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Frank Edelblut
Commissioner

Christine M. Brennan
Deputy Commissioner

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
101 Pleasant Street
Concord, N.H. 03301
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May 2, 2021

His Excellency, Governor Christopher T. Sununu
and the Honorable Executive Council
State House
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

REQUESTED ACTION

Authorize the Department of Education, Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) to enter into a contract with The Stephen Group, LLC, Manchester, New Hampshire (Vendor Code 355874), in an amount not to exceed \$592,710, to provide the development and implementation of a comprehensive quality assurance system for the Vocational Rehabilitation program, effective upon Governor and Council approval through June 30, 2023. 100% Federal Funds.

Funds are available in account titled Vocational Rehabilitation Field Programs-Federal for FY2021, and anticipated to be available in FY2022 and FY2023 upon the availability and continued appropriation of funds in the future operating budget, with the authority to adjust encumbrances between fiscal years within the price limitation through the Budget Office, if needed and justified.

	<u>FY2021</u>	<u>FY2022</u>	<u>FY2023</u>
06-56-56-565010-25380000-102-500731	\$7,590	\$453,675	\$131,445
Contracts for Program Services			

EXPLANATION

This request is to collaborate with The Stephen Group, LLC to design, develop, implement and train staff to implement a comprehensive quality assurance system to address the recent Legislative Budget Assistant audit of the VR program. The audit defines 46 observations that cover the following areas: governance, fiscal management, eligibility, individual plans for employment development, closure processes, developing policy and procedures, performance expectations, and service provision and authorization and payments for services. The Stephen Group, LLC will assess, design, develop and implement processes, procedures, internal controls and a comprehensive quality assurance system to directly address the audit observations.

A Request for Proposals (RFP) was advertised on the Department of Education website on February 25, 2021. Five (5) proposals were received by the due date of March 26, 2021. A review

committee consisting of the Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Education, VR Director, Field Service Administrator, Administrator of Services for the Blind and Vision-Impaired, two Program Specialists, a Business System Analyst, and four Regional Office Supervisors reviewed the proposals received by the deadline; (Attachment A). The team recommended The Stephen Group, LLC for funding.

The Stephen Group, LLC understands the critical importance of having a strong quality assurance system within a VR agency to ensure quality services are provided and received. The company has intimate knowledge of the requirements and components required to establish and maintain a comprehensive quality assurance program. They have worked with several states, include the Texas VR program in doing very similar work with outstanding results.

The practice of rehabilitation counseling has many intricate components and ensuring consistency and quality of services takes extensive training and monitoring. Eligibility determination criteria, disability priority decisions, functional limitations as a result of diagnoses, assessment tools, personalized planning and community rehabilitation provider services are the main components to providing VR services. Quality assurance and consistency across the VR program is critical to customer success.

The combination of the existing staff expertise and the in-depth knowledge, and the breadth of subject-matter expertise makes The Stephen Group, LLC uniquely qualified to deliver this system of quality assurance to the VR agency in NH. The goal of this contract is to ensure that all customers receive the highest level services and administrators of the program know that quality assurance is an achievable accomplishment.

In the event Federal Funds are no longer available, General Funds will not be requested to support this contract.

Respectfully Submitted,



Frank Edelblut
Commissioner of Education

Attachment A

SCORING FOR REVIEW
Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)
Comprehensive Quality Assurance System

Proposal Criteria in the RFP

Proposal Summary	10 points
Statement of Need	5 points
Project Summary/Description	30 points
Organizational Capacity	15 points
Quality Assurance Experience	10 points
Project and Organization Budget	<u>30 points</u>
Possible Points	100 points

The Request for Proposals was posted on the Department of Education’s website on February 25, 2021. Five (5) RFP Proposals were received by the due date of March 26, 2021.

Staff	Public Consulting Group	Encorpe	Commonwealth Medicine	Berry Dunn	The Stephen Group
CS	73	43	78	68	82
LB	74	59	92	74	82
BD	91	72	91	91	83
MW	79	78	83	85	84
ML	80	62	86	69	82
TT	90	57	87	67	77
SA	94	74	84	92	79
CB	95	68	71	94	74
TF	81	52	85	75	82
LHH	76	65	77	71	84
DF	67	54	76	65	84
Average	82	62	83	77	81

A proposal review occurred on April 7, 2021. The RFP review panel consisted of the following employees from the Department of Education.

Christine B. Deputy Commissioner, Department of Education. She has four years of experience in overseeing the operations of the Vocational Rehabilitation bureau. She worked with the VR team on the Legislative Budget Assistant (LBA) audit that resulted in this RFP and contract process occurring.

Lisa HH. Administrator IV, and Director of the New Hampshire Vocational Rehabilitation Program. She has 18 years in the program and began her career as a VR Counselor in the

ATTACHMENT A CONTINUED

Nashua, NH office. She has expertise in all aspects of the VR program and led the VR bureau through the LBA audit process.

Beth D., Administrator III, Field Services Administrator. Beth has 28 years of experience as a VR Supervisor and VR Counselor. She has expertise in all aspects of the VR program.

Daniel F., Administrator I, Services for Blind and Vision-Impaired. Daniel has been with the bureau for nearly two years and manages all the areas of the agency relating to blindness as well as managing the Independent Living grants administered by the bureau.

Terri T., Program Specialist III. Terri has worked for the agency for over 10 years. Her primary role is to provide businesses training and technical assistance for hiring individuals with disabilities. She also organizes on-the-job trainings for customers and does some job placement for individuals with disabilities.

Tracey F., Program Specialist, has worked for the program for over 10 years and manages the agencies Community Rehabilitation Programs, provides training for supported employment job development and also works with businesses seeking to hire, train and retain individuals with disabilities in their workforce.

Chris S., Business Systems Analyst, has worked for the program for over 10 years and manages the agencies case management system, federal reporting, technology solutions for VR and was integral in data sharing with the LBA during the audit.

Lisa B., Supervisor, has worked for the program for six years and has managed multiple VR offices. She is very familiar with the issues within the LBA audit and will work as a partner with the contractor in determining solutions.

Mark W., Supervisor, has worked for the program for two years and also worked as a Nashua VR Counselor many years ago. He is very familiar with the issues within the LBA audit and will work as a partner with the contractor in determining solutions.

Michelle L., Supervisor, has worked for the program for over 25 years and has been in multiple VR Counselor roles. She is very familiar with the issues within the LBA audit and will work as a partner with the contractor in determining solutions.

Steven A., Supervisor, has worked for the program for ten years and also worked as a Berlin VRC in multiple roles. He is very familiar with the issues within the LBA audit and will work as a partner with the contractor in determining solutions.


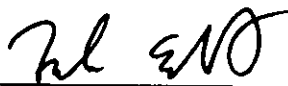
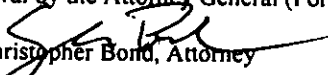
Notice: This agreement and all of its attachments shall become public upon submission to Governor and Executive Council for approval. Any information that is private, confidential or proprietary must be clearly identified to the agency and agreed to in writing prior to signing the contract.

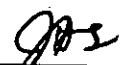
AGREEMENT

The State of New Hampshire and the Contractor hereby mutually agree as follows:

GENERAL PROVISIONS

I. IDENTIFICATION.

1.1 State Agency Name Department of Education		1.2 State Agency Address 21 S. Fruit Street, Suite 20 Concord, NH 03301	
1.3 Contractor Name The Stephen Group, LLC		1.4 Contractor Address 814 Elm Street, St. 309 Manchester, NH 03101	
1.5 Contractor Phone Number 603-419-9592	1.6 Account Number See Exhibit C	1.7 Completion Date 6/30/2023	1.8 Price Limitation \$592,710
1.9 Contracting Officer for State Agency Lisa Hinson-Hatz		1.10 State Agency Telephone Number 603-419-0086	
1.11 Contractor Signature  Date: 5-14-21		1.12 Name and Title of Contractor Signatory John Stephen, Managing Partner	
1.13 State Agency Signature  Date: 5-25-21		1.14 Name and Title of State Agency Signatory Frank Edelblut, Commissioner	
1.15 Approval by the N.H. Department of Administration, Division of Personnel (if applicable) By: _____ Director, On: _____			
1.16 Approval by the Attorney General (Form, Substance and Execution) (if applicable) By: Christopher Bond, Attorney  On: 5/26/21			
1.17 Approval by the Governor and Executive Council (if applicable) G&C Item number: _____ G&C Meeting Date: _____			

Contractor Initials 
Date 5-14-21

2. SERVICES TO BE PERFORMED. The State of New Hampshire, acting through the agency identified in block 1.1 ("State"), engages contractor identified in block 1.3 ("Contractor") to perform, and the Contractor shall perform, the work or sale of goods, or both, identified and more particularly described in the attached EXHIBIT B which is incorporated herein by reference ("Services").

3. EFFECTIVE DATE/COMPLETION OF SERVICES.

3.1 Notwithstanding any provision of this Agreement to the contrary, and subject to the approval of the Governor and Executive Council of the State of New Hampshire, if applicable, this Agreement, and all obligations of the parties hereunder, shall become effective on the date the Governor and Executive Council approve this Agreement as indicated in block 1.17, unless no such approval is required, in which case the Agreement shall become effective on the date the Agreement is signed by the State Agency as shown in block 1.13 ("Effective Date").

3.2 If the Contractor commences the Services prior to the Effective Date, all Services performed by the Contractor prior to the Effective Date shall be performed at the sole risk of the Contractor, and in the event that this Agreement does not become effective, the State shall have no liability to the Contractor, including without limitation, any obligation to pay the Contractor for any costs incurred or Services performed. Contractor must complete all Services by the Completion Date specified in block 1.7.

4. CONDITIONAL NATURE OF AGREEMENT.

Notwithstanding any provision of this Agreement to the contrary, all obligations of the State hereunder, including, without limitation, the continuance of payments hereunder, are contingent upon the availability and continued appropriation of funds affected by any state or federal legislative or executive action that reduces, eliminates or otherwise modifies the appropriation or availability of funding for this Agreement and the Scope for Services provided in EXHIBIT B, in whole or in part. In no event shall the State be liable for any payments hereunder in excess of such available appropriated funds. In the event of a reduction or termination of appropriated funds, the State shall have the right to withhold payment until such funds become available, if ever, and shall have the right to reduce or terminate the Services under this Agreement immediately upon giving the Contractor notice of such reduction or termination. The State shall not be required to transfer funds from any other account or source to the Account identified in block 1.6 in the event funds in that Account are reduced or unavailable.

5. CONTRACT PRICE/PRICE LIMITATION/ PAYMENT.

5.1 The contract price, method of payment, and terms of payment are identified and more particularly described in EXHIBIT C which is incorporated herein by reference.

5.2 The payment by the State of the contract price shall be the only and the complete reimbursement to the Contractor for all expenses, of whatever nature incurred by the Contractor in the performance hereof, and shall be the only and the complete

compensation to the Contractor for the Services. The State shall have no liability to the Contractor other than the contract price.

5.3 The State reserves the right to offset from any amounts otherwise payable to the Contractor under this Agreement those liquidated amounts required or permitted by N.H. RSA 80:7 through RSA 80:7-c or any other provision of law.

5.4 Notwithstanding any provision in this Agreement to the contrary, and notwithstanding unexpected circumstances, in no event shall the total of all payments authorized, or actually made hereunder, exceed the Price Limitation set forth in block 1.8.

6. COMPLIANCE BY CONTRACTOR WITH LAWS AND REGULATIONS/ EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY.

6.1 In connection with the performance of the Services, the Contractor shall comply with all applicable statutes, laws, regulations, and orders of federal, state, county or municipal authorities which impose any obligation or duty upon the Contractor, including, but not limited to, civil rights and equal employment opportunity laws. In addition, if this Agreement is funded in any part by monies of the United States, the Contractor shall comply with all federal executive orders, rules, regulations and statutes, and with any rules, regulations and guidelines as the State or the United States issue to implement these regulations. The Contractor shall also comply with all applicable intellectual property laws.

6.2 During the term of this Agreement, the Contractor shall not discriminate against employees or applicants for employment because of race, color, religion, creed, age, sex, handicap, sexual orientation, or national origin and will take affirmative action to prevent such discrimination.

6.3. The Contractor agrees to permit the State or United States access to any of the Contractor's books, records and accounts for the purpose of ascertaining compliance with all rules, regulations and orders, and the covenants, terms and conditions of this Agreement.

7. PERSONNEL.

7.1 The Contractor shall at its own expense provide all personnel necessary to perform the Services. The Contractor warrants that all personnel engaged in the Services shall be qualified to perform the Services, and shall be properly licensed and otherwise authorized to do so under all applicable laws.

7.2 Unless otherwise authorized in writing, during the term of this Agreement, and for a period of six (6) months after the Completion Date in block 1.7, the Contractor shall not hire, and shall not permit any subcontractor or other person, firm or corporation with whom it is engaged in a combined effort to perform the Services to hire, any person who is a State employee or official, who is materially involved in the procurement, administration or performance of this Agreement. This provision shall survive termination of this Agreement.

7.3 The Contracting Officer specified in block 1.9, or his or her successor, shall be the State's representative. In the event of any dispute concerning the interpretation of this Agreement, the Contracting Officer's decision shall be final for the State.

8. EVENT OF DEFAULT/REMEDIES.

8.1 Any one or more of the following acts or omissions of the Contractor shall constitute an event of default hereunder ("Event of Default"):

- 8.1.1 failure to perform the Services satisfactorily or on schedule;
- 8.1.2 failure to submit any report required hereunder; and/or
- 8.1.3 failure to perform any other covenant, term or condition of this Agreement.

8.2 Upon the occurrence of any Event of Default, the State may take any one, or more, or all, of the following actions:

8.2.1 give the Contractor a written notice specifying the Event of Default and requiring it to be remedied within, in the absence of a greater or lesser specification of time, thirty (30) days from the date of the notice; and if the Event of Default is not timely cured, terminate this Agreement, effective two (2) days after giving the Contractor notice of termination;

8.2.2 give the Contractor a written notice specifying the Event of Default and suspending all payments to be made under this Agreement and ordering that the portion of the contract price which would otherwise accrue to the Contractor during the period from the date of such notice until such time as the State determines that the Contractor has cured the Event of Default shall never be paid to the Contractor;

8.2.3 give the Contractor a written notice specifying the Event of Default and set off against any other obligations the State may owe to the Contractor any damages the State suffers by reason of any Event of Default; and/or

8.2.4 give the Contractor a written notice specifying the Event of Default, treat the Agreement as breached, terminate the Agreement and pursue any of its remedies at law or in equity, or both.

8.3. No failure by the State to enforce any provisions hereof after any Event of Default shall be deemed a waiver of its rights with regard to that Event of Default, or any subsequent Event of Default. No express failure to enforce any Event of Default shall be deemed a waiver of the right of the State to enforce each and all of the provisions hereof upon any further or other Event of Default on the part of the Contractor.

9. TERMINATION.

9.1 Notwithstanding paragraph 8, the State may, at its sole discretion, terminate the Agreement for any reason, in whole or in part, by thirty (30) days written notice to the Contractor that the State is exercising its option to terminate the Agreement.

9.2 In the event of an early termination of this Agreement for any reason other than the completion of the Services, the Contractor shall, at the State's discretion, deliver to the Contracting Officer, not later than fifteen (15) days after the date of termination, a report ("Termination Report") describing in detail all Services performed, and the contract price earned, to and including the date of termination. The form, subject matter, content, and number of copies of the Termination Report shall be identical to those of any Final Report described in the attached EXHIBIT B. In addition, at the State's discretion, the Contractor shall, within 15 days of notice of early termination, develop and

submit to the State a Transition Plan for services under the Agreement.

10. DATA/ACCESS/CONFIDENTIALITY/PRESERVATION.

10.1 As used in this Agreement, the word "data" shall mean all information and things developed or obtained during the performance of, or acquired or developed by reason of, this Agreement, including, but not limited to, all studies, reports, files, formulae, surveys, maps, charts, sound recordings, video recordings, pictorial reproductions, drawings, analyses, graphic representations, computer programs, computer printouts, notes, letters, memoranda, papers, and documents, all whether finished or unfinished.

10.2 All data and any property which has been received from the State or purchased with funds provided for that purpose under this Agreement, shall be the property of the State, and shall be returned to the State upon demand or upon termination of this Agreement for any reason.

10.3 Confidentiality of data shall be governed by N.H. RSA chapter 91-A or other existing law. Disclosure of data requires prior written approval of the State.

11. CONTRACTOR'S RELATION TO THE STATE.

In the performance of this Agreement the Contractor is in all respects an independent contractor, and is neither an agent nor an employee of the State. Neither the Contractor nor any of its officers, employees, agents or members shall have authority to bind the State or receive any benefits, workers' compensation or other emoluments provided by the State to its employees.

12. ASSIGNMENT/DELEGATION/SUBCONTRACTS.

12.1 The Contractor shall not assign, or otherwise transfer any interest in this Agreement without the prior written notice, which shall be provided to the State at least fifteen (15) days prior to the assignment, and a written consent of the State. For purposes of this paragraph, a Change of Control shall constitute assignment. "Change of Control" means (a) merger, consolidation, or a transaction or series of related transactions in which a third party, together with its affiliates, becomes the direct or indirect owner of fifty percent (50%) or more of the voting shares or similar equity interests, or combined voting power of the Contractor, or (b) the sale of all or substantially all of the assets of the Contractor.

12.2 None of the Services shall be subcontracted by the Contractor without prior written notice and consent of the State. The State is entitled to copies of all subcontracts and assignment agreements and shall not be bound by any provisions contained in a subcontract or an assignment agreement to which it is not a party.

13. INDEMNIFICATION.

Unless otherwise exempted by law, the Contractor shall indemnify and hold harmless the State, its officers and employees, from and against any and all claims, liabilities and costs for any personal injury or property damages, patent or copyright infringement, or other claims asserted against the State, its officers or employees, which arise out of (or which may be claimed to arise out of) the acts or omission of the

Contractor Initials JAS
Date 5-14-21

Contractor, or subcontractors, including but not limited to the negligence, reckless or intentional conduct. The State shall not be liable for any costs incurred by the Contractor arising under this paragraph 13. Notwithstanding the foregoing, nothing herein contained shall be deemed to constitute a waiver of the sovereign immunity of the State, which immunity is hereby reserved to the State. This covenant in paragraph 13 shall survive the termination of this Agreement.

14. INSURANCE.

14.1 The Contractor shall, at its sole expense, obtain and continuously maintain in force, and shall require any subcontractor or assignee to obtain and maintain in force, the following insurance:

14.1.1 commercial general liability insurance against all claims of bodily injury, death or property damage, in amounts of not less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence and \$2,000,000 aggregate or excess; and

14.1.2 special cause of loss coverage form covering all property subject to subparagraph 10.2 herein, in an amount not less than 80% of the whole replacement value of the property.

14.2 The policies described in subparagraph 14.1 herein shall be on policy forms and endorsements approved for use in the State of New Hampshire by the N.H. Department of Insurance, and issued by insurers licensed in the State of New Hampshire.

14.3 The Contractor shall furnish to the Contracting Officer identified in block 1.9, or his or her successor, a certificate(s) of insurance for all insurance required under this Agreement. Contractor shall also furnish to the Contracting Officer identified in block 1.9, or his or her successor, certificate(s) of insurance for all renewal(s) of insurance required under this Agreement no later than ten (10) days prior to the expiration date of each insurance policy. The certificate(s) of insurance and any renewals thereof shall be attached and are incorporated herein by reference.

15. WORKERS' COMPENSATION.

15.1 By signing this agreement, the Contractor agrees, certifies and warrants that the Contractor is in compliance with or exempt from, the requirements of N.H. RSA chapter 281-A ("*Workers' Compensation*").

15.2 To the extent the Contractor is subject to the requirements of N.H. RSA chapter 281-A, Contractor shall maintain, and require any subcontractor or assignee to secure and maintain, payment of Workers' Compensation in connection with activities which the person proposes to undertake pursuant to this Agreement. The Contractor shall furnish the Contracting Officer identified in block 1.9, or his or her successor, proof of Workers' Compensation in the manner described in N.H. RSA chapter 281-A and any applicable renewal(s) thereof, which shall be attached and are incorporated herein by reference. The State shall not be responsible for payment of any Workers' Compensation premiums or for any other claim or benefit for Contractor, or any subcontractor or employee of Contractor, which might arise under applicable State of New Hampshire Workers' Compensation laws in connection with the performance of the Services under this Agreement.

16. **NOTICE.** Any notice by a party hereto to the other party shall be deemed to have been duly delivered or given at the time of mailing by certified mail, postage prepaid, in a United States Post Office addressed to the parties at the addresses given in blocks 1.2 and 1.4, herein.

17. **AMENDMENT.** This Agreement may be amended, waived or discharged only by an instrument in writing signed by the parties hereto and only after approval of such amendment, waiver or discharge by the Governor and Executive Council of the State of New Hampshire unless no such approval is required under the circumstances pursuant to State law, rule or policy.

18. **CHOICE OF LAW AND FORUM.** This Agreement shall be governed, interpreted and construed in accordance with the laws of the State of New Hampshire, and is binding upon and inures to the benefit of the parties and their respective successors and assigns. The wording used in this Agreement is the wording chosen by the parties to express their mutual intent, and no rule of construction shall be applied against or in favor of any party. Any actions arising out of this Agreement shall be brought and maintained in New Hampshire Superior Court which shall have exclusive jurisdiction thereof.

19. **CONFLICTING TERMS.** In the event of a conflict between the terms of this P-37 form (as modified in EXHIBIT A) and/or attachments and amendment thereof, the terms of the P-37 (as modified in EXHIBIT A) shall control.

20. **THIRD PARTIES.** The parties hereto do not intend to benefit any third parties and this Agreement shall not be construed to confer any such benefit.

21. **HEADINGS.** The headings throughout the Agreement are for reference purposes only, and the words contained therein shall in no way be held to explain, modify, amplify or aid in the interpretation, construction or meaning of the provisions of this Agreement.

22. **SPECIAL PROVISIONS.** Additional or modifying provisions set forth in the attached EXHIBIT A are incorporated herein by reference.

23. **SEVERABILITY.** In the event any of the provisions of this Agreement are held by a court of competent jurisdiction to be contrary to any state or federal law, the remaining provisions of this Agreement will remain in full force and effect.

24. **ENTIRE AGREEMENT.** This Agreement, which may be executed in a number of counterparts, each of which shall be deemed an original, constitutes the entire agreement and understanding between the parties, and supersedes all prior agreements and understandings with respect to the subject matter hereof.

EXHIBIT A

SPECIAL PROVISIONS

Additional exhibits D-G.

Federal Certification 2 CFR 200.415

Required certifications include: (a) To assure that expenditures are proper and in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Federal award and approved project budgets, the annual and final fiscal reports or vouchers requesting payment under the agreements must include a certification, signed by an official who is authorized to legally bind the non-Federal entity, which reads as follows:

By signing this report, I certify to the best of my knowledge and belief that the report is true, complete, and accurate, and the expenditures, disbursements and cash receipts are for the purposes and objectives set forth in the terms and conditions of the Federal award. I am aware that any false, fictitious, or fraudulent information, or the omission of any material fact, may subject me to criminal, civil or administrative penalties for fraud, false statements, false claims or otherwise. (U.S. Code Title 18, Section 1001 and Title 31, Sections 3729-3730 and 3801-3812).

EXHIBIT B

SCOPE OF SERVICES

The Stephen Group (TSG) will provide the following services to the New Hampshire Department of Education, Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation (NHVR), effective upon Governor and Council approval through June 30, 2023:

The contractor, TSG, shall assess, design, develop and implement processes, procedures, internal controls and a comprehensive quality assurance system for NHVR, principally focused on response to a recent internal audit report. The Legislative Budget Assistant (LBA) report has 46 observations within the following areas: governance, fiscal management, eligibility, individual plans for employment development, closure processes, developing policy and procedures, performance expectations, and service provision and authorization and payments for services.

The contractor, TSG, in collaboration with NHVR, shall design the system in five (5) phases:

- In the First 2 weeks after the execution of the contract, TSG will charter the project with leadership followed by a Kickoff event outlining the Project Plan and Schedule for all engagement participants to include senior leadership and staff participating in the six (6) Component Projects.
- Phase one (1) will include an assessment phase that will include due diligence and stakeholder input. System and performance data analysis as well as reviewing current quality assurance tools will occur. This phase will include three half day planning sessions with senior leadership, management and key staff facilitated by TSG. Additionally, TSG will conduct stakeholder interviews, a stakeholder survey and facilitate consumer and provider workgroup meetings. The results of this strategic and operational planning will set the stage for improvement and quality assurance. TSG will take the desired goals, objectives and necessary tasks identified during planning, resulting in an Initial Observations Report to include fiscal analysis, stakeholder discussions summary, an updated plan for engagement and a communications plan.
- Phase two (2) will include a comprehensive mapping of: Federal requirements and NHVR Administrative Rules, policies and procedures, NHVR service delivery system and methods; budgeting, accounting and contracting, fiscal controls, internal controls, performance management and use of data, quality assurance system and data, outcomes management, and staff training program. This phase will include six (6) focus area kickoff meetings and a one day continuous improvement introductory training. TSG will consider the following in all six component project areas: 1) Assessments and mapping of component project areas and designated VR functions, 2) Business process reengineering and straightforward process continuous improvement, 3) Conduct benchmarking with other state VR programs, 4) Analysis of mission-core functions and all associated data, 5) Develop capacity models for case workflow, financial models and quality & control assurance, and 6) Collaborative work with staff and stakeholder workgroups to test

EXHIBIT B CONTINUED

assessments and emerging recommendations. The component projects will decrease redundancy, maximize time, and leverage the expertise of multiple stakeholders.

During phase 2 mapping will occur for various business processes, workflow, policies, and procedures, current training and supervisory and management oversight composition. The focus will be in reviewing consumer service, compliance with federal and state requirements, prior management directives, fiscal integrity, previous trainings and management performance reviews. During the mapping, gaps will be identified which pose a challenge to NHVR's purpose in assisting with the rehabilitation, vocational, and employment services provided to individuals with disabilities. Deliverables for this phase include "As is" maps of key processes, Gap Analysis, Strategic Plan, Business Plan and Policies & Procedures Crosswalk.

- Phase three (3) will provide recommendations to the NHVR team and will also develop and present maps and procedures of how procedures might change. The TSG team will provide quality assurance and internal controls system design, dashboards to visually reflect collected data and share a formal "process launch." Strategies and tools for monitoring performance and outcomes will be the goal of the recommendations phase. TSG will utilize its proven and principle-based *Quality Assurance and Controls Framework*. Key aspects of this framework include: performing a comprehensive risk assessment of the organization and developing and managing appropriate responses to risks, expand the application of internal control beyond financial reporting to other forms of reporting, operations, and compliance objectives, simplify and streamline controls and enhancing the confidence in the quality assurance and internal control structure of the NHVR program to bureau staff, Commissioners, and the public. Deliverables under this phase include a Recommendations & Implementation Plan, Training Plan and Curriculum Development, Program Evaluation Plan, "To-Be" Maps, Quality Assurance Plan and an Internal Controls Plan.
- Phase four (4) will be the implementation and training phase. The training will occur in six (6) focus areas: Governance and Fiscal Management, Eligibility, IPE Development and Services, Authorizations and Payments for Services, Case Closure and Program Management addressing all 46 observations in the LBA audit report. This phase will include an implementation plan that will identify tasks and action steps that have been approved by the program. Staffing and teams will be assigned to address each component of the plan. A schedule will be created that will also identify the resources that may be necessary to accomplish each task or action step. Updates to the schedule and progress will occur on an agreed upon schedule. Evaluation will also happen to determine program readiness for change with checklists to guide this process. Tracking results will be key at this stage to ensure sustainability of new processes.

EXHIBIT B CONTINUED

- Phase five (5) will be the consultation and ongoing support phase. TSG will attend select meetings to determine how the organization is progressing and implementing new business processes to have a successful quality assurance system. A formal assessment will occur and TSG will monitor the work of the six focus areas and provide feedback and mentorship. The engagement concludes with the final report which will describe all of the work completed to resolve the 46 observations of the audit as well as strengthening the core mission practices.

DELIVERABLES AND TIMELINE

TSG Shall:

1. Provide a formal assessment of the NHVR program to identify recommendations for all aspects of the LBA audit to enhance program operations. A five year strategic plan will be prepared as well as a one year business plan.
2. Mapping of key business processes will occur that will develop into a framework of recommendations and action steps necessary to accomplish the goals of the contract.
3. Implementation programming and training will occur to actualize all the component elements driving the new internal controls and quality assurance system.
4. Consultation and ongoing support will occur to ensure the new system is sustainable and obtaining the desired results.
5. The timeline for this contract will commence upon Governor and Council approval and will end in June 2023.

EXHIBIT C

Method of Payment

BUDGET

	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023	Total
Personnel Expense	\$7,590	\$453,675	\$131,445	\$592,710
Materials	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Travel	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Expenses	\$7,590	\$453,675	\$131,445	\$592,710

Limitation on Price: In no case shall the contract exceed the price limitation of \$592,710.

Funding Source: Funds are available in account titled Vocational Rehabilitation Field Programs-Federal for FY2021, and anticipated to be available in FY2022 and FY2023 upon the availability and continued appropriation of funds in the future operating budget, with the authority to adjust encumbrances between fiscal years within the price limitation through the Budget Office, if needed and justified.

	<u>FY2021</u>	<u>FY2022</u>	<u>FY2023</u>
06-56-56-565010-25380000-102-500731 Contracts for Program Services	\$7,590	\$453,675	\$131,445

Method of Payment: Payment will be made upon the submittal of an invoice for completed areas of the contract, which is supported by a summary of activities that have taken place in accordance with the terms of the contract. A final invoice, if necessary, shall be sent to the Department within 30 days of the end of this contract.

Invoices and reports shall be submitted electronically to:
Lisa Hinson-Hatz, VR Director
Lisa.Hatz@doe.nh.gov
NH Department of Education
21 S. Fruit Street, Suite 20
Concord, NH 03301

Contractor Initials PHS
Date 5-14-21

EXHIBIT D

Contractor Obligations

Contracts in excess of the simplified acquisition threshold (currently set at \$250,000) must address **administrative, contractual, or legal remedies** in instances where the contractors violate or breach contract terms, and provide for such sanctions and penalties as appropriate. Reference: 2 C.F.R. § 200.326 and 2 C.F.R. 200, Appendix II, required contract clauses.

The contractor acknowledges that 31 U.S.C. Chap. 38 (Administrative Remedies for False Claims and Statements) applies to the contractor's actions pertaining to this contract.

The Contractor, certifies and affirms the truthfulness and accuracy of each statement of its certification and disclosure, if any. In addition, the Contractor understands and agrees that the provisions of 31 U.S.C. § 3801 et seq., apply to this certification and disclosure, if any.

Breach

A breach of the contract clauses above may be grounds for termination of the contract, and for debarment as a contractor and subcontractor as provided in 29 C.F.R. § 5.12.

Fraud and False Statements

The Contractor understands that, if the project which is the subject of this Contract is financed in whole or in part by federal funds, that if the undersigned, the company that the Contractor represents, or any employee or agent thereof, knowingly makes any false statement, representation, report or claim as to the character, quality, quantity, or cost of material used or to be used, or quantity or quality work performed or to be performed, or makes any false statement or representation of a material fact in any statement, certificate, or report, the Contractor and any company that the Contractor represents may be subject to prosecution under the provision of 18 USC § 1001 and § 1020.

Environmental Protection

(This clause is applicable if this Contract exceeds \$150,000. It applies to Federal-aid contracts only.)

The Contractor is required to comply with all applicable standards, orders or requirements issued under Section 306 of the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 1857 (h)), Section 508 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1368), Executive Order 11738, and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulations (40 CFR Part 15) which prohibit the use under non-exempt Federal contracts, grants or loans of facilities included on the EPA List of Violating Facilities. Violations shall be reported to the FHWA and to the U.S. EPA Assistant Administrator for Enforcement.

Procurement of Recovered Materials

In accordance with Section 6002 of the Solid Waste Disposal Act (42 U.S.C. § 6962), State agencies and agencies of a political subdivision of a state that are using appropriated Federal funds for procurement must procure items designated in guidelines of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) at 40 CFR 247 that contain the highest percentage of recovered materials practicable, consistent with maintaining a satisfactory level of competition, where the purchase price of the item exceeds \$10,000 or the value of the quantity acquired in the preceding fiscal year exceeded \$10,000; must procure solid waste management services in a manner that maximizes energy and resource recovery; and must have established an affirmative procurement program for procurement of recovered materials identified in the EPA guidelines.

Contractor Initials
Date

JMS
5-14-21

Exhibit E

Federal Debarment and Suspension

- a. By signature on this Contract, the Contractor certifies its compliance, and the compliance of its Sub-Contractors, present or future, by stating that any person associated therewith in the capacity of owner, partner, director, officer, principal investor, project director, manager, auditor, or any position of authority involving federal funds:
1. Is not currently under suspension, debarment, voluntary exclusion, or determination of ineligibility by any Federal Agency;
 2. Does not have a proposed debarment pending;
 3. Has not been suspended, debarred, voluntarily excluded or determined ineligible by any Federal Agency within the past three (3) years; and
 4. Has not been indicted, convicted, or had a civil judgment rendered against the firm by a court of competent jurisdiction in any matter involving fraud or official misconduct within the past three (3) years.
- b. Where the Contractor or its Sub-Contractor is unable to certify to the statement in Section a.1. above, the Contractor or its Sub-Contractor shall be declared ineligible to enter into Contract or participate in the project.
- c. Where the Contractor or Sub-Contractor is unable to certify to any of the statements as listed in Sections a.2., a.3., or a.4., above, the Contractor or its Sub-Contractor shall submit a written explanation to the DOE. The certification or explanation shall be considered in connection with the DOE's determination whether to enter into Contract.
- d. The Contractor shall provide immediate written notice to the DOE if, at any time, the Contractor or its Sub-Contractor, learn that its Debarment and Suspension certification has become erroneous by reason of changed circumstances.

Contractor Initials

Date

AS
5-14-21

Exhibit F

Anti-Lobbying

The Contractor agrees to comply with the provisions of Section 319 of Public Law 101-121, Government wide Guidance for New Restrictions on Lobbying, and 31 U.S.C. 1352, and further agrees to have the Contractor's representative, execute the following Certification:

The Contractor certifies, by signing and submitting this contract, to the best of his/her knowledge and belief, that:

- a. No federal appropriated funds have been paid or shall be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence any officer or employee of any State or Federal Agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any federal grant, the making of any federal loan, the entering into any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal amendment, or modification of any Federal contract grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.
- b. If any funds other than federally appropriated funds have been paid or shall be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any Federal Agency, a Member of Congress, and officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit the "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities" form in accordance with its instructions (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/sfllin.pdf>).
- c. This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making and entering into this transaction imposed by Section 1352, Title 31 and U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.
- d. The Contractor also agrees, by signing this contract that it shall require that the language of this certification be included in subcontracts with all Sub-Contractor(s) and lower-tier Sub-Contractors which exceed \$100,000 and that all such Sub-Contractors and lower-tier Sub-Contractors shall certify and disclose accordingly.
- e. The DOE shall keep the firm's certification on file as part of its original contract. The Contractor shall keep individual certifications from all Sub-Contractors and lower-tier Sub-Contractors on file. Certification shall be retained for three (3) years following completion and acceptance of any given project.

Contractor Initials 
Date 5-14-21

Exhibit G

Rights to Inventions Made Under a Contract, Copy Rights and Confidentiality

Rights to Inventions Made Under a Contract or Agreement

Contracts or agreements for the performance of experimental, developmental, or research work shall provide for the rights of the Federal Government and the recipient in any resulting invention in accordance with 37 CFR part 401, "Rights to Inventions Made by Nonprofit Organizations and Small Business Firms Under Government Grants, Contracts and Cooperative Agreements," and any implementing regulations issued by the DOE.

Any discovery or invention that arises during the course of the contract shall be reported to the DOE. The Contractor is required to disclose inventions promptly to the contracting officer (within 2 months) after the inventor discloses it in writing to contractor personnel responsible for patent matters. The awarding agency shall determine how rights in the invention/discovery shall be allocated consistent with "Government Patent Policy" and Title 37 C.F.R. § 401.

Confidentiality

All Written and oral information and materials disclosed or provided by the DOE under this agreement constitutes Confidential Information, regardless of whether such information was provided before or after the date on this agreement or how it was provided.

The Contractor and representatives thereof, acknowledge that by making use of, acquiring or adding to information about matters and data related to this agreement, which are confidential to the DOE and its partners, must remain the exclusive property of the DOE.

Confidential information means all data and information related to the business and operation of the DOE, including but not limited to all school and student data contained in NH Title XV, Education, Chapters 186-200.

Confidential information includes but is not limited to, student and school district data, revenue and cost information, the source code for computer software and hardware products owned in part or in whole by the DOE, financial information, partner information (including the identity of DOE partners), Contractor and supplier information, (including the identity of DOE Contractors and suppliers), and any information that has been marked "confidential" or "proprietary", or with the like designation. During the term of this contract the Contractor agrees to abide by such rules as may be adopted from time to time by the DOE to maintain the security of all confidential information. The Contractor further agrees that it will always regard and preserve as confidential information/data received during the performance of this contract. The Contractor will not use, copy, make notes, or use excerpts of any confidential information, nor will it give, disclose, provide access to, or otherwise make available any confidential information to any person not employed or contracted by the DOE or subcontracted with the Contractor.

Ownership of Intellectual Property

The DOE shall retain ownership of all source data and other intellectual property of the DOE provided to the Contractor in order to complete the services of this agreement. As well the DOE will retain copyright ownership for any and all materials, patents and intellectual property produced, including, but not limited to, brochures, resource directories, protocols, guidelines, posters, or reports. The Contractor shall not reproduce any materials for purposes other than use for the terms under the contract without prior written approval from the DOE.

Contractor Initials

Date

JAS
5-14-01

State of New Hampshire

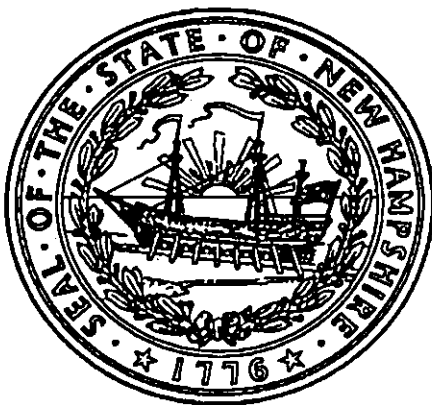
Department of State

CERTIFICATE

I, William M. Gardner, Secretary of State of the State of New Hampshire, do hereby certify that THE STEPHEN GROUP, LLC is a New Hampshire Limited Liability Company registered to transact business in New Hampshire on January 30, 2012. I further certify that all fees and documents required by the Secretary of State's office have been received and is in good standing as far as this office is concerned.

Business ID: 665309

Certificate Number: 0005356273



IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF,

I hereto set my hand and cause to be affixed
the Seal of the State of New Hampshire,
this 23rd day of April A.D. 2021.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William M. Gardner".

William M. Gardner
Secretary of State

(Limited partnership, Limited liability professional partnership or LLC)

Limited Partnership or LLC Certification of Authority

I, John A. Stephen hereby certify that I am the sole Partner, Member or
(Name)

Manager and the sole officer of The Stephen Group a limited liability partnership
(Name of Partnership or LLC)

under RSA 304-B, a limited liability professional partnership under RSA 304-D, or a limited liability company under RSA 304-C.

I certify that I am authorized to bind the partnership or LLC. I further certify that it is understood that the State of New Hampshire will rely on this certificate as evidence that the person listed above currently occupies the position indicated and that they have full authority to bind the partnership or LLC and that this authorization **shall remain valid for thirty (30) days** from the date of this Corporate Resolution.

DATED: 5/14/2021

ATTEST:


(Name & Title)
Managing
Partner



CERTIFICATE OF LIABILITY INSURANCE

DATE (MM/DD/YYYY)

05/18/2021

THIS CERTIFICATE IS ISSUED AS A MATTER OF INFORMATION ONLY AND CONFERS NO RIGHTS UPON THE CERTIFICATE HOLDER. THIS CERTIFICATE DOES NOT AFFIRMATIVELY OR NEGATIVELY AMEND, EXTEND OR ALTER THE COVERAGE AFFORDED BY THE POLICIES BELOW. THIS CERTIFICATE OF INSURANCE DOES NOT CONSTITUTE A CONTRACT BETWEEN THE ISSUING INSURER(S), AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE OR PRODUCER, AND THE CERTIFICATE HOLDER.

IMPORTANT: If the certificate holder is an ADDITIONAL INSURED, the policy(ies) must be endorsed. If SUBROGATION IS WAIVED, subject to the terms and conditions of the policy, certain policies may require an endorsement. A statement on this certificate does not confer rights to the certificate holder in lieu of such endorsement(s).

PRODUCER PAYCHEX INSURANCE AGENCY INC 76210762 150 SAWGRASS DRIVE ROCHESTER NY 14620	CONTACT NAME:	
	PHONE (800) 472-0072 (A/C, No, Ext):	FAX (585) 389-7894 (A/C, No):
	E-MAIL ADDRESS:	
	INSURER(S) AFFORDING COVERAGE	
	INSURER A : Hartford Accident and Indemnity Company	NAIC# 22357
INSURED STEPHEN GROUP 814 ELM ST STE 309 MANCHESTER NH 03101-2130	INSURER B :	
	INSURER C :	
	INSURER D :	
	INSURER E :	
	INSURER F :	

COVERAGES

CERTIFICATE NUMBER:

REVISION NUMBER:

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT THE POLICIES OF INSURANCE LISTED BELOW HAVE BEEN ISSUED TO THE INSURED NAMED ABOVE FOR THE POLICY PERIOD INDICATED. NOTWITHSTANDING ANY REQUIREMENT, TERM OR CONDITION OF ANY CONTRACT OR OTHER DOCUMENT WITH RESPECT TO WHICH THIS CERTIFICATE MAY BE ISSUED OR MAY PERTAIN, THE INSURANCE AFFORDED BY THE POLICIES DESCRIBED HEREIN IS SUBJECT TO ALL THE TERMS, EXCLUSIONS AND CONDITIONS OF SUCH POLICIES. LIMITS SHOWN MAY HAVE BEEN REDUCED BY PAID CLAIMS.

INSR LTR	TYPE OF INSURANCE	ADDL INSR	SUBR WVD	POLICY NUMBER	POLICY EFF (MM/DD/YYYY)	POLICY EXP (MM/DD/Y YYYY)	LIMITS	
	COMMERCIAL GENERAL LIABILITY <input type="checkbox"/> CLAIMS-MADE <input type="checkbox"/> OCCUR GEN'L AGGREGATE LIMIT APPLIES PER: <input type="checkbox"/> POLICY <input type="checkbox"/> PRO-JECT <input type="checkbox"/> LOC OTHER:						EACH OCCURRENCE	
							DAMAGE TO RENTED PREMISES (Ea occurrence)	
							MED EXP (Any one person)	
							PERSONAL & ADV INJURY	
							GENERAL AGGREGATE	
							PRODUCTS - COMP/OP AGG	
	AUTOMOBILE LIABILITY <input type="checkbox"/> ANY AUTO <input type="checkbox"/> ALL OWNED AUTOS <input type="checkbox"/> SCHEDULED AUTOS <input type="checkbox"/> HIRED AUTOS <input type="checkbox"/> NON-OWNED AUTOS						COMBINED SINGLE LIMIT (Ea accident)	
							BODILY INJURY (Per person)	
							BODILY INJURY (Per accident)	
							PROPERTY DAMAGE (Per accident)	
	UMBRELLA LIAB EXCESS LIAB <input type="checkbox"/> OCCUR <input type="checkbox"/> CLAIMS-MADE DED RETENTION \$						EACH OCCURRENCE	
							AGGREGATE	
A	WORKERS COMPENSATION AND EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY ANY PROPRIETOR/PARTNER/EXECUTIVE OFFICER/MEMBER EXCLUDED? (Mandatory in NH) If yes, describe under DESCRIPTION OF OPERATIONS below	Y/N	N/A		04/26/2021	04/26/2022	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PER STATUTE <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER E.L. EACH ACCIDENT \$100,000 E.L. DISEASE -EA EMPLOYEE \$100,000 E.L. DISEASE - POLICY LIMIT \$500,000	

DESCRIPTION OF OPERATIONS / LOCATIONS / VEHICLES (ACORD 101, Additional Remarks Schedule, may be attached if more space is required)

Those usual to the Insured's Operations.

CERTIFICATE HOLDER
 NH Department of Education
 Lisa Hinson-Hatz
 101 PLEASANT ST
 CONCORD NH 03301
CANCELLATION

SHOULD ANY OF THE ABOVE DESCRIBED POLICIES BE CANCELLED BEFORE THE EXPIRATION DATE THEREOF, NOTICE WILL BE DELIVERED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE POLICY PROVISIONS.

AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE

Susan J. Castaneda

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