

RFP 2025-20 Computer Coding Program Official Responses to Questions

Question Number	RFP Section	Questions Received in Writing	DOCCS' Responses to Questions
1	4.4 Curriculum Delivery Modality (page 11), 4.5 Curriculum (pages 11-12)	<p>a. Is the existing Secure Offender Network (SON) bandwidth sufficient at all four designated facilities to support a coding education program with 20 concurrent users running local development environments, or should bidders plan and budget for establishing an independent network?</p> <p>b. What specific software restrictions apply to the closed network environment?</p> <p>c. Are local installations of standard development tools such as VS Code, Node.js, Python, Git, and local database servers (PostgreSQL, MongoDB) permitted on student machines, or must all software be pre-approved through a DOCCS or ITS review process?</p>	<p>a. The SON has insufficient bandwidth. An independent data network must be installed.</p> <p>b. See ITS policies at https://its.ny.gov/policies.</p> <p>c. These would be permitted within a closed environment.</p>
2	4.2 Program Startup (pages 8-9), 4.8 Security (page 13)	<p>a. Can DOCCS provide the specific cybersecurity policies and NYS Office of Information Technology Services (ITS) requirements that the contractor's network must comply with prior to proposal submission?</p> <p>b. Are bidders permitted to conduct site visits at the four designated facilities to assess lab space, electrical capacity, and infrastructure readiness?</p>	<p>a. ITS Security policies are available online at https://its.ny.gov/policies.</p> <p>b. The awarded vendor will be able to visit the facilities prior to the start of the program.</p>

**RFP 2025-20 Computer Coding Program
Official Responses to Questions**

3	<p>4.2 Program Startup (pages 8-9), 4.4 Curriculum Delivery Modality (page 11)</p>	<p>Are there existing vocational education technology systems, equipment, or network infrastructure currently installed at any of the four designated facilities that the selected contractor may leverage, or should bidders assume all infrastructure must be provisioned from scratch?</p>	<p>Currently three of the four facilities have the Secure Offender Network (SON) but bidders should assume all infrastructure must be provisioned from scratch.</p>
4	<p>4.2 Program Startup (pages 8-9), 4.10 Transition (page 14)</p>	<p>The RFP states the contractor shall provide all equipment necessary for the program. Please clarify:</p> <p>a. Does the contractor retain ownership of all equipment throughout the contract term, or does ownership transfer to DOCCS?</p> <p>b. Upon contract expiration or termination, is the contractor expected to remove all equipment, or does it remain at the facility?</p> <p>c. Who bears liability for contractor-owned equipment in the event of damage, theft, or confiscation during facility lockdowns, security incidents, or emergencies?</p>	<p>a. The contractor would retain ownership of all equipment during the contract term and be expected to maintain equipment to ensure uninterrupted services unless the contract were to terminate early. The contractor would retain ownership.</p> <p>b. Upon contract expiration or termination, the vendor supplied equipment would remain with the Department.</p> <p>c. The vendor may acquire independent insurance to cover all contractor owned equipment for the duration of the contract.</p>
5	<p>4.2 Program Startup (pages 8-9)</p>	<p>a. Have any of the four designated facilities previously offered computer coding, software development, or related technology education programs? If so, what level of technical proficiency should bidders expect from incoming students who may have participated in prior programs?</p> <p>b. For students with no prior exposure, what is the general baseline of computer literacy DOCCS anticipates?</p>	<p>a. Two of the four facilities currently offer the Computer Operator program which trains incarcerated individuals in Microsoft Office products and Digital Literacy Topics to at least a minimum level of competency required to prepare them for employment upon release. Each facility has a reasonable number of incarcerated individuals with basic computer proficiency.</p> <p>b. All students enrolled in the Coding Program, regardless of facility, will have a minimum of a High School Equivalency Diploma or higher and will have a basic computer proficiency.</p>

RFP 2025-20 Computer Coding Program Official Responses to Questions

6	4.5 Curriculum (pages 11-12)	<p>The RFP references a full-stack developer curriculum and final industry certification.</p> <p>a. Given the rapid evolution of the technology industry, would DOCCS welcome the integration of applied Artificial Intelligence and AI-assisted development components into the full-stack curriculum to strengthen graduate employability and align the program with current industry hiring standards? This would supplement—not replace—the core full-stack requirements outlined in the RFP.</p> <p>b. May the contractor propose a certification framework that combines multiple industry-recognized credentials (e.g., front-end and back-end certifications from recognized bodies) to constitute the full-stack developer certification, or does DOCCS require a single unified credential?</p> <p>c. Does DOCCS have specific expectations for the types of applications or projects students should build during the program? For example, should projects be oriented toward particular industries, community needs, or real-world use cases, or is the contractor free to design the project-based learning scope?</p>	<p>a. DOCCS is willing to negotiate with the awarded vendor on the inclusion of AI topics. However, ITS policy on AI must be followed (https://its.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2026/01/nys-p24-001-acceptable-use-of-ai.pdf)</p> <p>b. DOCCS would be willing to consider stacked credentials as long as the population were provided with the option to earn at least one single unified credential as well prior to their completion of the program and release.</p> <p>c. All applications and projects should provide the incarcerated individuals in the program with the appropriate training and real-world experience required to prepare individuals for future employment opportunities.</p>
7	3.3 Preferred Qualifications (page 7)	<p>a. For the preferred qualification of 'experience in a correctional setting,' may the bidding organization satisfy</p>	<p>a. It is preferred that the bidding organization itself should have experience providing services in a correctional</p>

RFP 2025-20 Computer Coding Program Official Responses to Questions

		<p>this through the documented correctional teaching experience of individual team members, instructors, or advisors who will be directly involved in program delivery, rather than requiring the organization itself to have held a prior corrections contract?</p> <p>b. What are DOCCS' goals and expectations for post-release career outcomes? Specifically, what types of roles does DOCCS envision graduates pursuing (e.g., junior developer, QA analyst, IT support, freelance), and what is the expected timeline between release and employment for purposes of measuring program success?</p> <p>c. How will DOCCS facilitate the contractor's ongoing contact with program graduates after their release? Will DOCCS provide advance notification of release dates and updated contact information to enable continuity of career support services?</p> <p>d. May post-release transition services—including career coaching, mentoring, job placement support, and technical assistance—be delivered remotely through virtual platforms, or must all post-release services be provided in person within New York State?</p>	<p>setting, but staff experience would be considered as well.</p> <p>b. The goals and expectations for those who complete the Coding program are that individuals are provided with the opportunity for future employment whether that is in the private or public sectors as it relates to their training in the program. Roles may vary but the opportunity to be put in contact with potential employers is essential. Coding roles could be, but not necessarily limited to website developer, data entry, and scripters. Expected timeline between release and employment should be 6 months to a year and a half.</p> <p>c. DOCCS will provide the releasee with the contractor information prior to release.</p> <p>d. DOCCS would support all modes of post-release transition services that would be available to the releasee.</p>
8	<p>3.3 Preferred Qualifications (page 7), 4.5 Curriculum (pages 11-12)</p>	<p>a. Are students permitted to retain course materials, notes, and reference guides upon program completion?</p> <p>b. Additionally, may the contractor provide graduates with access to</p>	<p>a. Students may retain all paper-based course materials, notes, and reference guides upon program completion.</p> <p>b. If a supplemental self-paced resource is available to the population, DOCCS would consider reviewing the</p>

**RFP 2025-20 Computer Coding Program
Official Responses to Questions**

		supplemental self-paced learning resources (e.g., an online platform or offline materials) to support continued skill development during and after their transition?	product as a possible addition to the incarcerated populations tablets upon review and approval from security, media review, and ITS. This would be provided by the Contractor at no additional cost to DOCCS.
9	5.11 Payment <i>(pages 18-20)</i>	Regarding the retainage structure (20% total across two cohorts, 10% per cohort): a. Is retainage calculated and held per facility or across all four facilities combined? b. What is the expected timeline for retainage release after a cohort completes the program? c. What constitutes 'successful course completion' for purposes of retainage release—is there a minimum student completion rate or competency threshold?	a. Please see Amendment 2 for removal of retainage language from the RFP.
10	5.11 Payment <i>(pages 18-20)</i>	a. If a student is transferred, released, or otherwise exits the program mid-cohort, is the contractor compensated for instruction already delivered to that student, or is compensation tied exclusively to students who complete the full program? b. What is DOCCS' standard payment processing timeline for approved monthly invoices? Does the State anticipate any changes to the contract's funding source or appropriation status during the initial term that could affect payment schedules?	a. The contractor will be compensated for the instruction provided in the program at an hourly rate, and will not be tied to individual students and their completion of the program. b. A vendor issues an invoice to the Correctional Facility for review and approval. Once DOCCS approves the invoice, payment request is sent to NYS Control Agencies for review and approval. If approved payment is typically within 30 days. This will vary based on who the vendor is submitting invoices to, the facility or central office. At this time, DOCCS does not anticipate changes to funding. Please see Section 5.36 Termination for additional information on changes in funding availability.

RFP 2025-20 Computer Coding Program Official Responses to Questions

11	4.9 Contract Invoicing (pages 13-14), 5.11 Payment (pages 18-20)	<p>a. What is the approximate average number of lockdown days per year across the four designated facilities?</p> <p>b. For purposes of the cancellation fee structure in Section 5.11, are lockdowns and security-related class cancellations treated under the cancellation provisions, or are they classified separately?</p>	<p>a. While rare, lockdowns are appropriate when safety and security of the staff and incarcerated population dictate such action, and an average number of days cannot be predicted at this time.</p> <p>b. Yes, lockdowns and security-related class cancellations are treated under the cancellation provisions.</p>
12	3.3 Preferred Qualifications (page 7)	<p>This section states a preference for transition services (employment mentoring, technical support) "at no cost to DOCCS." Does this preclude the inclusion of Case Managers or Employment Specialists who provide pre- and post-release services or just post-release service in the proposed budget to facilitate these outcomes, or must all post-release support staff be funded entirely by outside sources?</p>	<p>DOCCS provides the incarcerated population transitional services as part of their release. DOCCS is looking for a vendor to provide post-release support in the Coding field as it pertains to employment preparation and / or employment services.</p>
13	4.1 Program Overview (page 8)	<p>a. The RFP states that the program will operate with "one (1) cohort at each of the four (4) facilities per year" with a total of "20 students per facility." It also states classes consist of "two (2), 3-hour modules per day." Please clarify if the daily schedule requires the full cohort of 20 students to attend 6 hours of instruction per day (two 3-hour modules), or if the cohort is split into two groups of 10 students who attend one 3-hour module each?</p> <p>b. Regarding the "total 7.5 hours per day," does this calculation assume 6 hours of instruction (two 3-hour modules), 0.5</p>	<p>a. The cohorts will be 20 students attending for six hours a day during the AM and PM modules.</p> <p>b. Yes.</p> <p>c. No, the contractor will not be penalized if the enrollment drops below 20 students. Students will be enrolled into a cohort and continue through the program, not a rolling enrollment.</p>

**RFP 2025-20 Computer Coding Program
Official Responses to Questions**

		<p>hour for lunch, and 1.0 hour for preparation time?</p> <p>c. The RFP mentions a total of 20 students per facility per year. If a student is transferred, released, or dropped from the program by DOCCS, will the contractor be penalized for the reduced class size? Is there a mechanism to backfill these seats to maintain the cohort numbers?</p>	
14	4.2 Program Startup (page 9)	<p>a. Regarding "Curriculum Approval," the RFP states the curriculum must be approved prior to use. What is the anticipated timeline for DOCCS to review and approve the curriculum once submitted? We want to ensure sufficient time for any required modifications before the start date.</p> <p>b. The RFP anticipates classes beginning three months after the contract start date. Will DOCCS guarantee that all necessary physical infrastructure (e.g., room availability, electrical wiring for the lab) will be ready by that date to avoid delays in program launch?</p> <p>c. Under "Network Connectivity," the RFP requires a platform separate from existing network connectivity. Our curriculum platform operates on a closed network but requires whitelisting of specific IP addresses for upload/download synchronization. Is a whitelisted closed-circuit environment permissible under the security requirements?</p>	<p>a. DOCCS would require 4 weeks for review and approval of any coding curriculum.</p> <p>b. DOCCS will make every effort to ensure that the program area is ready for the program launch barring any unforeseen issues with infrastructure or the required renovation approval process.</p> <p>c. A new data circuit must be installed to support a new, separate network. Whitelisting IP addresses will be acceptable.</p> <p>d. Yes.</p>

**RFP 2025-20 Computer Coding Program
Official Responses to Questions**

		d. When we read the language around network and circuit design, it sounds similar to an isolated network architecture - separated from the open internet and other facilities/devices. Are we interpreting the language correctly?	
15	4.3 Designated Staffing (page 9)	<p>a. This section states that "program instructors" shall be designated as "liaisons" for student monitoring, program operation, and educational accountability. Our instructors are skilled developers, not operations managers. Can you clarify your intent for the instructor role?</p> <p>b. In the event of sudden staff turnover or illness, will DOCCS review and approve the resumes of temporary instructors on an expedited basis to ensure continuity of instruction? Approximately how long will it take to review and approve a new instructor resume?</p>	<p>a. The intent for the instructor is to ensure all students are actively engaged in the program and continually progressing towards program completion. The instructor will also be responsible for ensuring that the day-to-day execution of program related activities are completed and that the curriculum is properly presented to the incarcerated individuals so they can progress at a reasonable rate for completion.</p> <p>b. DOCCS recommends that there is a backup or multiple back up instructors cleared if needed in the event staff are unable to provide services.</p>
16	4.4 Curriculum Delivery Modality (page 11)	The RFP limits remote instruction to 20%. In the event of an instructor emergency or illness preventing on-site attendance, is it permissible to utilize a remote instructor to cover the class, provided the total remote instruction for the cohort remains below the 20% threshold?	Utilizing remote instruction upon an instructor emergency or illness would be considered if 24 hours' notice was provided to ensure remote instruction equipment is available.
17	Attachment 7 Cost Proposal, Section 6.4 Cost Proposal (page 43)	The RFP states that travel, materials, equipment, overhead, profit, and labor must be included in the bid price. May program management, compliance oversight, and reporting administration be	Bidders may not modify the Cost Proposal to change the deliverables or include additional fees. If the Bidder has additional costs beyond the deliverables listed on the Cost Proposal, they must build those costs into their bid rates for the existing deliverables. Please see Amendment 2 for an amended Cost Proposal.

RFP 2025-20 Computer Coding Program Official Responses to Questions

		included within the hourly training rate under Deliverable C?	
18	Attachment 7 Cost Proposal, Section 4.2 Program Startup (page 9)	If curriculum revisions are required beyond the estimated 40 hours under Deliverable B, will additional hours be billable?	No, curriculum revisions over 40 hours will not be billable. Please see Amendment 2.
19	Attachment 7 Cost Proposal	Is Deliverable E expected to cover all system support costs (including third-party software licenses), or only vendor labor?	All system support costs.
20	Attachment 7 Cost Proposal	The scope references a 7.5-hour program day, while Attachment 7 reflects an 8-hour calculation for Deliverable C. Can you confirm which duration should be used for pricing purposes?	8-hour duration should be used for pricing purposes.

Applicants should monitor the following websites for posted updates or information:

NYS Contract Reporter: <http://www.nyscr.ny.gov>

NYS DOCCS' Web site: <https://doccs.ny.gov/procurement-opportunities>

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