

Community Action in Aroostook, Washington
and Hancock Counties

Request for Proposal

Wage Scale/Compensation Study

2026



I. Background Information:

Overview

Community Action in Aroostook, Washington and Hancock Counties (“CAAWHC”) is requesting proposals from a qualified firm or individual for professional services related to conducting a comprehensive study on CAAWHC’s current Compensation & Wage Scale and process.

Background on CAAWHC

Community Action in Aroostook, Washington and Hancock Counties (CAAWHC), formerly known as Aroostook County Action Program (ACAP), is a 501c3 non-profit organization founded in 1972. Between July and October of 2025, programs and staff from DownEast Community Partners-DCP (Washington and Hancock Counties) became part of Aroostook County Action Program (ACAP). Staff from DCP became ACAP team members moving onto the ACAP wage and pay bands. The temporary name for the newly formed partnership is Community Action in Aroostook, Washington and Hancock Counties (CAAWHC).

CAAWHC provides guidance and support to the community in responding to emerging human needs in the areas of Prevention and Wellness, Early Care and Education, Energy and Housing, Aging Services and Workforce Development. Detailed information about the agency and its programs can be found at www.acap-me.org.

Mission Statement

Community Action in Aroostook, Washington and Hancock Counties leads or collaborates to provide services that support, empower and improve lives.

Vision Statement

We Make Life Better

II. General Terms and Conditions

Review and Compliance

CAAWHC is looking for a Consultant to review the attached materials and comply with all requirements of this invitation. “Consultant” means any person or entity who may or does submit a proposal in response to this invitation.

Questions and Clarifications

All questions, including requests for clarification, must be submitted by e-mail to Margo Dyer, Director of Human Resources at margo.dyer@acap-me.org or by calling 207-554-4155. Any and all questions must be received by end of day March 3, 2026.

Proposal Valid for 45 Days

All proposals submitted by Consultants and received by CAAWHC will be treated as offers to contract for services. A Consultant’s proposal must remain open from the time of receipt of the proposal by CAAWHC and continuing for a minimum of 45 days. The proposal may not be modified by the consultant during the 45-day time period. Alterations, modifications or variations of a proposal after the submission deadline will not be considered by CAAWHC unless authorized by an amendment or addendum to this Invitation issued by CAAWHC. In the case of any award pursuant to the Invitation, the awarded Consultant must keep in effect all proposal terms, including pricing, throughout any contract negotiations.

Cost of Proposal Development

Costs of developing and delivering proposals pursuant to this Invitation and providing service demonstrations are solely the responsibility of Consultants. CAAWHC is not liable for any expense connected

with any service demonstrations.

Proposal Materials

All proposals submitted, including all items and materials submitted as part of the proposals, become the property of CAAWHC, whether or not selected. Proposal materials may be appended by CAAWHC to any contract between CAAWHC and the Consultant providing such materials.

III. Scope of Work

A. Background on CAAWHC's Wage Scale and Grading Tool

In 2017, CAAWHC contracted with an independent Human Resources Consultant to assist in updating all job descriptions, develop a new Position Evaluation Plan, and facilitate the work of an internal committee to evaluate each position using a "point factor" system.

In 2020, CAAWHC staff conducted a smaller scale comprehensive survey which included information from local and statewide agencies, similar in size and function and utilized data from other comparative comprehensive surveys. CAAWHC has also participated in several comprehensive surveys conducted by other agencies with similar jobs. The survey results have been utilized as another resource to help evaluate and determine the competitiveness of the scale. In addition to any adjustments based on internal and external equity factors, there have been board-approved administrative adjustments based on the typical economic measures. These occurred nearly every year and ranged between 1 and 3 percent. CAAWHC has also implemented a merit increase system ranging between 1 and 5 percent, depending on the overall score of an employee's evaluation.

In 2023, a Wage Survey resulted in the development of the current Wage Band structure. The survey significantly increased the wage rates resulting in a recommendation that team members be moved onto the new wage scale at least to the Minimum level of their band or their current rate. At the same time the merit system was eliminated.

In 2024, an adjustment was made to account for longevity and in 2025, there was no increase to wages offered by the agency. In 2024, the minimum wage in Maine required a compression of the top three bands into Band D, which has caused a concern related to losing the progression of steps for certain positions. (For example, a teacher aide (no formal training), Ed Tech II (60 credit hours), Ed Tech III (90 credit hours) and Teacher CDA (Child Development Associate credential) are all on the same band.

B. Objective and Requirements

1. To assess CAAWHC's current plan and propose a market-based compensation schedule.

- Review current pay grades, salary ranges and pay practices
- Conduct an external market study (minimum, midpoint, and maximum) in both the public and private sectors to benchmark a recommended number of positions (in consultations with CAAWHC identify market area). External market study will be limited to Aroostook, Washington and Hancock County organizations that employ similar positions to CAAWHC, and to other Community Action Agencies in Maine closest in comparable size to CAAWHC.
- Incorporate, where applicable, data contained in most recent Maine Association of Non-Profits Compensation Report (2024)
- Recommend and prepare salary structure recommendations based on the results of the market study and MANP 2024 Compensation Report

- Review current employee salary information and make recommendations for adjustments based on the external market results and internal equity, as needed
- Determine if one pay structure is appropriate for the three-county region and present findings to show a competitive pay structure across the three-county region
- Make recommendations to the compensation program to include the following program design options for CAAWHC's consideration: merit; promotions; demotions; starting salary; and introductory period
- Prepare written final report of recommendations, including discussion of methods, techniques and data used to develop pay ranges
- Prepare an analysis of the financial impact for implementation of the new compensation system for existing employees
- Be available to present study recommendations to the Executive Leadership Team and to the Board of Directors if invited
- Provide implementation support and training as needed

C. Consultant Proposals – Specifications

1. General Requirements

a. Consultant Capability:

A consultant's proposal must demonstrate the Consultant's understanding of CAAWHC's needs and expectations described in this invitation and Consultant's capability to meet those needs.

b. Technical Documentation:

All proposals must include technical specifications and existing technical documentation associated with the proposed Compensation System. Consultant may provide additional information in the form of brochures, sample manuals or other material that is relevant to Consultant's proposal.

2. Specific Requirements

In connection with the objectives outlined in Section III.B above, Consultants' proposals in response to this Invitation must include information specifically demonstrating how each of the functional and other requirements described in Section III.B will be met.

IV. Company Information

Business References

Consultants must provide a minimum of two (2) business references from similar projects for private, state and /or large local government clients within the last three (3) years. Please include the following information:

- Primary and Alternate Contact Information to include Name, Street Address, City, State and Zip Code; e-mail address; phone, including area code
- Brief description of the project and description of services performed
- Was project completed in time originally allotted and if not, why not?
- Was project completed within or under the original budget/cost proposal, and if not, why not?

CAAWHC reserves the right to contact and verify any and all references listed.

V. Cost Proposal

	Consultant Hours	Consultant Timeline	Total Consultant Fees
Review current pay grades and salary ranges			
Conduct an external market study (minimum, midpoint, and maximum) in both the public and private sectors to benchmark a recommended number of positions (in consultation with CAAWHC identify market area). External market study will be limited to Aroostook, Washington and Hancock County organizations that employ similar positions to CAAWHC, and to other Community Action Agencies in Maine closest in comparable size to CAAWHC.			
Incorporate, where applicable, data contained in most recent Maine Association of Non-Profits Compensation Report (2024)			
Recommend and prepare salary structure recommendations based on the results of the market study			
Review current employee salary information and make recommendations for adjustments based on the external market results and internal equity, as needed			
Make recommendations to compensation program to include the following program design options for CAAWHC's consideration: Merit; Promotions; Demotions; Starting salary; and Orientation period			

Prepare written final report of recommendations, including discussion of methods, techniques and data used to develop the Pay Ranges			
Prepare an analysis of the financial impact for implementation of the new compensation system for existing employees			
Be available to present study recommendations to the Agency Leadership Team and Board of Directors if invited			
Provide implementation support and training, as needed			
GRAND TOTALS:			

Consultant must provide detailed fixed prices for all costs associated with its proposal.

An all-inclusive firm fixed price covering all deliverables, labor, materials, and out-of-pocket, travel and other expenses relating to the specific item listed above. The basis of the price and any underlying assumptions (including assumptions concerning travel expenses) must be included in the Consultant’s cost proposal.

VI. Proposal Submission Requirements

This section of the invitation deals with the requirements for the contents and submission of proposals.

Delivery of Response

Please provide five copies (or a single electronic version by email) of your response to this RFP by the end of business on March 3, 2026. Responses should be directed to: margo.dyer@acap-me.org or mailed to:

Aroostook County Action Program
 Attn: Director of Human Resources, Margo Dyer
 771 Main Street
 Presque Isle, ME 04769

VII. Response Requirements and Selection Criteria

Response Requirement

Response to this RFP should include the following information:

- A brief history of Consultant, including history of performing this type of engagement.
- Ownership/structure of Consultant and continuity plan, if applicable.

- Proposed service team with related resumes.
- Description of proposed services and role of the Consultant: Include discussion of the following:
 - What distinguishes your consulting services from your competitors? Describe your “consulting philosophy.”
 - How many different organizations are you currently working with?
 - Provide a list of two client references.
 - Within the last five years, has your firm in any capacity been a party to any litigation directly or indirectly related to the conduct of your business?
 - Any special terms or conditions requested/required by the Consultant.
 - Description of any additional services the Consultant would like to propose to expand or supplement services requested.

Selection Process and Criteria

A selection committee will review all responses. Primary evaluation criteria will include, in order of importance:

1. The perceived ability of the Consultant to best meet CAAWHC’s needs based on the understanding of the engagement demonstrated in the Consultant’s response. 35 pts
2. Extent of relevant experience and/or expertise. 30 pts
3. Price. 20 pts.
4. Feedback from references. 15 pts.

Based on the selection committee’s evaluation of the responses, potential Consultants will be selected and asked to participate in a final interview with the committee. Consultants responding to this RFP will be notified in writing of the results of the selection process.

Response Deadline

The following schedule provides key events and their associated completion dates, and is provided primarily for planning purposes. CAAWHC may modify the project timeline at its discretion.

No.	RFP	Target Dates
1.	RFP Issued	February 2, 2026
2.	RFP Response Due	March 3, 2026
3.	CAAWHC Review Period	Week of March 9, 2026
4.	Notification of Finalist Vendor Selection	Week of March 16, 2026
5.	Finalist Presentations	Week of March 23, 2026
6.	Vendor Selection Completed/Notification Letters	Week of March 30, 2026

VIII. Additional Information, Expectations and Contract Requirements

CAAWHC

This RFP represents the best effort of CAAWHC to document its requirements for this project. CAAWHC reserves the right to adjust the specifications or scope of effort stated in this RFP. In the event that any modifications are necessary, CAAWHC will notify all Consultants remaining in consideration via a written addendum to this RFP.

Consultant's Responsibility

It is the Consultant's responsibility to provide a complete response to the RFP. If the Consultant believes more information is necessary for a proper response, questions should be directed via email to margo.dyer@acap-me.org. In some cases, if additional information is provided to one potential Consultant, similar information will be provided to other Consultants receiving this RFP.

Use and Disclosure

CAAWHC reserves the right to use information submitted in response to this document in any manner it may deem appropriate in evaluating the fitness of the services proposed. Materials that are submitted by the Consultant that should be considered highly confidential should be marked as such. If confidentiality is requested but cannot be afforded, the Consultant will be notified and will be permitted to withdraw its proposal.

Liability

The issuance of this document and the receipt of the information in response to this RFP will not in any way cause CAAWHC to incur liability or obligation, financial or otherwise. CAAWHC assumes no obligation to reimburse or in any way compensate Consultant for expenses incurred in connection with response to this RFP.

Compliance

By responding to this RFP, the Consultant is providing assurance that in the performance of the service covered under this RFP it will comply with all applicable State and Federal laws and regulations.

Independent Consultant Status

All personnel assigned by the Consultant to perform Services will be employees of the Consultant and the Consultant will pay all salaries and expenses of, and all federal, social security, unemployment taxes, and any other payroll or withholding taxes relating to such employees. The Consultant will be considered, for all purposes, an independent Consultant, and it will not, directly or indirectly, act as an agent, servant or employee of CAAWHC, or make any commitments or incur any liabilities on behalf of CAAWHC without its prior written consent.