

Procurement Office

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To: All Prospective Bidders

From: Dr. Drewry L. Brown

Director of Procurement

Date: August 11, 2025

Subject: 26P-001 vCISO RFP

Addendum No. 1

This addendum will clarify, add, delete, correct, or change information outlined in the Request for Proposals (RFP) referenced above, and shall be made a part of the solicitation. This addendum must be included in your proposal submission. Failure to complete and submit this addendum with your proposal may result in your firm's proposal being considered non-responsive and therefore rejected.

Revise the KEY INFORMATION SUMMARY SHEET with:

	Friday, August 15, 2025, at 11 am EST
Closing Date:	Friday, August 22, 2025, at 11 am EST

RFP Title: Virtual Chief Information Security Officer Services

Opening Date: July 14, 2025 Closing Date: August 22, 2025

No.	<u>QUESTION</u>	<u>ANSWSER</u>
1	Can the vendor include a trusted subcontracting company specializing in security services, and can the company overview and experience include this subcontractor's experience?	Will only be maintaining contact with the principal vendor
2	Have these services been used in the past and if so, which firm provided them? May this same firm bid this opportunity	No
3	What amount is budgeted for these services and is that budget state-funded?	Prefer not to answer at this time
4	Does Howard Community College have a contract template for these services that can be reviewed prior to submitting a response? If not, is Howard Community College open to using the vendor's standard agreement?	Vendor contract can be provided but it will be compared to Howard Community College's terms and conditions and redlined accordingly.
5	Why was the initial RFP cancelled? Was this just to allow for an expansion of the scope, or were there other concerns?	New requirements from leadership.
6	References are mentioned throughout the solicitation. In 3.10 (page 12), it specifies "all listed projects shall be from a higher education institution." Can you confirm whether references outside of higher education institutions (e.g. government, private sector, K–12 education) can be utilized?	Yes, higher ed is preferred but not solely. At least one reference should be from higher education.
7	Are subcontractors permitted to provide services on behalf of the prime contractor, and	Proposal responses from one vendor only. (See question 1)

RFP Title: Virtual Chief Information Security Officer Services

Opening Date: July 14, 2025 Closing Date: August 22, 2025

	if so, how should their qualifications be included?	
8	Are vendors expected to provide references from comparable institutions or only higher education?	Yes, preferred higher ed and cybersecurity references
9	Can the vendor include optional services in their response or only what is explicitly requested in the RFP?	Explicitly what is requested in the RFP
10	Are there any existing vendor relationships that must be considered in the execution of this engagement?	No
11	Will the vCISO be responsible for third-party software security reviews or procurement support?	Yes
12	Are there expectations for the vCISO to identify grant opportunities or funding sources for cybersecurity initiatives?	No
13	Will the vCISO be involved in strategic procurement decisions related to IT/cybersecurity?	Yes, as advisory role
14	Will the awarded vendor be asked to provide staffing resources for temporary surges if need?	No
15	Will the vendor be expected to help build institutional capacity for future in-house CISO placement?	Yes

RFP Title: Virtual Chief Information Security Officer Services

Opening Date: July 14, 2025 Closing Date: August 22, 2025

16	Can the Virtual CISO services be provided by a group of people, or is Howard Community College seeking an individual to act as a vCISO Are Samples (3.8) to be provided based on the bidding firm's experience or the proposed vCISO?	Individual, no concerns about others working in the background with vCISO Yes, welcome to include samples
18	Will the vCISO have regular access to the Board of Trustees, and how often are board-level reports expected?	No, CIO will provide updates quarterly
19	What security KPIs/KRIs are currently tracked by the college?	Phishing rate, training participation, etc.
20	Is there an established cybersecurity budget, and will the vCISO be expected to manage or influence its allocation directly?	Budget managed by HCC
21	Are cloud services limited to Microsoft 365, AWS, and Azure, or are there additional SaaS platforms used by the college? If additional, can you please share what they are?	LMS, ERP, CMS
22	Are there any evaluation preferences given to vendors who have served Maryland-based public institutions or community colleges?	No
23	Are there specific terms or insurance carriers HCC requires for liability coverage compliance?	See Section 4.17 of Solicitation
24	Will any background checks or additional security clearances be required before onboarding?	No

RFP Title: Virtual Chief Information Security Officer Services

Opening Date: July 14, 2025 Closing Date: August 22, 2025

25	What is the total number of virtual and physical servers in the institution's IT environment including cloud/IaaS?	Approximately 200
26	Does your institution have a written incident response plan?	Yes, vCISO will need to update
27	Does your institution have a written information security plan?	Yes, vCISO will need to update
28	Please describe the staffing structure of the institution's IT security resources.	Two people with multiple responsibilities
29	Are HCC's current cybersecurity controls, policies, and processes aligned with the CIS Controls Implementation Group (IG) 1?	Yes, currently working on this
30	Did the 2024 cybersecurity risk assessment include a gap analysis against both GLBA and the CIS Controls?	Yes
31	When were HCC's policies (incident response plan, information security plan, and vendor, vulnerability, data, software, and asset management policies) last reviewed and updated?	Still under review and some need to be updated
32	Does HCC currently subscribe to a threat intelligence service? If so, which one?	Yes
33	How many security analysts does HCC currently have on staff?	One
34	Does HCC have formal, documented business continuity and disaster recovery plans in	Needs to be updated and tested

RFP Title: Virtual Chief Information Security Officer Services

Opening Date: July 14, 2025 Closing Date: August 22, 2025

	place? If so, when were the plans last tested and updated?	
35	Has HCC conducted a business impact analysis?	Yes, it needs to be updated
36	How often is security awareness training delivered, and is it mandatory for all users?	Mandatory for employees and will be conducted at least twice this year
37	Has HCC taken any steps to implement zero-trust architecture?	No
38	The RFP proposal format does not seem to include a section for resumes/qualifications of the primary vCISO and other staff that may support the project. Does HCC require resumes, and if so, where should they be placed in the proposal?	Yes, for vCISO
39	Are all the tasks in the scope of work to be repeated annually?	Yes
40	Have there been any new tasks added to the RFP since it was originally created in the Fall of 2024?	Yes
41	Has the college ever completed a road mapping activity that prioritizes the key deliverables listed in the scope of work? Are there any activities that are a higher priority than the others?	No
42	The RFP states that the expected transition will occur during November 2025. What is the desired start date for the project?	To be determined/ASAP

RFP Title: Virtual Chief Information Security Officer Services

Opening Date: July 14, 2025 Closing Date: August 22, 2025

43	Can you please confirm if vulnerability assessments, penetration testing, and security awareness training are in scope as part of this engagement? a. Are any other unspecified services and/or testing in-scope?	Yes, information will be provided to awardee
44	Can you provide the number of endpoints and servers, including OS?	No, information will be provided to awardee
45	Does the University currently conduct regular vulnerability scans of its IT/OT networks?	We are a college that conducts vulnerability scans.
46	Please confirm that the University has a SOC to handle day-to-day security functions? a. If yes, is the SOC in-house or outsourced?	Yes, outsourced
47	Has the University experienced any kind of cyber incidents recently? a. If so, how were they resolved?	No incidents recently
48	Does the University currently maintain a risk register or enterprise risk management framework?	We abide by CIS-IG1 standards
49	Is there an asset management or CMDB tool currently in use?	Yes
50	Can vendors propose a hybrid model that includes both onsite and remote vCISO services?	This is a virtual role.
51	Does the college require any specific security frameworks (e.g., NIST, ISO 27001) to be followed for this engagement?	CIS-IG1

RFP Title: Virtual Chief Information Security Officer Services

Opening Date: July 14, 2025 Closing Date: August 22, 2025

52	Are there any current tools in use for vulnerability management or incident response?	Yes
53	Does HCC currently have a data classification policy?	Yes
54	How is privileged access management currently handled?	Carefully, additional information will be provided to awardee
55	Are third-party vendor risk assessments part of the current cybersecurity process?	Yes
56	Will the awarded vendor be expected to assist with audit preparation or compliance reviews?	Yes
57	Is the awarded vendor expected to develop or revise policies, or only review them?	Most are developed and may need revision.
58	What systems are in place for log management and SIEM (Security Information and Event Management)?	Graylog
59	Are managed services (MSSPs) currently being used for any security operations?	No
60	Will the selected vCISO have access to prior security assessments, audit reports, or third-party evaluations?	Yes
61	What is the expected number of hours per week/month for the vCISO role?	20 hours per week
62	Is there a current governance structure in place for information security oversight?	No

RFP Title: Virtual Chief Information Security Officer Services

Opening Date: July 14, 2025 Closing Date: August 22, 2025

63	Does HCC utilize endpoint detection and response (EDR) tools? If so, which one?	Yes
64	What level of interaction is expected between the vCISO and academic departments?	Little to none
65	Will the vCISO be expected to participate in emergency preparedness or crisis management exercises?	Yes, they will lead the exercises
66	How many physical campus locations does HCC operate?	One campus, one location
67	Are there satellite or remote sites that require security oversight?	See answer in number 66 above
68	Will the vCISO be required to present to executive leadership or the president's office?	Potentially, yes
69	Are there ongoing security initiatives (e.g., MFA rollouts, cloud migrations) that the vCISO will be expected to lead or support?	Yes
70	What tools are currently in place for identity and access management (IAM)?	Additional information will be provided to awardee
71	Does HCC expect the vCISO to provide end- user training content or just oversee its implementation?	Advisory only
72	Is there a dedicated project manager from HCC who will work with the vCISO?	There are dedicated staff
73	Will HCC provide office space or other onsite facilities for in-person engagements?	No in-person engagements are expected

RFP Title: Virtual Chief Information Security Officer Services

Opening Date: July 14, 2025 Closing Date: August 22, 2025

74	Is there a strategic IT or cybersecurity roadmap in place that the vCISO will be expected to align with?	Yes, additional information will be provided to awardee
75	Is there an existing data governance framework, and how does cybersecurity align with that initiative?	In process
76	What backup and recovery tools are in place for critical systems?	Veeam
77	Is data loss prevention (DLP) currently implemented?	Yes, in 365
78	Will the vCISO be expected to conduct technical assessments or coordinate with internal/third-party assessors?	Yes
79	Does HCC have a mobile device management (MDM) solution in place?	No
80	What percentage of staff and students are remote, hybrid, or on-campus?	22,000 students mostly on campus 1,100 employees
81	Are Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) policies enforced, and how are those managed?	No, a policy is needed
82	Is there a preferred format for deliverables such as reports or presentations?	Yes
83	Are there any known cybersecurity compliance deadlines or audits scheduled in FY26?	GLBA risk assessment
84	Are external stakeholders (e.g., donors, government partners) involved in any cybersecurity planning?	Some may be

RFP Title: Virtual Chief Information Security Officer Services

Opening Date: July 14, 2025 Closing Date: August 22, 2025

85	Are risk management and information security considered part of the same reporting structure?	No
86	How is security budget planning conducted—annually or multi-year?	Annually
87	Is the vCISO expected to assist with hiring or training internal cybersecurity staff?	Yes
88	Does the College have a documented Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)?	Yes
89	Are devices encrypted by default, and if so, using what technology?	Yes, for employees BitLocker
90	What tools are currently in place for patch management and software updates?	A list will be provided to awardee.
91	Are there any current initiatives around accessibility or inclusive design as it pertains to IT/cybersecurity?	No
92	Does the College have any upcoming system migrations or large-scale IT upgrades planned?	Yes, ERP to SaaS
93	Will the vCISO have visibility into student or health-related data (e.g., FERPA, HIPAA)?	No
94	Will the vendor be required to sign a Business Associate Agreement (BAA)?	No
95	Are there any relevant union, HR, or labor relations considerations the vCISO should be aware of?	No

RFP Title: Virtual Chief Information Security Officer Services

Opening Date: July 14, 2025 Closing Date: August 22, 2025

96	Are there service-level expectations for response times or deliverables from vCISO?	Yes
	What level of documentation is expected (e.g.,	
97	executive summary vs. technical detail)?	Both
98	Will the College provide tools, templates, or systems of access for vCISO functions?	Yes
99	How are incident response exercises currently conducted (tabletop, live drills, etc.)?	Tabletop to be conducted by vCISO
100	Is vulnerability management centralized or decentralized across departments?	Centralized
101	Are cybersecurity goals or performance metrics included in institutional planning documents?	Yes, needs to be defined
102	Will any grant-funded initiatives fall under the scope of vCISO responsibilities?	No
103	Are faculty/staff required to complete annual cybersecurity training?	Yes
104	How frequently does HCC conduct phishing simulations or social engineering tests?	In 2024, there was one campaign and two phishing scenarios.
105	Are there expectations for the vCISO to contribute to Board-level reports or strategic communications?	Yes
106	Are there plans to adopt or expand artificial intelligence (AI) or machine learning (ML) in IT operations?	Eventually

RFP Title: Virtual Chief Information Security Officer Services

Opening Date: July 14, 2025 Closing Date: August 22, 2025

107	What is the average incident response time and resolution timeline currently?	To be sync'd with Security Department once awarded			
108	Is the vCISO expected to perform internal audits or collaborate with external audit teams?	Yes			
109	Is cybersecurity part of the college's overall enterprise risk management (ERM) strategy?				
110	Are there plans to move critical infrastructure or services to the cloud in the next 1–2 years?	Currently doing so Most critical systems are in the cloud			
111	Are there policies in place for social media use by staff or departments that affect cybersecurity posture?	Not directly			
112	Will the vendor have access to conduct network scans or is that managed internally?	Internal scans			
113	Are there retention policies for security logs and incident records?	Needs to be developed			
114	Is Zero Trust Architecture formally adopted or in planning?	Needs to be developed			
115	Will student devices be in scope for any cybersecurity oversight?	No for personal devices			
116	Does HCC have specific goals tied to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in IT or security staffing?	No			
117	Is there a cybersecurity insurance policy in place?	Yes			

RFP Title: Virtual Chief Information Security Officer Services

Opening Date: July 14, 2025 Closing Date: August 22, 2025

118	Are physical security systems (e.g., cameras, access control) integrated into the broader cybersecurity program?	Yes		
119	How many cybersecurity incidents were reported in the last 12 months?	None		
120	What is the level of awareness among departments regarding phishing or ransomware threats?	Annual training in 2024 Semi-annual in 2025		
121	How often are network architecture or firewall configurations reviewed?	Annually		
122	What antivirus or EDR software is currently deployed?	Both		
123	Is there an expectation that the vCISO will serve as a public spokesperson in the event of a breach?	No, but may need to provide script for the college spokesperson		
124	What identity verification measures are in place for student/staff accounts?	Additional information will be provided to awardee.		
125	Is any part of the IT infrastructure managed by a third-party MSP (Managed Service Provider)?	No		
126	Is there a designated Data Protection Officer or similar privacy role on campus?	No		
127	Will the vCISO be expected to maintain industry certifications (e.g., CISSP, CISM)?	Yes		

RFP Title: Virtual Chief Information Security Officer Services

Opening Date: July 14, 2025 Closing Date: August 22, 2025

128	Are there any known risks, legacy systems, or technical debt that have been flagged in prior assessments?	Additional information will be provided to awardee		
129	Does HCC have a cybersecurity steering committee?	No		
130	Are there active partnerships with other educational institutions for shared cybersecurity resources?	No		
131	Is penetration testing performed internally, externally, or both?	Both		
132	Are critical systems protected by multifactor authentication (MFA)?	Yes		
133	What is the escalation process for reporting cybersecurity incidents?	Escalation process to be developed		
134	Will the vCISO help define acceptable thresholds for key risk indicators (KRIs)?	Yes		
135	Is cybersecurity education embedded in any academic programs?	A few programs		
136	Are there documented procedures for onboarding/offboarding employees with respect to IT access?	In development		
137	Does the college have contracts with cloud service providers under shared responsibility models?	Yes		
138	How are third-party risk assessments documented and tracked?	HECVAT		

RFP Title: Virtual Chief Information Security Officer Services

Opening Date: July 14, 2025 Closing Date: August 22, 2025 Addendum No. 1

	Ara any wanders or systems governed under			
139	Are any vendors or systems governed under DFARS, CMMC, or other federal compliance standards?	To be confirmed once awarded		
140	Will the vCISO be required to attend or present at external conferences or professional groups on behalf of HCC?	No		
141	What expectations are in place regarding change management and security oversight?	Policy and procedure development		
142	Will the vCISO work directly with the IT help desk or tiered support staff?	Rarely		
143	How are patching and system updates coordinated across departments or business units?	Scheduled maintenance with allocated service windows		
144	Does HCC have a Security Information and Event Management (SIEM) platform in place?	No		
145	Are data centers on-premises cloud-based, or hybrid?	Hybrid		
146	Is there a disaster recovery plan, and when was it last tested?	Yes, needs to be tested		
147	Will the vCISO need to assist with accreditation or regulatory reporting (e.g., PCI-DSS, GLBA)?	GLBA		
148	Are there role-based access controls (RBAC) currently implemented across core systems?	Yes		

RFP Title: Virtual Chief Information Security Officer Services

Opening Date: July 14, 2025 Closing Date: August 22, 2025

149	Does HCC plan to implement or enhance its public-facing cybersecurity awareness campaigns?	Yes		
150	Is there a need for vCISO to support digital forensics in the event of a breach?	Yes		
151	How is physical access to network equipment controlled and monitored?	Through IT Department		
152	Will vCISO responsibilities extend to student data privacy or FERPA compliance oversight?	Advisory needs may arise		
153	Are any operational technologies (OT) or industrial control systems (ICS) in use (e.g., HVAC, energy management)?	Yes		
154	Are any operational technologies (OT) or industrial control systems (ICS) in use (e.g., HVAC, energy management)?	Yes		
155	Does the college leverage data analytics tools that raise cybersecurity considerations (e.g., Splunk, Tableau)?	Possibly		
156	Are annual penetration tests conducted? Who performs them?	Yes		
157	Is the college part of any national or regional cybersecurity consortiums (e.g., REN-ISAC)?	Yes		
158	Are social engineering assessments (e.g., phone phishing) included in your security program?	Yes		

RFP Title: Virtual Chief Information Security Officer Services

Opening Date: July 14, 2025 Closing Date: August 22, 2025 Addendum No. 1

159	Will the vCISO have direct access to senior leadership, or work through an intermediary?	CIO is part of senior leadership		
160	Are there any special cybersecurity considerations for student housing or campus security systems?	No – student housing Yes – security systems		
161	Does the vCISO need to coordinate with legal counsel for policy updates or breach notifications?	No		
162	What is the level of executive buy-in and support for cybersecurity initiatives?	High		
163	Is cloud security posture management (CSPM) currently part of the IT strategy?	Yes		
164	Are there formalized incident post-mortem processes in place?	No		
165	How are remote learning platforms secured and monitored?	Through IT Department		
166	Will the vCISO be required to maintain documentation for internal audits or state oversight?	Possibly		
167	Is there a preferred project management methodology (e.g., Agile, Waterfall) for security initiatives?	No		
168	Are there IoT devices deployed that require oversight (e.g., smart boards, lab sensors)?	Yes		

RFP Title: Virtual Chief Information Security Officer Services

Opening Date: July 14, 2025 Closing Date: August 22, 2025

169	Are security updates required to be presented to the Board of Trustees? Yes			
170	How is risk appetite defined and measured at HCC?	To be determined once awarded		
171	Are risk registers maintained and regularly updated?	No		
172	What role will the vCISO play in budget forecasting for IT security?	Advisory		
173	Are internal phishing campaigns tracked by metrics (e.g., click rate, reporting rate)?	Yes		
174	Is there a requirement for a cybersecurity maturity model assessment or roadmap delivery?	Yes		
175	Does the vCISO have authority to recommend disciplinary actions in response to repeated policy violations?	Recommend to CIO		
176	How is remote access currently secured for vendors or third-party contractors?	VPN and MFA		
177	Are any security operations outsourced internationally?	No		
178	Will the vCISO need to engage with accreditation bodies or federal auditors?	No		
179	Does HCC participate in vulnerability disclosure or bug bounty programs?	No		

RFP Title: Virtual Chief Information Security Officer Services

Opening Date: July 14, 2025 Closing Date: August 22, 2025

Addendum No. 1

	Is there a list of approved devices and	
180	applications for staff and faculty use?	Yes
		No leve may call be mate
	Will the vCISO collaborate with academic	No, but may collaborate with Executive Director for
181	research teams or data ethics committees?	Planning, Research &
101	research teams of data etines committees:	Organizational
		Development
	What level of integration is required with ERP	Bevelopment
182	systems (e.g., Ellucian Banner, Workday)?	High level of integration
	Are there specific deliverables or milestones	Conduct cyber risk
183	expected in the first 90 days of engagement?	assessment
		abboshiicht
	How are privileged accounts audited and	Additional information will
184	rotated?	be provided to awardee
	Is there an enhanding shooklist for external	-
185	Is there an onboarding checklist for external vendors or consultants?	Yes
103	vehicors of consultants?	1 05
	Are legal holds or data preservation notices	
186	handled by IT or a separate department?	Both
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End of Questions and Answers

RFP Title: Virtual Chief Information Security Officer Services

Opening Date: July 14, 2025 Closing Date: August 22, 2025

Addendum No. 1

July 22, 2025 - Pre-Proposal Conference Attendance Sheet

First Name (Attendee)	Last Name (Attendee)	Email Address	Company Name	Phone
Habib	Keita	hkeita@kemeskisystems.com	Kemeski Systems	6186710007
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End of Attendance Sheet

RFP Title: Virtual Chief Information Security Officer Services

Opening Date: July 14, 2025 Closing Date: August 22, 2025 Addendum No. 1

Please take notice that the "Financial Proposal Form" Section (1) "Program Costs" has been edited to the following:

Should Read: Provide an itemized cost breakdown of the **Public Relations and Marketing Virtual Chief Information Security Officer** services costs.

All other requirements in the RFP remain unchanged.

Sincerely,
Drewry L Brown Jr Dr. Drewry L. Brown Jr.
Director of Procurement
HCC
By signing this addendum, the Offeror acknowledges receipt of Addendum No. 1.
Offeror Name:
(Print)
Signature:
Date: