

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**  
Digital On-Demand Behavioral Health Platform  
**Vermont State Colleges System d/b/a Vermont State University**

**ISSUED BY**  
Vermont State Colleges d/b/a Vermont State University

**APPLICATION DEADLINE**  
April 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025, 2:00 pm Eastern Time

**APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS**  
Email PDF versions of all documents to [cara.hill@vermontstate.edu](mailto:cara.hill@vermontstate.edu) by the deadline, using the following naming convention:

- **Email Subject Line:** Behavioral Health Platform
- **Organization and Personnel Qualifications:** Applicant\_Name\_RFP\_ Behavioral Health Platform
- **References:** Applicant\_Name\_RFP\_ Behavioral Health Platform\_References.pdf
- **Fee Proposal:** Applicant\_Name\_RFP\_ Behavioral Health Platform\_Fees.pdf

**QUESTIONS REGARDING THE RFP**  
Questions regarding this RFP may be directed to Cara Hill, Assistant to the Dean of Students. For fastest response please enter **Behavioral Health Platform RFP Question** in the subject line of your message. All questions must be submitted by March 17<sup>th</sup> 2025, 4:00pm ET. Answers will be provided by March 20<sup>th</sup> ,2025 at 4:00pm ET, and will be available on [www.vsc.edu/rfps](http://www.vsc.edu/rfps).

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## VERMONT STATE COLLEGES SYSTEM OVERVIEW

As of July 1, 2023, the [Vermont State Colleges System](#) (VSCS) will be comprised of two member institutions [Community College of Vermont](#) (CCV) and [Vermont State University](#) (VTSU). The system educates over ten thousand Vermonters and non-Vermonters each year, employs over three thousand Vermonters, and in Spring 2020, graduated over eighteen hundred Vermonters and out-of-state students into the workforce with certificates and degrees.<sup>1</sup>

Combining and building upon the history of Castleton University, Northern Vermont University, and Vermont Technical College, Vermont State University will become a single accredited institution on July 1, 2023, pending final approval of NECHE.

## SCOPE OF WORK

The Vermont State Colleges System seeks a company or individuals to provide on-demand fee for service telehealth services to residential, commuter, and virtual students at VTSU.

The selected company should provide, at minimum, the following services at a fee for service rate:

1. Free on-demand 24/7 virtual mental health care via video or phone;
2. Scheduled appointments for students with licensed counselor via video or phone, at no charge to student;
3. Free 24-hour access to self-care tools and health education on a variety of age-appropriate topics;
4. Free 24-hour access for faculty and staff to clinical professionals who can assist/advise in emergencies;
5. 24/7/365 emergency/crisis support with a licensed clinician for students.
6. Assist students with identifying campus and community social-service resources.
7. Ability to respond to after-hours mental health crises and to collaborate with campus staff and community mental health crisis services.
8. Access to a culturally and racially diverse pool of qualified behavioral-health providers;
9. Access via a web portal;
10. Integration with SAML 2.0 for Single sign-on (SSO) secure user authentication with existing school login system;
11. Mobile application;
12. Integration with Canvas Learning Management System (LMS);
13. Language interpreters available for on-demand and scheduled appointments;
14. HIPAA compliant electronic care summaries for campus providers;
15. PyraMed, integration;
16. Ability to track and analyze usage data by student demographics;
17. 24/7 technical support;
18. Fully accessible interface that is compliant with Section 508 and/or WCAG 2.0 AA.

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<sup>1</sup>[VSCS Sourcebooks](#) as well as [Board & Committee Meeting Materials and Minutes](#) are available on the System's website.

**SCHEDULE:**

Deliverable:	Expected Delivery:
Implementation	July 1, 2025
Initiation of test phase	August 1, 2025
Live	August 15, 2025

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## **QUALIFICATIONS**

Company must have a minimum of five (5) years demonstrated experience and expertise in the successful work associated with this RFP in public higher education institutions.

The successful bidder shall have a staff that is sufficient in numbers and qualifications to provide appropriate services to the variety of participants served.

Counselors must be state-licensed in all 50 states, master's level or above, trained and experienced mental health professionals.

Counselors must be tele-health certified and licensed to operate in all states in which our students reside.

Counselors must represent diverse backgrounds and/or have specialized background or experience working with students from diverse backgrounds.

## **EVALUATION**

Responses will be evaluated on company's ability to provide the scope of service desired, the company's experience, the qualifications of counselors and other practitioners, and fee.

### **Method of Award**

VSCS will base the evaluation of each proposal to this RFP on its demonstrated competence, compliance, format, cost, and enterprise applicability. This includes, but is not limited to, product availability, quality, prices, service availability, timing, and delivery. The purpose of this RFP is to identify those vendors having the interest, capability, and financial strength to provide on-demand virtual mental health services to VTSU students. If the VSCS does not identify a suitable bidder within the RFP process, the VSCS is not obligated to award the project to any bidder.

The VSCS, in its best interests, reserves the option to accept or reject any or all proposals, to accept or reject any item or combination of items therein, to waive any irregularities or informalities in any proposal or items therein, and/or to negotiate with particular bidders following the evaluation of proposals without right of recourse by other bidders. A top proposal would be assessed in the judgment of VSCS as best complying with all considerations set forth in this RFP. When VSCS has tentatively selected a successful proposal, VSC may engage in discussions with the bidder to formulate plans in greater detail, to clarify unclear items for either party, and to otherwise complete negotiations prior to formal selection.

### **Evaluation Criteria**

**Approach to Scope of Services:** How does the firm describe the approach that will be taken to accomplish this work? Is the company able to provide all services listed?

**Company's Experience:** What experience does the company have working with public university systems? Do the references provided support the company's claims?

**Qualifications of Practitioners:** How qualified are the individuals proposed to provide services? Are counselors licensed to practice in Vermont and in all 50 other states? Are counselors tele-health certified? Do available counselors reflect a diversity of backgrounds?

**Fee proposal:** What is the detailed breakdown of the first-year cost of the platform/service based on 5500, and 7500 headcount? What are the subsequent annual renewal fees?

### Scoring

	Weight	Maximum points	Weighted Total
Scope	2.5	16	40
Experience	2.5	8	20
Qualifications	2.5	8	20
Fee	2.5	8	<u>20</u>
TOTAL			100

## GENERAL CONDITIONS

1. This RFP does not commit the Vermont State Colleges System to award a contract.
2. This RFP and the process it describes are proprietary to the VSCS and are for the sole and exclusive benefit of the corporation. No other party, including any Applicant, is granted any rights hereunder. Any response, including written documents and verbal communication, by any Applicant to this RFP, shall become the property of the VSCS and may be subject to public disclosure as described in the Confidentiality section, below
3. Submission of a proposal indicates acceptance by the Applicant of the conditions contained in this RFP, unless clearly and specifically noted in the proposal submitted and confirmed in the contract between Vermont State Colleges System and the chosen Applicant selected
4. Responses shall be binding upon the chosen Applicant and irrevocable for up to 60 days following the close of applications
5. From the release date of this request for proposal until award of the contract, no contact with Vermont State Colleges System personnel or board members related to this solicitation is permitted. Direct all communications to the designated contact on the first page of this request.
6. Any contract awarded will be governed by the laws of the State of Vermont and adjudicated in the exclusive jurisdiction of the court of the State of Vermont.
7. The Vermont State Colleges System reserves the right to:

- a. Request clarification and additional information from any Applicant during the evaluation process
- b. Negotiate with the chosen Applicant to include further services not identified in this RFP
- c. Re-advertise with either an identical or a revised scope of work or cancel requirements in their entirety
- d. Issue subsequent RFPs based on refinement of concepts proposed in response to this request
- e. Conduct investigations of the qualifications of the Applicant as deemed appropriate
- f. Request the Applicant modify the submitted proposal to more fully meet the needs of the Vermont State Colleges System

## CONFIDENTIALITY

The Vermont State Colleges System complies with the Vermont Public Records Act, 1 VSA § 315 *et seq.* which requires public agencies to allow any person to inspect or copy any public record upon request. Accordingly, applicants for this RFP are hereby advised that any communications, data or other information received by the Vermont State Colleges System during the RFP process could be subject to a public records request. However, certain public records are exempt from public inspection and copying, as set forth in 1 VSA § 317(c), including, for example, those portions of a record which meet the statutory definition of a trade secret. **Accordingly, Applicant should submit a second copy of their proposal, from which any portion of the proposal that the Applicant reasonably believes to be exempt from disclosure under the Public Records Act has been redacted. By submitting a proposal, you indicate that you understand the requirements of this section and the potential applicability of Vermont's Public Records Act to your proposal.**

## SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

All submissions are due no later than April 18, 2025, 2:00 pm Eastern Time

In three (3) separate documents, to be named as outlined on Application Instructions page, please provide the following:

1. **Organization Approach and Personnel Qualifications:** Provide a statement of qualifications and capability to perform the services sought by this RFP, including:
  - a. Provide a comprehensive outline as to how your company intends to provide the services and outcomes identified below.
  - b. Provide a detailed schedule of activities to achieve each phase of this RFP.
  - c. Provide three or more well-defined examples of work that you have collectively accomplished. Be clear in regards to what services were provided by the various practitioners who are included in this team.

- d. Qualifications and experience for personnel working on this engagement including skillset (described in detail), experience level, and job title. Relevance with similar projects should be cited along with the level of effort expected for this engagement.
- 2. **References:** Provide examples of work and references from three to five clients performing work of similar complexity. In each reference include the following:
  - a. Name of institution.
  - b. Size, type, and location of institution.
  - c. Name, telephone number, and email address of institutional contacts.
- 3. **Fee Proposal:** Provide a fee proposal with the following break out.
  - a. Initial cost including set-up fee(s), if any) based on 4000, 4500, and 5000 student headcount.
  - b. Subsequent annual renewal fees based on 4000, 4500, and 5000 student headcount.
  - c. Price per tele health session for 100, 150 and 200 sessions.
  - d. Cost of any optional, added-value services offered by the company.
- 4. **Redacted Copy:** Provide a second copy of the proposal, redacting any portion of the proposal that is reasonably believed to be exempt from disclosure under the Vermont Public Records Act.

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