



PUBLIC SCHOOL & EDUCATION EMPLOYEE
RETIREMENT SYSTEMS OF MISSOURI

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Penetration Testing

Prepared: 4/14/2025

**The Public School and Education Employee
Retirement Systems of Missouri (PSRS/PEERS)**
3210 W. Truman Blvd. ■ Jefferson City, MO ■ 65109

Primary Contact: Monica Cain
Email: MCain@psrsmo.org
Phone: 573.638.1014

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1. Introduction and Background

The Public School Retirement System of Missouri (“PSRS”) and the Public Education Employee Retirement System of Missouri (“PEERS”) are defined benefit plans established to provide retirement security to Missouri’s educators after a full career of service.

The total invested assets of both PSRS and PEERS were approximately \$58.7 billion as of June 30, 2024, making the combined entity larger than all other public retirement plans in the state combined, and the 44th largest defined benefit plan in the United States. The combined Systems serve over 315,000 total members in 535 districts and other employers. As of June 30, 2024, over 110,000 individuals received retirement benefits from the Systems. Total annual benefits paid were over \$3.8 billion for the year ended June 30, 2024.

PSRS and PEERS are governed jointly by a seven-member Board of Trustees (“Trustees”). Four of the Trustees are active members of PSRS or PEERS and are elected by the membership of the systems. The remaining three Trustees are appointed by the Missouri Governor. No elected officials or state employees may sit on the Board of Trustees. Trustees serve terms of four years; however, appointed Trustees may continue to serve on an expired term until their replacement is named. The Board hires the Systems’ Executive Director, who reports to the Board. All other employees are hired by and report to the Executive Director.

Additional information about PSRS and PEERS, including additional information on the Board of Trustees, can be found at www.psr-peers.org.

2. Scope of Services

2.1 Internal Penetration Testing

- Assess the effectiveness of existing security controls such as firewalls, intrusion detection/prevention systems (IDS/IPS), endpoint security measures, and others.
- Enumerate and assess the security posture of the of the internal network environment, simulating attacks in a controlled manner.
- The internal environment consists of approximately 300 servers and endpoints of varying operating systems.

2.2 External Penetration Testing

- Evaluate the strength of external-facing assets and security devices such as firewalls, web servers, load balancers, and SFTP servers.
- Enumerate and assess the security posture of the entirety of all public-facing IP addresses, servers, and services – simulating attacks in a controlled manner.
- The external IP range consists of about 110 addresses.

2.3 Rules of Engagement

- **Scoping Call:** Schedule a engagement call with key PSRS/PEERS stake holders detailing testing plan, methodology and more.
- **Service Availability:** Testing must not cause service interruptions or degrade the availability of systems. Any high-risk testing activities must be scheduled and coordinated with PSRS/PEERS to minimize disruptions.
- **Data Protection:** No data should be exfiltrated or manipulated. Sensitive data discovered must be handled per PSRS/PEERS data protection guidelines. Certain mission critical systems will require adhering to specific, more stringent guidelines for testing.
- **Social Engineering:** The use of social engineering of membership of the Systems to obtain system access is strictly prohibited.
- **Brute Force Attacks:** Brute force attacks on authentication mechanisms should only be conducted with prior approval and during agreed-upon windows.
- **Denial of Service Attacks:** No Denial of Service (DoS) attacks are permitted unless explicitly authorized in writing.
- **Testing Best Practices:** All testing activities must comply and be performed with industry best practices and all applicable laws, such as OWASP, NIST, and local regulations.

2.4 Communication Protocols

- The vendor must designate a primary point of contact who will communicate progress, findings, and issues during the engagement.
- PSRS/PEERS designated point of contact (POC) will be available for consultation in case of any potential service-impacting activities.
- If a critical vulnerability is discovered that poses an imminent risk, the vendor must immediately inform the designated PSRS/PEERS contact person.
- In the event of a major incident or unexpected issues during testing, the vendor should escalate according to the agreed protocol.

2.5 Deliverables

The vendor will provide the following deliverables:

- **Pre-engagement Scoping Document:** A detailed plan outlining the methodology, tools, and timelines for the engagement.
- **Penetration Test Report:** A detailed report covering the vulnerabilities identified, their risk levels, and recommendations for remediation. The report should include:
 - Executive summary with key findings and risks.
 - Technical details for each vulnerability discovered, along with exploitation paths.
 - Recommendations for mitigating each risk.
- **Retesting and Verification:** After remediation efforts by PSRS/PEERS the vendor will retest to verify that identified vulnerabilities have been resolved.

2.6 Conflicts

If current representation of a client of the firm may create a conflict with representation of PSRS/PEERS, please provide a description of the firm's course of action to remedy the conflict if the firm is awarded the contract resulting from this RFP.

3. Proposal Specifications

Award of the contract resulting from this RFP will be based upon the most responsive Firm whose offer will be the most advantageous to PSRS/PEERS in terms of cost, functionality, and other factors as specified elsewhere in this RFP.

PSRS/PEERS reserve the right to:

- Reject any or all offers and discontinue this RFP process without obligation or liability to any Respondent
- Accept a bid other than the lowest price offered
- Award a contract on the basis of initial offers received, without discussions or requests for best and final offers.

3.1 Intent to Respond

If a firm intends to respond to this RFP, a Notice of Intent to do so should be sent to PSRS/PEERS by April 21, 2025. The Notice should be sent by email to the contact listed in Paragraph 3.2 below, and contain the firm's name, its intent to respond, the name of a contact person and the contact person's telephone number and email. Submitting this Notice will not obligate the firm to submit a response but will allow PSRS/PEERS to send out any necessary information to interested firms.

3.2 Contact

The following contact must be utilized for all responses and communications:

Monica Cain
Lead Senior Accountant
PSRS/PEERS
P.O. Box 268
Jefferson City, MO 65102
573-638-1041
Email: MCain@psrsmo.org

3.3 RFP Questions

Questions concerning the RFP, selection process, and contract terms must be received via email to Ms. Cain by 5:00 p.m. (CST) on April 30, 2025 in order for PSRS/PEERS to provide information before any potential finalist interviews. All questions must be submitted to Ms. Cain. PSRS/PEERS will respond to all questions submitted no later than 5:00 p.m. CST May 7, 2025, and all firms who submitted an intent to respond will receive the question and answer document.

3.4 Response Deadline and Delivery

Full and complete responses to this RFP must be received via email to Ms. Cain by 5:00 p.m. (CST) on May 14, 2025. Responses received after this deadline may not be considered.

4. Selection Process

PSRS/PEERS staff will evaluate all timely and complete responses. PSRS/PEERS reserve the right to request that any response be clarified or supplemented.

Any award to be made pursuant to this RFP will be based upon the proposal with appropriate consideration given to operational, technical, cost, and management requirements. Evaluation of offers will be based upon the firm's responsiveness to the RFP and the total price quoted for all items covered by the RFP.

The following elements will be the primary considerations in evaluating all submitted proposals and in the selection of a firm:

1. Completion of all required responses in the correct format.
2. The extent to which the proposed solution fulfills PSRS/PEERS stated requirements as set out in this RFP.
3. An assessment of the respondent's ability to deliver the indicated service in accordance with the specifications set out in this RFP.
4. The respondent's experience, and record of past performance in delivering such services.
5. Availability of sufficient high quality personnel with the required skills and experience for the specific approach proposed.
6. Overall cost of the firm's proposal. While cost is relevant to the selection process, PSRS/PEERS is not required to select the lowest cost proposal.

PSRS/PEERS may, at their discretion and without explanation to the respondents, at any time choose to discontinue this RFP without obligation to any respondent.

5. Tentative Timetable

The following is the tentative time schedule for this RFP process. All dates are subject to modification by PSRS/PEERS.

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| • Issuance of RFP | April 14, 2025 |
| • Intent to Respond | April 21, 2025 |
| • RFP Question deadline | April 30, 2025 |
| • RFP Question and Answer Document Issued | May 7, 2025 |
| • RFP response deadline | May 14, 2025 |
| • Finalist interviews with staff | May 20 -23, 2025 |
| • Contract Award Announcement | May 26, 2025 |

6. Proposal Content

At a minimum, the proposal should include the following information:

6.1 Company Data

- Include contact data for the primary contact on this RFP. Include name, title, and contact information.
- Please identify the lead consultant who will be assigned to the project/engagement, along with a bio which includes experience, education and work history.
- Please identify any other staff who will be assigned to this project/engagement, along with bios for the staff including experience, education and work history.
- Include a summary of your entity including the length of time in business and a narrative of your entity's qualifications to perform the work identified in this proposal.

6.2 Work Plan

- For each of the services identified in Section 2. ("Required Services"), provide a detailed narrative of your Firm's experience and ability to perform the services. Description of how your Firm will consult with PSRS/PEERS staff during the course of providing the services.
- A description of any potential problems anticipated in completing the services and your Firm's approach to resolving these problems.
- Any special assistance that will be requested from PSRS/PEERS staff.
- Please also identify any additional services or offerings that your Firm provides that you believe may be of interest or use to PSRS/PEERS based on your knowledge of the systems and your experience in government relations.

A. References

- Provide three (3) clients that we may use as references. Each reference shall include:
 - Contact data
 - Description of services provided
 - Time period of representation
- No references will be contacted without first informing the firm.

6.3 Cost

- Please provide a cost proposal for the services outlined in this RFP.

6.4 Additional Information

- Provide any additional information you believe is relevant for PSRS/PEERS to consider when reviewing your proposal.

7. Terms and Conditions

PSRS/PEERS makes no representations or warranties, expressed or implied, as to the accuracy or completeness of the information in the RFP and nothing contained herein is or shall be relied upon as a promise or representation, whether as to the past or the future. The RFP does not purport to contain all of the information that may be required to evaluate the RFP and any recipient hereof should conduct its own independent analysis of PSRS/PEERS and the data contained or referenced herein. PSRS/PEERS does not anticipate updating or otherwise revising the RFP. However, this RFP may be withdrawn, modified, or re-circulated at any time at the sole discretion of PSRS/PEERS.

PSRS/PEERS reserves the right, at its sole discretion and without giving reasons or notice, at any time and in any respect, to alter these procedures, to change and alter any and all criteria, to terminate discussions, to accept or reject any response, in whole or in part, to negotiate modifications or revisions to a response and to negotiate with any one or more respondents to the RFP.

PSRS/PEERS is not and will not be under any obligation to accept, review or consider any response to the RFP, and is not and will not be under any obligation to accept the lowest offer submitted or any offer at all. PSRS/PEERS is not and will not be under any obligation to any recipient of, or any respondent to, the RFP except as expressly stated in any binding agreement ultimately entered into with one or more parties, either as part of this RFP process, or otherwise.

This RFP is not an offer but a request to receive a response. PSRS/PEERS will consider a response as an offer to develop an agreement based upon the contents of the response. Respondents agree that the contents of their responses are valid for one year from the date of submission. PSRS/PEERS will not be liable for any cost incurred in the preparation of a response and will not reimburse any respondents for their submission. Expenses related to the production of a response, including any potential interviews or presentations, are the sole responsibility of the respondent.

Respondent acknowledges that if any agreement results from this RFP that PSRS/PEERS Confidential information includes, but is not limited to, individually identifiable information pertaining to PSRS/PEERS' members, retirees, beneficiaries and survivors, made confidential pursuant to §169.020.17, RSMo.

Respondent acknowledges that if any agreement results from this RFP Respondent will be required to agree to indemnify PSRS/PEERS and its respective trustees, officers, employees, agents and representatives and their respective successors and assigns, and hold them harmless from any liabilities, losses, costs, or expenses which PSRS/PEERS may incur in connection with the disclosure or unauthorized use of PSRS/PEERS Confidential Information, together with attorney's fees, costs and expenses incurred by PSRS/PEERS as a result thereof.

Respondent acknowledges that if any agreement results from this RFP Respondent will be required to agree that at PSRS/PEERS written request, Respondent shall promptly return to PSRS/PEERS all copies, whether in written, electronic or other form or media, of the confidential information or destroy all such copies, and, upon PSRS/PEERS written request, certify in writing that such information has been destroyed.

Respondent acknowledges that, pursuant to the Missouri Open Records Act, section 610.010, et seq., PSRS/PEERS may be required to release to third parties all information provided by Respondent in response to this RFP, regardless if such information is labeled "confidential," "proprietary" or is otherwise intended by the Respondent not to be released to third parties, without providing advance notice to Respondent of a request for such information or the release of such information. By submitting a response, Respondents acknowledge and agree that PSRS/PEERS shall have no liability to them or to any other person or entity for disclosing information in accordance with the Missouri Open Records Act, as interpreted by PSRS/PEERS.

If any agreement resulting from this RFP has a value of \$100,000 or more and the Respondent has ten or more employees, the Respondent will be required to certify in the agreement, pursuant to Section 34.600 RSMo., that it is not currently engaged in, and shall not for the duration of this Contract engage in a boycott of (1) goods or services from the State of Israel, (2) companies doing business in or with Israel or authorized by, licensed by, or organized under the laws of the State of Israel, or (3) persons or entities doing business in the State of Israel. For purposes of the certification, “boycott Israel” and “boycott of the State of Israel” means “engaging in refusals to deal, terminating business activities, or other actions to discriminate against, inflict economic harm, or otherwise limit commercial relations specifically with the State of Israel, companies doing business in or with Israel or authorized by, licensed by, or organized under the laws of the State of Israel, or persons or entities doing business in the State of Israel, that are all intended to support a boycott of the State of Israel.” Respondent hereby acknowledges and agrees that, notwithstanding any provision to the contrary in the resulting agreement, the resulting agreement will be void in the event the certification is breached.

Respondent acknowledges that all lawsuits involving PSRS/PEERS must be brought in Cole County Circuit Court, Cole County, Missouri, and be subject to Missouri Law, whether or not related to this RFP or any contract or agreement entered into pursuant to this RFP.