P&C) is the strategic force to provide the State's entities with a catalog of Statewide Term Contracts (STC) that provide for an encompassing, organized, and efficient manner to pool resources to provide goods and services.

The State, through the Department of Administration's Division of Purchase & Contract, is seeking qualified Vendors to establish a Statewide Term Contract to furnish and deliver the State's requirements for Promotional Items throughout the State on an "As Needed" basis, if and when ordered by State Departments, Agencies, and Institutions of Higher Education during the contract period.

The State seeks to launch the intended STC for the procurement of promotional items to include a wide range of products that can be customized with logos, slogans, or other branding to support the State's mission to engage the public, strengthen community outreach, and enhance recognition of State agencies, programs, and services. This initiative will serve a variety of functions, including but not limited to:

- ✓ Public awareness campaigns and events
- ✓ Employee recognition programs
- ✓ Community outreach and educational initiatives
- ✓ Promotional giveaways and marketing efforts

Product categories will include:

Category 1: Apparel (*e.g., T-shirts, polos, outerwear, hats, uniforms*)
Category 2: Bags & Totes (*e.g., tote bags, backpacks, duffels, drawstring bags*)
Category 3: Drinkware (*e.g., mugs, tumblers, bottles*)
Category 4: Writing Instruments (*e.g., pens, pencils, highlighters, markers, stylus pens, mechanical pencils*)
Category 5: Award & Recognition Gifts (*e.g., plaques, trophies, medals, crystal awards, framed certificates, lapel pins*)
Category 6: Other Promotional Merchandise (*any item suitable for imprinting with a logo or branding*)

This new STC will serve as a primary resource for State entities seeking reliable sources for high-quality, competitively priced promotional items and services. By centralizing procurement under a single contract, the State intends to improve efficiency and promote brand consistency for all State Entities.

To comply with the Governor's Office's Executive Order 80 (October 2018), North Carolina's Commitment to Address Climate Change and Transition to a Clean Energy Economy, the contract resulting from this solicitation intends to provide sustainability features such as products with recycled or biodegradable content, reduced packaging, and options for reusable or environmentally certified items (e.g., Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), Green Seal), per industry standards. See Section 4.18 Sustainability Efforts.

The intent of this Request for Proposal (hereinafter, "RFP") is to receive pricing from Vendors that will offer savings to the State and confirm, through Vendors' submission of proposals, its ability to meet the State's needs.

The contract resulting from this RFP is mandatory for State departments and most State Agencies, and by State institutions of higher education (except under the conditions specified in G.S. 115D-58.14(a) and G.S. 116-13). The Contract may also be utilized, without further competition, by non-mandatory State Agencies and Other Eligible Entities.

North Carolina State Organizations

North Carolina Community Colleges

North Carolina Institutions – UNC System

Proposals shall be submitted in accordance with the terms and conditions of this RFP and any addenda issued hereto.

1.1 CONTRACT TERM

The Contract shall have an initial term of three (3) years, beginning on the date of final Contract execution (the "Effective Date").

At any time during the contract period, the State may conduct an Open Enrollment process by posting a solicitation in the Ariba Sourcing Tool for the purpose of adding new suppliers or manufacturers to the contract, to provide wide coverage of promotional items. The awarded Vendor(s) will remain on the contract for the duration of the contract term unless terminated for convenience.

At the end of the Contract's initial term, the State shall have the option, in its sole discretion, to renew the Contract on the same terms and conditions for up to two (2) additional one-year terms. The State will give the Vendor written notice of its intent to exercise each option no later than thirty (30) days before the end of the Contract's then-current term. In addition, the State reserves the right to extend a contract term after the last active term.

1.2 ESTIMATED SPEND

As part of this new State Term Contract initiative, the estimated spend for the contract term is $6,085,000.00, based on historical promotional item expenditures across the state. This amount is not guaranteed and could be more or less than the historical expenditure during the contract period. No maximum or minimum quantities are guaranteed. The State will be responsible only for items requested and received.

2.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

2.1 REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL DOCUMENT

The RFP is comprised of the base RFP document, any attachments, and any addenda released before Contract award, which are incorporated herein by reference.

2.2 E-PROCUREMENT FEE

ATTENTION: This is an NC eProcurement solicitation facilitated by the Ariba Network. The E-Procurement fee may apply to this solicitation. See paragraph entitled ELECTRONIC PROCUREMENT of the North Carolina General Terms and Conditions.

General information on the E-Procurement Services can be found at: http://eprocurement.nc.gov/.

What is the Ariba Network?

The Ariba Network is a web-based platform that serves as a connection point for buyers and Vendors. Vendors can log in to the Ariba Network to view purchase orders, respond to electronic requests for quotes, participate in Sourcing Events, and collaborate with buyers on contract documents.

For training on how to use the Sourcing Tool to view solicitations, submit questions, develop responses, upload documents, and submit offers to the State, Vendors should go to the following site:

http://eprocurement.nc.gov/training/vendor-training.

2.3 NOTICE TO VENDORS REGARDING RFP TERMS AND CONDITIONS

It shall be the Vendor's responsibility to read the Instructions to Vendors, the North Carolina General Terms and Conditions, all relevant exhibits and attachments, and any other components made a part of this RFP and comply with all requirements and specifications herein. Vendors also are responsible for obtaining and complying with all Addenda and other changes that may be issued in connection with this RFP.

If Vendors have questions or issues regarding any component within this RFP, those must be submitted as questions in accordance with the instructions in the BID QUESTIONS Section. If the State determines that any changes will be made as a result of the questions asked, then such decisions will be communicated in the form of an RFP addendum. The State may also elect to leave open the possibility for later negotiation and amendment of specific provisions of the Contract that have been addressed during the question-and-answer period.

Other than through the process of negotiations under 01 NCAC 05B.0503, the State rejects and will not be required to evaluate or consider any additional or modified terms and conditions submitted with Vendor's bid. This applies to any language appearing in or attached to the document as part of the Vendor's bid that purports to vary any terms and conditions or Vendors' instructions herein or to render the bid non-binding or subject to further negotiation. Vendor's bid shall constitute a firm offer that shall be held open for the period required herein ("Validity Period" above).

The State may exercise its discretion to consider Vendor proposed modifications. By execution and delivery of this RFP Response, the Vendor agrees that any additional or modified terms and conditions, whether submitted purposely or inadvertently, shall have no force or effect, and will be disregarded unless expressly agreed to during negotiations and incorporated by way of a Best and Final Offer (BAFO). Noncompliance with, or any attempt to alter or delete, this paragraph shall constitute sufficient grounds to reject Vendor's bid as non-responsive.

2.4 RFP SCHEDULE

The table below shows the *intended* schedule for this RFP. The State will make every effort to adhere to this schedule.

Event	Responsibility	Date and Time
Issue RFP	State	March 10, 2026
Submit Written Questions	Vendor	March 20, 2026 @ 12:00 PM ET
Provide Responses to Questions	State	March 27, 2026
Submit Proposals/Bid Opening	Vendor	April 13, 2026 @ 2:00 PM ET **Microsoft Teams Meeting** **Join the meeting now** Meeting ID: 257 238 879 327 21 Passcode: tJ7Nm3NW **Dial in by phone** +1 984-204-1487,,333654207# United States, Raleigh Phone conference ID: 333 654 207#
Intended Contract Award	State	TBD

2.5 PROPOSAL QUESTIONS

Upon review of the RFP documents, Vendors may have questions to clarify or interpret the RFP in order to submit the best bid possible. To accommodate the Bid Questions process, Vendors shall submit any such questions by the "Submit Written Questions" date and time provided in the RFP SCHEDULE Section above, unless modified by Addendum.

Questions related to the content of the solicitation, or the procurement process should be directed to the person on the title page of this document via the Sourcing Tool's message board by the date and time specified in the RFP SCHEDULE Section of this RFP. Vendors will enter "**RFP # DPC-1677864747-MT-R– Questions**" as the subject of the message. Question submittals should include a reference to the applicable RFP section. This is the only manner in which questions will be received. Questions submitted via email will not be addressed.

Questions or issues related to using the Sourcing Tool itself should be directed to the North Carolina eProcurement Help Desk at 888-211-7440, Option 2. Help Desk representatives are available Monday through Friday from 7:30 AM ET to 5:00 PM EST.

Questions received prior to the submission deadline date, the State's response, and any additional terms deemed necessary by the State will be posted in the Sourcing Tool in the form of an addendum and shall become an Addendum to this RFP. No information, instruction or advice provided orally or informally by any State personnel, whether made in response to a question or otherwise in connection with this RFP, shall be considered authoritative or binding. Vendors shall rely *only* on written material contained in an Addendum to this RFP.

2.6 PROPOSAL SUBMITTAL

IMPORTANT NOTE: This is an absolute requirement. Late Proposals, regardless of cause, will not be opened or considered, and will be automatically disqualified from further consideration. Vendor shall bear the sole risk of late submission due to unintended or unanticipated delay. It is the Vendor's sole responsibility to ensure its bid has been received as described in this RFP by the specified time and date of opening. Failure to submit a bid in strict accordance with instructions provided shall constitute sufficient cause to reject a Vendor's bid(s). Solicitation responses are subject to Sealed Bidding requirements.

Vendor's Proposals for this procurement must be submitted through the Sourcing Tool. For training on how to use the Sourcing Tool to view solicitations, submit questions, develop responses, upload documents, and submit offers to the State, Vendors should go to the following site: https://eprocurement.nc.gov/training/vendor-training.

Questions or issues related to using the Sourcing Tool itself can be directed to the North Carolina eProcurement Help Desk at 888-211-7440, Option 2. Help Desk representatives are available Monday through Friday from 7:30 AM EST to 5:00 PM EST.

Tips for Using the Sourcing Tool

1. Vendors should review available training and confirm that they are able to access the Sourcing Event, enter responses, and upload files well in advance of the date and time response are due to allow sufficient time to seek assistance from the North Carolina eProcurement Help Desk.
2. Vendors may submit their responses early to make sure there are no issues, and then submit a revised response any time prior to the response due date and time. The State will only review the most recent response.
3. Vendors should respond to all relevant sections of the Sourcing Event. Certain questions or items are required in order to submit a response and are denoted with an asterisk. The Sourcing Tool will not allow a response to be submitted unless all required items are completed. The Sourcing Tool will provide error messages to help identify any required information that is missing when response is submitted.
4. Simply saving your response in the Sourcing Tool is not the same as submitting your response to the State. Vendors should make sure they complete the submission process and receive a message that their response was successfully submitted.
5. **Only Proposals submitted through the Content Section of the Ariba Sourcing Event will be considered. Proposals submitted through the Message Board will not be accepted or considered for award.**

2.7 PROPOSAL CONTENTS

Vendors shall provide responses to all questions and complete all attachments for this RFP that require the Vendor to provide information and upload them to the Sourcing Event in the Sourcing Tool. Vendor may not be able to submit its response in the Sourcing Tool unless all required items are addressed. Vendors shall provide authorized signatures where requested. Failure to provide all required items, or Vendor's submission of incomplete items, may result in the State rejecting Vendor's bid, in the State's sole discretion.

Vendors shall upload the following items and attachments in the Sourcing Tool:

a) Vendors *may* submit a Cover Letter, that includes the following: (i) a statement that confirms that the Vendor has read the RFP in its entirety, including all links, and all Addenda released in conjunction with the RFP; (ii) a statement that Vendor agrees to perform in accordance with the scope of work, requirements, and specifications contained herein; and (iii) Vendor's agreement to comply with all instructions, terms and conditions, and attachments.

b) Title Page: Include the company name, address, phone number, and authorized representative along with the Proposal Number.

c) Completed and signed version of EXECUTION PAGES, along with the body of the RFP.

d) Signed receipt pages of any addenda released in conjunction with this RFP, if required to be returned.

e) Vendor's Proposal addressing all Specifications/SOW of this RFP to include the following sections:

Requirements (Section 4.0)

Sections 4.11 Authorized Manufacturer (Check Box and Attachment Response in Sourcing Tool)

Section 4.14 Vendor's Published Catalog(s) & Lists (Option to Link in Attachment A or Attachment Response in Sourcing Tool)

Section 4.16 Vendor Experience (Attachment Response in Sourcing Tool)

Section 4.18 Sustainability Efforts (Attachment Response in Sourcing Tool)

Section 4.25 Secretary of State (Check Box)

Section 4.27 GenAI Solutions or Services (Attachment Response in Sourcing Tool)

Proposal (Solution to Section 5.0) – Note, this should be one (1) document, tabbed with Section References

Section 5.4 Implementation Plan (Proposal Attachment Response in Sourcing Tool)

Section 5.5 Customer Service Plan (Check Box in 5.5.1a and Proposal Attachment Response in Sourcing Tool)

Section 5.6 Product and Catalog Offering (Check Box and Attachment Response in Sourcing Tool)

Section 5.8 Project Organization (Proposal Attachment Response in Sourcing Tool)

Section 5.9 Technical Approach (Proposal Attachment Response in Sourcing Tool)

Contract Administration (Section 6.0)

Section 6.1 Contract Manager and Customer Service Contacts (Fill In)

Section 6.2.3 Catalog Solution Option (Check Box)

f) Completed version of ATTACHMENT A: COST PROPOSAL WORKBOOK

g) Completed and signed version of ATTACHMENT D: HUB SUPPLEMENTAL VENDOR INFORMATION

h) Completed and signed version of ATTACHMENT E: CUSTOMER REFERENCE FORM

i) Completed and signed version of ATTACHMENT F: LOCATION OF WORKERS UTILIZED BY VENDOR

j) Completed and signed version of ATTACHMENT G: CERTIFICATION OF FINANCIAL CONDITION

k) Completed version of ATTACHMENT H: GEN AI OR AI QUESTIONS

l) Completed and signed version of CERTIFICATION FOR CONTRACTS, GRANTS, LOANS, AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS and OMB STANDARD FORM LLL

2.8 ALTERNATE PROPOSALS

Unless provided otherwise in this RFP, Vendor may submit alternate Proposals for comparable Goods, various methods or levels of Service(s), or that propose different options. Alternate Proposals must specifically identify the RFP requirements and advantages addressed by the alternate bid. Each bid must be for a specific set of Goods and must include specific pricing. Each bid must be complete and independent of other Proposals offered. If a Vendor chooses to respond with various offerings, Vendor shall follow the specific instructions for uploading Alternate Proposals in the Sourcing Tool.

2.9 DEFINITIONS, ACRONYMS, AND ABBREVIATIONS

Relevant definitions for this RFP are provided in 01 NCAC 05A .0112 and in the Instructions to Vendors found Sourcing Tool, which are incorporated herein by this reference.

The following definitions, acronyms, and abbreviations are also relevant to this RFP:

ASTM: American Society for Testing and Materials

CPSC: Consumer Product Safety Commission

FDA: Federal Drug Administration

Price List/List Price: The price regularly offered to the public, not including limited time, one time only, or other promotional pricing. This may include the manufacturer's suggested retail price (MSRP) or public price list (PPL).

Product Category: A grouping of related promotional items that share common characteristics or intended use (e.g., Apparel, Drinkware, Writing Instruments, Technology, Awards & Recognition).

State Entity/Purchasing Entity: Any North Carolina state agency, department, institution, or other governmental unit authorized to procure goods and services under this STC in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

Subcontractor: *For the purpose of this RFP*, a subcontractor is a third party that performs contractual services or functions on behalf of Vendor.

Partner Supplier: *For the purpose of this RFP*, a partner supplier is an entity that provides products or decoration services to the Vendor, where the Vendor maintains full responsibility for contract performance. Partner Suppliers do not require disclosure under RFP section 4.27.

3.0 METHOD OF AWARD AND BID EVALUATION PROCESS

3.1 METHOD OF AWARD

North Carolina G.S. 143-52 provides a general list of criteria the State shall use to award contracts, as supplemented by the additional criteria herein. The Goods or Services being procured shall dictate the application and order of criteria; however, all award decisions shall be in the State's best interest. All qualified proposals will be evaluated, and awards will be made to the Vendor(s) meeting the specific RFP specifications and achieving the highest and best final evaluation, based on the criteria described below, including catalog coverage, pricing, service availability, and overall value at the discretion of the evaluation team.

While the intent of this RFP is to award a Contract(s) to multiple Vendors, the State reserves the right to make separate awards to different Vendors for one or more product category, to not award one or more product categories or to cancel this RFP in its entirety without awarding a Contract, if it is considered to be most advantageous to the State to do so.

EVALUATING COST PROPOSALS

ATTACHMENT A: COST PROPOSAL WORKBOOK includes a market basket of preselected items that represent commonly purchased promotional products identified through historical spend analysis. The market basket pricing will be used as a representative sample of catalog pricing as part of the best-value evaluation. Vendors shall complete the cost proposal workbook for these preselected items, per the instructions in ATTACHMENT A: COST PROPOSAL WORKBOOK and provide pricing that reflects their proposed contract pricing structure.

Each product category (i.e., *Apparel, Bags & Totes, Drinkware, Writing Instruments, Awards & Recognition, and Other*) includes ten (10) representative market basket items. If all participating Vendors do not have a comparable product that meets the item specifications (i.e., size, packaging) or quantities differ substantially, the State may determine an equivalent "unit price" for evaluation purposes. The State reserves the right to remove items from the market basket as necessary to ensure a representative sample for cost evaluation.

There will be no guaranteed number of vendors; however, the state will limit the number of awards to maintain contract manageability and ensure efficient use for State Entities.

The State reserves the right to waive any minor informality or technicality in Proposals received.

3.2 CONFIDENTIALITY AND PROHIBITED COMMUNICATIONS DURING EVALUATION

While this RFP is under evaluation, the responding Vendor, including any subcontractors and suppliers, is prohibited from engaging in conversations intended to influence the outcome of the evaluation. See the Paragraph of the Instructions To Vendors entitled COMMUNICATIONS BY VENDORS.

Each Vendor submitting a bid to this RFP, including its employees, agents, subcontractors, suppliers, subsidiaries and affiliates, is prohibited from having any communications with any person inside or outside the using agency; issuing agency; other government agency office or body (including the procurement lead named above, any department secretary, agency head, members of the General Assembly and Governor's office); or private entity, if the communication refers to the content of Vendor's proposal or qualifications, the content of another Vendor's proposal, another Vendor's qualifications or ability to perform a resulting contract, and/or the transmittal of any other communication of information that could be reasonably considered to have the effect of directly or indirectly influencing the evaluation of proposals, the award of a contract, or both.

Any Vendor not in compliance with this provision shall be disqualified from evaluation and award. A Vendor's proposal may be disqualified if its subcontractor and/or supplier engage in any of the foregoing communications during the time that the procurement is active (*i.e.*, the issuance date of the procurement until the date of contract award or cancellation of the procurement). Only those discussions, communications or transmittals of information authorized or initiated by the issuing agency for this RFP or inquiries directed to the procurement lead named in this RFP regarding requirements of the RFP (prior to proposal submission) or the status of the award (after submission) are excepted from this provision.

3.3 PROPOSAL EVALUATION PROCESS

Only responsive submissions will be evaluated.

The State will conduct a One-Step evaluation of Proposals:

Proposals will be received according to the method stated in the Proposal Submittal Section above.

All proposals must be received by the issuing agency no later than the date and time specified in the RFP SCHEDULE Section above, unless modified by Addendum. Vendors are cautioned that this is a request for offers, not an offer or request to contract, and the State reserves the unqualified right to reject any and all offers at any time if such rejection is deemed to be in the best interest of the State.

At the date and time provided in the RFP SCHEDULE Section above, unless modified by Addendum, the proposal from each responding Vendor will be opened publicly, and all offers (except those that have been previously withdrawn or voided bids) will be tabulated. The tabulation shall be made public at the time it is created. When negotiations after receipt of bids are authorized pursuant to G.S. 143-49 and 01 NCAC 05B.0503, only the names of offerors and the Goods and Services offered shall be tabulated at the time of opening. If negotiation is anticipated, cost and price shall become available for public inspection at the time of the award. Interested parties are cautioned that these costs and their components are subject to further evaluation for completeness and correctness and therefore may not be an exact indicator of a Vendor's pricing position.

At their option, the evaluators may request oral presentations or discussions with any or all Vendors for clarification or to amplify the materials presented in any part of the proposal. Vendors are cautioned, however, that the evaluators are not required to request presentations or other clarification—and often do not. Therefore, all proposals should be complete and reflect the most favorable terms available from the Vendor.

Upon completion of the evaluation process, the State will make award(s) based on the evaluation and post the award(s) to the State's eVP website under the RFP number for this solicitation. Award of a Contract to one Vendor does not mean that the other proposals lacked merit, but that, all factors considered, the selected proposal(s) was deemed most advantageous and represented the best value to the State.

The State reserves the right to negotiate with one or more Vendors, or to reject all original offers and negotiate with one or more sources of supply that may be capable of satisfying the requirement, and in either case to require Vendor to submit a Best and Final Offer (BAFO) based on discussions and negotiations with the State.

3.4 EVALUATION CRITERIA

In addition to the general criteria in G.S. 143-52 which may or may not be relevant to this RFP, all qualified proposals will be evaluated, and award made based on considering the following criteria, to result in an award most advantageous to the State:

BEST VALUE: "Best Value" procurement methods are authorized by N.C.G.S. §§143-135.9 and 143B-1350(h). The award decision is made based on multiple factors, including: total cost of ownership, meaning the cost of acquiring, operating, maintaining, and supporting a product or service over its projected lifetime; the evaluated technical merit of the Vendor's offer; the Vendor's past performance; and the evaluated probability of performing the specifications stated in the solicitation on time, with high quality, and in a manner that accomplishes the stated business objectives and maintains industry standard compliance. The intent of "Best Value" procurement is to enable Vendors to offer and the Agency to select the most appropriate solution to meet the business objectives defined in the solicitation and to keep all parties focused on the desired outcome of a procurement.

A ranking method of source selection will be utilized in this procurement using evaluation criteria listed in order of importance in the Evaluation Criteria section below to allow the State to award this RFP to the Vendor(s) providing the Best Value and recognizing that Best Value may result in award other than the lowest price or highest technically qualified offer. By using this method, the overall ranking may be adjusted up or down when considered with, or traded off against, other non-price factors.

EVALUATION METHOD: Narrative and by consensus of the evaluating committee, explaining the strengths and weaknesses of each proposal and why the recommended awardee(s) provide the best value to the State.

All qualified proposals will be evaluated, and award(s) made based on considering the following criteria listed in descending order of importance, to result in an award most advantageous to the State:

Evaluation Criteria	RFP Section	Method
Product & Catalog Offering	Section 5.6	Explanation of proposal strengths and weaknesses
Technical Approach	Section 5.9	
Project Organization	Section 5.8	
Vendor Experience	Section 4.16	
Customer Service Plan	Section 5.5	
Cost Proposal	Section 4.1/Att. A	
Sustainability Efforts	Section 4.18	PASS/FAIL
Implementation & Communication Plan	Section 5.4	PASS/FAIL

3.5 PERFORMANCE OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES

Vendor shall complete ATTACHMENT F: LOCATION OF WORKERS UTILIZED BY VENDOR. In addition to any other evaluation criteria identified in this RFP, the State may also consider, for purposes of evaluating proposed or actual contract performance outside of the United States, how that performance may affect the following factors to ensure that any award will be in the best interest of the State:

a) Total cost to the State
b) Level of quality provided by the Vendor
c) Process and performance capability across multiple jurisdictions
d) Protection of the State's information and intellectual property
e) Availability of pertinent skills
f) Ability to understand the State's business requirements and internal operational culture
g) Particular risk factors such as the security of the State's information technology
h) Relations with citizens and employees
i) Contract enforcement jurisdictional issues

3.6 INTERPRETATION OF TERMS AND PHRASES

This RFP serves two functions: (1) to advise potential Vendors of the parameters of the solution being sought by the State; and (2) to provide (together with other specified documents) the terms of the contract resulting from this procurement. The use of phrases such as "shall," "must," and "requirements" are intended to create enforceable contract conditions. In determining whether Proposals should be evaluated or rejected, the State will take into consideration the degree to which Vendors have proposed or failed to propose solutions that will satisfy the State's needs as described in the RFP. Except as specifically stated in the RFP, no one requirement shall automatically disqualify a Vendor from consideration. However, failure to comply with any single requirement may result in the State exercising its discretion to reject a bid in its entirety.

4.0 REQUIREMENTS

This Section lists the requirements related to this RFP. By submitting a Proposal, the Vendor agrees to meet all stated requirements in this Section, as well as any other specifications, requirements, and terms and conditions stated in this RFP. If a Vendor is unclear about a requirement or specification or believes a change in a requirement would allow for the State to receive a better Proposal, the Vendor is encouraged to submit these items in the form of a question during the question and answer period in accordance with the Proposal Questions Section above.

4.1 PRICING

The Vendor shall submit pricing in accordance with the instructions in ATTACHMENT A: COST PROPOSAL WORKBOOK and all other relevant terms and conditions of this RFP. Complete ATTACHMENT A: COST PROPOSAL WORKBOOK and upload it to the Sourcing Tool. The pricing provided in ATTACHMENT A, or resulting from any negotiations, is incorporated herein and shall become part of any resulting contract.

The items listed in Attachment A are generic examples only and are not tied to specific products or brands. Vendors should propose pricing based on their standard, commercially reasonable offerings for each item category, ensuring consistent assumptions are applied throughout the pricing form. Detailed product features, decoration requirements, and sustainability attributes will not be assessed at the line-item level; these will be defined by the purchasing entity at the time of order, in accordance with the contract.

Vendors may source products from different manufacturers. The pricing for each line item in Attachment A should reflect the manufacturer's actual cost. Vendors must apply the same discount percentage uniformly to all items in a category, regardless of the manufacturer.

The Vendor shall demonstrate reasonableness of price by offering the Percentage Discount to North Carolina that is the same or better than what is provided in a current contract, to similarly situated governmental entities (i.e., other State contracts, GSA, NASPO ValuePoint, Veterans Administration, Department of Defense, or other governmental entities). If the Vendor is unable to offer the Percentage Discount to NC that is the same or better than given to other similarly situated governmental entities, Vendor shall include with the response a brief explanation as to why they are unable to do so. The State reserves the right to request further information, such as copies of other governmental contracts, to determine the reasonableness of the price offered.

4.1.1 Additional Fees

Vendors shall disclose any additional fees that may apply in connection with the products and services offered under this contract. Examples of such fees may include, but are not limited to:

- ✓ Setup fees (screen printing, embroidery, imprint charges)
- ✓ Artwork/proof fees
- ✓ Rush order fees
- ✓ Shipping and handling fee structure
- ✓ Other vendor-specific charges

Vendors shall complete the appropriate tab within ATTACHMENT A: COST PROPOSAL WORKBOOK to identify applicable fees, indicate the associated unit of measure, and provide explanatory notes as needed.

This information is requested for informational purposes only. Additional fees will be reviewed for reasonableness and transparency, but will not be a part of the evaluation.

4.1.2 Newly Implemented Import Tariff (Temporary Surcharge)

Pricing shall be exclusive of any pending tariffs or temporary tariff surcharge. Vendor may request a temporary tariff surcharge in ATTACHMENT A: COST PROPOSAL WORKBOOK as a charge separate from the contract price. Any temporary tariff surcharge(s) associated with purchases shall be provided by way of a percentage tariff surcharge. All tariff surcharges proposed are intended to be temporary and based on current tariff implications specific to related commodities with evidence of submitted documentation of affected MSRP/PPL products. Vendor understands that the agency may request additional justification. Any temporary tariff surcharge percentage will be negotiated and mutually agreed upon. The state is not obligated to accept any proposed import tariff surcharge. Proposed tariff surcharges may be used as a factor for evaluation and award.

4.2 ADDITIONAL SAVINGS OFFERS/REBATES

This component of the Pricing Response is optional, but the State encourages Vendors to provide additional financial incentives/rebates, if possible, within the scope of this RFP, that will benefit the State. These additional incentives could include, but are not limited to, additional discounts based on total spend volumes, tiered pricing, rebates, additional discounts by manufacturers, limited-time promotional discounts, etc. Additional Discount Offers shall be in addition to the discounts Vendor offers as a List Item Price. Additional Discount Offers should be provided in ATTACHMENT A: COST PROPOSAL WORKBOOK.

Additional Discounts: As part of the pricing submittal, Vendors are being requested to propose an additional percentage discount which would be applied to all orders for the remainder of the contract term if and when the total orders against the contract exceed the provided estimated spend amount, at any point during the life of the contract. Orders from all entities utilizing this contract will count toward the contract volume discount threshold.

Rebates: If a rebate is offered, it will be based on reported sales, on a quarterly basis (see Section 6.5 QUARTERLY SPEND REPORTS). The Vendor shall submit the rebate amount due by check with the “Contracts Number," “Report Amount,” and “Report Period” on either the check stub or other remittance materials. The payment shall be made by check as described herein.

Checks shall be payable to: NCDOA, Division of Purchase & Contract

Checks shall be mailed to: NCDOA, Division of Purchase & Contract, Contract Manager
1305 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699

All discounts in Vendor's Proposal shall remain in effect for the entire contract period and shall not be decreased. However, the discount may be increased, and any such increase shall remain in effect for the remainder of the contract period and any subsequent extensions. Volume or tier discounts, if offered, shall apply to purchase orders placed for delivery to the same location. Vendors may provide volume or tier discounts to orders that include multiple delivery points from the same agency.

The State reserves the right to accept or reject all or part of the proposed Additional Discount Offers as part of a Vendor's Total Price Submittal Value. The State has sole discretion to not assign value to Vendor's proposed Additional Discount Offers which the State cannot quantify or to give only partial value for Additional Discount Offers. Vendors may offer the State additional discounts using the Additional Discount Offers within ATTACHMENT A: COST PROPOSAL WORKBOOK.

4.3 PRODUCT IDENTIFICATION

SUITABILITY FOR INTENDED USE

Vendors are requested to offer only items directly complying with the specifications herein or comparable items which will provide the equivalent capabilities, features, and diversity called for herein. The State reserves the right to evaluate all Proposals for suitability for the required use and to award the one best meeting requirements and considered to be in the State's best interest.

4.4 TRANSPORTATION AND IDENTIFICATION

The Vendor shall deliver Free-On-Board (FOB) Destination to any requested location within the State of North Carolina.

When an order is placed using a purchase order, the purchase order number shall be shown on all packages and shipping manifests to ensure proper identification and payment of invoices. If an order is placed without using a purchase order, such as via phone, the Purchasing Entity's name shall be shown on all packages. A complete packing list shall accompany each shipment. Vendors shall not ship any products until they have received an order.

4.5 DELIVERY

Lead times, delivery dates, and shipping charges are to be clearly communicated to the Purchasing Entity before orders are placed. Standard shipping/delivery charges will be included in the price quoted to the Purchasing Entity. Shipping costs may be displayed as a separate line item during checkout within the punchout site, provided that the total cost (including shipping) is visible to the purchasing entity prior to order submission with no markup. In the event of an emergency or rush delivery as a result of a vendor error, the vendor shall pay for shipping and handling costs. Turnaround time is to be as soon as possible, and flexibility/priority must be allowed for the Purchasing Entity's needs.

Vendor should complete delivery within ten (10) business days after final proof approval; however, complex customization, high-volume orders, or documented supply chain constraints may necessitate extended lead times, as mutually agreed in writing with the State or Purchasing Entity.

For completion by Vendor: Deliveries will be made from Long Island City, NY (city, state) within 10 consecutive business days after final proof approval. Promptness of delivery may be used as a factor in the award criteria.

Note: If multiple shipment origination locations will be used, only the primary or most common location needs to be provided. Additional locations can be disclosed during order processing if applicable.

4.6 ON-TIME DELIVERY RATE

The Vendor shall maintain an on-time shipment rate of at least 95% of orders being shipped within delivery terms. On-time shipment is defined as shipping all ordered items to the receiving point designated by the Purchasing Entity within the shipping time required in Section 4.5 DELIVERY. The on-time shipping rate is calculated using the following formula:

Shipment Timing	Percent On-Time Shipment Rate
Section 4.5 (Business Days)	95%

(Number of On-Time Order Shipments)/(Total Number of Orders) x 100% = On-Time Shipment Rate
Note: On-Time Shipment Rate will be rounded to the nearest whole percent.

NOTE: An order will not be considered shipped until all items in the order have been delivered to the Purchasing Entity. This includes all shipments required to complete a given order. Therefore, the "Total Number of Orders" is equal to the total number of orders received, subtracting any orders that are cancelled by the State prior to shipment. If the Vendor makes multiple shipments to fill a single order, the shipment is not considered complete until all items have been shipped. Once all items have been shipped the order will be considered either "On-Time" or "Late". Vendor shall not cancel or require that the State cancel any partial order or item considered "back-ordered" due to shipment delay unless requested to do so by the State, nor engage in any process or activity with an effect of inflating the actual On-Time Shipment Rate without prior written authorization from the State.

4.7 DEFECTIVE PRODUCTS

In the event a product is found to be defective, Vendor agrees to replace the item immediately, within the same delivery time frame at no additional charge to the State.

4.8 PRODUCT RECALL

Vendor expressly assumes full responsibility for prompt notification to the Contract Manager at the State's Division of Purchase & Contract of any product recall in accordance with the applicable State or Federal regulations. The Vendor shall support the Contract Manager in necessary follow-up with State Entities that have purchased recalled products to replace, at no cost to the State, any such products promptly.

4.9 OUT-OF-STOCK AND BACK-ORDERS

The Vendor shall notify the Purchasing Entity when one or more items in an order cannot be delivered within the time specified. After notification to the Purchasing Entity by Vendor of a fulfillment delay of one or more items in the order, the Purchasing Entity may cancel undelivered items within an order, or an order in its entirety, without penalty or charge, to the extent that the notice of cancellation occurs before Purchasing Entity is notified that the delayed item or other cancelled items in the order have shipped.

4.10 QUALITY ACCEPTANCE INSPECTION

It is the responsibility of the receiving Purchasing Entity to inspect all materials, supplies, and equipment upon delivery to ensure compliance with the Contract requirements and specifications.

INVOICES MAY NOT BE PAID BY THE PURCHASING ENTITY UNTIL AN INSPECTION HAS OCCURRED, AND THE GOODS ACCEPTED.

4.11 AUTHORIZED MANUFACTURER/DISTRIBUTOR/RESELLER

A Vendor may submit a Proposal if it is a Manufacturer, Authorized Distributor, or Reseller of the proposed promotional items.

Vendor shall indicate its role in the supply chain by selecting an option below:

Failure to provide this statement shall constitute sufficient grounds for rejection of Vendor's offer, at the discretion of the State.

Vendor is the: ☐ **Manufacturer** ☐ **Reseller** ☒ **Distributor**

Authorized: ☒ **Yes** ☐ **No**

The Vendor shall be authorized by the manufacturer to distribute or resell the products offered in this RFP. Upon request by the State or Purchasing Entity, the Vendor shall provide a signed statement from the manufacturer confirming such authorization. Failure to provide this statement shall constitute sufficient grounds for rejection of the Vendor's offer, at the discretion of the State or Purchasing Entity.

4.12 WARRANTY

Manufacturer's standard warranty shall apply.

Vendor warrants that all items furnished under this RFP will be newly manufactured, of good material and workmanship. The warranty will apply from date items are put into operation for a minimum period of twelve (12) months or the length of the manufacturer's warranty, whichever is longer. Such warranty shall cover the cost of all defective parts replacement, labor, freight, and technicians' travel at no additional cost to the State. To the extent not superseded by the terms of this paragraph, manufacturer's warranty terms shall apply. Vendor's warranty shall be at least the level of coverage provided for its comparable customers.

4.13 SAMPLES/DESCRIPTIVE LITERATURE

POST-AWARD SAMPLES

Samples shall be provided at no cost to the Purchasing Entity upon request, prior to making a purchase. These samples must represent the exact model of the item(s) being offered. Samples may be required to evaluate the suitability of the item(s) for their intended use. A written request for return of sample(s) shall be provided prior to the sample being delivered to the Purchasing Entity. If sample return is requested, the Purchasing Entity shall return the sample(s) within thirty (30) days of delivery. Otherwise, the samples shall become the State's property to be used or disposed of at the State's discretion. Each individual sample shall be labeled with the Vendor's Name, Contract Number, and Item Number.

POST-AWARD DESCRIPTIVE LITERATURE

Descriptive Literature, including specifications, certification, and all other pertinent information, shall be provided to the Purchasing Entity at no cost, upon request prior to purchase.

4.14 VENDOR'S PUBLISHED CATALOG & LISTS

As a result of this Contract, Vendors shall provide its entire catalog of products. By definition, a Vendor's catalog, as a result of this effort, is a Vendor's full line of products within the awarded scope that is consistent with what is offered on its punch-out catalog site. The State reserves the right to determine whether the Vendor's catalog sufficiently represents the full range of products within the proposed scope.

Vendor's Catalog and Price List must be submitted with its Proposal by:

1. Providing the most recent, active, and direct web link to a publicly accessible catalog displaying item-level pricing in ATTACHMENT A: COST PROPOSAL WORKBOOK in the designated field for each product category offered. A link providing login credentials may be provided, as long as such credentials are submitted with the proposal and allows the State to view and retain pricing data. The State will not request the necessary credentials from the vendor during evaluation; OR
2. Providing the completed price list as a Microsoft Excel file (free of passwords and macros) or PDF as an attachment with the corresponding categories clearly labeled within the attachment(s).

Altered or unpublished price lists/literature may subject your Proposal to rejection. **Vendors shall not provide a link to their homepage or general marketing pages that do not clearly identify "published price list" information. Vendors are advised that literature, questionnaires, and other data submitted in response to a previous RFP or other inquiry will not suffice for the above requirement.** Submitted materials shall reflect current, active pricing as of the proposal due date and include item level pricing or a clearly defined pricing structure (e.g., tiered pricing). Failure to include such information shall be a sufficient basis for rejection of the Vendor's Proposal. The Vendor shall, where applicable, provide the following information, at a minimum, on the proposed products:

a. Detailed Item Description
b. Manufacturer
c. Manufacturer or Vendor's List Price
d. UOM

e. Number of Items (pens, t-shirts, mugs, etc.) per UOM
f. Minimum Order Quantity
g. Customization/Branding Options
h. Pricing Tiers

4.15 HUB PARTICIPATION

Pursuant to North Carolina General Statute G.S. 143-48, it is State policy to encourage and promote the use of small, minority, physically handicapped, and women contractors in purchasing Goods and Services. As such, this RFP will serve to identify those Vendors that are minority owned or have a strategic plan to support the State's Historically Underutilized Businesses program by meeting or exceeding the goal of 10% utilization of diverse firms as 1st or 2nd tier subcontractors. Vendor shall complete ATTACHMENT D: HUB SUPPLEMENTAL VENDOR INFORMATION.

4.16 VENDOR EXPERIENCE

In its Proposal, Vendor shall demonstrate experience with public and/or private sector clients with similar or greater size and complexity to the State within the last five (5) years. Vendor shall provide information as to the qualifications and experience of all executive, managerial, legal, and professional personnel to be assigned to this contract, including citing experience with similar projects.

As part of the Vendor Experience, the Vendor's response shall specifically address the following:

1. Provide an example of your company's experience successfully supporting a large, multi-agency contract or comparable customer. Examples of successful contract support should include measurable outcomes such as performance benchmarks, client satisfaction ratings, or renewal history.

2. Describe your company's experience managing contracts that require strict adherence to branding guidelines or multiple unique logos across different entities.

4.17 REFERENCES

Vendors shall upload to the Sourcing Tool at least three (3) references, using ATTACHMENT E: CUSTOMER REFERENCE FORM, for which your company has supplied the exact model of equipment offered. References shall not be from the same company or from the soliciting State entity. The State *may* contact these users to determine quality level of the offered equipment; as well as but not limited to user satisfaction with Vendor performance. Information obtained *may* be considered in the evaluation of the Proposal.

4.18 SUSTAINABILITY EFFORTS

According to G.S. 143-58.2, it is the policy of this State to encourage and promote the purchase of products with recycled content and to purchase items that are reusable, refillable, repairable, more durable, and less toxic to the extent that the purchase or use is practicable and cost effective. The Proposal must describe how Vendor will meet environmental requirements, including clear labeling of environmental and sustainability attributes (e.g., certifications, total and post-consumer recycled content) in product catalogs, the ability to run usage reports that capture such attributes, and processes for packaging and recycling of spent products.

4.19 RETURN POLICY

Vendor shall accept merchandise returns from Purchasing Entity for a period of thirty (30) business days after delivery. Vendor shall provide full credit or full refund to Purchasing Entity, whichever is requested, within thirty (30) business days on all returns of an ordered item or product that (1) is a stock item in original packaging and in re-sellable conditions; (2) is not a specialty or customized item; (3) is defective or damaged; (4) is a return of an incorrect product shipped; (5) results from a Vendor order entry error; or (6) is non-conforming due to any other cause reasonably assumed to be the fault of the Vendor.

Vendor may charge a restocking fee for undamaged, conforming goods outside the thirty (30) business day period and for returns of custom-made items. A custom-made item is an item specially manufactured for a specific order due to the Purchasing Entity's choices of non-standard dimensions, fabric, choice of wood or stain, and the like. An otherwise standard item is not considered custom-made simply because it is manufactured to fulfill a Purchasing Entity's order.

4.20 PRODUCT SAFETY LISTING

All manufactured items and/or fabricated assemblies subject to operation under pressure or operation involving a connection to a manufactured, natural, or LP gas source shall be constructed and approved in a manner acceptable to the appropriate State inspector which customarily requires the label or re-examination listing or identification marking of the appropriate safety standard organization; such as the American Society of Mechanical Engineers for pressure vessels, or the American Gas Association for gas operated assemblies, where such approvals of listings have been established for the type of device offered and furnished. Further, all items furnished shall meet all requirements of the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA), and State and Federal requirements relating to clean air and water pollution. Having the appropriate certification or safety label affixed to any device delivered pursuant to this solicitation, under the conditions described above, is a material condition of any contract awarded as a result of this solicitation. All costs for product and industry certifications and listings required to supply conforming products to the State as described in this RFP are the sole responsibility of the Vendor. The certification or safety label shall be affixed and be visible on the OUTSIDE of all products that require a certification or safety label.

All electrical materials, devices, appliances, and equipment shall be evaluated for safety and suitability for intended use in accordance with G.S. 66-25 Acceptable Listings as to Safety of Goods.

4.21 VENDOR'S REPRESENTATIONS

If Vendor's Proposal results in an award, Vendor agrees that it will not enter any agreement with a third party that may abridge any rights of the State under the contract. If any Services, deliverables, functions, or responsibilities not specifically described in this solicitation are required for Vendor's proper performance, provision and delivery of the Service and deliverables under a resulting contract, or are an inherent part of or necessary sub-task included within such service, they will be deemed to be implied by and included within the scope of the contract to the same extent and in the same manner as if specifically described in the contract. Unless otherwise expressly provided herein, Vendor will furnish all of its own necessary management, supervision, labor, facilities, furniture, computer and telecommunications equipment, software, supplies and materials necessary for the Vendor to provide and deliver the Services and/or other Deliverables.

4.22 FINANCIAL STABILITY

As a condition of contract award, the Vendor must certify that it has the financial capacity to perform and to continue to perform its obligations under the contract; that Vendor has no constructive or actual knowledge of an actual or potential legal proceeding being brought against Vendor that could materially adversely affect performance of this contract; and that entering into this contract is not prohibited by any contract, or order by any court of competent jurisdiction

Each Vendor shall certify it is financially stable by completing the ATTACHMENT G: CERTIFICATION OF FINANCIAL CONDITION. The State is requiring this certification to minimize potential performance issues from contracting with a Vendor that is financially unstable. This Certification shall be deemed continuing, and from the date of the Certification to the expiration of the contract, the Vendor shall notify the State within thirty (30) days of any occurrence or condition that materially alters the truth of any statement made in this Certification.

4.23 INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS MODIFICATION

A. Default Insurance Coverage from the General Terms and Conditions applicable to this Solicitation:

☒ Contract value in excess of $1,000,000.00

4.24 LOBBYING ACTIVITY CERTIFICATION FOR FEDERAL GRANTS

Federal law prohibits recipients of federal funds, whether through grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements, from using those funds to influence or attempt to influence (lobby) a federal official in connection with obtaining, extending, or modifying any federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement. Further, federal law requires that applicants for federal funds certify:

- that they propose by the above restriction;
- that they disclose any permissible (non-federal) paid lobbying on the Federal Awards being applied for; and
- that such certification requirements will also be included in any subawards meeting the applicable thresholds.

Vendors must complete and submit the CERTIFICATION FOR CONTRACTS, GRANTS, LOANS, AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS and the OMB STANDARD FORM LLL when responding to this solicitation.

4.25 SECRETARY OF STATE REGISTRATION

Upon notification of award, the selected Vendor(s) shall complete registration with the NC Secretary of State and shall furnish evidence of filing to the Procurement Lead. Failure to provide proof of registration will result in the removal as a selected Vendor(s) from the contract award. Note that any prolonged (longer than ten (10) business days) notification of evidence of filing may result in a disqualification for award. No purchase orders shall be issued prior to confirmation of completed registration with the Secretary of State.

A contract award under the above-referenced solicitation, and the resulting purchase orders, will produce repeated orders and transactions in North Carolina and will constitute "transacting business" in the State, which requires a certificate of authority from the North Carolina Secretary of State as provided in G.S. §55-15-01 (corporations) or §57D-7-01 (LLCs). Please go to: https://www.sosnc.gov/ to register.

Vendor registered with the North Carolina Secretary of State: YES ☐ NO ☒

Upon notification of award, we will complete registration os the NC Secretary of State within 10 business days

4.26 SUBCONTRACTORS

No portion of the work shall be subcontracted without prior written consent of the State. In the event that the Vendor desires to subcontract some part of the work specified herein, the Vendor shall furnish within their proposal, a Section Header for Subcontractor, with the names, qualifications, and experience of their proposed subcontractors. The Vendor shall, however, remain solely and fully liable and responsible for the work done by its subcontractor(s) and shall ensure compliance with all the requirements and specifications of the contract.

Note: Vendors serving as distributors working with Partner Suppliers, as defined in Section 2.9, are not obligated to disclose the manufacturers or product suppliers utilized during the contract period.

4.27 GENAI SOLUTIONS OR SERVICES

1. Disclosure of GENAI Prior to Contract Award

The State seeks to realize the potential benefits of GenAI through the development and deployment of GenAI tools while balancing the risks of these new technologies. Each Vendor shall certify its utilization of AI or GenAI by completing and uploading to the sourcing tool ATTACHMENT H: GEN AI OR AI QUESTIONS. The State is requiring this certification to minimize potential performance issues from contracting with a Vendor that is financially unstable. Failure to return this attachment shall constitute sufficient grounds for rejection of the Vendor's offer, at the discretion of the State.

a. Vendor must notify the State in writing if Vendor's Solution or Service includes, or makes available, any GenAI, including GenAI from third parties or subcontractors. Response shall be included within ATTACHMENT H.

b. For Vendors responding affirmatively to 1.a, describe the GenAI technology available in Vendor's Solution or Services using the GenAI questions located in ATTACHMENT H and include the responses with Vendor's proposal.

c. Failure to submit answers to the GenAI questions with Vendor's proposal will result in Vendor's offer being deemed non-responsive.

d. Upon receipt of Vendor's responses to the State's GenAI questions, the State reserves the right to incorporate GenAI Special Provisions into the final contract or to reject offers that present an unacceptable level of risk to the State.

e. Prior to contract award, the State may, in its sole discretion, require the Vendor to provide additional information for Vendor's GENAI technology related to privacy, security, and architecture.

f. Failure to report GenAI to the State may void any resulting contract. The State reserves its right to seek any and all relief it may be entitled to as a result of such non-disclosure.

2. Use and Disclosure of GENAI During the Term of the Agreement

a. During the term of the Contract, Vendor must promptly notify the State in writing if Vendor's Services or any work under this the Contract includes, or makes available, any previously unreported GenAI technology, including GenAI from third parties or subcontractors, submit Vendor's completed responses to the GenAI questions in ATTACHMENT H and provide the Vendor Standard Agreements, including license and maintenance and support agreements, applicable to the technology for the State's review.

b. Vendor shall not activate such GenAI technology without the State's written consent and approval. Changes to the Contract shall be governed by the North Carolina Department of Administration, Division of Purchase and Contract, Terms and Conditions.

c. The State may, in its sole discretion, require the Vendor to provide additional information for Vendor's GENAI technology related to privacy, security, and architecture.

d. Failure to disclose GenAI use to the State may be considered a breach of the Contract by the State at its sole discretion. The State may consider such failure to disclose GenAI or any failure to provide requested information related to privacy, security, or architecture as grounds for the immediate termination of the Contract. The State is entitled to seek any and all relief it may be entitled to as a result of Vendor's failure to disclose GENAI.

e. The State reserves the right to incorporate GenAI Special Provisions into the Contract at the State's sole discretion and/or terminate any Contract that presents an unacceptable level of risk to the State.

For Vendor solutions or Services with AI or GenAI features or tools, refer to ATTACHMENT H (*i.e., set of additional specifications*) for Vendor's response. **If Vendor's proposed solution does not utilize AI or GenAI features, please respond by confirming on ATTACHMENT H that it is "Not applicable for Vendor's Solution or Services".**

5.0 SCOPE OF WORK AND SPECIFICATIONS

5.1 GENERAL

The intent of this Statewide Term Contract is to provide a reliable, efficient, and consistent method for eligible entities to access a broad range of customizable promotional items that meet diverse branding, quality, and delivery requirements. Awarded Vendor(s) will be responsible for maintaining accurate and up-to-date product catalogs and pricing, processing and fulfilling orders in a timely manner, delivering items to locations across the state, and providing responsive customer service and issue resolution. The scope of work requires Vendors to leverage their existing systems and infrastructure to manage varying order sizes, support multiple concurrent State Entity requests, and accommodate customized branding needs without compromising quality or timeliness. This framework ensures consistent delivery of high-quality, branded promotional items throughout the life of the contract.

5.2 SPECIFICATIONS

The Vendor shall provide a wide range of new, unused, and in current production promotional items that are customizable with logos or messaging, free of defects, and compliant with all applicable industry standards in six (6) categories, including:

5.2.1 Apparel

The Vendor shall provide apparel suitable for branding and customization. At a minimum, the Vendor shall offer T-shirts, polos, sweatshirts, jackets, and hats in a variety of fabrics and colors. Apparel shall be available in a full range of sizes, including but not limited to:

a. Adult sizes: XS – 5XL (with tall options where available)
b. Women's sizes: XS – 4XL (including fitted or contoured styles where available)
c. Youth sizes: S – XL

The Vendor shall make extended sizes available upon request without unreasonable additional costs.

5.2.2 Bags and Totes

The Vendor shall provide a variety of bags designed for everyday use, as well as for functional and event purposes. At a minimum, the Vendor shall offer tote bags, drawstring bags, backpacks, duffel bags, and messenger bags. Bags and totes shall:

a. Be constructed from durable materials suitable for repeated use (e.g., canvas, polyester, nylon).
b. Offer options in a range of sizes (small event totes to large travel duffels).
c. Include eco-friendly/reusable options such as recycled or biodegradable materials.
d. Provide reinforced handles/straps capable of supporting everyday loads.

5.2.3 Drinkware

The Vendor shall provide reusable and durable drinkware suitable for branding and customization. At a minimum, the Vendor shall offer water bottles, tumblers, travel mugs, ceramic mugs, and glassware. Drinkware shall:

a. Comply with all applicable safety standards for food and beverages (e.g., BPA-free plastics, FDA-approved coatings).
b. Be available in multiple capacities (e.g., 12 oz, 16 oz, 20 oz, 32 oz).
c. Offer both hot and cold options (e.g., insulated tumblers, ceramic coffee mugs).
d. Provide reusable, eco-friendly alternatives (e.g., stainless steel, glass, recycled plastic).

5.2.4 Writing Instruments

The Vendor shall provide writing instruments that are capable of customizing logos or slogans. At a minimum, the Vendor shall offer ballpoint pens, gel pens, stylus pens, pencils, and highlighters. Writing instruments shall:

a. Be available in standard and premium options.
b. Include retractable, capped, and multifunction (e.g., stylus/pen combos) designs.
c. Provide smooth, consistent ink flow and legible imprinting.
d. Be available in assorted colors and ink options.

5.2.5 Award and Recognition Gifts

The Vendor shall provide products designed to recognize employee or stakeholder achievements, service, and milestones. At a minimum, the Vendor shall offer plaques, trophies, certificates, custom pins, and crystal awards. Award and recognition gifts shall:

a. Be customizable with logos, names, or inscriptions.
b. Offer a range of materials (e.g., wood, acrylic, glass, metal, crystal).
c. Include both formal awards (e.g., plaques, trophies) and informal recognition items (e.g., pins, certificates).
d. Be available in multiple sizes and formats to support varying levels of recognition.

5.2.6 Other Promotional Merchandise

The Vendor shall provide additional promotional items commonly used for events, campaigns, and public engagement. At a minimum, the Vendor shall offer keychains, lanyards, stress balls, calendars, and basic technology accessories (such as USB drives or phone stands). Miscellaneous items shall:

a. Be functional and suitable for daily use or event distribution.
b. Include a range of low-cost items (e.g., keychains, stress relievers) and higher-value giveaways (e.g., tech accessories).
c. Be constructed from durable materials appropriate for their intended use.
d. Provide eco-friendly alternatives when commercially available.

Vendors may only provide items in this category if they are offering items in at least two (2) other categories.

5.2.7 Additional Categories

The State reserves the right to request additional promotional item categories not expressly listed herein. The Vendor shall make commercially available promotional items accessible when requested, subject to the pricing and terms agreed upon.

5.2.8 General Quality and Compliance Requirements

Vendor shall ensure that all items required under this RFP meet the following minimum requirements:

- **Safety and Compliance:** All items shall comply with applicable U.S. safety and industry standards, including but not limited to CPSC, ASTM, and FDA regulations where applicable.
- **Branding Durability:** All imprinting, embroidery, or engraving shall be durable and able to withstand normal use without premature fading, peeling, or washing away.
- **Product Quality:** All items shall be constructed of materials suitable for their intended use, free from defects, and reasonably durable.
- **Accessibility and Inclusivity:** Where applicable (e.g., apparel), products shall be available in a variety of sizes, colors, and styles.
- **Sustainability:** Vendors are encouraged to provide eco-friendly or recycled-content alternatives when available.

5.3 SCOPE OF WORK

Vendor shall provide all necessary promotional items and related services for the entire contract term, including, but not limited to, ensuring product availability, customization, timely order processing, quality assurance, and delivery.

5.3.1 Tasks and Deliverables

A. Provide item availability and customization options through an up-to-date catalog consistent with the Vendor's punch-out site.

1. Maintain a process within the customer service plan, while providing a range of customization options, including screen printing, embroidery, and laser engraving.
2. Provide a product specification sheet to the Purchasing Entity for each item offered at the time of the quote. The specification sheet must include, at a minimum, the specific item(s), the available branding options, imprint areas, and color selections, where applicable.

B. Manage order processing and workflow, including order acknowledgment, processing, and tracking.

1. Acknowledge all orders within one (1) business day, confirming receipt, identifying any missing details, and providing the expected timeline for proof submission and production.

2. Provide an itemized pricing quote to the Purchasing Entity within two (2) business days of order submission for each order prior to production. Quotes shall include, at a minimum, unit cost, setup fees, customization charges, shipping, and any other applicable costs.
3. Process orders according to the following service tiers, unless otherwise proposed by the Vendor and accepted by the State:
    a. *Standard Orders:* Fulfilled and shipped within ten (10) business days of final proof approval.
    b. *Rush Orders:* Fulfilled and shipped within five (5) business days of final proof approval.
    c. Disclose any items that require extended fulfillment timelines beyond these tiers to the Purchasing Entity at the time of order placement. Any exceptions must be clearly identified in the Vendor's catalog and communicated to the Purchasing Entity.
4. Maintain a process within the customer service plan that allows Purchasing Entities to track the status of their orders from placement through final delivery (e.g., real-time order tracking, shipment tracking, notification of delay).
5. Vendors may charge a setup fee for each new imprint method or version of artwork. If a different product, imprint method, or modified artwork is requested, a setup fee may be charged again. However, setup fees shall not be charged for the exact reorders that do not require any new setup or reconfiguration. All setup fees shall be clearly disclosed at the time of quoting.
6. State entities will provide logo and branding files when placing their orders. Vendors must manage these files and embed the logos on their product.
7. Production shall not begin until the Purchasing Entity has approved the proof in writing.

C. Provide and maintain a mock-up and proof approval process for all customized items.
1. Deliver digital proof to the Purchasing Entity within two (2) business days of design submission.
2. Provide and manage a mock-up approval process that requires documented sign-off by Purchasing Entity.

D. Implement and maintain quality assurance protocols to ensure product quality and customization accuracy prior to shipment.
1. Implement and maintain quality inspection protocols for all products prior to shipment to ensure compliance with order specifications and State requirements. At a minimum, quality inspection protocols shall include:
    i. Verification of current item(s), customization details, and quantity.
    ii. Inspection of product defects, damage, or misprints.
    iii. Documentation of inspection results maintained by Vendor and made available to Purchasing Entity upon request.

E. Provide packing, shipping, and fulfillment services and documentation to all Purchasing Entities upon delivery.
1. Provide packing slips and shipment tracking information for each order, including Purchasing Entity name, purchase order or reference number, itemized product list, quantities, and customization details.
2. Accommodate consolidated or split shipments as requested by the Purchasing Entity.

5.3.2 Timelines & Flexibility

Vendors shall adhere to the baseline timelines outlined in Section 5.3.1 unless alternate timelines are proposed and approved by the State. Purchasing Entities may grant additional time during contract performance if mutually agreed with Purchasing Entity.

Proof Approval: Production shall not begin until the Purchasing Entity has provided documented sign-off.

Fulfillment Exceptions: Any extended fulfillment timelines must be disclosed at order placement, clearly flagged in the Vendor's catalog or ordering system, and approved by the Purchasing Entity.

5.4 IMPLEMENTATION AND COMMUNICATION PLAN

The successful implementation and efficient management of promotional items and applicable services are crucial for an effective and functioning contract. This plan outlines the steps and strategies to implement and communicate the procurement, distribution, and usage of services.

At a minimum, the Vendor's plan shall address the four (4) areas below. To support consistency and ease of review, Vendors shall submit their Implementation and Communication Plan in a clear and organized format. Acceptable formats include narrative responses, tables, timelines, or Gantt charts.

1. **Implementation Timeline**
   a. Provide a detailed schedule with key milestones for contract start-up, including catalog launch, order processing readiness, and system integration with the NC eProcurement System (if applicable), based on catalog type selection in Section 6.0.
   b. Identify expected timeframes for agency onboarding and training resources.
2. **Communication Strategy**
   a. Outline methods for communication with State Contract Administrator/Manager, State Entities, and other stakeholders.
3. **Training and Support**
   a. Describe training and onboarding resources for State Entities, including user guides, and customer service support.
4. **Performance and Feedback Mechanisms**
   a. Detail how the Vendor will measure implementation success, including service performance, order accuracy, and fulfillment timelines. The State reserves the right to request modifications to the Vendor's Implementation and Communication Plan to ensure alignment with State requirements and contract objectives.

5.5 CUSTOMER SERVICE PLAN

The Vendor shall outline in its proposal the structure and execution for delivering customer service in the context of providing promotional items. Vendor shall specifically address the following:

1. Describe your company's customer service structure, including the following details:
   a. Hours of availability
   b. Response times
   c. Problem-solving capabilities (including product knowledge/expertise, ensuring accuracy and efficiency)
   d. Escalation procedures for resolving issues
   e. Order tracking and status updates
2. Describe how your company will provide customer service coverage across the entire state (or offered regions), including support for rural areas, to ensure all State Entities receive timely and consistent assistance.

5.5.1 GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE

The State seeks to ensure comprehensive access to promotional items for all eligible entities across North Carolina.

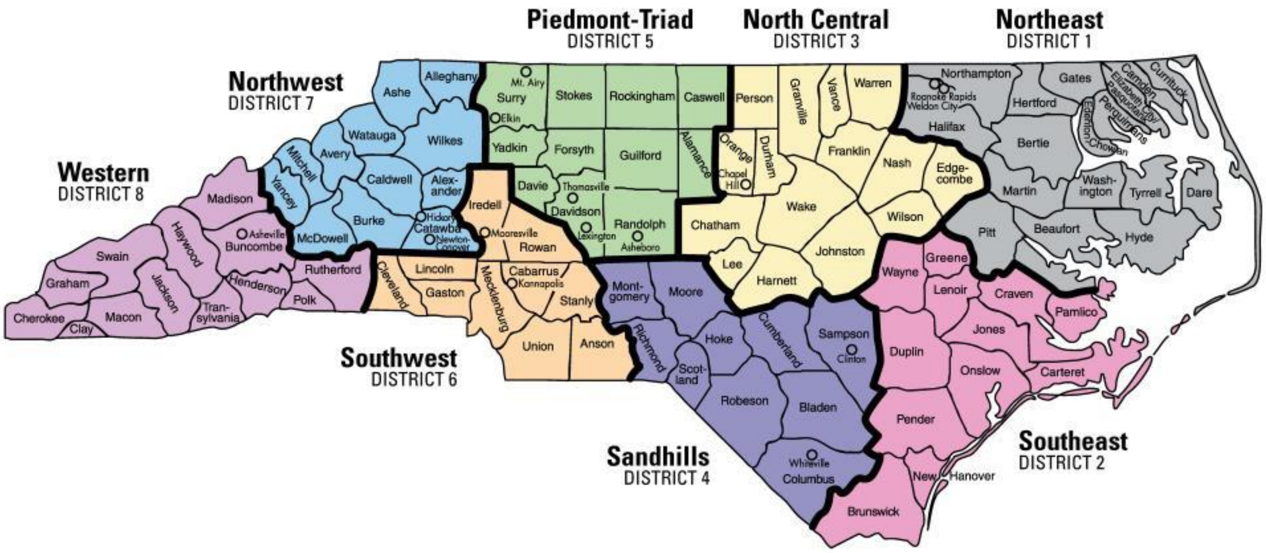

Figure 1: For the purposes of the RFP, the areas shown as 'Districts' on the map shall be referred to as 'Regions'.

Vendors may propose coverage on one (1) of the following bases:

A. Statewide Coverage

Vendor shall provide complete coverage for all 100 counties within North Carolina. Products, services, delivery, and customer support must be available throughout the entire state.

B. Regional Coverage

Vendor shall provide coverage for one (1) or more of the State's designated regions (see above Regional Map). Vendors proposing regional coverage must provide all products and full service to every county within the region(s). Vendor shall indicate which region(s) they are proposing to cover in Attachment A: Cost Proposal Workbook.

5.5.1a Vendor shall indicate their proposed geographic coverage by selecting one (1):

☒ **Statewide Coverage**

☐ **Regional Coverage**

The State reserves the right to make multiple awards, both statewide and regionally, within each product category in order to ensure comprehensive coverage, promote competition, and provide State Entities with vendor choice. State Entities shall utilize awarded Vendors based on their coverage area(s).

If multiple Vendors are awarded within the same coverage area (statewide or regionally), State Entities shall select the Vendor that provides the best value for the specific product needs, considering factors such as price, delivery timeframe, product availability, and service capabilities. State Entities are not required to rotate among Vendors but are expected to make selections that represent the best value to the State.

5.6 PRODUCT AND CATALOG OFFERING

Vendors shall provide a comprehensive overview of their current promotional product catalog and related capabilities. This overview must align with the vendor's punch-out catalog site and may be presented in narrative, outline, or graphical format.

Vendor's response shall clearly address the following components:

1. Describe the overall scope of your company's product offerings, including the range of product categories, decoration and customization capabilities available, such as screen printing, embroidery, laser engraving, and any other relevant methods. Additionally, explain how updates to the catalog or changes in product availability will be communicated to the State.
2. Outline the process for providing digital proofs and mock-ups, including timelines, revision policies, and approval procedures. Vendors may include instructions regarding quote requests, if applicable.
3. Indicate which of the following categories are included in your catalog by checking all that apply. Vendors may only offer items in Category 6 if they also offer products in at least two (2) other categories:

- [x] **Category 1: Apparel**
- [x] **Category 2: Bags & Totes**
- [x] **Category 3: Drinkware**
- [x] **Category 4: Writing Instruments**
- [x] **Category 5: Award & Recognition Gifts**
- [x] **Category 6: Other Promotional Merchandise**

5.7 OPTIONAL VALUE-ADDED SERVICES

Vendors may provide Value-Added Services along with description and pricing offered on the ATTACHMENT A: COST PROPOSAL WORKBOOK. During the award process, the State has the option to negotiate the services being offered. Please be advised that any value-added services offered are optional and will not be included in the bid evaluation process; however, they may be taken into consideration at the State's discretion. The State does not imply or intend that any value-added service will be deemed acceptable.

5.8 PROJECT ORGANIZATION

Vendor shall describe the organizational and operational structure it proposes to utilize for the work described in this RFP and identify the responsibilities to be assigned to each person Vendor proposes to staff the work. The response shall include identification of the Account Manager as the primary point of contact, roles for order processing and escalation, and disclosure of any subcontractors or outsourcing arrangements with details on their responsibilities and oversight (see Section 4.27 SUBCONTRACTORS).

5.9 TECHNICAL APPROACH

Vendor's proposal shall include, in narrative, outline, and/or graph form, the Vendor's technical approach for accomplishing the tasks and deliverables in the Scope of Work. Vendor's response shall demonstrate how the Vendor will ensure reliable and safe services in accordance with industry standards.

As part of the Technical Approach, Vendors shall specifically address the following:

1. Explain how your company will manage accounts for multiple State Entities with unique branding and logo requirements, ensuring efficiency and minimizing errors.
2. Describe your company's approach to ensuring quality assurance, while maintaining timely delivery.

3. Outline your order intake process, including how orders are received, verified, and scheduled, average production lead times for standard and customized items, and associated costs (e.g., setup charges, repeat order fees, shipping, and other applicable fees) for categories offered.

6.0 CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION

All Contract Administration requirements are conditioned on an award resulting from this solicitation. This information is provided for the Vendor's planning purposes.

State Contract Administrator: Melinda Tomlinson, Melinda.tomlinson@doa.nc.gov, 984-236-0238

State Contract Manager: Ian Fox-Castro, ian.m.fox-castro@doa.nc.gov, 984-236-0211

Note: In the event the State's Contract Administrator or Contract Manager changes, notification will be sent to the Vendor's Contract Manager and the Contract Synopsis on the DOA P&C website will be updated.

6.1 CONTRACT MANAGER AND CUSTOMER SERVICE

The Vendor shall be required to designate and make available to the State a Contract Manager. The Contract Manager shall be the State's point of contact for contract related issues and issues concerning performance, progress review, scheduling, and service.

Contract Manager Point of Contact	
Name:	Dan Berkowitz
Office Phone #:	718-784-1166 x102
Mobile Phone #:	857-284-3812
E-mail:	dan.berkowitz@uniformstoday.com

The Vendor shall be required to designate and make available to the State for customer service. The customer service point of contact shall be the State's point of contact for customer service-related issues, including but not limited to responding to inquiries, assisting with order status and tracking, resolving issues, and ensuring consistent communication.

Customer Service Point of Contact	
Name:	Jaylene Suazo
Office Phone #:	718-764-1166 x109
Mobile Phone #:	
E-mail:	jaylene@uniformstoday.com

6.2 ELECTRONIC PRODUCT CATALOG

Vendors have two (2) options to select for managing products using the NC E-Procurement Services to develop and manage a catalog solution. Options include:

1. Line-Item Catalog –
   a. Limited to no more than 5,000 available products.
2. Punch-Out Catalog –
   a. No limit to products available.

3. Ordering Instructions

6.2.1 Line-Item Catalog Solution

If selected for contract award, the awarded Vendor hereby agrees to cooperate with the State and E-Procurement Services to develop a line-item catalog. At a minimum, the Vendor shall agree to the following:

a. Vendor shall deliver a line-item catalog **within ten (10) calendar days of notice**. By providing a line-item catalog, the Vendor shall provide a list of its products/services and pricing within a specific template format to E-Procurement Services by emailing the populated template to eprocurementdata@its.nc.gov and copying the Contract Manager.

b. The State will confirm the accuracy of the electronic catalog before loading it into the E-Procurement system. In addition, the State may determine when the electronic catalog and any subsequent revisions "go live".

c. The Vendor shall submit an updated electronic catalog from time to time or as requested by the State to maintain the most up-to-date version of its product/service offering under the statewide contract.

d. The Vendor shall meet the following requirements:

   1. Include in the catalog the most current pricing, including all applicable administrative fees and/or discounts, as well as the most up-to-date product/service offering the Vendor is authorized to provide in accordance with the statewide contract; and
   2. Adhere to the percentage discount off the price list even when using the punchout catalog solution or dynamic pricing feeds.
   3. Maintain the accuracy of the catalog throughout the duration of the statewide contract; and
   4. Include in the catalog detailed product line-item descriptions; and
   5. Include in the catalog, identifiers for specific types of products, to include NC HUB Certified (2nd Tier) products, Sustainable products, Contract products; and
   6. Include in the catalog any additional content required by the State; and
   7. Limit the line-item catalog content to the Vendor's statewide contract offering.

e. The State shall control which statewide contracts appear in the E-Procurement System and may elect at any time to remove Vendor's offering from the E-Procurement System.

6.2.2 Punchout Catalog Solution

If selected for contract award, the awarded Vendor hereby agrees to cooperate with the State and E-Procurement Services to deliver a punch-out catalog solution. The Vendor agrees to the following:

a. Vendor shall deliver a punch-out catalog which must be approved and available for use within thirty (30) calendar days of notice of award. Vendor shall limit the punch-out catalog content to the Vendor's statewide contract offering. By providing a punch-out catalog, Vendor shall provide its own catalog (the "online catalog"), which must be capable of communication between the E-Procurement System and a supplier's ERP system via Commerce Extensible Markup Language (cXML) 1.0 or 1.1 standards.

b. Vendor shall ensure its online catalog marketplace is up-to-date or as requested by the State, updating the offered products/services and pricing listed on its online catalog.

c. Vendor shall deliver a punch-out catalog that contains only items that are in the scope of the awarded contract. The Vendor shall have the capability to block from the punch-out catalog those items as designated by the State or Supplier Manager. "Blocking" is defined as the electronic removal of product information and prices from the punch-out catalog solution. For each item included, the following information shall be provided at a minimum: item description, manufacturer name, manufacturer part number, unit of measure, and contract price.

d. The Vendor shall meet the following requirements:

1. Vendor shall include in the catalog the most current pricing, inclusive of all applicable administrative fees and/or discounts, as well as the most up-to-date product offering the Vendor is authorized to provide in accordance with the contract; and
2. Vendor shall maintain the accuracy of the catalog throughout the duration of the contract; and
3. Vendor shall include in the catalog detailed product line-item descriptions; and Vendor shall include in the catalog pictures when possible; and
4. Vendor shall include in the catalog any additional content required by the State or Supplier Manager; and
5. Vendor shall make access to the punch-out catalog available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

e. The State shall control which statewide contracts appear in the E-Procurement System and may elect at any time to remove Vendor's offering from the E-Procurement System.

6.2.3 Ordering Instructions Solution

The State will allow for 'Ordering Instructions' for custom-built or customized equipment purchases only. If selected for contract award, the State will work with awarded Vendors and the E-Procurement team to create catalogs that meet the requirements for ordering instructions depending on the complexity of the awarded contract and the number of items available.

Only those products awarded under this contract, as determined by the State, shall be made available for purchase from the punch-out catalog. Products not awarded under this contract shall be blocked from the punch-out catalog or may not be displayed on the site. In addition, the punch-out catalog shall not allow a user to add non-contract items to a shopping cart or to the E-Procurement System.

6.2.3 Vendor shall indicate which catalog solution they intend to use. Select all that apply.

- ☐ Line-Item Catalog
- ☑ Punch-Out Catalog
- ☐ Ordering Instructions

6.3 CONTRACT BUSINESS REVIEW MEETINGS

The Vendor, at the request of the State, shall be required to meet periodically, semi-annually with the State for Contract Business Review meetings. The purpose of these meetings will be to review project progress reports, discuss Vendor and State performance, address outstanding issues, review problem resolution, provide direction, evaluate continuous improvement and cost saving ideas, and discuss any other pertinent topics.

Business Review meetings shall be scheduled semi-annually. Meetings shall be presented by the Vendor and be inclusive of the following:

1. Spend overview
   a. Entity Breakdown
   b. FY Comparison
   c. Volume Discount
   d. Subcontractor spend
2. Product Cost Savings from list price
3. Product Accuracy Rate – Percent of items invoiced and shipped without post order correction
4. Complete Shipment Rate –
   a. Percent of orders filled in one (1) shipment
   b. Shipping fees charged
5. On Time Delivery Rate – Percent of orders delivered within contract delivery term
6. Sustainability Efforts and Results
7. Additional Discounts Exercised
8. Rebates

9. Purchasing Entity Feedback
10. Challenges/Resolutions
11. Improvement Ideas
12. Limited-time promotional discounts

6.4 CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The State encourages the Vendor to identify opportunities to reduce the total cost to the State. A continuous improvement effort consisting of various ideas to enhance business efficiencies as performance progresses.

6.5 PERIODIC *QUARTERLY* SPEND REPORTS

The Vendor shall be required to provide Sales Management Reports to the above designated Contract Manager on a ***Quarterly*** basis. This report shall include, at a minimum, information concerning:

1. Sales Report (total cost) by State entity, to include agencies, community colleges, universities, school systems, local government entities.

2. Sales Report Category (e.g., *Apparel, Bags & Totes, Drinkware, Writing Instruments, Awards & Recognition, Other Promotional Merchandise*), Items Purchased (Manufacturer/Brand), Item Description, Quantity, Unit of Measure, List Price, Contract Price, Discount Applied, Any additional delivery charges such as setup fees, run charges, specialty packaging or overnight delivery, Shipping/handling fees; Purchasing Entity, Delivery Location (City), Order Date, Shipment Date, Delivery Date.

***Quarterly* Sales Management Reports shall be uploaded via the electronic Vendor Portal (eVP).** Users can submit their report through eVP by following the instructions in the STC Quarterly Reporting job aid. Vendor shall include all issues identified by Vendor related to Vendor performance or to the State's usage of the contract

Vendor shall submit the Quarterly Sales Management Reports by the 15th of the month following the end of the quarter. The Quarterly Management Report delivery schedule is included below:

By October 15th: Q1 Quarterly Management Report for July – September

By January 15th: Q2 Quarterly Management Report for October – December

By April 15th: Q3 Quarterly Management Report for January – March

By July 15th: Q4 Quarterly Management Report for April – June.

This schedule aligns with the State's fiscal year. If the contract start date does not align with the start of a quarter, the initial Quarterly Management Report shall be for the period from the contract start date to the end of the existing calendar quarter. Timely submission of all reports shall be a material term of this contract and failure to do so shall constitute a default.

Additional related sales information and/or details on user purchases may be required by the State and must be supplied within thirty (30) days of any such request. A template for any such reports may be provided by the State, at its discretion.

6.6 ACCEPTANCE OF WORK

Performance of the work and delivery of Goods and Services shall be conducted and completed at least in accordance with the contract requirements and recognized and customarily accepted industry practices. Performance shall be considered complete when the Goods and Services are approved as acceptable by the Purchasing Entity.

Acceptance of work products shall be based on the following criteria:

1. Order Processing & Timeliness
2. Customization Accuracy
3. Quality Assurance
4. Customer Service Responsiveness

The State shall have the obligation to notify Vendor, in writing ten (10) calendar days following completion of such work or delivery of a deliverable described in the contract that it is not acceptable. The notice shall specify in reasonable detail the reason(s) it is unacceptable. Acceptance by the State shall not be unreasonably withheld; but may be conditioned or delayed as required for reasonable review, evaluation, installation, or testing, as applicable to the work or deliverable. Final acceptance is expressly conditioned upon completion of all applicable assessment procedures. Should the work or deliverables fail to meet any specifications, acceptance criteria or otherwise fail to conform to the contract, the State may exercise any and all rights hereunder, including, for Goods deliverables, such rights provided by the Uniform Commercial Code, as adopted in North Carolina.

6.7 INVOICES

Vendor shall invoice the Purchasing Entity. The standard format for invoicing shall be Single Invoices, meaning that the Vendor shall provide the Purchasing Entity with an invoice for each order. Invoices shall include detailed line-item information to allow Purchasing Entity to verify that pricing at point of receipt matches the correct price from the original date of order. At a minimum, the following fields shall be included on all invoices:

Vendor's Billing Address, Customer Account Number, NC Contract Number, Order Date, Buyer's Order Number, Vendor Part Numbers, MSRP part numbers, Item Descriptions, Price, Quantity, and Unit of Measure, Carrier (Manufacturer/Decorator) Shipping Costs.

INVOICES MAY NOT BE PAID UNTIL AN INSPECTION HAS OCCURRED AND THE GOODS ACCEPTED.

6.8 DISPUTE RESOLUTION

During the performance of the contract, the Parties agree that it is in their mutual interest to resolve disputes informally. Any claims by the Vendor shall be submitted in writing to the State's Contract Manager for resolution. Any claims by the State shall be submitted in writing to the Vendor's Contract Manager for resolution. The Parties shall agree to negotiate in good faith and use all reasonable efforts to resolve such dispute(s).

During the time the Parties are attempting to resolve any dispute, each shall proceed diligently to perform their respective duties and responsibilities under this contract. The Parties will agree on a reasonable amount of time to resolve a dispute. If a dispute cannot be resolved between the Parties within the agreed upon period, either Party may elect to exercise any other remedies available under the contract, or at law. This provision, when agreed in the contract, shall not constitute an agreement by either party to mediate or arbitrate any dispute.

6.9 PRODUCT RECALL

Vendor expressly assumes full responsibility for prompt notification to the Contract Manager listed in this RFP or the Purchasing Entity of any product recall in accordance with the applicable State or Federal regulations. The Vendor shall support the State, as necessary, to promptly replace any such products, at no cost to the State.

6.10 POST AWARD PRODUCT SUBSTITUTION, ADDITIONS, & REMOVALS

Post-Award product substitutions are not permitted without prior written approval from the Contract Administrator. Proposed substitutions shall be of the same or higher quality and at the same or lower price as the original item. Failure of the Vendor to comply with this requirement shall constitute sufficient cause to hold the Vendor in default or for removal from the contract.

The items included in this RFP are expected to cover the State's needs for the term of the contract. In the case that the State's needs change over the term of the contract, the State reserves the right to add additional products to the contract that can be supplied by the awarded Vendor. The price for these added products will be mutually agreed to by the State and the Vendor but are assumed to be priced at a discount similar to what is being offered on the products listed in the RFP.

6.11 PRICE ADJUSTMENTS

Prices proposed by the Vendor shall be firm against any increase for one (1) year from the effective date of the contract.

Price increase requests shall be submitted in writing to the Contract Manager, which shall include the reason(s) for the request and contain supporting documentation for the need. Price increases will be negotiated and agreed to by both the State and Vendor in advance of any price increase going into effect. The State is not obligated to accept pricing adjustments or increases and reserves the right to accept or reject them in part or in whole. Price de-escalation or decreases may be requested by the State at any time.

It is understood and agreed that orders will be shipped at the established contract prices in effect on the date an order is placed. Invoicing that deviates from this provision may result in contract cancellation.

6.12 CONTRACT CHANGES

Contract changes, if any, over the life of the contract shall be implemented by contract amendments agreed to in writing by the State and Vendor.

6.13 TAXES

No taxes shall be included in any bid prices.

6.14 ATTACHMENTS

All attachments to this RFP are the copies found within the Ariba Sourcing Tool, and are incorporated herein, and shall be submitted by responding in the Sourcing Tool. Additional Terms and Conditions are provided below.

7.0 Additional Terms and Conditions

7.1 TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLICABLE TO ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE ("AI")

The following terms ("**AI Terms**") are hereby added to and become part of the Agreement as Additional Terms. Capitalized terms not defined in these AI Terms have the meanings given in the Agreement.

1) **Definitions.** "AI Features" means large language models (LLMs) or other machine learning (ML) or artificial intelligence (AI) features of the Software or Service. AI Features may include or be in addition to AI Tools. "AI Tools" means any and all deep learning, machine learning, and other artificial intelligence technologies, including any and all
   a) algorithms, heuristics, models, and methodologies, whether in source code, object code, human readable form or other form,
   b) proprietary algorithms, software or other IT Systems that make use of or employ expert systems, natural language processing, computer vision, automated speech recognition, automated planning and scheduling, neural networks, statistical learning algorithms (like linear and logistic regression, support vector machines, random forests, k-means clustering), or reinforcement learning, and
   c) proprietary embodied artificial intelligence and related hardware or equipment.

2) **AI Prohibited Absent Authorization.** Except as expressly disclosed and described by Vendor and expressly approved in writing by the State, Vendor represents and warrants that it will not provide any Software or other Deliverables, or perform any Services that use or incorporate, in whole or in part, any AI Features or AI Tools (or depends in any way upon any AI Features or AI Tools), including without limitation, any collection or processing of any the State's Data using any AI Features or AI Tools.

3) **AI Warranties**. With respect to all AI Features or AI Tools (collectively "AI") described by the Vendor and approved for use by the State, Vendor warrants that:
   a) Vendor has accurately identified and fully described all AI for use by the State;
   b) The AI will
      (i) perform with a high degree of accuracy in accordance with the Specifications and
      (ii) not produce materially inaccurate results when used in accordance with the Documentation.
   c) Vendor will monitor the performance of the AI to ensure continued accuracy in accordance with the Specifications, including processes and policies for the regular assessment and validation of the AI's outputs.
   d) Vendor has obtained, and is in compliance with, all rights and licenses necessary to use all AI as described in Vendor's proposal;
   e) Vendor has complied with all the Laws and industry standards applicable to (i) Vendor's development and provision of all AI as described in Vendor's proposal and (ii) the State's use of all AI as described in the Vendor's proposal;
   f) Vendor specifically represents and warrants that Vendor has complied with all applicable data privacy laws, rules, and regulations, including but not limited to, the training of the AI algorithms and the data used in that training.
   g) Vendor will comply with all State policies and procedures relating to the use of AI;
   h) Vendor will notify Customer at least sixty (60) days prior to any material changes pertaining to the AI (in whole or in part);
   i) Vendor will cooperate and comply with the State's privacy, security, and proprietary rights questionnaires and assessments concerning all AI and all proposed changes thereto;
   j) Vendor will, upon the State's request, allow the State (or its agent) to audit or review all Software, Deliverables, or Services for usage of AI and will provide the State with all related necessary assistance;
   k) There have been no interruptions in use of Vendor's AI in the past six (6) months;
   l) Vendor (i) retains and maintains information in human-readable form that explains or could be used to explain the decisions made or facilitated by the AI, and (ii) maintains such information in a form that can readily be provided to the State upon request;
   m) Vendor maintains or adheres to industry standard policies and procedures relating to the ethical or responsible use of AI at and by Vendor, including policies, protocols and procedures for
      (i) developing and implementing AI in a way that promotes transparency, accountability and human interpretability;

(ii) identifying and mitigating bias in training data or in the algorithmic model used in AI Tools, including without limitation, implicit racial, gender, or ideological bias; and

(iii) management oversight and approval of employees' use or implementation of AI (collectively, "Vendor AI Policies");

n) there has been

(i) no actual or alleged non-compliance with any such Vendor AI Policies;

(ii) no actual or alleged failure of any AI to satisfy the requirements or guidelines specified in any such Vendor AI Policies;

(iii) no claim alleging that any training data used in the development, training, improvement or testing of any AI was falsified, biased, untrustworthy or manipulated in an unethical or unscientific way; and no report, finding or impact assessment by any employee, contractor, or third party that makes any such allegation; and

(iv) no request from any Governmental Authority concerning any Vendor AI.

4) Use of AI. The State may submit Data (including in the form of prompts or queries) to the AI ("Inputs") and receive outputs from the AI ("Outputs").

5) Training. Vendor may not use Inputs or Outputs to train or otherwise improve AI Features, except solely for the benefit of the State. Notwithstanding the foregoing, Vendor may use Inputs or Outputs to train or otherwise improve the AI Features, but only if (a) such Inputs and Outputs have been (i) de-identified so that they do not identify the State, its Users or any other person; (ii) aggregated with data across Vendor's other customers; and (b) such use is approved in advance by the State Chief Information Officer or the Using Agency. For these purposes (and without limiting other obligations with respect to the State's Data generally), such Data is provided by the State to the Vendor strictly "AS IS".

6) Intellectual Property:

a) **Inputs**. Except for Vendor's express rights in the Agreement, as between the parties, the State owns Inputs as the State's Data and retains all intellectual property and other rights in the Inputs.

b) **Outputs**. Outputs are deemed to be State Data, subject to these AI Terms.

7) Infringement by Outputs. With respect to infringement or misappropriation of third-party intellectual property rights by Outputs, should any Outputs become the subject of a claim of infringement of a patent, copyright, Trademark or a trade secret in the United States, the Vendor at its own expense, shall defend any action brought against the State. The Vendor shall pay those costs and damages finally awarded or agreed in a settlement against the State in any such action. Such defense and payment shall be conditioned on the following: i) That the Vendor shall be notified within a reasonable time in writing by the State of any such claim; and, ii) That the Vendor shall have the sole control of the defense of any action on such claim and all negotiations for its settlement or compromise provided, however, that the State shall have the option to participate in such action at its own expense.

8) Special Restrictions on Use of AI Features. The State will not and will not permit anyone else to:

a) use the AI Features or any Output to infringe any third-party rights,

b) use the AI Features or any Output to develop, train or improve any AI or ML models (separate from authorized use of the Software or Services under this Agreement),

c) represent any Output as being approved or vetted by Vendor,

d) represent any Output as being an original work or a wholly human-generated work,

e) use the AI Features for automated decision-making that has legal or similarly significant effects on individuals, unless it does so with adequate human review and in compliance with laws applicable to the State, or

f) use the AI Features for purposes or with effects that are discriminatory, harassing, harmful or unethical.

9) Limitation of Liability Modifications. The Limitation of Vendor's Liability in Section 1 of the NCDIT Terms and Conditions shall not apply to claims for data privacy or intellectual property infringement arising from Vendor's AI.

10) Updates. Vendor's AI has a data cutoff date of _________ *[Fill in date].* The State has the right to receive updates to the dataset, notification of those updates, and delivery of those updates made generally available to Vendor's Customers receiving similar AI Services.

11) Confidentiality. Vendor will ensure that the Services and Software, provided via a third-party cloud ("Cloud Service Provider") and AI environment ("Cloud AI Service Environment"), shall maintain strict confidentiality and security of the State's Data. The State's Data will be securely retained within the specific, dedicated Cloud AI Service Environment allocated for the Vendor, and will not contribute to the training of the Vendor's or the Cloud Service Provider's AI models, nor be utilized by any third party outside of the State's express approval (in writing). Upon receipt of a notice from the State, Vendor will remove all State Data from the Cloud AI Service Environment. Vendor will ensure that the governing contractual terms (e g terms of service) issued by the Cloud Service Provider include provisions materially consistent with this provision and will identify the forgoing to the State. Vendor will allow Customer to first approve in writing a given Cloud Service Provider and its Cloud AI Service Environment, such approval not to be unreasonably withheld or delayed. If there is any conflict or ambiguity between this provision and the rest of the Agreement, this provision governs and controls

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<u>State of North Carolina – Promotional Items Statewide Term Contract</u>
Executive Summary

Overview

Uniforms Today appreciates the opportunity to respond to the State of North Carolina's request for a promotional items statewide term contract. This solicitation represents more than a sourcing exercise—it is the establishment of a centralized, scalable procurement program designed to support a diverse and decentralized user base across all State Entities.

Uniforms Today understands that the State requires a partner capable of delivering:

- Broad and flexible product access
- Consistent branding and quality control
- Reliable fulfillment and delivery
- Responsive customer service
- Transparent reporting and continuous improvement

Our proposal is designed specifically to meet these needs through a fully managed, technology-enabled promotional products program.

Our Approach: A Managed Statewide Program

Uniforms Today is not proposing a transactional vendor relationship. We are proposing a comprehensive program management model that integrates:

- Punch-Out Catalog Technology (NC eProcurement / Ariba)
- Centralized Account and Customer Service Management
- Structured Order Processing and Quality Assurance Workflows
- Real-Time Tracking and Reporting Systems
- Continuous Improvement and Cost Optimization Strategies

This approach ensures that procurement is efficient, compliant, and easy to execute, while maintaining full visibility and control for the State.

Comprehensive Product Offering

Uniforms Today provides access to a robust and scalable catalog through our platform, www.epromostoday.com, offering thousands of promotional products across all required categories, including:

- Apparel
- Bags and totes
- Drinkware
- Writing instruments

- Awards and recognition items
- Additional promotional merchandise

Our Punch-Out Catalog solution allows for unlimited product availability, real-time updates, and agency-specific customization, ensuring that all State Entities can efficiently source products aligned with their unique needs.

Technology and System Integration

Uniforms Today's Punch-Out Catalog solution integrates seamlessly with the State's NC eProcurement System, providing:

- Real-time pricing and inventory visibility
- Entity-specific storefronts with approved branding
- Controlled access to contract-compliant products
- 24/7 availability

This system-driven approach reduces errors, increases efficiency, and ensures compliance across all transactions.

Customer Service and Support

Uniforms Today delivers a structured, high-performance customer service model designed to support a statewide user base.

Our service model includes:

- Dedicated account management and customer service personnel
- Defined service level commitments (SLAs)
- Real-time order tracking and communication
- Structured escalation procedures

This ensures that all State Entities receive consistent, responsive, and reliable support, regardless of location.

Quality Assurance and Delivery Performance

Uniforms Today maintains a multi-stage quality assurance process to ensure accuracy and consistency across all orders.

We commit to:

- ≥ 98% order accuracy
- ≥ 95% on-time delivery
- Transparent communication throughout the order lifecycle

Our production and supplier network is actively managed to ensure both quality and timeliness.

Statewide Coverage and Scalability

Uniforms Today will provide complete statewide coverage across all 100 counties, ensuring equal access to products, services, and support.

Our centralized service model, combined with a distributed fulfillment network, ensures:

- Consistent service quality across all regions
- Reliable delivery to both urban and rural areas
- Scalability to meet high-volume demand

Governance, Reporting, and Continuous Improvement

Uniforms Today will actively manage this contract through:

- Semi-annual Contract Business Review meetings
- Quarterly spend and performance reporting
- Data-driven performance tracking
- Continuous improvement initiatives

This ensures that the contract is not only executed effectively but continuously optimized to deliver cost savings and operational efficiency.

Why Uniforms Today

Uniforms Today offers a unique combination of:

- Proven experience supporting large, multi-entity organizations
- Advanced technology integration and punch-out capabilities
- A structured, accountable service model
- Comprehensive product offerings
- A commitment to transparency, quality, and continuous improvement

We understand the complexity of this contract and have designed our approach to minimize risk while maximizing value for the State.

Conclusion

Uniforms Today is fully prepared to deliver a scalable, efficient, and reliable promotional products program that meets the State of North Carolina's needs.

Our approach ensures that:

- Procurement is simplified and compliant
- Users are supported with responsive service
- Products are delivered accurately and on time
- Performance is measured and continuously improved

We look forward to the opportunity to partner with the State of North Carolina and deliver a high-performing, statewide promotional items program.

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
Department of Administration
Division of Purchase & Contract

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION
Promotional Items
Request for Proposal #: DPC-1677864747-MT-R

Submitted By:

Dan Berkwitz
Uniforms Today, LLC
34-24 Hunters Point Avenue
Long Island City, NY 11101

Phone:718-784-1166
Email: ddn.berkowitz@uniformstoday.com

Authorized Representative:

Dan Berkowitz
Uniforms Today, LLC

Submission Date:

April 13, 2026

Submitted To:

State of North Carolina
Department of Administration
Division of Purchase & Contract

Solicitation Addendum

Issuing Agency:	Division of Purchase and Contract
Solicitation Number:	DPC-1677864747-MT-R
Solicitation Description:	Promotional Items
Bid Opening Date & Time:	April 13, 2026 @ 2:00 PM
Addendum Number:	01
Addendum Date:	March 27, 2026
Procurement Lead:	Melinda Tomlinson

FAILURE TO RETURN THIS ADDENDUM SHALL SUBJECT YOUR RESPONSE TO REJECTION.

1. **The Solicitation is hereby modified as follows:**
The previously posted RFP has been replaced in its entirety, to incorporate all modifications herein and must be the executed response returned to the State, uploaded in the response Section of the Sourcing Event. See Section 3.1 of the Sourcing Event to access the updated RFP and return. Return of the original RFP will deem your response non-responsive.

Modification #	Solicitation Section	Updated Solicitation Language
1.	4.14 Vendor's Published Catalog & Lists	As a result of this Contract, Vendors shall provide its entire catalog of products. By definition, a Vendor's catalog, as a result of this effort, is a Vendor's full line of products within the awarded scope that is consistent with what is offered on its punch-out catalog site. The State reserves the right to determine whether the Vendor's catalog sufficiently represents the full range of products within the proposed scope. Vendor's Catalog and Price List must be submitted with its Proposal by: 1. Providing the most recent, active, and direct web link to a publicly accessible catalog displaying item-level pricing in ATTACHMENT A: COST PROPOSAL WORKBOOK in the designated field for each product category offered. A link providing login credentials may be provided, as long as such credentials are submitted with the proposal and allows the State to view and retain pricing data. The State will not request the necessary credentials from the vendor during evaluation; OR 2. Providing the completed price list as a Microsoft Excel file (free of passwords and macros) or PDF as an attachment with the corresponding categories clearly labeled within the attachment(s). Altered or unpublished price lists/literature may subject your Proposal to rejection. **Vendors shall not provide a link to their homepage or general marketing pages that do not clearly identify "published price list" information. Vendors are advised that literature, questionnaires, and other data submitted in response to a previous RFP or other inquiry will not suffice for the above requirement.** Submitted materials shall reflect current,

Modification #	Solicitation Section	Updated Solicitation Language
		active pricing as of the proposal due date and include item level pricing or a clearly defined pricing structure (e.g., tiered pricing). Failure to include such information shall be a sufficient basis for rejection of the Vendor's Proposal. The Vendor shall, where applicable, provide the following information, at a minimum, on the proposed products: a. Detailed Item Description b. Manufacturer c. Manufacturer or Vendor's List Price d. UOM e. Number of Items (pens, t-shirts, mugs, etc.) per UOM f. Minimum Order Quantity g. Customization/Branding Options h. Pricing Tiers
2.	Attachment A: Cost Proposal Workbook	The previously posted Attachment A: Cost Proposal Workbook has been replaced in its entirety, to incorporate modifications. See Section 5.1 of the Sourcing Event to access the updated Att. and return.

2. The following are questions received about the Solicitation and the State's response:

Question	RFP Section	Vendor Question	State's Response
1.	Section 4.14 Vendor's Published Catalog & Lists	This section states that vendors should provide their entire catalog of products & a price list by a weblink. However, the second paragraph states that vendors shall not provide a link to their website in lieu of the published price list. Our website is our published price list for our entire catalog. With hundreds of thousands of products available from approximately 3,000 different suppliers, our website catalog price list is the only single price list source that can be updated by our suppliers in real time for pricing, inventory and availability. In this situation, is a link to our site acceptable as it shows item descriptions, MSRP, pricing tiers, imprint information, etc. for every product we offer? If not, how do you propose we provide you with a price list on such a large number of products? Based on the number of products and vendors we use, plus the varying levels of customization available for each product, producing a single price list of our entire catalog in PDF or Excel format isn't feasible.	See Modification Section, Modification #1.

Question	RFP Section	Vendor Question	State’s Response
2.	Att. A Cost Proposal Workbook	Attachment A has a market basket of 60 items. Are those items considered to be representative of the offerings of the entire catalog, making the term "entire catalog" in this particular section refer to only the 60 market basket items?	No. The RFP specifies that the items listed in Attachment A are solely for cost evaluation and serve as a representative sample of frequently purchased promotional items. This market basket is not meant to replace or restrict the obligation of vendors to supply their full product catalog.
3.	Section 4.14 Vendor’s Published Catalog & Lists	It is stated in bullet point 1 to provide a link to the catalog and price list for each category in Attachment A; however, there is a field on each product line for a link. Should each field have a link that corresponds with the line item, or should each field have the same link containing all 10 items in that category?	Vendors can use the same link for all items within a category (e.g., the same link for all Apparel items), or they can enter different links for each item within a category if the price lists for that category are separated by brand, supplier, etc.
4.	Solicitation Document	If we can provide a VRAR, even though it is not required in this RFP, should we include that in the Additional Attachments section and will it have any impact on the proposal?	No. VRARs are not required and should not be submitted with proposals.
5.	Section 6.2	References multiple electronic catalog solution options, including punchout and “ordering instructions.” Can the State please clarify how “ordering instructions” is intended to function as a catalog solution within NC eProcurement?	“Ordering Instructions” is an alternative catalog format within NC eProcurement designed for custom-built or highly customized items that cannot be effectively displayed through standard line-item or punchout catalogs. This option enables the State and E-Procurement to create an instruction-based catalog entry that guides users on how to obtain quotes, provide customization details, and enter requisitions correctly within the scope of the contract.
6.		Please confirm that ordering instructions can be used as a standalone solution in lieu of a line item or punchout catalog integration?	Ordering Instructions should only be used when the Line-Item or Punch-Out Catalog requirements are unable to be met. Ordering Instructions serve as a supplementary resource and are not a substitute for catalog formats that can manage electronic item listings. If a vendor offers unlimited items at consistent list prices, a punchout catalog is preferred. If a vendor has up to 5,000 stable SKUs, then a line-item catalog is the better choice. Ordering Instructions should only be considered when neither of these options is practical.

Question	RFP Section	Vendor Question	State's Response
7.		Are there any examples of existing Statewide Term Contracts currently using ordering instructions for similar commodity types?	1. 193A-Drug Testing Products & Services 2. Recycling Services 3. 7811A-Passenger Vehicle and Box Truck Rental 4. 060C-Store Front Auto Parts 5. 958A-Small Package Delivery Services 6. 7215B-Equipment Maintenance Management 7. 961C-Translation & Interpretation Services 8. 5610A-Furniture
1.		For vendors proposing ordering instructions, are there any requirements to submit sample content, templates, or workflows as part of the RFP response, or will the structure and format of ordering instructions be developed post-award in coordination with the NC eProcurement team?	Vendors selecting 'Ordering Instructions' may propose their workflows in their proposal response using Section 5.9.3, including how Purchasing Entities will request quotes, submit customization details, and receive instructions for entering requisitions in NC eProcurement. However, the Vendor's line-item, punch-out, or ordering instructions catalog option must align with the NC eProcurement System.

ALL OTHER TERMS AND CONDITIONS REMAIN THE SAME

Vendor Name:	Uniforms Today
Authorized Signature:	
Name & Title:	Dan Berkowitz - Sales
Date:	4/13/26

JUSTIFICATION FOR NORTH CAROLINA DISCOUNT DIFFERENCE

RFP #DPC-1677864747-MT-R
Uniforms Today, LLC

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1. Introduction

Uniforms Today, LLC respectfully submits the following justification regarding the Percentage Discount offered to the State of North Carolina in accordance with RFP Section 4.1 – Pricing.

Uniforms Today has developed its pricing structure to ensure that the State of North Carolina receives competitive, transparent, and commercially reasonable pricing, consistent with public-sector procurement standards while also reflecting the specific requirements, scale, and structure of this solicitation.

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2. Approach to Pricing and Discount Structure

Uniforms Today's pricing model is based on:

- Manufacturer-direct sourcing across multiple suppliers
- Category-based pricing with consistent discount application
- National cooperative contract benchmarking (E&I Cooperative Services and BuyBoard)
- Volume-driven cost efficiencies

All pricing submitted in Attachment A: Cost Proposal Workbook reflects commercially reasonable pricing assumptions applied consistently across each product category, as required by the RFP.

Uniforms Today applies a uniform percentage discount within each category, regardless of manufacturer, ensuring compliance with the requirement that discounts be applied consistently across all items.

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3. Comparison to Other Governmental Contracts

Uniforms Today actively participates in cooperative and governmental contracts, including:

- E&I Cooperative Services
- BuyBoard National Purchasing Cooperative
- Various municipal and higher education agreements

While Uniforms Today strives to offer pricing to the State of North Carolina that is equal to or better than pricing provided to similarly situated governmental entities, certain factors may result in differences in the percentage discount offered.

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4. Justification for Any Discount Variance

Any variance between the discount offered to the State of North Carolina and discounts provided under other governmental contracts is driven by the following factors:

4.1 Scope and Structure of the Contract

This RFP represents a statewide contract with a broad and diverse user base, including agencies, universities, municipalities, and school systems. The variability in order types, volumes, and customization requirements introduces additional operational complexity that must be accounted for in pricing.

4.2 Product Variability and Customization

Unlike standardized commodity contracts, promotional products and apparel involve:

- Variable decoration methods (screen printing, embroidery, digital imprinting)
- Fluctuating material and labor costs
- Custom specifications determined at the time of order

These factors require a pricing structure that allows flexibility while still maintaining competitive baseline discounts.

4.3 Market Conditions and Supply Chain Factors

Pricing reflects current market conditions, including:

- Raw material cost fluctuations
- Freight and logistics variability
- Supplier pricing differences across manufacturers

Uniforms Today continuously monitors these factors to ensure pricing remains competitive while sustainable over the life of the contract.

4.4 Cooperative Contract Alignment

Uniforms Today's pricing is benchmarked against national cooperative contracts such as E&I and BuyBoard. While these contracts provide strong baseline pricing, the specific structure, administrative requirements, and anticipated usage patterns of this RFP may differ, necessitating slight adjustments in discount levels.

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5. Commitment to Price Reasonableness

Uniforms Today is committed to ensuring that pricing offered to the State of North Carolina is:

- Competitive with national public-sector benchmarks
- Transparent and easy to audit
- Consistent across product categories
- Designed to deliver long-term value and cost savings

In addition, Uniforms Today is willing to provide supporting documentation, including comparable contract pricing, upon request by the State to further demonstrate price reasonableness.

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6. Additional Fees Transparency

Uniforms Today has disclosed all applicable additional fees within Attachment A: Cost Proposal Workbook, including:

- Setup and decoration fees
- Artwork and proofing fees
- Rush order fees
- Shipping and handling structures

All fees are presented for transparency and are structured to remain competitive and reasonable within the industry.

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7. Tariff Surcharge Approach

Uniforms Today understands that pricing must exclude any temporary tariff surcharge. Should tariff conditions materially impact costs, Uniforms Today may propose a temporary, clearly defined tariff surcharge as a separate line item, supported by appropriate documentation and subject to negotiation and approval by the State.

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8. Conclusion

Uniforms Today affirms that the pricing and discount structure submitted to the State of North Carolina is fair, reasonable, and competitive, and reflects a balance between cost efficiency, operational sustainability, and the flexibility required to support a statewide, multi-entity procurement environment.

We remain committed to working collaboratively with the State to ensure pricing continues to deliver maximum value throughout the term of the contract.

State of North Carolina – Promotional Items Statewide Term Contract
Implementation Plan and Communications Strategy

Uniforms Today understands that the successful implementation of this contract is not simply a launch event; it is the establishment of a statewide operating program that must function reliably across North Carolina State departments, agencies, institutions of higher education, community colleges, and other eligible entities. The State is seeking a contract that improves efficiency, supports brand consistency, delivers high-quality promotional items on an as-needed basis, and remains scalable for a decentralized user community. Uniforms Today's implementation approach is designed specifically for that environment.

Our implementation model is built on one principle: make compliant purchasing the easiest purchasing option. For North Carolina, that means combining a Punch-Out Catalog structure, disciplined project governance, responsive communication, structured training, and measurable service performance into one coordinated launch plan. Uniforms Today is not proposing to simply "accept orders." We are proposing to stand up and manage a statewide promotional-items program with the controls, responsiveness, and visibility the State requires. Our broader proposal already establishes the systems behind this approach: punchout capability, agency-specific storefront logic, logo governance, live inventory visibility, QA checkpoints, rapid escalation, and a named service team led by Harrison Wills, Jeff Reisner, Dan Berkowitz, Carol Schiffman, and Jaylene Suazo.

1. Implementation Timeline

Uniforms Today will implement this contract using a phased startup plan designed to achieve full operational readiness within **30 calendar days of contract award**, with core account structure, catalog configuration, and customer service readiness established earlier in the process. This timeline is intentionally aggressive because the State's RFP signals the importance of readiness, orderly startup, and immediate usability. It also aligns with the operational requirements elsewhere in the solicitation for order acknowledgement, quoting, fulfillment, and tracking.

Milestone	Timing	Deliverable	Primary Owner
Contract award / internal launch	Day 0	Internal kickoff, implementation file opened, responsibilities assigned	Harrison Wills
State kickoff meeting	Within 5 business days	Alignment with State Contract Administrator/Manager, final implementation calendar, decision log	Harrison Wills / Dan Berkowitz
Contract governance and contact setup	Days 1–5	Contract manager and customer service points of contact confirmed; escalation ladder activated	Dan Berkowitz / Jaylene Suazo
Punch-Out Catalog architecture finalized	Days 3–10	Catalog structure, agency segmentation logic, approval workflow, branding logic, hot-list framework	Dan Berkowitz / IT
Initial catalog configuration	Days 5–15	Core statewide catalog built; product categories, customization logic, shipping visibility, item structure loaded	Dan Berkowitz

Branding and logo governance setup	Days 5–15	Approved artwork library, file standards, proof-routing rules, version control process	Carol Schiffman
Order processing readiness	By Day 15	Internal SOPs activated for order acknowledgement, quoting, proofing, production scheduling, tracking, and escalation	Jaylene Suazo
NC eProcurement / Punchout testing	Days 10–20	Connectivity testing, checkout validation, mapping review, user acceptance testing support	IT / Dan Berkowitz
Initial catalog launch	By Day 20	Punch-out environment live for initial use; “Hot List” items pre-positioned for quick ordering	Dan Berkowitz
Agency onboarding and training	Days 20–30	Targeted onboarding sessions, guides, recorded training modules, help resources distributed	Dan Berkowitz / Jaylene Suazo
Full operational status	By Day 30	Contract live for statewide use with reporting, support, escalation, and governance cadence active	Full account team

Uniforms Today recommends a Punch-Out Catalog as the preferred catalog solution under Section 6.2 because it allows unlimited product availability, faster updates, easier management of multiple branding environments, and stronger support for decentralized purchasing across a statewide user base. That flexibility is particularly important for a contract covering apparel, bags, drinkware, writing instruments, awards, and other promotional merchandise for multiple types of end users across North Carolina.

The implementation work itself will be managed through a launch governance model with clearly assigned owners. Harrison Wills will serve as executive sponsor and escalation authority. Dan Berkowitz will lead day-to-day implementation and serve as the primary account lead. Carol Schiffman will oversee artwork and brand governance. Jaylene Suazo will activate customer service protocols, user support, and issue resolution workflows. Jeff Reisner will oversee pricing integrity, reporting readiness, and financial accountability. Those roles are already defined in Uniforms Today’s staffing response and should be used directly in this section because they reinforce that the implementation is tied to actual people, not generic departments.

Agency Onboarding and Training Timeframes

Uniforms Today will not wait until “go-live” to begin onboarding. We will use a staggered approach:

- **Days 15–20:** onboarding communications issued to initial State contacts and early user groups.
- **Days 20–30:** live onboarding sessions conducted for procurement and administrative users.
- **Within 48 hours of request after launch:** supplemental onboarding for newly added agencies, departments, or user groups.
- **Ongoing:** refresher training, new-user training, and event-specific support as usage expands.

This approach is designed to support the State’s decentralized structure while still giving the Contract Administrator and Contract Manager a clear, centralized launch sequence. It also supports future catalog growth or onboarding under the contract term.

```
Day:          0      5      10      15      20      25      30
              |------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
Contract Award █
Kickoff        ███
Contacts/SOPs  █████
Catalog Design    ███████
Brand Governance  ███████
Order Readiness         █████
Punchout Testing         ███████
Catalog Launch                  ███
Onboarding/Training             █████████
Full Operational Status                               █
```

2. Communication Strategy

Uniforms Today's communication strategy is designed to create confidence, reduce ambiguity, and maintain accountability from contract award through steady-state operations. North Carolina is not looking for a vendor that communicates only when there is a problem. The State needs a partner that communicates in a structured, proactive, and documented way with the State Contract Administrator, State Contract Manager, individual State Entities, and internal end users. The RFP specifically identifies those stakeholders, and our communication approach is built accordingly.

Uniforms Today will establish two clearly defined communication channels required by the contract administration structure in Section 6.1: a Contract Manager point of contact for performance, scheduling, and contract administration matters, and a Customer Service point of contact for inquiries, order tracking, issue resolution, and day-to-day service needs. This structure mirrors the State's own administration model and makes it easy for the State to know exactly where to direct each type of communication.

Stakeholder	Purpose	Method	Frequency	Uniforms Today Lead
State Contract Administrator	Contract oversight, policy alignment, major issues, implementation status	Email, scheduled calls, executive review meetings	Weekly during launch; quarterly thereafter; as needed for escalations	Harrison Wills / Dan Berkowitz
State Contract Manager	Performance, progress review, service issues, schedule coordination	Email, phone, status reports, review meetings	Weekly during launch; monthly operational check-ins; quarterly business reviews	Dan Berkowitz
State procurement/users	___	Email, phone, user guides, virtual support sessions	Ongoing / real time	Jaylene Suazo
Agency/department requesters	Artwork, proof approvals, product selection, order status	Email, phone, digital proofs, portal updates	Per order / per request	Carol Schiffman / Customer Service
Internal stakeholders	Production, QA, logistics, escalation tracking	Internal workflow tools, daily status coordination	Daily as needed	Dan Berkowitz / Jaylene Suazo

Uniforms Today will communicate proactively at the points that matter most to the State:

- contract kickoff complete
- catalog structure approved
- punchout testing underway / complete
- catalog live
- onboarding schedule issued
- first orders processed
- first month stabilization summary
- quarterly business review and spend/performance report

The communication plan also includes exception management. When a delay, stock issue, proof revision, quality concern, or systems issue arises, Uniforms Today will not wait for the State to discover the problem. We will initiate communication, explain the issue, provide options, identify the corrective action, and confirm resolution timing. This matches the RFP's emphasis on tracking, customer service responsiveness, and communication consistency.

Escalation Structure

Level 1: Customer Service / Order Support
Jaylene Suazo and service team
↓ same business day
Level 2: Account Management / Contract Oversight
Dan Berkowitz
↓ same day or next business day
Level 3: Executive Escalation
Harrison Wills
↓ immediate attention for material issues

This escalation structure is particularly important because the State is buying on behalf of many users, many locations, and many event-driven needs. A promotional-items contract fails when communication is inconsistent or diffuse. Uniforms Today eliminates that risk by assigning ownership visibly and early.

3. Training and Support

Uniforms Today's training model is designed around one goal: reduce user friction while protecting contract compliance. The State's contract will serve many types of purchasing entities and end users, from experienced procurement professionals to infrequent requesters ordering event merchandise or recognition items. The training program therefore must be practical, repeatable, and available in multiple formats. That is exactly what Uniforms Today will deliver.

Training Resources Provided

Uniforms Today will provide the following onboarding and training tools:

- live virtual onboarding sessions for procurement and administrative users
- user guides for punchout navigation, ordering steps, proof review, and support contacts

- quick-reference guides for common order types and reorder workflows
- recorded training modules for on-demand review
- order support by phone and email
- product/specification guidance at quote stage
- proofing support and branding assistance through Carol Schiffman's design team

These resources are not theoretical. They are built from the same operating model Uniforms Today uses for complex institutional accounts requiring punchout ordering, brand controls, and multi-entity support. The staffing response in your proposal already establishes the right job-function alignment for this: Dan Berkowitz for onboarding and account management, Carol Schiffman for artwork and mockups, and Jaylene Suazo for ongoing support and resolution.

Training Resource	**Audience**	**Delivery**	**Timing**
Kickoff orientation	State contract leadership	Virtual meeting	Within first week after award
Procurement onboarding	Agency and institution buyers	Live virtual session	Days 20–30
Catalog navigation guide	All users	PDF / digital guide	Before catalog launch
Proofing and artwork guide	Requesters and approvers	PDF + live explanation as needed	During onboarding
Recorded tutorials	New users / refresher users	On-demand	At go-live and ongoing
Customer service support	All State Entities	Phone + email	Ongoing statewide

Support resources will reinforce the operating standards required elsewhere in the RFP: acknowledgment of orders within one business day, provision of itemized quotes within two business days, tracking visibility, transparent disclosure of lead times and fees, standard fulfillment within ten business days after final proof approval, and rush fulfillment within five business days where applicable. Those are critical because they convert the training section from generic "support" language into a concrete promise that users can understand and the State can monitor.

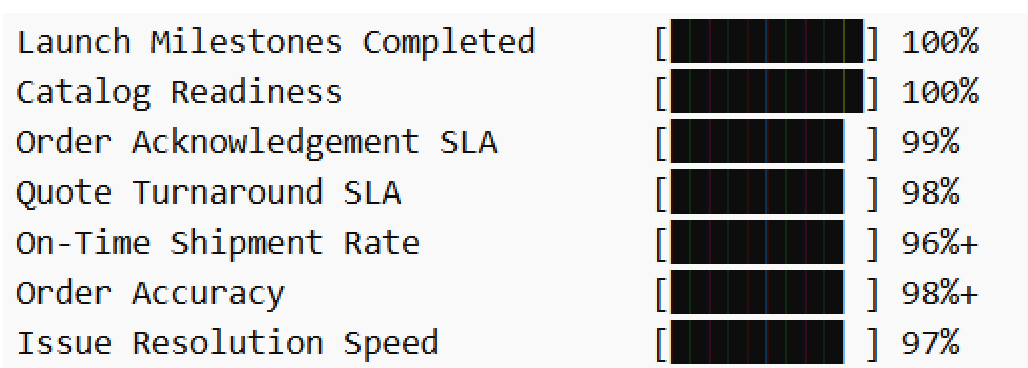
Uniforms Today will also support statewide coverage, not just urban or high-volume users. The RFP specifically asks vendors to demonstrate service across the entire state, including rural areas. Our support model is therefore centralized, digital-first, and equally available regardless of geography, while fulfillment is supported by logistics partners and multi-vendor sourcing that can serve all 100 counties under a statewide model.

4. Performance and Feedback Mechanisms

Uniforms Today will measure implementation success the same way the State should evaluate it: by whether the contract becomes easier to use, more accurate, more responsive, and more reliable over time. The RFP specifically calls for measurement of service performance, order accuracy, and fulfillment timelines, and other sections define concrete delivery and service expectations that should be reflected in implementation success metrics.

Metric	Standard / Target	Why It Matters
Implementation milestones completed on time	100% of launch milestones	Confirms disciplined startup
Catalog readiness by launch date	100%	Ensures users can order on schedule
Order acknowledgement time	Within 1 business day	Matches RFP requirement and builds confidence
Quote turnaround	Within 2 business days	Supports timely approvals and order flow
Standard fulfillment	Within 10 business days after final proof approval	Matches State expectation
Rush fulfillment	Within 5 business days after final proof approval	Supports urgent needs
On-time shipment rate	At least 95%	Matches RFP delivery performance requirement
Order accuracy	98%+ target	Reduces rework and dissatisfaction
First-response customer service rate	Same business day target	Keeps users engaged and informed
Issue resolution for defects/escalations	24-hour corrective-action initiation	Demonstrates control and responsiveness

The RFP explicitly sets a minimum 95% on-time shipment rate and requires immediate replacement of defective products within the same delivery time frame at no additional charge. It also requires visibility on tracking, recall handling, and quarterly spend reporting. Uniforms Today's performance framework should therefore be described as a contract-management dashboard, not just a customer service summary.



Reporting and Feedback Structure

Uniforms Today will provide the State with structured performance visibility through:

- launch status updates during implementation
- 30-day post-go-live stabilization review
- quarterly business reviews
- quarterly spend and operational reporting
- trend review of defects, late shipments, and corrective actions
- recommendations for catalog refinement, high-volume “Hot List” additions, and process improvements

This aligns directly with the contract administration requirements covering contract business review meetings, continuous improvement, and periodic quarterly spend reports.

Just as important, Uniforms Today will formalize the feedback loop. Feedback will be collected from the State Contract Manager, agency buyers, and end users, then translated into action in three areas:

1. Catalog optimization – add, remove, or elevate commonly purchased items
2. Service refinement – improve response times, routing, or communication where needed
3. Supplier management – address performance issues with vendors, decorators, or freight partners before they affect the State’s users

That last point matters because your broader proposal already describes continuous QA review, supplier audits, defect tracking, and corrective action. Pulling that discipline into this section helps prove that Uniforms Today’s implementation plan is not a startup document only; it is the beginning of an active management model.

Why Uniforms Today’s Plan Is Different

Most promotional-products vendors can describe a launch. Far fewer can demonstrate a controlled statewide implementation model. Today's advantage is that our implementation plan is supported by the same program elements already established elsewhere in this proposal: punchout experience, governance controls, agency-specific catalog logic, rigorous quality assurance, cooperative-contract discipline, statewide public-sector experience, and a named team with defined roles. Uniforms Today is therefore not presenting implementation as an administrative afterthought. We are presenting it as the framework that makes the entire contract work.

For North Carolina, that means:

- a startup plan with named owners and dates
- a Punch-Out Catalog model suited to statewide scale
- clear communication channels to the State Contract Administrator, Contract Manager, and all State Entities
- structured onboarding and accessible training resources
- measurable service standards aligned to the RFP
- quarterly review and continuous improvement after launch

Conclusion

Uniforms Today’s Implementation and Communication Plan is designed to give the State of North Carolina what average vendors cannot: a fully managed, implementation-ready statewide program. We will launch the contract with discipline, communicate with consistency, train users in practical ways, support all regions of the state, and measure success against clear service and fulfillment standards. Because our model combines catalog flexibility, operational accountability, and proactive contract governance, Uniforms Today will enable the State to improve efficiency, strengthen brand consistency, reduce procurement friction, and maintain confidence that this contract is being actively managed in the State's best interest.

State of North Carolina – Promotional Items Statewide Term Contract
Customer Service Plan

Customer Service Philosophy

Uniforms Today understands that customer service for this contract is not simply a support function; it is a core operational component of a statewide procurement program. The State of North Carolina requires a partner that can deliver consistent, responsive, and accountable service across a decentralized user base that includes State departments, agencies, institutions of higher education, community colleges, and other eligible entities.
Our customer service model is designed to ensure that:

- Orders are processed accurately and efficiently
- Users receive timely and knowledgeable support
- Issues are resolved quickly and transparently
- Procurement teams maintain confidence in the contract

Uniforms Today's approach combines dedicated personnel, defined service levels, structured workflows, and real-time visibility tools into a coordinated service delivery model aligned with the State's operational expectations.

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1. Customer Service Structure

Uniforms Today will deliver customer service through a tiered, accountable service model with clearly defined roles, response expectations, and escalation pathways.

Service Team Structure and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility	Primary Owner
Executive Oversight	Contract alignment, executive escalation	Harrison Wills
Account Management	Day-to-day coordination, State interface	Dan Berkowitz
Customer Service Lead	Order support, issue resolution, tracking	Jaylene Suazo
Creative / Proofing Support	Artwork, mockups, approvals	Carol Schiffman
Finance & Reporting	Billing, reporting, pricing integrity	Jeff Reisner

This structure ensures that each request is handled by the appropriate subject matter expert, improving response speed and accuracy.

---

a. Hours of Availability

Uniforms Today will provide consistent and reliable service availability:

- Standard Service Hours: Monday – Friday, 8:00 AM – 6:00 PM (ET)

- Extended Coverage: Available during peak demand periods and major statewide initiatives
- Escalation Availability: Executive-level support available for urgent or time-sensitive issues

This schedule ensures accessibility for all State Entities while maintaining responsiveness during critical ordering periods.

---

b. Response Times and Service Commitments

Uniforms Today will operate under clearly defined service level standards that align directly with RFP requirements.

Customer Service Performance Standards

Service Metric	Standard / Commitment	Why It Matters
Initial response to inquiries	Within 4 business hours	Keeps users engaged and informed
Order acknowledgment	Within 1 business day	Matches RFP requirement
Quote turnaround	Within 2 business days	Supports timely approvals
Proof/mockup delivery	Within 24–48 hours	Enables efficient decision-making
Issue resolution	Corrective action initiated within 24 hours	Ensures rapid problem resolution
Order status updates	Same-day / real-time availability	Provides transparency

These service levels ensure that all State Entities receive predictable, measurable, and reliable support.

---

c. Problem-Solving Capabilities

Uniforms Today’s customer service model is built on expertise, structured processes, and operational controls that ensure both accuracy and efficiency.

Key Capabilities

- Product Knowledge and Expertise
  - Deep familiarity with promotional products, materials, and decoration methods
  - Ability to recommend alternatives based on availability, budget, and use case
- Order Accuracy Controls
  - Pre-approved product catalogs and branding standards
  - Structured proofing and approval workflows
  - Multi-stage quality assurance checkpoints
- Operational Efficiency
  - Punch-Out Catalog with real-time inventory and pricing visibility
  - Standardized order processing workflows
  - Integrated tracking and communication tools

Outcome

- Reduced errors and rework
- Faster order processing and approvals
- Improved consistency across State Entities

---

d. Escalation Procedures

Uniforms Today maintains a clear, structured escalation process to ensure that issues are addressed quickly and effectively.

Escalation Structure

Level 1: Customer Service / Order Support
Jaylene Suazo and service team
↓ same business day response

Level 2: Account Management / Contract Oversight
Dan Berkowitz
↓ same day or next business day corrective action

Level 3: Executive Escalation
Harrison Wills
↓ immediate intervention for critical issues

Escalation Commitments

- All escalations acknowledged within the same business day
- Corrective action initiated within 24 hours
- Resolution communicated clearly and proactively

This structure ensures that issues do not stall and are resolved with full accountability.

---

e. Order Tracking and Status Updates

Uniforms Today will provide full visibility into every order lifecycle, from request through delivery.

Tracking Capabilities

- Real-time order status through punch-out system
- Shipment tracking numbers provided upon dispatch
- Visibility into:
  - Order confirmation
  - Production status
  - Shipment progress

Communication Approach

- Proactive notification of delays or changes
- Immediate response to tracking inquiries
- Transparent communication at all stages

Result

The State will experience complete transparency with no “black box” ordering process.

---

2. Statewide Customer Service Coverage

Uniforms Today is fully equipped to provide consistent, high-quality customer service across the entire State of North Carolina, including rural and geographically dispersed areas.

Centralized Service Delivery Model

Uniforms Today utilizes a centralized, technology-enabled service model to ensure consistent service regardless of location.

Key Features

- Single point of contact for all State Entities
- Standardized service processes across all users
- Centralized tracking, reporting, and escalation

Support for Rural and Distributed Users

Uniforms Today’s service model is designed to ensure equal access and consistent service quality for all users, including those in rural areas.

Service Delivery Approach

- Digital-First Access
    - Online catalog (www.epromostoday.com)
    - Punch-out integration with NC eProcurement
- Remote Support Capabilities
    - Phone and email support for all users
    - Virtual onboarding and training
- Statewide Fulfillment Network
    - Shipping coverage across all regions
    - Multi-vendor sourcing model to minimize delays

Statewide Coverage Model

Central Service Team

↓

Digital Platform (Punchout + Online Catalog)
↓
All State Entities (Urban + Rural)
↓
Consistent Service Experience

Consistency Assurance

Uniforms Today ensures that all State Entities receive:

- The same response times
- The same pricing structure
- The same product access
- The same level of service support

This eliminates variability and ensures a uniform experience statewide.

Conclusion

Uniforms Today's Customer Service Plan is designed to support the State of North Carolina with a scalable, structured, and performance-driven service model.

By combining:

- Dedicated and accountable personnel
- Clearly defined service standards
- Real-time tracking and communication tools
- A centralized model with statewide reach

Uniforms Today will deliver a reliable, responsive, and consistent customer service experience that supports the successful execution of this contract from initial launch through ongoing operations.

State of North Carolina – Promotional Items Statewide Term Contract
Geographic Coverage

Statewide Coverage

Uniforms Today proposes to provide complete statewide coverage across all 100 counties in North Carolina, ensuring that all eligible State Entities—including agencies, departments, institutions of higher education, community colleges, municipalities, and other authorized users—have full access to products, services, delivery, and customer support.

Statewide Service Philosophy

Uniforms Today understands that geographic coverage for this contract is not simply about delivery—it is about ensuring equal access, consistent service quality, and reliable support regardless of location.

The State requires a vendor capable of supporting:

- Urban and high-volume agencies
- Mid-size and regional institutions
- Rural and geographically dispersed users

Our statewide model is designed to ensure that every user experiences the same level of service, responsiveness, and access, regardless of where they are located.

Statewide Coverage Model

Uniforms Today delivers statewide coverage through a centralized, technology-enabled service model supported by a distributed fulfillment network.

Service Delivery Structure

Central Account & Service Team
↓
Punch-Out Platform + Online Catalog (epromostoday.com)
↓
Statewide Fulfillment Network
↓
All 100 Counties (Urban + Rural)
↓
Consistent User Experience

Service Capabilities Across All Regions

Uniforms Today ensures that all required services are available statewide:

Products and Catalog Access

- Full access to thousands of promotional items via:
  - Punch-out catalog (NC eProcurement / Ariba)
  - Online catalog (www.epromostoday.com)
- Agency-specific product controls and branding governance

Customer Service and Support

- Centralized service team providing:
  - Phone and email support
  - Real-time order assistance
  - Issue resolution and escalation
- Equal service levels across all regions

Delivery and Fulfillment

- Statewide shipping coverage across all 100 counties
- Multi-vendor sourcing and production network
- Ability to meet:
  - Standard fulfillment timelines
  - Rush order requirements

Order Management and Tracking

- Real-time order tracking
- Shipment visibility across all regions
- Proactive communication for delays or changes

Support for Rural and Underserved Areas

Uniforms Today's model ensures that rural and geographically dispersed entities receive the same level of service as urban users.

Key Capabilities

- Digital-First Access
  - Punch-out ordering eliminates location dependency
  - Online catalog accessible statewide
- Centralized Support
  - Single service team supporting all users
  - No reliance on local representatives
- Logistics Flexibility
  - Distributed supplier network reduces geographic constraints
  - Reliable shipping partners ensure delivery consistency

Consistency and Standardization

Uniforms Today ensures that all State Entities, regardless of location, receive:

- The same pricing structure
- The same product access
- The same service level agreements (SLAs)
- The same response times and support experience

This eliminates regional variability and ensures a uniform statewide program.

Scalability and Capacity

Uniforms Today's infrastructure is designed to support statewide demand at scale, including:

- Simultaneous ordering across multiple agencies
- High-volume seasonal or event-driven demand
- Rapid onboarding of new entities

Our use of:

- Punch-out technology
- Centralized service operations
- Multi-supplier fulfillment

Ensures that capacity is not limited by geography.

Alignment with State Objectives

Uniforms Today's statewide coverage model supports the State's goals to:

- Ensure comprehensive access across all regions
- Provide consistent service quality statewide
- Enable competitive vendor selection based on best value
- Support efficient, compliant procurement

Conclusion

Uniforms Today is fully prepared to deliver complete statewide coverage across all 100 counties in North Carolina, providing:

- Equal access to products and services
- Reliable delivery and fulfillment
- Consistent customer service and support
- Scalable infrastructure for statewide demand

Our model ensures that every State Entity—regardless of size or location—can rely on Uniforms Today to deliver a consistent, responsive, and high-quality procurement experience.

State of North Carolina – Promotional Items Statewide Term Contract
Product & Catalog Overview

Catalog Overview and Scope of Offerings

Uniforms Today provides a comprehensive and scalable promotional product catalog designed to support the diverse needs of State departments, agencies, institutions of higher education, community colleges, municipalities, and other eligible entities across North Carolina.

Our catalog is accessible through:

- Punch-Out integration with NC eProcurement (Ariba)
- Online platform: www.epromostoday.com

This catalog includes thousands of SKUs across all required product categories, enabling State Entities to source all promotional items through a single, compliant procurement channel.

---

1. Scope of Product Offerings and Capabilities

Uniforms Today offers a broad range of product categories supported by extensive customization capabilities.

Product Categories

Category	Description	Example Items
Apparel	Branded clothing for events and operations	T-shirts, polos, hoodies, outerwear
Bags & Totes	Carry and promotional items	Tote bags, backpacks, drawstring bags
Drinkware	Reusable and promotional drinkware	Tumblers, water bottles, mugs
Writing Instruments	Everyday promotional tools	Pens, stylus pens, markers
Awards & Recognition	Recognition and milestone items	Plaques, trophies, certificates
Promotional Merchandise	General marketing and outreach items	Lanyards, badges, tech accessories

---

Decoration and Customization Capabilities

Uniforms Today provides full-service decoration and branding capabilities, including:

- Screen Printing
- Embroidery
- Heat Transfer / Vinyl Application
- Laser Engraving
- Pad Printing
- Digital Printing (DTG / UV Printing)
- Sublimation

These methods allow for customization across a wide range of materials and product types while ensuring consistency with agency branding standards.

Catalog Management and Updates

Uniforms Today's catalog is actively managed to ensure accuracy, availability, and relevance.

Update Capabilities

- Real-time inventory visibility through punch-out system
- Rapid addition of new products (within hours when needed)
- Removal or substitution of discontinued items

Communication of Changes

- Updates reflected immediately within the punch-out catalog
- Proactive communication to the State for:
    - Product discontinuations
    - Substitutions or alternatives
    - Pricing or availability changes

This ensures that State Entities always have access to current, available, and compliant product options.

---

2. Digital Proofs and Mock-Up Process

Uniforms Today utilizes a structured and efficient proofing process to ensure accuracy, branding compliance, and timely approvals.

Proofing Workflow

Request / Quote Submission
↓
Product Selection & Artwork Intake
↓
Digital Mock-Up Creation
↓
Client Review & Feedback
↓
Final Approval
↓
Production Release

Proof and Mock-Up Timelines

Step	Timeline
Initial mock-up delivery	Within 24–48 hours
Revisions (if needed)	Within 24 hours per revision
Final approval processing	Same business day

Revision Policy

- Unlimited revisions within reasonable scope to ensure satisfaction
- Dedicated creative support (Carol Schiffman) for branding accuracy
- Alternative product recommendations provided if needed

Approval Procedures

- Digital proofs provided via email or portal
- Written approval required prior to production
- Approval confirmation logged for order tracking and audit purposes

Quote Request Process

State Entities may request quotes through:

- Punch-out system (preferred method)
- Direct email or phone contact

Quotes include:

- Itemized pricing
- Decoration details
- Production timelines
- Shipping estimates

---

3. Product Categories Offered

Uniforms Today confirms inclusion of the following categories:

☑ Category 1: Apparel
☑ Category 2: Bags & Totes
☑ Category 3: Drinkware
☑ Category 4: Writing Instruments
☑ Category 5: Award & Recognition Gifts
☑ Category 6: Other Promotional Merchandise

Uniforms Today offers Category 6 in addition to all core categories, exceeding the minimum requirement.

OPTIONAL VALUE-ADDED SERVICES

Uniforms Today offers additional services designed to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of promotional programs. These services are detailed, including pricing, in Attachment A: Cost Proposal Workbook.
Examples include:

- Custom kitting and fulfillment
- Inventory management programs
- Event-specific product sourcing
- Dedicated storefront development
- Sustainability-focused product sourcing

PROJECT ORGANIZATION

Uniforms Today will support this contract through a structured team with clearly defined roles and responsibilities.

Account Team Structure

Role	Responsibility	Assigned Personnel
Account Manager (Primary Contact)	Contract oversight, State interface	Dan Berkowitz

Executive Sponsor	Strategic alignment, escalation	Harrison Wills
Customer Service Lead	Order processing, support, issue resolution	Jaylene Suazo
Creative Director	Artwork, mockups, branding compliance	Carol Schiffman
Finance & Reporting	Pricing, billing, reporting	Jeff Reisner

Operational Responsibilities

- Order Processing: Managed by Customer Service Lead and support team
- Escalation Management: Handled through structured escalation ladder
- Creative & Branding: Overseen by Creative Director
- Reporting & Compliance: Managed by Finance & Account Management

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Subcontractors and Supplier Network

Uniforms Today utilizes a vetted network of suppliers, decorators, and logistics partners to fulfill orders efficiently and at scale.

Oversight and Control

- Centralized quality assurance processes
- Supplier performance monitoring
- Contract compliance enforcement

All subcontracted services are managed under Uniforms Today's operational control to ensure consistent quality, delivery, and service standards.

Conclusion

Uniforms Today provides a comprehensive, scalable, and actively managed promotional product catalog supported by:

- Thousands of product options across all required categories
- Full-service customization capabilities
- Structured proofing and approval workflows
- Real-time catalog management and updates
- A dedicated, accountable team

This approach ensures that the State of North Carolina receives a flexible, reliable, and fully compliant promotional product program capable of supporting diverse needs across all State Entities.

<u>State of North Carolina – Promotional Items Statewide Term Contract</u>
Technical Approach

Technical Philosophy: Scalable Control with Operational Precision

Uniforms Today's technical approach is designed to support a statewide, multi-entity procurement environment where consistency, accuracy, and efficiency are critical.

The State of North Carolina requires a solution that can:

- Support multiple agencies with unique branding requirements
- Ensure accuracy across thousands of potential product variations
- Maintain consistent quality and delivery timelines
- Provide transparency and control throughout the order lifecycle

Uniforms Today delivers this through a combination of:

- Punch-Out Catalog Technology (NC eProcurement / Ariba)
- Structured Order Workflows
- Centralized Quality Assurance Processes
- Real-Time Tracking and Communication Systems

This integrated approach ensures that all services are delivered reliably, safely, and in alignment with industry standards.

---

1. Multi-Entity Account Management & Branding Control

Uniforms Today is specifically structured to support multiple State Entities with distinct branding, logo usage, and approval requirements.

Account Management Framework

Each State Entity will be supported through a customized account structure within our punch-out system.

Key Capabilities

- Entity-Specific Storefronts
  - Customized product selections by agency
  - Pre-approved items aligned with brand guidelines
- Logo and Artwork Governance
  - Centralized logo library with version control
  - Restricted access to approved artwork only
  - Elimination of unauthorized branding usage
- Approval Workflows
  - Configurable approval chains (if required)

- Proof validation before production release

Branding Control Model

State Entity Request
↓
Pre-Approved Catalog (Entity-Specific)
↓
Approved Logo Selection
↓
Digital Proof Review
↓
Final Approval
↓
Production

Error Prevention Mechanisms

Uniforms Today minimizes errors through:

- Pre-approved product catalogs
- Locked branding assets
- Structured proofing workflows
- Automated order validation checks

Result

- Reduced rework and delays
- Consistent brand compliance across agencies
- Increased confidence in ordering process

---

2. Quality Assurance and Delivery Management

Uniforms Today employs a multi-stage quality assurance system designed to ensure both product accuracy and on-time delivery.

Quality Assurance Framework

Production Quality Stages

Stage	Process	Purpose
Pre-Production	Artwork verification, material review	Prevent errors before production
In-Production	Supplier quality checks	Maintain consistency

Post-Production	Final inspection before shipment	Ensure accuracy and quality
Post-Delivery	Issue tracking and resolution	Continuous improvement

---

Supplier and Production Oversight

Uniforms Today works with a vetted supplier network and maintains:

- Supplier performance monitoring
- Standardized quality benchmarks
- Corrective action protocols for defects

Delivery Performance Management

Uniforms Today ensures timely delivery through:

- Production scheduling aligned with approved timelines
- Real-time tracking of order progress
- Proactive communication of delays

Delivery Standards

Metric	Commitment
Standard Production	≤ 10 business days after proof approval
Rush Orders	≤ 5 business days (where applicable)
On-Time Delivery	≥ 95%

Continuous Improvement Process

Measure Performance
↓
Identify Issues
↓
Implement Corrective Actions
↓
Monitor Results
↓
Report to State

---

3. Order Intake, Verification, and Production Workflow

Uniforms Today utilizes a structured, end-to-end order management process to ensure accuracy, efficiency, and transparency.

Order Intake Channels

State Entities may submit orders through:

- Punch-out system (NC eProcurement / Ariba) – primary method
- Direct request via email or phone (as needed)

Order Processing Workflow

Order Submission
↓
Order Verification (Product, Pricing, Artwork)
↓
Quote Confirmation (if applicable)
↓
Digital Proof Creation
↓
Client Approval
↓
Production Scheduling
↓
Quality Assurance Checks
↓
Shipment & Tracking
↓
Delivery Confirmation

Order Verification Process

Each order undergoes validation for:

- Product specifications
- Pricing accuracy
- Branding and artwork compliance
- Production feasibility

Production Lead Times

Order Type	**Lead Time**
Standard Items	7–10 business days after proof approval
Custom/Complex Orders	10–15 business days
Rush Orders	3–5 business days (where available)

<u>State of North Carolina – Promotional Items Statewide Term Contract</u>
Electronic Product Catalog Solution

Catalog Solution Selection

☐ Line-Item Catalog
☑ **Punch-Out Catalog**
☐ Ordering Instructions

Uniforms Today proposes to deliver a Punch-Out Catalog solution, which provides the State with maximum flexibility, scalability, and real-time access to a comprehensive promotional product catalog.

Punch-Out Catalog Approach

Uniforms Today will provide a fully integrated punch-out catalog solution that enables seamless communication between the State's NC eProcurement System (Ariba) and Uniforms Today's online catalog platform.

This solution is designed to support:

- Unlimited product availability
- Real-time pricing and inventory visibility
- Entity-specific catalog experiences
- Controlled access to contract-compliant products only

This aligns directly with the State's preference for scalable and dynamic catalog solutions, as the punch-out model allows no limit on product offerings, compared to the 5,000-item limitation of a line-item catalog .

System Integration and Technical Compliance

Uniforms Today's punch-out catalog will:

- Utilize cXML 1.0 / 1.1 standards for communication with NC eProcurement
- Integrate with the State's procurement workflows for seamless ordering
- Support secure data exchange between systems
- Be fully operational within 30 calendar days of contract award, in compliance with State requirements

---

Catalog Content and Data Requirements

Uniforms Today will ensure that all catalog items meet or exceed State requirements.

Catalog Data Elements

Each item in the punch-out catalog will include:

- Detailed item description
- Manufacturer name
- Manufacturer part number
- Unit of measure
- Contract pricing
- Product images (where available)

This ensures transparency and consistency for all State users.

Catalog Accuracy and Maintenance

Uniforms Today will maintain a continuously updated and accurate catalog throughout the duration of the contract.

Maintenance Commitments

- Real-time updates to pricing and product availability
- Immediate removal or replacement of discontinued items
- Ongoing catalog refreshes as requested by the State
- Continuous alignment with contract pricing and discount structures

Uniforms Today understands that **catalog accuracy is critical to procurement integrity**, and will actively manage the catalog to prevent discrepancies.

Contract Scope Compliance and Product Controls

Uniforms Today will strictly ensure that:

- Only awarded contract items are displayed in the punch-out catalog
- Non-contract items are blocked and inaccessible
- State-requested items can be removed (“blocked”) immediately

This aligns with the State’s requirement that all catalog content remain within the scope of the awarded contract .

User Access and Availability

Uniforms Today's punch-out catalog will be:

- Available 24 hours per day, 7 days per week
- Accessible to all authorized State users
- Designed for ease of use and efficient navigation

This ensures that State Entities can access products and place orders at any time.

Ordering Workflow Integration

The punch-out catalog will support a seamless procurement experience:

User accesses NC eProcurement (Ariba)
↓
Punch-out to Uniforms Today catalog
↓
Select products and configure customization
↓
Cart returned to NC eProcurement
↓
Order submitted through State workflow
↓
Uniforms Today processes order

This process ensures compliance with State purchasing controls while providing a user-friendly experience.

Catalog Flexibility and Scalability

Uniforms Today's punch-out solution provides significant advantages:

- Unlimited product catalog (no SKU cap)
- Rapid addition of new products
- Ability to create **agency-specific catalogs**
- Support for high-volume and seasonal demand

This flexibility is critical for a statewide contract serving diverse users with varying needs.

Conclusion

Uniforms Today's Punch-Out Catalog solution provides the State of North Carolina with a fully compliant, scalable, and user-friendly catalog system that ensures:

- Accurate and up-to-date product information
- Seamless integration with NC eProcurement
- Strict adherence to contract scope
- Reliable access for all State Entities

By leveraging a punch-out catalog model, Uniforms Today delivers a solution that is more flexible, more scalable, and better aligned with statewide procurement needs than traditional line-item approaches.

Cost Structure and Fees

Uniforms Today provides transparent and competitive pricing.

Typical Cost Components

Cost Element	Description
Product Cost	Based on item and quantity
Setup Charges	One-time charge for initial customization
Repeat Order Fees	Reduced or eliminated for reorders
Decoration Costs	Based on method (screen print, embroidery, etc.)
Shipping Costs	Based on delivery method and timeline

Cost Transparency

- All costs disclosed at quote stage
- No hidden fees
- Clear breakdown provided to State Entities

Conclusion

Uniforms Today's Technical Approach provides a structured, scalable, and reliable framework for delivering promotional products across the State of North Carolina.
By combining:

- Advanced punch-out technology
- Controlled branding and account management
- Rigorous quality assurance processes
- Efficient order workflows and transparent pricing

Uniforms Today ensures that all services are delivered with accuracy, consistency, and efficiency, meeting the State's expectations for reliability and operational excellence.

<u>State of North Carolina – Promotional Items Statewide Term Contract</u>
Electronic Product Catalog Solution

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- Detailed item description
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- Manufacturer part number
- Unit of measure
- Contract pricing
- Product images (where available)

This ensures transparency and consistency for all State users.

Catalog Accuracy and Maintenance

Uniforms Today will maintain a continuously updated and accurate catalog throughout the duration of the contract.

Maintenance Commitments

- Real-time updates to pricing and product availability
- Immediate removal or replacement of discontinued items
- Ongoing catalog refreshes as requested by the State
- Continuous alignment with contract pricing and discount structures

Uniforms Today understands that **catalog accuracy is critical to procurement integrity**, and will actively manage the catalog to prevent discrepancies.

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Order submitted through State workflow
↓
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This process ensures compliance with State purchasing controls while providing a user-friendly experience.

Catalog Flexibility and Scalability

Uniforms Today’s punch-out solution provides significant advantages:

- Unlimited product catalog (no SKU cap)
- Rapid addition of new products
- Ability to create **agency-specific catalogs**
- Support for high-volume and seasonal demand

This flexibility is critical for a statewide contract serving diverse users with varying needs.

Conclusion

Uniforms Today's Punch-Out Catalog solution provides the State of North Carolina with a fully compliant, scalable, and user-friendly catalog system that ensures:

- Accurate and up-to-date product information
- Seamless integration with NC eProcurement
- Strict adherence to contract scope
- Reliable access for all State Entities

By leveraging a punch-out catalog model, Uniforms Today delivers a solution that is more flexible, more scalable, and better aligned with statewide procurement needs than traditional line-item approaches.

State of North Carolina – Promotional Items Statewide Term Contract
Contract Governance, Repeating and Continuous Improvement

Contract Governance Philosophy

Uniforms Today understands that this contract requires more than fulfillment—it requires active management, transparency, and continuous performance improvement.

Our governance model is designed to:

- Provide the State with full visibility into spend and performance
- Identify opportunities for cost savings and efficiency gains
- Ensure accountability across all service metrics
- Support data-driven decision-making

Uniforms Today will deliver this through structured Business Review Meetings, detailed reporting, and an ongoing continuous improvement program.

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1. CONTRACT BUSINESS REVIEW MEETINGS (SEMI-ANNUAL)

Uniforms Today will conduct semi-annual Contract Business Review (CBR) meetings with the State, as requested, and will lead the preparation, presentation, and follow-up actions.
These meetings will serve as a formal governance checkpoint to evaluate performance, address issues, and identify opportunities.

Meeting Structure and Leadership

- Meeting Frequency: Semi-annual (or as requested)
- Led By: Dan Berkowitz (Account Manager)
- Executive Participation: Harrison Wills (as needed)
- Attendees: State Contract Manager, stakeholders, and relevant team members

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Business Review Dashboard

Uniforms Today will present a comprehensive performance dashboard covering all required metrics.

1. Spend Overview

Metric	Description

Entity Breakdown	Spend by agency, institution, and entity
Fiscal Year Comparison	Year-over-year analysis
Volume Discounts	Discounts achieved through aggregated purchasing
Subcontractor Spend	Transparency into supplier utilization

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2. Product Cost Savings

- Comparison of list price vs. contract price
- Total savings achieved for the State
- Identification of high-impact savings categories

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3. Product Accuracy Rate

Metric	**Target**
Order Accuracy	≥ 98%

Defined as the percentage of items delivered without post-order corrections.

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4. Complete Shipment Rate

Metric	Target
Single Shipment Completion	≥ 95%
Shipping Fee Transparency	100% disclosed

Includes:

- Percentage of orders fulfilled in one shipment
- Analysis of shipping costs and optimization opportunities

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5. On-Time Delivery Rate

Metric	Target
On-Time Delivery	≥ 95%

Measured against contract delivery timelines.

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6. Sustainability Efforts and Results

Uniforms Today will report on:

- Sustainable product usage
- Eco-friendly sourcing initiatives
- Reduction in packaging and waste
- Supplier sustainability compliance

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7. Additional Discounts Exercised

- Promotional discounts applied
- Bulk or volume-based savings
- Special pricing initiatives

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8. Rebates

- Any applicable rebates provided
- Summary of financial benefits returned to the State

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9. Purchasing Entity Feedback

- Summary of user satisfaction
- Common feedback themes
- Areas of improvement identified

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10. Challenges and Resolutions

- Identified service or operational issues
- Root cause analysis
- Corrective actions implemented

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11. Improvement Initiatives

- Process enhancements
- Efficiency improvements
- Cost reduction strategies

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12. Limited-Time Promotional Opportunities

- Short-term discount programs
- Seasonal or volume-based promotions
- Strategic sourcing opportunities

Business Review Process Flow

Collect Data
↓
Analyze Performance
↓
Prepare Dashboard
↓
Conduct Review Meeting
↓
Identify Action Items
↓
Implement Improvements
↓
Track Results

---

2. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Uniforms Today will maintain an ongoing Continuous Improvement Program designed to reduce total cost, improve service performance, and enhance operational efficiency.

Continuous Improvement Approach

Measure Performance
↓
Identify Opportunities
↓
Develop Solutions
↓
Implement Changes
↓
Monitor Results
↓
Report Outcomes

Key Focus Areas

- Cost reduction strategies
- Supplier optimization
- Product standardization (“Hot List” expansion)
- Order processing efficiency
- Delivery performance improvements

Outcome

- Lower total cost of ownership for the State
- Improved service levels
- Increased operational efficiency

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3. QUARTERLY SPEND REPORTING

Uniforms Today will provide Quarterly Sales Management Reports in full compliance with State requirements.

Reporting Schedule

Report	Period	Due Date
Q1	July – September	October 15
Q2	October – December	January 15
Q3	January – March	April 15
Q4	April – June	July 15

Reports will be submitted via the electronic Vendor Portal (eVP) in accordance with State guidelines.

Report Content and Data Elements

Each report will include, at a minimum:

Sales Overview

- Total spend by State Entity
- Agencies, universities, community colleges, local governments

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Detailed Transaction Data

Data Element	Description
Product Category	Apparel, Bags, Drinkware, etc.
Manufacturer / Brand	Item source
Item Description	Product details
Quantity	Units purchased
Unit of Measure	Standardized unit

List Price	Original price
Contract Price	Discounted price
Discount Applied	Savings achieved
Additional Charges	Setup, run, packaging, rush fees
Shipping & Handling	Delivery costs
Purchasing Entity	Ordering agency
Delivery Location	City
Order Date	Date order placed
Shipment Date	Date shipped
Delivery Date	Date delivered

Performance Transparency

Uniforms Today will also include:

- Identified performance issues
- Service or operational concerns
- Recommendations for improvement

Ad Hoc Reporting Capability

Uniforms Today will provide additional requested reports within 30 days of request, ensuring flexibility to meet evolving State needs.

Conclusion

Uniforms Today's Contract Governance and Reporting approach ensures that the State of North Carolina receives:

- Full transparency into spend and performance
- Structured oversight through regular business reviews
- Data-driven insights for decision-making
- Continuous improvement focused on cost savings and efficiency

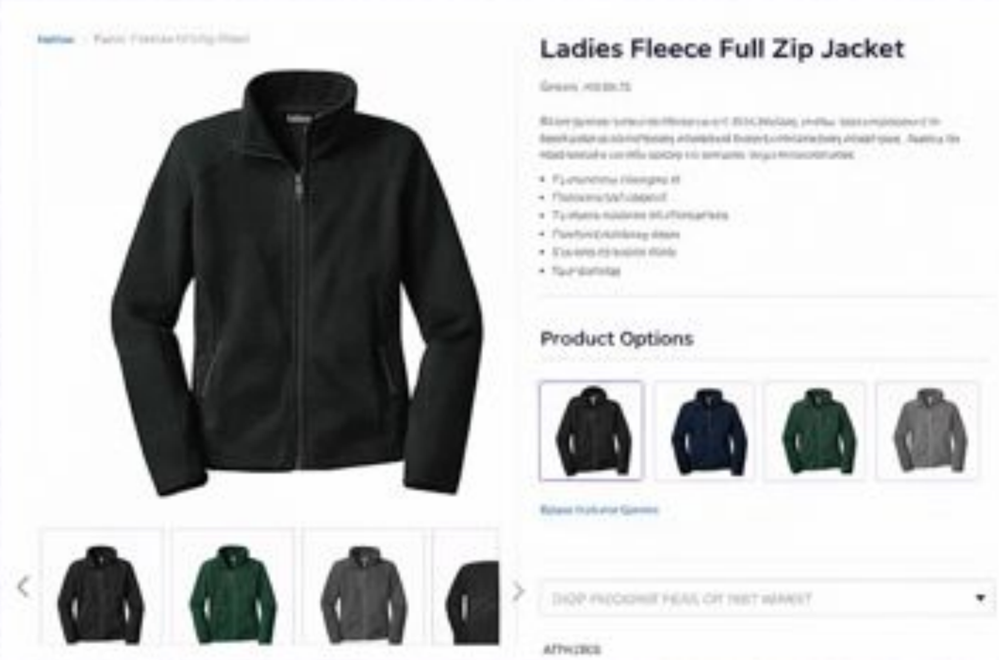
By combining robust reporting, proactive governance, and a disciplined improvement process, Uniforms Today delivers a contract that is actively managed, continuously optimized, and aligned with the State's long-term objectives.

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
APPAREL · BAGS · DRINKWARE · OUTDOOR · GIVEAWAYS · TECH ACCESSORIES · ATHLETIC
Serving These Regions:
Northwest
Western
Southwest
Sandhills
Piedmont Triad
North Central
Northeast
Southeast
NORTH CAROLINA
CAROLINA
YOUR TRUSTED SOURCE FOR PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS
ACROSS NORTH CAROLINA
NORTHWEST
WESTERN
SOUTHWEST
SANDHILLS
PIEDMONT-TRIAD
Serving These Regions:
Northwest
Western
Southwest
Sandhills
Piedmont-Triad
Northeast
Southeast

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

APPAREL · BAGS · DRINKWARE · OUTDOOR · GIVEAWAYS · STATIONARY · ATH

Product Page Features



Product Information

- Live manufacturer inventory
- Related product alternatives
- Images, speen, and lead times
- Size charts

Branding & Customization

- Logo visualizer
- Approved logo library
- Logo upload

Athletics Use

- Same features support for athletic apparel and team products

Live Inventory

Logo Library

VENDOR NAME:	

Please enter vendor name above.

UNIFORMS TODAY

Department of Administration

DIVISION OF PURCHASE AND CONTRACT

ATTACHMENT A: COST PROPOSAL WORKBOOK
PROPOSAL NO: DPC-1677864747-MT-R
PROMOTIONAL ITEMS

Statewide Term Contract

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE COST PROPOSAL WORKBOOK

Please carefully follow the instructions below to complete the cost proposal workbook herein.

NOTE: There are a total of six (6) tabs to review including the 'Instructions' tab.

WHAT VENDORS NEED TO COMPLETE:

1. Vendor Name
Enter your company name where indicated on the ***Instructions*** tab. (Vendor name only needs to be entered on the ***Instructions*** tab.)

COST PROPOSAL SHEET INSTRUCTIONS

2. Pre-Filled Information
Vendors DO NOT need to enter any information in the following cells:
Item # (Column B); Item Description/Unit of Measure (Column C); Est. Qty. (Column D)

3. Equivalent Items (Column E)
If the listed item does not match your catalog, enter the Equivalent Item you sell in the column titled ***Equivalent Items (If Applicable)*** **(Column E)**.
Vendors should provide a short but clear description that allows for easy comparison.

Please Note:
1. If fields in the the following columns are left blank"***Catalog ID, Price List Name, Price List Date, List Price, and % Discount Off Price List***", the State will consider it a "*No Bid*" for that specific item and or category.
2. If a vendor does not intend to offer a specific category, they should leave the corresponding section of the pricing workbook blank.
Note: Enter % Discount Off Price list as a decimal (e.g., 0.15 for 15%). The cell will display as a percentage.

4. Vendor Input Fields
Complete the following fields for each offered item highlighted in Yellow:
Catalog ID: Enter your catalog number for the item.
Price List Name: Enter the name of the published price list from which the discount is applied (e.g., "2025 Promotional Products Catalog").
Price List Date: Enter the effective date of the price list.
List Price: Enter the manufacturer's suggested retail price (MSRP) or your published catalog price per unit.
% Discount Off Price List: Enter the percentage discount (as a whole number, e.g., "15%" as "15") that will be applied to the list price.

5. Auto-Calculated Fields. Do not modify these fields.
Contract Price *(List Price – Discount)* : This field will auto-calculate based on the List Price and Discount entered.
Extended Cost *(Contract Price × Est. Qty)* : This field will also auto-calculate.

6. Published Price List Link
Enter the URL or hyperlink to your published catalog/price list in the column titled *Link to Vendor's Published List Price* (Column M).
Ensure the link is publicly accessible on a standard PC and does not include macros or require a login, a specialized system, or any functionality to access and download.
Note: Alternatively, Vendors may upload the published price list in the corresponding section in the sourcing event. Vendors are not required to provide price list in both locations.

7. General Guidance
Do not alter the structure, formulas, or formatting of the Cost Proposal Workbook.
Complete all required fields for each item. Incomplete information shall be sufficient grounds for rejection of the Vendor's offer, at the discretion of the State.
All prices must be in **U.S. dollars**.
Ensure consistency between your catalog, pricing form, and proposal submission.

Vendor Cost Proposal

Reminder: Items listed in Attachment A are generic examples only and are not tied to specific products or brands.
Vendors should propose pricing based on their standard, commercially reasonable offerings for each item category.

INSTRUCTIONS

Click here to view the Instructions Tab

Coverage Options	
STATEWIDE	TRUE

Region List	
Northeast	TRUE
Southeast	TRUE
North Central	TRUE
Sandhills	TRUE
Piedmont-Triad	TRUE
Southwest	TRUE
Northwest	TRUE
Western	TRUE

Click here to view the regional map

Vendor must cover ALL counties in the selected region(s).

CATEGORY 1: APPAREL (e.g.,T-Shirts, Polo Shirts, Outerwear, Hats, Uniforms)

Item #	Item Description/Unit of Measure	Est. Qty.	Equivalent Items	Catalog ID	Price List Name	Price List Date	List Price	% Discount Off	Contract Price	Extended Cost	Link to Vendor's Published List Price
1	Screen Printed Cotton Short Sleeve Shirt (Each)	500	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-001	E Promos Today	4/10/2026	$6.50	10.00%	$ 5.85	$ 2,925.00	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
2	Moisture Wicking Polo, 100% Polyester (Each)	300	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-002	E Promos Today	4/10/2026	$14.17		$ 12.75	$ 3,825.90	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
3	Unisex Poly/Cotton Blend Tee 50/50 (Each)	400	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-003	E Promos Today	4/10/2026	$6.28		$ 5.65	$ 2,260.80	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
4	Long Sleeve Core Blend Tee 50/50 (Each)	350	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-004	E Promos Today	4/10/2026	$9.00		$ 8.10	$ 2,835.00	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
5	Heavy Cotton T-shirt, Preshrunk (Each)	600	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-005	E Promos Today	4/10/2026	$6.61		$ 5.95	$ 3,569.40	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
6	Embroidered Quarter Zip Pullover (Each)	200	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-006	E Promos Today	4/10/2026	$27.22		$ 24.50	$ 4,899.60	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
7	Embroidered Baseball Hat, Adjustable (Each)	300	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-007	E Promos Today	4/10/2026	$9.17		$ 8.25	$ 2,475.90	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
8	Embroidered Pullover Hoodie (Each)	250	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-008	E Promos Today	4/10/2026	$24.17		$ 21.75	$ 5,438.25	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
9	Embroidered Knit Beanie (Each)	200	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-009	E Promos Today	4/10/2026	$7.22		$ 6.50	$ 1,299.60	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
10	Embroidered Dress Shirt, Cotton/Poly (Each)	150	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-010	E Promos Today	4/10/2026	$21.39		$ 19.25	$ 2,887.65	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
	CATEGORY 1 TOTAL									$ 32,417.10	

Category 2: Bags & Totes (e.g., tote bags, backpacks, duffels, drawstring bags)

Item #	Item Description/Unit of Measure	Est. Qty.	Equivalent Items	Catalog ID	Price List Name	Price List Date	List Price	% Discount Off	Contract Price	Extended Cost	Link to Vendor's Published List Price
1	Non-Woven Tote Bag, 13"x15" with Gusset (Each)	1000	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-011	E Promos Today	4/10/26	$1.95	10.00%	$ 1.76	$ 1,755.00	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
2	Cotton Canvas Tote, 12oz, 15"x15" (Each)	800	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-012	E Promos Today	4/10/26	$4.10		$ 3.69	$ 2,952.00	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
3	Drawstring Backpack, Polyester (Each)	700	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-013	E Promos Today	4/10/26	$3.75		$ 3.38	$ 2,362.50	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
4	Zippered Convention Tote with Front Pocket (Each)	600	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-014	E Promos Today	4/10/26	$5.25		$ 4.73	$ 2,835.00	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
5	Insulated Lunch Cooler Bag (Each)	500	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-015	E Promos Today	4/10/26	$7.50		$ 6.75	$ 3,375.00	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
6	Messenger Bag, 600D Polyester (Each)	400	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-016	E Promos Today	4/10/26	$9.25		$ 8.33	$ 3,330.00	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
7	Duffel Bag, 20" Travel Size (Each)	300	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-017	E Promos Today	4/10/26	$19.25		$ 17.33	$ 5,197.50	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
8	Laptop Sleeve, 15" Neoprene (Each)	300	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-018	E Promos Today	4/10/26	$6.25		$ 5.63	$ 1,687.50	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
9	Backpack, Two-Compartment, 20L (Each)	250	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-019	E Promos Today	4/10/26	$26.50		$ 23.85	$ 1,687.50	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
10	Foldable Grocery Bag, RPET (Each)	600	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-020	E Promos Today	4/10/26	$3.05		$ 2.75	$ 1,647.00	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
	CATEGORY 2 TOTAL									$ 26,829.00	

Category 3: Drinkware (e.g., mugs, tumblers, bottles)

Item #	Item Description/Unit of Measure	Est. Qty.	Equivalent Items	Catalog ID	Price List Name	Price List Date	List Price	% Discount Off	Contract Price	Extended Cost	Link to Vendor's Published List Price
1	Stainless Steel Tumbler, 20oz, Laser Engraved (Each)	800	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-021	E Promos Today	4/10/26	$6.50	10.00%	$ 5.85	$ 4,680.00	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
2	Acrylic Tumbler with Straw, 16oz, Screen Printed (Each)	600	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-022	E Promos Today	4/10/26	$4.75		$ 4.28	$ 2,565.00	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
3	Ceramic Coffee Mug, 12oz, 1-Color Imprint (Each)	700	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-023	E Promos Today	4/10/26	$5.25		$ 4.73	$ 3,307.50	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
4	Reusable Plastic Water Bottle, 24oz, Screen Printed (Each)	900	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-024	E Promos Today	4/10/26	$4.25		$ 3.83	$ 3,442.50	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
5	Insulated Sports Bottle, 20oz, Flip Lid (Each)	500	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-025	E Promos Today	4/10/26	$7.75		$ 6.98	$ 3,487.50	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
6	Glass Mason Jar Mug, Etched Logo (Each)	300	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-026	E Promos Today	4/10/26	$6.00		$ 5.40	$ 1,620.00	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
7	Metal Travel Mug, 16oz, Engraved (Each)	400	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-027	E Promos Today	4/10/26	$8.50		$ 7.65	$ 3,060.00	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
8	Aluminum Water Bottle, 25oz, Full Color Wrap (Each)	350	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-028	E Promos Today	4/10/26	$6.95		$ 6.26	$ 2,189.25	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
9	Insulated Thermos Bottle, 32oz (Each)	200	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-029	E Promos Today	4/10/26	$11.50		$ 10.35	$ 2,189.25	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
10	Silicone Collapsible Cup, Printed Logo (Each)	250	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-030	E Promos Today	4/10/26	$5.95		$ 5.36	$ 1,338.75	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
	CATEGORY 3 TOTAL									$ 27,879.75	

Category 4: Writing Instruments (e.g., pens, pencils, highlighters, markers, stylus pens, mechanical pencils)

Item #	Item Description/Unit of Measure	Est. Qty.	Equivalent Items	Catalog ID	Price List Name	Price List Date	List Price	% Discount Off	Contract Price	Extended Cost	Link to Vendor's Published List Price
1	Plastic Ballpoint Pen, 1-Color Imprint (Each)	2000	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-031	E Promos Today	4/10/26	$0.85	10.00%	$ 0.77	$ 1,530.00	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
2	Metal Pen with Stylus, Laser Engraved (Each)	1000	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-032	E Promos Today	4/10/26	$2.25		$ 2.03	$ 2,025.00	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
3	Highlighter, Chisel Tip, 1-Color Logo (Each)	1200	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-033	E Promos Today	4/10/26	$1.35		$ 1.22	$ 1,458.00	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
4	Mechanical Pencil, Screen Printed (Each)	900	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-034	E Promos Today	4/10/26	$0.95		$ 0.86	$ 769.50	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
5	Gel Ink Pen, Retractable, 1-Color Logo (Each)	1500	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-035	E Promos Today	4/10/26	$1.10		$ 0.99	$ 1,485.00	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
6	Eco Bamboo Pen, Laser Engraved (Each)	800	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-036	E Promos Today	4/10/26	$3.25		$ 2.93	$ 2,340.00	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
7	4-in-1 Multi-Function Pen (Each)	400	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-037	E Promos Today	4/10/26	$2.95		$ 2.66	$ 1,062.00	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
8	Premium Rollerball Pen, Gift Box, Engraved (Each)	250	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-038	E Promos Today	4/10/26	$6.50		$ 5.85	$ 1,462.50	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
9	Crayon Pack, 4-Color with Custom Wrap (Pack)	1000	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-039	E Promos Today	4/10/26	$0.95		$ 0.86	$ 1,462.50	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
10	Dry Erase Marker Set, 4 Colors with Case (Set)	600	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-040	E Promos Today	4/10/26	$3.75		$ 3.38	$ 2,025.00	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
	CATEGORY 4 TOTAL									$ 15,619.50	

Category 5: Award & Recognition Gifts (e.g., plaques, trophies, medals, crystal awards, framed certificates, lapel pins)

Item #	Item Description/Unit of Measure	Est. Qty.	Equivalent Items	Catalog ID	Price List Name	Price List Date	List Price	% Discount Off	Contract Price	Extended Cost	Link to Vendor's Published List Price
1	Crystal Desk Award, Etched Logo (Each)	50	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-041	E Promos Today	4/10/2026	$28.50		$ 25.65	$ 1,282.50	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search

2	Acrylic Plaque, 8x10, Full Color Insert (Each)	80	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-042	E Promos Today	4/10/2026	$18.50		$ 16.65	$ 1,332.00	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
3	Wood Plaque with Metal Plate, Laser Engraved (Each)	100	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-043	E Promos Today	4/10/2026	$22.50		$ 20.25	$ 2,025.00	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
4	Glass Trophy, 10in, Etched (Each)	60	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-044	E Promos Today	4/10/2026	$30.00		$ 27.00	$ 1,620.00	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
5	Medal with Ribbon, Die Cast, Color Fill (Each)	300	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-045	E Promos Today	4/10/2026	$6.50	10.00%	$ 5.85	$ 1,755.00	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
6	Resin Award Statue, 8in (Each)	70	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-046	E Promos Today	4/10/2026	$24.50		$ 22.05	$ 1,543.50	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
7	Certificate Frame, 8.5x11, Logo Plate (Each)	150	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-047	E Promos Today	4/10/2026	$14.50		$ 13.05	$ 1,957.50	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
8	Engraved Metal Keychain, Recognition Gift (Each)	400	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-048	E Promos Today	4/10/2026	$4.50		$ 4.05	$ 1,620.00	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
9	Custom Enamel Lapel Pin (Each)	600	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-049	E Promos Today	4/10/2026	$2.75		$ 2.48	$ 1,620.00	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
10	Glass Paperweight, Etched (Each)	120	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-050	E Promos Today	4/10/2026	$16.50		$ 14.85	$ 1,782.00	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
	CATEGORY 5 TOTAL									**$ 16,537.50**	

Category 6: Other Promotional Merchandise (Any item suitable for imprinting with a logo or branding)

Vendors may only provide items in category six (6) if they are offering items in at least two (2) other categories.

Item #	Item Description/Unit of Measure	Est. Qty.	Equivalent Items	Catalog ID	Price List Name	Price List Date	List Price	% Discount Off	Contract Price	Extended Cost	Link to Vendor's Published List Price
1	Keychain, Metal, Laser Engraved (Each)	500	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-051	E Promos Today	4/10/2026	$4.50		$ 4.05	$ 2,025.00	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
2	Lanyard, 3/4", Screen Printed (Each)	600	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-052	E Promos Today	4/10/2026	$2.25		$ 2.03	$ 1,215.00	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
3	Stress Ball, Round, 1-Color Imprint (Each)	400	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-053	E Promos Today	4/10/2026	$1.35		$ 1.22	$ 486.00	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
4	Wall Calendar, 12-Month, Full Color (Each)	300	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-054	E Promos Today	4/10/2026	$6.50		$ 5.85	$ 1,755.00	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
5	Desk Calendar, Tent Style, Full Color (Each)	350	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-055	E Promos Today	4/10/2026	$5.95	10.00%	$ 5.36	$ 1,874.25	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
6	USB Flash Drive, 16GB, Printed Logo (Each)	250	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-056	E Promos Today	4/10/2026	$8.50		$ 7.65	$ 1,912.50	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
7	Phone Stand, Foldable, Printed Logo (Each)	300	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-057	E Promos Today	4/10/2026	$6.25		$ 5.63	$ 1,687.50	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
8	Mouse Pad, Full Color, 8"x9" (Each)	200	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-058	E Promos Today	4/10/2026	$7.50		$ 6.75	$ 1,350.00	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
9	Notebook, 5"x7", 80 Pages, 1-Color Logo (Each)	450	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-059	E Promos Today	4/10/2026	$3.25		$ 2.93	$ 1,350.00	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
10	Sticker Sheet, 8.5"x11", Full Color (Each)	800	Product link provided is representative of	EPT-APP-060	E Promos Today	4/10/2026	$2.25		$ 2.03	$ 1,620.00	https://epromostoday.com/ProductResults/?Search
	CATEGORY 6 TOTAL									**$ 15,275.25**	

Vendor-Defined Volume & Tiered Pricing (Informational Only – Not Scored)

INSTRUCTIONS

Vendors may provide up to five (5) pricing tiers per item on this form.
If your standard pricing structure includes more than five (5) tiers, DO NOT add rows to this sheet.
Instead, attach a supplemental pricing file as part of your proposal that clearly identifies the additional tiers.

CATEGORY 1: APPAREL (e.g.,t-shirts, polo shirts, outerwear, hats, uniforms)													
Item #	Item Description	UOM	Tier 1	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 3	Tier 4	Tier 4	Tier 5	Tier 5	Notes
1	Screen Printed Cotton Short Sleeve Shirt	Each	1-99	$7.25	100-249	$6.50	250-499	$6.10	500-999	$5.85	1000+	$5.60	Includes standard 1-color print
2	Moisture Wicking Polo, 100% Polyester	Each	1-49	$16.50	50-99	$14.75	100-249	$13.50	250-499	$12.75	500+	$12.25	Includes standard embroidery
3	Unisex Poly/Cotton Blend Tee 50/50	Each	1-99	$6.95	100-249	$6.25	250-499	$5.95	500-999	$5.65	1000+	$5.40	Includes standard 1-color print
4	Long Sleeve Core Blend Tee 50/50	Each	1-49	$10.95	50-99	$9.75	100-249	$8.95	250-499	$8.10	500+	$7.75	Includes standard 1-color print
5	Heavy Cotton T-shirt, Preshrunk	Each	1-99	$7.50	100-249	$6.75	250-499	$6.35	500-999	$5.95	1000+	$5.65	Includes standard 1-color print
6	Embroidered Quarter Zip Pullover	Each	1-24	$32.00	25-49	$28.50	50-99	$26.50	100-249	$24.50	250+	$23.50	Includes standard embroidery
7	Embroidered Baseball Hat, Adjustable	Each	1-49	$10.95	50-99	$9.75	100-249	$8.95	250-499	$8.25	500+	$7.75	Includes standard embroidery
8	Embroidered Pullover Hoodie	Each	1-24	$28.50	25-49	$25.50	50-99	$23.50	100-249	$21.75	250+	$20.75	Includes standard embroidery
9	Embroidered Knit Beanie	Each	1-49	$8.95	50-99	$7.95	100-249	$7.25	250-499	$6.50	500+	$6.10	Includes standard embroidery
10	Embroidered Dress Shirt, Cotton/Poly	Each	1-24	$26.50	25-49	$23.50	50-99	$21.50	100-249	$19.25	250+	$18.50	Includes standard embroidery
Category 2: Bags & Totes (e.g., tote bags, backpacks, duffels, drawstring bags)													
Item #	Item Description	UOM	Tier 1	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 3	Tier 4	Tier 4	Tier 5	Tier 5	Notes
1	Non-Woven Tote Bag, 13"x15" with Gusset	Each	1-99	$2.95	100-249	$2.55	250-499	$2.25	500-999	$1.95	1000+	$1.75	Includes standard 1-color, 1-location
2	Cotton Canvas Tote, 12oz, 15"x15"	Each	1-99	$5.50	100-249	$4.95	250-499	$4.50	500-999	$4.10	1000+	$3.85	Includes standard 1-color, 1-location
3	Drawstring Backpack, Polyester	Each	1-99	$4.95	100-249	$4.50	250-499	$4.10	500-999	$3.75	1000+	$3.50	Includes standard 1-color, 1-location
4	Zippered Convention Tote with Front Pocket	Each	1-99	$6.75	100-249	$6.10	250-499	$5.65	500-999	$5.25	1000+	$4.95	Includes standard 1-color, 1-location
5	Insulated Lunch Cooler Bag	Each	1-49	$9.95	50-99	$8.95	100-249	$8.25	250-499	$7.50	500+	$6.95	Includes standard 1-color, 1-location
6	Messenger Bag, 600D Polyester	Each	1-49	$11.95	50-99	$10.75	100-249	$9.95	250-499	$9.25	500+	$8.75	Includes standard 1-color, 1-location
7	Duffel Bag, 20" Travel Size	Each	1-24	$24.50	25-49	$22.00	50-99	$20.50	100-249	$19.25	250+	$18.25	Includes standard 1-color, 1-location
8	Laptop Sleeve, 15" Neoprene	Each	1-49	$8.50	50-99	$7.65	100-249	$6.95	250-499	$6.25	500+	$5.85	Includes standard 1-color, 1-location
9	Backpack, Two-Compartment, 20L	Each	1-24	$34.50	25-49	$31.00	50-99	$28.50	100-249	$26.50	250+	$25.00	Includes standard 1-color, 1-location
10	Foldable Grocery Bag, RPET	Each	1-99	$4.25	100-249	$3.75	250-499	$3.40	500-999	$3.05	1000+	$2.85	Includes standard 1-color, 1-location
Category 3: Drinkware (e.g., mugs, tumblers, bottles)													
Item #	Item Description	UOM	Tier 1	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 3	Tier 4	Tier 4	Tier 5	Tier 5	Notes
1	Stainless Steel Tumbler, 20oz, Laser Engraved	Each	1-49	$7.50	50-99	$6.95	100-249	$6.25	250-499	$5.85	500+	$5.50	Includes laser engraving
2	Acrylic Tumbler with Straw, 16oz, Screen Printed	Each	1-99	$5.25	100-249	$4.75	250-499	$4.50	500-999	$4.28	1000+	$4.00	Includes standard 1-color print
3	Ceramic Coffee Mug, 12oz, 1-Color Imprint	Each	1-99	$5.75	100-249	$5.25	250-499	$4.95	500-999	$4.73	1000+	$4.50	Includes standard 1-color print
4	Reusable Plastic Water Bottle, 24oz, Screen Printed	Each	1-99	$4.75	100-249	$4.25	250-499	$4.00	500-999	$3.83	1000+	$3.60	Includes standard 1-color print
5	Insulated Sports Bottle, 20oz, Flip Lid	Each	1-49	$8.75	50-99	$8.25	100-249	$7.50	250-499	$6.98	500+	$6.50	Includes standard 1-color print
6	Glass Mason Jar Mug, Etched Logo	Each	1-49	$6.75	50-99	$6.25	100-249	$5.75	250-499	$5.40	500+	$5.10	Includes etched logo
7	Metal Travel Mug, 16oz, Engraved	Each	1-49	$9.50	50-99	$8.95	100-249	$8.25	250-499	$7.65	500+	$7.25	Includes laser engraving
8	Aluminum Water Bottle, 25oz, Full Color Wrap	Each	1-49	$7.75	50-99	$7.25	100-249	$6.75	250-499	$6.26	500+	$5.95	Includes full color wrap
9	Insulated Thermos Bottle, 32oz	Each	1-24	$13.50	25-49	$12.50	50-99	$11.50	100-249	$10.35	250+	$9.75	Includes standard decoration
10	Silicone Collapsible Cup, Printed Logo	Each	1-99	$6.75	100-249	$6.25	250-499	$5.95	500-999	$5.36	1000+	$5.00	Includes standard 1-color print
Category 4: Writing Instruments (e.g., pens, pencils, highlighters, markers, stylus pens, mechanical pencils)													
Item #	Item Description	UOM	Tier 1	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 3	Tier 4	Tier 4	Tier 5	Tier 5	Notes
1	Plastic Ballpoint Pen, 1-Color Imprint	Each	1-499	$0.95	500-999	$0.85	1000-2499	$0.80	2500-4999	$0.77	5000+	$0.72	Includes standard 1-color print
2	Metal Pen with Stylus, Laser Engraved	Each	1-99	$2.75	100-249	$2.50	250-499	$2.25	500-999	$2.03	1000+	$1.90	Includes laser engraving
3	Highlighter, Chisel Tip, 1-Color Logo	Each	1-99	$1.75	100-249	$1.55	250-499	$1.35	500-999	$1.22	1000+	$1.10	Includes standard 1-color print
4	Mechanical Pencil, Screen Printed	Each	1-99	$1.25	100-249	$1.10	250-499	$0.95	500-999	$0.86	1000+	$0.80	Includes standard 1-color print
5	Gel Ink Pen, Retractable, 1-Color Logo	Each	1-249	$1.35	250-499	$1.20	500-999	$1.10	1000-2499	$0.99	2500+	$0.90	Includes standard 1-color print
6	Eco Bamboo Pen, Laser Engraved	Each	1-99	$3.75	100-249	$3.50	250-499	$3.25	500-999	$2.93	1000+	$2.75	Includes laser engraving
7	4-in-1 Multi-Function Pen	Each	1-99	$3.25	100-249	$3.10	250-499	$2.95	500-999	$2.66	1000+	$2.50	Includes standard 1-color print
8	Premium Rollerball Pen, Gift Box, Engraved	Each	1-24	$7.50	25-49	$7.00	50-99	$6.50	100-249	$5.85	250+	$5.50	Includes gift box packaging
9	Crayon Pack, 4-Color with Custom Wrap (Pack)	Each	1-499	$1.10	500-999	$1.00	1000-2499	$0.95	2500-4999	$0.86	5000+	$0.80	Includes full color imprint
10	Dry Erase Marker Set, 4 Colors with Case (Set)	Each	1-49	$4.50	50-99	$4.25	100-249	$3.75	250-499	$3.38	500+	$3.10	Includes standard 1-color print
Category 5: Award & Recognition Gifts (e.g., plaques, trophies, medals, crystal awards, framed certificates, lapel pins)													
Item #	Item Description	UOM	Tier 1	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 3	Tier 4	Tier 4	Tier 5	Tier 5	Notes
1	Crystal Desk Award, Etched Logo	Each	1-24	$32.00	25-49	$30.00	50-99	$28.50	100-249	$25.65	250+	$24.00	Includes etched logo
2	Acrylic Plaque, 8x10, Full Color Insert	Each	1-24	$21.00	25-49	$19.50	50-99	$18.50	100-249	$16.65	250+	$15.75	Includes full color insert
3	Wood Plaque with Metal Plate, Laser Engraved	Each	1-24	$25.00	25-49	$23.50	50-99	$22.50	100-249	$20.25	250+	$19.25	Includes laser engraved plate
4	Glass Trophy, 10in, Etched	Each	1-24	$34.00	25-49	$32.00	50-99	$30.00	100-249	$27.00	250+	$25.50	Includes etched logo
5	Medal with Ribbon, Die Cast, Color Fill	Each	1-99	$7.50	100-249	$6.95	250-499	$6.50	500-999	$5.85	1000+	$5.50	Includes color fill imprint
6	Resin Award Statue, 8in	Each	1-24	$27.00	25-49	$25.50	50-99	$24.50	100-249	$22.05	250+	$21.00	Includes standard decoration
7	Certificate Frame, 8.5x11, Logo Plate	Each	1-49	$16.50	50-99	$15.50	100-249	$14.50	250-499	$13.05	500+	$12.25	Includes logo plate
8	Engraved Metal Keychain, Recognition Gift	Each	1-99	$5.25	100-249	$4.95	250-499	$4.50	500-999	$4.05	1000+	$3.75	Includes laser engraving
9	Custom Enamel Lapel Pin	Each	1-249	$3.25	250-499	$3.00	500-999	$2.75	1000-2499	$2.48	2500+	$2.25	Includes full color imprint
10	Glass Paperweight, Etched	Each	1-49	$18.50	50-99	$17.50	100-249	$16.50	250-499	$14.85	500+	$14.00	Includes etched logo
Category 6: Other Promotional Merchandise (Any item suitable for imprinting with a logo or branding)													
Item #	Item Description	UOM	Tier 1	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 3	Tier 4	Tier 4	Tier 5	Tier 5	Notes
1	Keychain, Metal, Laser Engraved	Each	1-99	$5.25	100-249	$4.75	250-499	$4.50	500-999	$4.05	1000+	$3.75	Includes laser engraving
2	Lanyard, 3/4", Screen Printed	Each	1-99	$2.75	100-249	$2.50	250-499	$2.25	500-999	$2.03	1000+	$1.90	Includes standard 1-color print
3	Stress Ball, Round, 1-Color Imprint	Each	1-99	$1.75	100-249	$1.55	250-499	$1.35	500-999	$1.22	1000+	$1.10	Includes standard 1-color print
4	Wall Calendar, 12-Month, Full Color	Each	1-49	$7.50	50-99	$6.95	100-249	$6.50	250-499	$5.85	500+	$5.50	Includes full color print
5	Desk Calendar, Tent Style, Full Color	Each	1-49	$6.95	50-99	$6.50	100-249	$5.95	250-499	$5.36	500+	$5.00	Includes full color print
6	USB Flash Drive, 16GB, Printed Logo	Each	1-49	$9.50	50-99	$8.95	100-249	$8.50	250-499	$7.65	500+	$7.25	Includes printed logo
7	Phone Stand, Foldable, Printed Logo	Each	1-49	$6.95	50-99	$6.50	100-249	$6.25	250-499	$5.63	500+	$5.25	Includes standard 1-color print
8	Mouse Pad, Full Color, 8"x9"	Each	1-49	$8.25	50-99	$7.75	100-249	$7.50	250-499	$6.75	500+	$6.25	Includes full color print
9	Notebook, 5"x7", 80 Pages, 1-Color Logo	Each	1-99	$3.95	100-249	$3.50	250-499	$3.25	500-999	$2.93	1000+	$2.75	Includes standard 1-color print
10	Sticker Sheet, 8.5"x11", Full Color	Each	1-99	$2.75	100-249	$2.50	250-499	$2.25	500-999	$2.03	1000+	$1.90	Includes full color print

Shipping & Handling Plan (Informational Only – Not Scored)

Instructions

This tab is provided to capture each Vendor's shipping and handling practices. Responses will be used to establish baseline expectations for post-award contract management.

Completion Guidance:

- Provide concise, plain-language responses.
- Exact shipping dollar amounts are not required.
- Shipping costs may not be marked up.
- Manufacturer or decorator shipping costs must be addressed as part of the Shipping Fee Structure.

	Vendor Reponse
Describe the shipping method(s) and carrier(s) used to fulfill orders.	Orders are shipped via FedEx Ground, FedEx Express, and other FedEx services as appropriate. Additional carriers may be utilized when required to meet delivery timelines or customer requirements.
Provide the standard delivery timeframe under normal conditions (business days).	Standard delivery timeframe is typically 7–10 business days after final proof approval, depending on product type, order quantity, and decoration requirements.
Are shipping costs all inclusive in the % discount price of the item or charged separately?	Charged separately
If shipping costs are charged separately from item price, describe the shipping fee structure, including how manufacturer or decorator shipping costs are treated. *Shipping cost markup is not permitted.*	Shipping costs are billed separately at actual carrier rates. All shipping charges from manufacturers, suppliers, and decorators are passed through to the ordering entity without markup, in compliance with contract requirements.
Identify the handling fee structure(s) used, if applicable. *(Select Response)*	None
If Vendor allows more than one fee structure, provide an description in the Exceptions, Limitations, or Additional Notes field below	Not applicable. Vendor utilizes a single shipping fee structure based on actual carrier rates.
Describe when shipping or handling fees apply (i.e., what triggers additional fees).	Shipping charges apply to all physical product orders and are based on weight, dimensions, destination, and service level selected. Expedited shipping, split shipments, or special delivery requirements may result in additional shipping costs.
Identify how shipping and handling fees are disclosed to ordering entities.	All shipping charges are clearly disclosed at the time of quote and included on order confirmations and invoices prior to fulfillment.

Identify any exceptions, limitations, or additional notes related to shipping or handling.	Delivery timelines and shipping costs may vary based on product availability, production schedules, and carrier conditions. Every effort is made to meet requested delivery dates, and expedited production and shipping options are available upon request.

Additional Fees, Discounts, and Value-Added Services (Informational Only – Not Scored)

Instructions

Enter amounts or "*No Charge*" as applicable. Use preset UOM/Criteria where provided, or enter your own if different. Leave rows blank if not applicable.

1. Additional Fees

Fee Type / Description	Unit of Measure	Vendor UOM (if different)	Amount ($)	Notes / Conditions
Setup Fee (Screen/Embroidery/Imprint)	Per color / per logo		No charge	
Run Charge (Additional Color/Location)	Per item / per imprint		No charge	
Artwork/Proof Fee	Each proof / artwork file		No charge	
Rush Fee (Expedited Production/Shipping)	Per order / % surcharge		Varies	Varies based on production timeline and supplier capability

Other (Vendor-Defined)

Discount Type / Description	Vendor Criteria *(if different)*	Amount ($)	Notes/Conditions

2. Additional Discounts (Optional)

Discount Type / Description	Preset Criteria	Vendor Criteria (if different)	Discount %	Notes/Conditions
Early Payment Discount	Payment within 15 days		1%	Applies to invoice total
High Volume Discount	Orders over $100,000 annually		2%	Evaluated annually
Eco-Friendly / Sustainability Promotion	Recycled/eco-friendly items		N/A	Standard pricing applies

Other (Vendor-Defined)

Discount Type / Description	Vendor Criteria *(if different)*	Discount %	Notes/Conditions

3. Value-Added Services (Optional)

Service Offered		Vendor UOM (if different)	Cost (if any)	Notes/Conditions
Digital Proofs	Each proof		No charge	
Online Ordering Portal	Per portal		No charge	
Pre-production Samples	Each sample		Varies	Available upon request; charges may apply depending on item
Dedicated Account Manager	Per contract		No charge	

Other (Vendor-Defined)

Discount Type / Description	Vendor UOM	Cost *(if any)*	Notes/Conditions

For Value-Added Services, if a service is provided at no cost, please indicate **“No Charge”** in the *Cost* column.

Vendors should only select regions if they are not offering statewide coverage. Vendors selecting a region(s) must provide full catalog coverage and all services for every county within that region.

Click here to
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Cost
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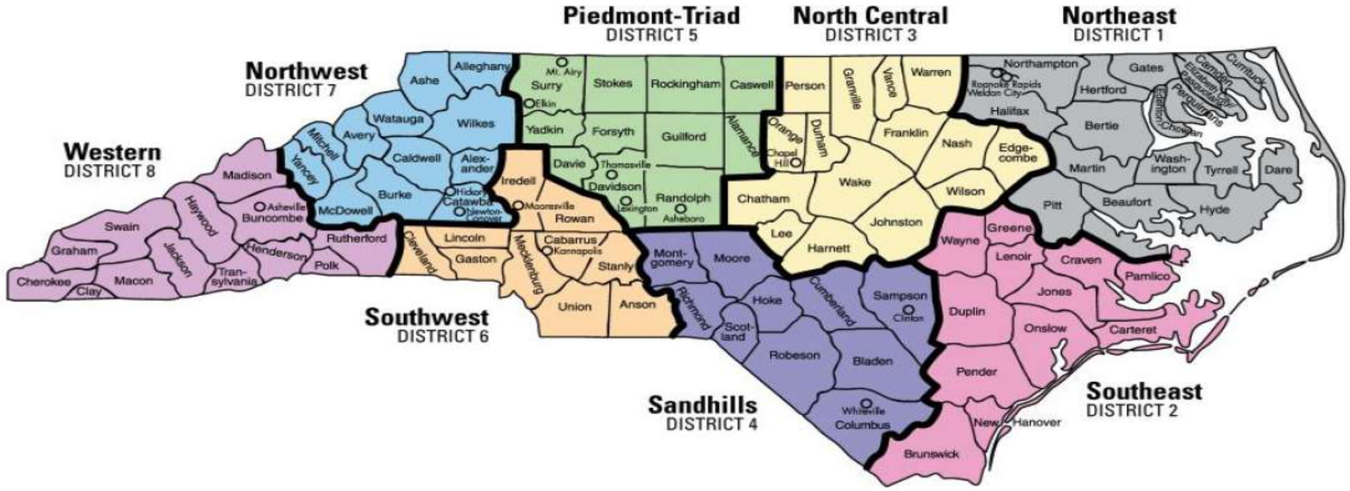
Region List
Northeast
Southeast
North Central
Sandhills
Piedmont-Triad
Southwest
Northwest
Western



Note: For purposes of this RFP, the areas shown as 'Districts' on the map shall be referred to as 'Regions.'