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FLEXIBLE RESOURCES, DATA-DRIVEN SOLUTIONS:  
USING HMIS AND HEARTH TO END HOMELESSNESS

# Vendor Relations and Changing Software





## Presenters

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## Learning Objectives

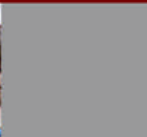
- To become familiar with important aspects of vendor relations including: contracting, conflict resolution, monitoring obligations, and termination
- To learn the importance of assessing and defining the community's software requirements: inputs, workflow, calculations, and outputs
- To understand the process and considerations communities should investigate when considering switching software





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# Vendor Relations





## Important Aspects of Vendor Relations

- Contracting process that allows for stakeholder input
- Monitoring protocols that are consistently practiced
- Mutually understood process for conflict resolution
- Transparent termination process





## Stakeholder Involvement in Contract Negotiations

- Continuum of Care staff
- Technology staff
- Subject matter experts (i.e. privacy laws)
- Contract specialists





## Stakeholder Involvement in Contract Negotiations (cont.)

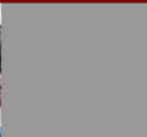
- Attorneys (for each partner)
- Vendor representative with highest level of decision-making authority
- Vendor representatives with strong expertise in the software product





## Primary Contract Elements

- General terms and conditions
- Deliverables and expectations
- System modifications and enhancements
- Service (hosting, maintenance, and support)







## Other Contract Elements

- Definitions
- Escrow deposits
- Access and limitations of use
- Data ownership





## Other Contract Elements (cont.)

- Training and Technical Support
- Process for resolving issues
- Indemnification
- Limitation of liability
- Copy of original proposal





## Creating Deliverables

- Clearly describe the deliverable
- Indicate the priority of the deliverable
- Clarify who is assigned responsibility for the deliverable (indicate one person)
- Articulate the due date
- Indicate the status of the deliverable
- Indicate the completion date (whenever met)





## Performance Indicators

- Significant changes/challenges in performance measures
- Deliverables that were not met or were exceeded
- Accomplishments and challenges
- System compliance with data standards
- System compliance with technical standards





## Developing Monitoring Protocols

- What is the process for tracking agreed upon expectations?
- How often do you track these?
- Process for addressing issues when they arise?
- What are the consequences for not meeting expectations?
- Are consequences immediate or are they addressed in an annual contract?





## Performance Indicators

### Examples:

- Number of outages
- Amount of downtime
- Number of system errors reported (and fixed)
- Number of system errors outstanding over 45 days
- Number of enhancements submitted (and completed)





## Resolving Conflict

- Ensure the problem is understood
- Involve the appropriate people in the resolution process
- Understand the chain of authority for both parties involved in the conflict
- Understand the benefits and risks of contract termination





## Contract Termination

- Does termination require written notice?
- Are there early termination fees?
- What is the provision for delivering data/equipment?







## Contract Termination (cont.)

- What is the cost to download and store data?
- What is the time frame for data transfer?
- Who will validate the data?
- What is the disposal process for data, hardware, media storage, and equipment?





## Discussion Questions

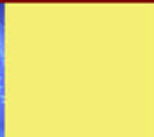
- What experiences have you had with managing vendor relations?
- What were the challenges?
- What were the successes?
- What would you do differently if you contracting with your vendor for the first time?





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# Changing Software





## Important Aspects of Changing Software

- What is the potential impact on current reporting requirements and time frames for both the CoC and the individual agencies?
- What is the cost and how will it be funded?
- Is a partnership with another CoC possible?





## Important Aspects of Changing Software (cont.)

- Is technical support needed to migrate the data?
- How will software functionality be determined?
- What are the requirements for procurement (competitive bid, specific list of vendors, minimum number of bidders)?





## RFP Process

- Prepare an RFP
  - Determine software functionality
- Issue an RFP
  - Check for potential legal requirements
- Review products and proposals
  - Product demonstrations, user testing





## RFP Process (cont.)

- Issue a statement of work
  - Based on the RFP and the vendor's response
- Negotiate a contract





## Primary Elements to Include in the RFP

- Background
- Include relevant laws
- Current technical environment
- Scope of work
- Project timeline







## Primary Elements to Include in the RFP (cont.)

- Functional requirements
- Pricing guidelines
- RFP timeline
- References
- Legal documentation





## Software Functionality: Data Collection

- Beyond the HUD HMIS Data Standards, what other data are needed?
- Is the community of stakeholders involved in determining data collection standards?
- Has an effort been made to align funders to reduce redundancies?
- Is data integration from other systems needed?
- Will data be shared, and to what extent?





## Software Functionality: Interface

- Is there a common intake form already in use to support a common interface?
- How will variations in program delivery be accounted for in the workflow?





## Software Functionality: Outputs

- What formats are needed for downloading data?
- What formats are needed for data imports/exports?
- What are the required reports and how should they be rendered?





## Discussion Questions

- What experiences have you had with changing software?
- Who was involved in the process?
- What were some of the challenges and some of the successes?
- What would you do differently if you were changing software today?





## Resources Available on HMIS.INFO

- *Deal or No Deal: Vendor Relations & Contracting*
- *Changing Software Workshop Workbook*
- *Negotiating Successful HMIS Software Contracts Presentation*
- *HMIS Cost Estimation Guidelines: Cost Framework and Submission Recommendations*





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## Contact Information

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