Other Government Entity (OGE) Frequently Asked Questions

South Carolina Department of Administration
Division of Technology Operations (DTO)
Statewide Contract: 4400040058

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This document provides answers to frequently asked questions about the South Carolina Managed Cloud Services Statewide Contract (4400040058), administered by the Department of Administration, and executed by SMX. In addition to State Agencies, this contract is intended to help Other Government Entities (OGEs), including counties, municipal governments, school districts, public colleges and universities, and other eligible political subdivisions, understand the services available, the process for requesting and procuring cloud solutions, pricing structures, and key contractual considerations. For specific engagement details, please refer to your project-specific Statement of Work (SOW) or quote and the executed Statewide Contract.

Q1. Who may use the contract?

Subject to applicable South Carolina procurement statutes, regulations, and contract terms, eligible entities may include:

- Counties
- Municipal Governments
- School Districts
- Public Colleges and Universities
- Special Purpose Districts
- Public Authorities
- Public Utilities
- Other political subdivisions authorized to utilize statewide contracts

Each organization is responsible for confirming its eligibility and complying with its own internal procurement policies.

Q2. What services are available?

Available services include CSP consumption, cloud planning, architecture, landing zones, migration, implementation, managed cloud operations, network services, virtual machine administration, middleware, database management, DDoS protection, security architecture, backup and recovery, optimization, governance, and professional services obtained through a Request for Solution (RFS).

Q3. Which cloud providers are supported?

The contract supports Amazon Web Services, Microsoft Azure, Google Cloud, and Oracle Cloud Infrastructure.

Q4. How does an OGE begin?

The OGE should identify its business objective, technical need, anticipated users, data requirements, preferred CSP, security requirements, implementation schedule, and available budget. SMX can then conduct discovery and develop a proposed SOW or RFS response.

Q5. What is a Request for Solution?

An RFS is the process used to define and price project-specific consulting, assessment, architecture, migration, modernization, implementation, optimization, or specialized engineering work.

The RFS documents the requested outcome, scope, deliverables, assumptions, schedule, service resources, and pricing.

Q6. Is an RFS the same as the SOW?

No. The RFS initiates and defines the solution request. The resulting SOW is the project-specific document that establishes the authorized scope, deliverables, schedule, responsibilities, pricing, acceptance criteria, and other performance terms.

Q7. What should an OGE submit with an RFS?

The OGE should provide:

- Business need.
- Desired outcome.
- Current environment.
- Workload inventory.
- CSP preference.
- User population.
- Data classifications.
- Security requirements.
- Compliance requirements.
- Availability and recovery objectives.
- Existing licenses.
- Required implementation date.
- Budget constraints.
- Required deliverables.
- Acceptance criteria.
- Procurement and approval requirements.

Q8. What if I do not know what CSP is most appropriate for my workload?

The OGE can request an initial consult with the SMX solutions team to help navigate the benefits and applicability of services to your defined needs.

Q9. Are there additional steps for an AI-related request?

Possibly. AI-related purchases may involve additional governance, privacy, security, data-use, records, intellectual-property, accessibility, ethical-use, funding, and approval considerations.

> **Artificial Intelligence Purchasing Review**
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> If the proposed acquisition includes artificial intelligence (AI), generative AI, machine learning, intelligent automation, or cloud services supporting AI workloads, institutions of higher education should review applicable Department of Administration Artificial Intelligence Center of Excellence (AI CoE) guidance and institutional AI governance requirements before submitting a Request for Solution or approving a Statement of Work.

Q10. Does the contract itself approve an AI purchase?

No. Availability of a technical capability or labor category under the contract does not replace any required OGE, institutional, Department of Administration, security, privacy, legal, funding, or governance review.

Q11. What information should be included in an AI-related RFS?

An AI-related RFS should identify:

- Business purpose.
- Intended users.
- Proposed AI function.
- Data sources.
- Sensitive information.
- Whether OGE data may be retained or used for training.
- Human oversight.
- Decision-making impact.
- Security controls.
- Privacy implications.
- Records implications.
- Model or platform provider.
- Transparency requirements.
- Accuracy requirements.

- Bias and risk controls.
- Accessibility.
- Expected benefits.
- Performance measures.
- Required approvals.

Q12. How are CSP charges calculated?

CSP charges are generally based on actual eligible cloud consumption. Applicable discounts are determined in accordance with the awarded pricing structure and the conditions stated in the OGE Pricing Guide.

Q13. Are CSP discounts the same as managed-service percentages?

No. A CSP discount reduces eligible cloud-provider charges. Managed Cloud Services support is a separate charge for operational management.

For example, an AWS engagement may contain:

- AWS eligible consumption.
- The applicable AWS CSP discount.
- The applicable AWS MCS support percentage.
- Optional managed support.
- Fixed-price services.
- RFS or professional-service charges.

Q14. Do I have to spend more than $100,000 per month to receive the AWS contract discount?

No. The CSP volume discount thresholds shown in the Pricing Guide are based on the combined monthly cloud consumption of participating organizations under the South Carolina Managed Cloud Services Contract. Individual OGEs are not required to independently meet those thresholds. Applicable discounts are determined in accordance with the executed contract and the awarded pricing structure.

Q15. Do CSP discounts apply to every product?

Not necessarily. Discounts apply only when the service is eligible and SMX receives the corresponding discount. Third-party marketplace products, licensing, or other charges may be excluded.

Q16. Are cloud costs fixed?

Cloud consumption is generally variable. Estimates may be developed for planning, but actual charges depend on usage, service configuration, workload behavior, storage, network traffic, CSP pricing, reservations, commitments, and other factors.

Q17. Can an OGE choose its MCS pricing tier?

No. The MCS pricing tier is determined by the applicable monthly CSP spend amount. The OGE does not select the tier, and SMX does not assign a tier based on a preferred service level.

Q18. What are the MCS consumption tiers?

The MCS pricing tiers are based on monthly CSP cloud charges as follows:

Tier	CSP Monthly Charges
Tier 1	$0 – $150,000
Tier 2	$150,001 – $300,000
Tier 3	$300,001 – $500,000
Tier 4	$500,001 – $1,000,000
Tier 5	$1,000,001 and above

Q19. What happens if monthly CSP consumption changes?

The applicable tier may change when monthly CSP consumption moves into another contract spend range. The corresponding contract support percentage will apply in accordance with the awarded pricing structure.

Q20. Does the pricing tier determine the exact scope of services?

No. The tier determines the applicable pricing percentage based on CSP spend. The specific services, responsibilities, service hours, deliverables, and operational requirements are defined separately in the Statement of Work.

Q21. What is included in Managed Cloud Services?

The exact scope is defined in the SOW. Services may include monitoring, incident management, service requests, operating system administration, CSP administration, backup monitoring, patch support, capacity review, performance analysis, reporting, service management, and technical support.

Q22. Is 24×7 support automatically included for everything?

No. The SOW must define the specific services, systems, support hours, response expectations, escalation procedures, and exclusions.

Q23. What optional services are available?

Optional services include:

- Customer-to-CSP network connections.
- Networking within CSPs.
- Customer virtual CSP connections.
- Virtual machine middleware.
- Virtual machine system administration.
- Cloud-native middleware.
- DDoS protection.
- Database management.
- Optional managed technical support.
- Professional labor.

Q24. Can an OGE purchase only CSP consumption?

No. The contract requires engagement through managed services. CSP consumption alone, without managed cloud services, is not available through this contract.

Q25. Can an OGE use an existing CSP environment?

Potentially. Discovery must determine the account structure, ownership, billing relationship, administrative access, security configuration, commitments, licensing, and technical feasibility.

The Pricing Guide states that administrative access is required for specified Google Cloud and Azure discount arrangements.

Q26. Who owns the cloud account?

Account, subscription, project, or tenancy ownership must be documented in the SOW. The SOW should also address administrative access, billing, data ownership, transition, and termination.

Q27. What happens to reserved instances or committed-use purchases if participation ends?

The Pricing Guide explains that an OGE may remain responsible for outstanding committed balances and invoices unless the CSP permits transfer to another authorized arrangement. The specific commitment terms should be reviewed before purchase.

Q28. How are professional services priced?

Professional services may use the applicable RFS charges, labor categories, optional Resource Units, or another authorized pricing component identified in the executed contract and project SOW.

Q29. Which labor categories are available?

The Pricing Guide identifies:

- System Administration.
- Operations.
- Database Administration.
- Project Management Support.
- Solution Architect.
- CCOE Architect.
- Network Administration.
- Infrastructure Architect.

Current rates must be taken from the applicable contract year.

Q30. Will the OGE be responsible for Contractor travel if on-site visits are requested?

Approved on-site travel may be priced in accordance with the contract. The Pricing Guide states that the listed travel charges do not apply to South Carolina residents. Travel should be authorized in advance and identified in the SOW.

Q31. Are prices the same in every contract year?

Not all prices remain the same. Percentage-based rates may remain fixed or change according to the awarded schedule. RFS charges, optional fixed-price services, labor rates, and travel rates increase according to the applicable year tables.

The SOW must identify the contract year used for pricing.

Q32. Can services be added after award of an OGE SOW?

Yes, when permitted by the contract and the OGE's purchasing procedures. Added services should be documented through an authorized SOW amendment, change order, or other approved purchasing instrument.

Q33. Can the scope be changed informally?

Material changes should not be implemented based only on an informal request. Scope, schedule, deliverables, security requirements, or pricing changes should be evaluated and authorized through the documented change-control process.

Q34. How are deliverables accepted?

The SOW should define objective acceptance criteria, the authorized reviewer, the review period, the method for identifying deficiencies, and the process for correction and acceptance.

Q35. What security information should the OGE provide?

The OGE should provide:

- Data classifications.
- Applicable standards.
- Identity requirements.
- Encryption requirements.
- Network requirements.
- Logging requirements.
- Vulnerability requirements.
- Incident-notification requirements.
- Backup and recovery requirements.
- Records-retention requirements.
- Privacy requirements.
- Regulatory requirements.
- Institutional standards.

Q36. Who is responsible for compliance?

The OGE is responsible for identifying its applicable legal, regulatory, policy, funding, security, privacy, accessibility, records, and institutional requirements. SMX is responsible for performing the contractual services and controls assigned to it in the SOW.

Responsibility should be documented rather than assumed.

Q37. Can the contract be used for disaster recovery?

Yes, subject to development of an approved solution. The OGE should define its recovery time objective, recovery point objective, critical workloads, dependencies, testing requirements, retention, failover design, and funding.

Q38. Can the contract be used for cloud optimization?

Yes. Optimization may include rightsizing, utilization review, storage analysis, commitment analysis, cost allocation, architecture efficiency, governance, and operational recommendations.

Savings are not guaranteed because actual results depend on consumption and implementation decisions.

Q39. Can the contract support migration from an on-premises data center?

Yes. The RFS and SOW should identify the current environment, inventory, dependencies, migration approach, network capacity, data volume, testing, cutover, rollback, security, operational transition, and decommissioning responsibilities.

Q40. Can the contract support a multi-cloud environment?

Yes, where technically appropriate and included in the approved scope. Governance, identity, networking, monitoring, security, data movement, operational responsibility, and cost allocation should be clearly defined.

Q41. What is not automatically included?

Unless identified in the SOW, the following should not be assumed:

- Third-party licenses.
- Telecommunications.
- Customer hardware.
- Facility upgrades.
- Application remediation.
- End-user support.
- Data cleansing.
- Custom development.
- Training.
- On-site services.
- Legal or regulatory determinations.
- AI approval or AI-governance services.
- Services outside the contract scope.

Q42. What documents should an OGE review before ordering?

The OGE should review:

- Executed statewide contract.
- Applicable amendments.
- OGE solution exhibit.
- Common-services exhibit.
- OGE Pricing Guide.
- Service Catalog.
- Ordering Guide.
- Sample SOW.
- Procurement Checklist.
- Applicable AI CoE guidance for AI-related requests.

- OGE-specific procurement, security, privacy, legal, accessibility, funding, and governance requirements.

Q43. What takes precedence if these FAQs conflict with the contract?

The executed statewide contract and incorporated exhibits govern.

Q44. How does an OGE provide a Purchase Order to SMX?

The OGE will issue a Purchase Order or other authorized procurement document to SMX. Submission instructions will be included on the Quote or SOW provided to you.

Contact Information

To learn more about services available under this contract, initiate a Request for Solution, or obtain assistance with ordering, contact the SMX State and Local Account Team, Program Management Office:

	Contact 1	Contact 2
Name	Shelly Reade	Elizabeth Brown
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Important Notice

> *This document provides general guidance and does not replace the executed Statewide Contract, incorporated exhibits, applicable amendments, or the Pricing Guide. In the event of a conflict between this document and the contract, the executed contract and incorporated exhibits govern.*