THE JUDICIARY, STATE OF HAWAII
NOTICE OF REQUEST FOR EXEMPTION
FROM HRS CHAPTER 103D

TO: Chief Procurement Officer

FROM: _Staffing Services Division_____
              Name of Requesting Division/Program

Pursuant to HRS § 103D -102 (b)(4) and HAR Chapter 3-120, The Judiciary requests a procurement exemption for the following:

1. Describe the goods, services or construction: Quintela software. The software stores interview questions in one central location or question bank/library with the ability to categorize the questions by KSA (competency) and job levels, along with search and filter options to locate specific instruments. Quintela can also modify/format their interview template to suit our needs. When built, the system will enable us to search for questions by KSA and job level and export the questions with rating guides into a formatted Word template. (See attached document)

2. Vendor/Contractor/Service Provider: Quintela	3. Amount of Request: $21,000 (initial setup cost included)
4. Term of Contract From: To: One (1) year from contract execution	5. Prior Judiciary Procurement Exemption No. (if applicable):

6. Explain in detail why it is not practicable or not advantageous for the Program/Division to procure by competitive means: To the best of our knowledge, there is no other software program available that will build a complete online interview management system. Other software program vendors that we researched and/or contacted are unable or unwilling to tailor their software to fit our needs. (See attached document)

7. Explain in detail, the process that will be or was utilized in selecting the vendor/contractor/service provider: We initially approached Quintela who was present among 650 exhibitors demonstrating their services at a Society of Human Resources Management (SHRM) Annual Conference in June 2023. Quintela was the only exhibitor that specialized in competency-based structured interviews. We exchanged our contact information at the conference and communicated back to Quintela to provide us with a demo of their user interface. During the demo, we were able to assess and determine that their software would enable us to enhance our current way of developing interview instruments for our hiring programs. We were subsequently granted a temporary free license to test the software. Our test of the software further cemented our initial notion that Quintela offers an ideal digital program that could assist us with creating our interview instruments more effectively and efficiently for our hiring programs. (See attached document)

Name	Division/Program	Phone Number	email address
Teng Yang*	Staff Services Division	808-539-4944	teng.p.yang@courts.hawaii.gov
Lynne Kushiyama	Staff Services Division	808-539-4947	lynne.t.kushiyama@courts.hawaii.gov

8. Identify the primary responsible staff person(s) conducting and managing this procurement. (Appropriate delegated procurement authority and completion of mandatory training required).
*Point of contact (Place asterisk after name of person to contact for additional information).

All requirements/approvals and internal controls for this expenditure is the responsibility of the Division/Program. I certify that the information provided above is, to the best of my knowledge, true and correct.

/s/ Eric Tanigawa

10/13/2023

Department/Division/Program Head Signature   _Date_

For Chief Procurement Officer Use Only

Date Notice Posted: _____

Inquiries about this request shall be directed to the contact named in Item 8. Submit written objection to this NOTICE OF REQUEST FOR EXEMPTION within seven (7) calendar days, or as otherwise allowed, from the Date Notice Posted to:

    Chief Procurement Officer – The Judiciary
    Financial Services Department
    Contracts & Purchasing Office
    1111 Alakea Street, 6th Floor
    Honolulu, Hawaii 96813-2807

Chief Procurement Officer (CPO) Comments:

☐ Approved   ☐ Disapproved   ☐ No Action Required

_____
Chief Procurement Officer Signature   _Date_

4Gov Justification – Quintela online interview management system.

The demand for interview instruments has steadily risen over time. On average, the Staffing Services Division (SSD) receives one to four interview request(s) per week.

Depending on the complexity of the interview instrument, e.g., for a position with a lower or higher SR level, white or blue collar, non-supervisory or supervisory, managerial, civil service or exempt position, it takes on average up to six (6) hours to complete an instrument tailored for the specific position. The completion time may be reduced when a previously developed instrument exists for the specific position that may only require information to be updated.

The number of interview requests per month in calendar years 2021, 2022 and 2023 and the total average number of hours, i.e., total number of requests per calendar year multiplied by six hours, are reflected in the last two columns in the table below:

CY	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total # of requests	Avg # of hours
2021	6	5	4	5	5	8	11	8	3	6	3	1	**65**	**390**
2022	6	4	4	3	4	2	7	2	7	9	4	8	**60**	**360**
2023	3	5	3	7	1	2	7	14	1				**43**	**258**

Normally, when a request is received, assigned staff needs to assess and re-prioritize their workload to be able to complete the instrument within a specified time frame to enable interviews to commence. Although a longer lead time to develop the instrument is preferred, there are times when staff must complete the instrument within a shorter time period, e.g., when interviews have been scheduled and the interview request is received within days before the first interview.

Factors that cause greater demand for interview instruments are outlined below:

- Due to the increasing number of resignations, retirements and promotional opportunities in recent years, there are many new hiring managers. Ideally, the hiring manager would create their own interview questions as they are the subject matter experts. However, most hiring managers are either unfamiliar with how to develop the instrument or too busy. Also, it is common that previous incumbents do not transfer their interview files to the new incumbent. As a result, there have been more reliance on SSD for interview assistance.

- Due in large part to the COVID pandemic and resulting social distancing recommendations, virtual types of interviews are now preferred. While there are advantages of virtual interviews such as an accelerated hiring process, greater scheduling flexibility for the candidates, and eliminated travel time for panel members when they participate remotely rather than report to live interview settings, the disadvantage of a virtual interview is the compromised security of confidential interview questions due to an exposed virtual environment – it is unknown whether the applicant has recorded the interview.

  There are also frequent application filers who continually apply but are not selected. If referred to the program and interview questions remain unchanged, these applicants are repeatedly interviewed with the same interview questions, thus, giving them an advantage to score higher than first-time applicants.

  Therefore, the necessity of developing new interview questions have increased to ensure fairness and objectivity in a competitive interview process.

- The amount of interview requests fluctuate throughout the year. However, interview requests are more frequent around the November 30 vacancy report and preferred retirement months of July and December.

 The current process of developing new interview instruments is not only time consuming and labor intensive, it is also challenging to locate desired questions without an item bank or central database to pull questions from.

The process to assemble an interview instrument is by searching for previously developed interview questions by knowledge, skills and abilities (KSA), conducting online searches using key words, copying and pasting questions and rating guides onto a new Word document, and editing existing questions. If there is no record of an existing instrument for a specific position, a new one needs to be developed. After completion, the instruments are saved as Word documents by class of work and position number.

Without an instrument template in a standard format, a significant amount of time is spent re-formatting the contents of the instrument to ensure that information is correctly aligned and updated with the appropriate introductory and final scripts, rating guides, interview summary sheets, etc.

As such, an online search to find software that can be customized as a question bank or central database and also, format the interview questions and rating guides in a standard way has been ongoing. The closest we have found is an online database in a South American educational system. However, when we traced the origin of the software to a U.S. company, we were informed that it can only be acquired for educational testing purposes.

Our search continued at The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) Annual Conference in June 2023. Among more than 650 exhibitors, we found Quintela, the only company at the conference that specialized in competency-based structured interviews.

We subsequently met with Quintela via Zoom and reviewed a demo of their user interface. The user interface stores interview questions in one central location or question bank/library with the ability to categorize the questions by KSA (competency) and job levels, along with search and filter options to locate specific instruments. Quintela can also modify/format their interview template to suit our needs. When built, the system will enable us to search for questions by KSA and job level and export the questions with rating guides into a formatted Word template.

The initial cost for Quintela's digital interview guide (instrument) builder is $21,000. It includes a one-time setup fee of $11,000 for customizations, an interview guide management module, Eguides, guide modifications and a single sign-on. In addition, Quintela will upload 300+ interview questions from their question library.

The other $10,000 is the annual fee for unlimited user access, unlimited space for interview instruments, a portal that allows users to manage and email Word/PDF instruments to hiring managers, and user access rights to manage interview content, including downloading and uploading content on demand.

SSD believes Quintela will be able to build a centralized online interview management system to manage our KSA (competency) based library of questions, interview guides for interviewers, and export the assembled instrument in a consistent format.

According to SHRM, *"Quintela is unique because they are selection science experts who build simple, easy-to-use HR technology. Using the Interview Guide Platform is highly intuitive—which is a must for HR professionals and hiring managers with decreased bandwidth and increased responsibilities. One of the best parts of the platform is it helps equip interviewers with practical tips on how to structure the interview, how to ask probing questions, what to look for and how to evaluate. It reduces much of the leg work typically required by recruiters to prepare interviewers, while providing candidates a more consistent and polished interview experience."*