



**The North Carolina Partnership for Children, Inc.  
Request for Proposals  
for  
e-Signature Tool**

The North Carolina Partnership for Children (NCPC) will conduct a competitive selection process for a vendor to provide an e-Signature Tool.

NCPC limits contractual relationships to only those with governmental agencies or businesses such as corporations, limited liability companies, partnerships, or sole proprietorships conducting the business as described herein.

Applicants are cautioned that this is a Request for Proposals (RFP), not a request to contract. NCPC and/or its agent reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, to waive technicalities, and to be the sole judge of suitability of the services for its intended use and specifically reserves the right to make awards based on what is determined by NCPC to be in the best interest of the State of North Carolina.

**PLEASE READ THIS RFP CAREFULLY. Late applications will not be accepted.**

RFP Release Date:	May 29, 2025
Location of RFP:	<a href="http://www.smartstart.org/jobs/">http://www.smartstart.org/jobs/</a>
Questions:	<b>Questions must be received by 5:00 PM (ET) June 17, 2025.</b>  Submit Questions to: <a href="mailto:submissions@smartstart.org">submissions@smartstart.org</a>  Answers to any submitted questions will be posted on <b>July 3, 2025</b> at the same location as the RFP.
Deadline for Proposals:	<b>Proposals must be received by 5:00 pm, July 18, 2025</b> for furnishing services specified herein.
Submission:	Email to: <a href="mailto:submissions@smartstart.org">submissions@smartstart.org</a> Subject: e-Signature Tool – [Company Name]
Award Notification:	Respondents will be contacted via email no later than <b>September 1, 2025</b> with the award decision.

## **I. BACKGROUND**

The North Carolina Partnership for Children (NCPC) guides and facilitates the Smart Start Network, supporting the work of [local partnerships](#) and connecting them to the statewide early childhood system.

Smart Start's mission is to advance a high quality, comprehensive, accountable early childhood system that benefits each child in North Carolina, beginning with a healthy birth. Smart Start brings together families, teachers, doctors, dentists, libraries, schools, and many others to create a comprehensive system of early childhood services for children across the state, including health, early care and education, and family support. More information about Smart Start can be found online at [www.smartstart.org](http://www.smartstart.org).

## **II. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE**

The Smart Start Network is seeking proposals from qualified vendors to provide a secure, efficient, and user-friendly e-signature solution to facilitate electronic document signing, ensure compliance, and streamline workflows across departments. The selected solution should enhance operational efficiency, meet regulatory requirements, and provide a seamless experience for internal and external users.

This RFP aims to gather information from qualified vendors about their available e-signature tools, including features, security standards, scalability, compliance capabilities, technical support capacity, and bulk-rate discounts. We are evaluating e-signature tools that meet industry's best practices, integrate with existing systems, and ensure compliance with legal and regulatory requirements.

NCPC currently offers an e-signature tool as a shared service at no cost to all of our 75 Local Partnerships. We intend to continue to provide this service, therefore we are seeking a vendor that will provide a tool that allows multiple organizations to have individual accounts with local autonomy while offering centralized billing. The vendor will also need to be able to provide technical support to each local organization as needed.

The goal is to implement a robust e-signature platform that will:

- Automate document signature processes.
- Ensure security and compliance with industry standards.
- Improve document turnaround time.
- Integrate seamlessly with existing processes.
- Provide cost savings to a network of nonprofit organizations.

### **III. CONTRACT PROVISIONS**

Funding for this project is available beginning **October 1, 2025**, with implementation to be completed no later than November 1, 2025. NCPC is limited in contract length commitment and is required to periodically solicit cost proposals. Proposals must be for a minimum of 12 months, and may extend or include renewal options for up to 36 months.

### **IV. SOLUTION REQUIREMENTS**

The proposed solution should include, but is not limited to, the following requirements:

#### **Core Functionality**

- Ability to send, sign, and manage electronic documents.
- Support multiple document formats (PDF, Word, etc.).
- Sequential and parallel signing options.
- Bulk sending and signing capabilities.
- Audit trails and activity logs for compliance.

#### **Security and Compliance**

- Compliance with e-signature regulations (e.g., ESIGN, UETA, GDPR).
- Encryption of documents during transmission and storage.
- Multi-factor authentication (MFA) options.
- Role-based access control (RBAC) and permissions management.

#### **User Interface and Experience**

- Intuitive, easy-to-use interface for signers and administrators.
- Mobile-friendly platform with responsive design.
- Custom branding and personalized templates.

### **Integration and Compatibility**

- Integration with commonly used platforms (e.g., Microsoft 365, Google Workspace, Salesforce).
- API availability for custom integrations.
- Single Sign-On (SSO) compatibility.

### **Reporting and Analytics**

- Real-time tracking of document status.
- Usage reports and completion metrics.
- Audit trails and compliance documentation.

### **Administration and Support**

- Centralized admin dashboard for managing users and documents.

## **V. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS**

Proposals should include a plan to address the **Solution Requirements** listed in Section IV as well as the following information.

### **Company Information**

- Company name, address, and contact details.

### **Solution Overview**

- Description of proposed solution, including features and functionality.
- Security and compliance certifications.

### **Technical Specifications**

- Overview of technical architecture and system requirements.
- API documentation and integration capabilities.
- Details on data encryption and security protocols.

### **Implementation of Product**

- Estimated timeline for beginning to use the tool. (i.e. is it simple and can be used without much uptake or will there need to be time built in for setting up the tool and learning how to use it.)
- Opportunities for training and onboarding support for any staff across the 76 organizations who are using this tool for the first time.
- Ongoing technical assistance and support for any staff across the 76 organizations who are using this tool and have questions.

### **Pricing Structure**

- Detailed pricing model (e.g., per user, per document, or enterprise license).
- Breakdown of initial implementation costs and ongoing maintenance.
- Any applicable discounts or bundled services.

### **Support and Maintenance**

- SLA response times and escalation procedures.
- Ongoing maintenance, updates, and customer support offerings

## VI. PROCUREMENT PROCESS

### Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Functionality and Features
- Security and Compliance
- Integration and Compatibility
- Implementation Plan and Timeline
- Cost Effectiveness
- Customer Support and SLAs

### Timeline

The planned timeline for the assessment period is August 2025 with the intent of having a tool selected and implemented by November 1, 2025.

### Responses

Interested parties should respond to this RFP no later than **July 18, 2025** by submitting a response to the above information and the following page to [submissions@smartstart.org](mailto:submissions@smartstart.org) with the subject "e-Signature Tool RFP – (Company Name)"

To maintain procurement integrity, NCPC is limited in the information it can provide and direct interaction with potential vendors during this process.

During evaluation, NCPC may reach out to respondents for clarification and to provide feedback on next steps in the procurement process.

## VII. RFP TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. **TERMS AND CONDITIONS:** All proposals are subject to the terms and conditions outlined herein. All responses shall be controlled by such terms and conditions and the submission of other terms and conditions, price lists, catalogs, and/or other documents as part of an offeror's response will be waived and have no effect either on this Request for Proposals or on any contract that may be awarded resulting from this solicitation.

Offeror specifically agrees to the conditions set forth in the above paragraph by submitting a response to this Request for Proposals.

2. **CERTIFICATION:** By submitting the proposal, the submitter certifies that this proposal is submitted competitively and without collusion (G.S. 143-54), that none of our officers, directors, or owners of an unincorporated business entity has been convicted of any violations of Chapter 78A of the General Statutes, the Securities Act of 1933, or the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (G.S. 143-59.2), and that we are not an ineligible vendor as set forth in G.S. 143-59.1.
3. **ORAL EXPLANATIONS:** NCPC shall not be bound by oral explanations or instructions given at any time during the competitive process or prior to agreement execution.
4. **REFERENCE TO OTHER DATA:** Only information that is received in response to this RFP will be evaluated; reference to information previously submitted shall not be evaluated.
5. **COST FOR PROPOSAL PREPARATION:** Any costs incurred by offerors in preparing or submitting offers are the offerors' sole responsibility; NCPC will not reimburse an offeror for any costs incurred prior to agreement effective date.
6. **TIME FOR ACCEPTANCE:** Each proposal shall state that it is a firm offer that may be accepted within a period of 45 days. Although the contract is expected to be awarded prior to that time, the 45-day period is requested to allow for unforeseen delays.
7. **TITLES:** Titles and headings in this RFP and any subsequent contract are for convenience only and shall have no binding force or effect.
8. **CONFIDENTIALITY OF PROPOSALS:** In submitting its proposal the offeror agrees not to discuss or otherwise reveal the contents of the proposal to any source outside of NCPC, its agent, and the Office of State Auditor, until after the award of the contract. Offerors not in compliance with this provision may be disqualified, at the option of NCPC, from contract award. Only discussions authorized by NCPC are exempt from this provision.
9. **RIGHT TO SUBMITTED MATERIAL:** All responses, inquiries, or correspondence relating to or in reference to the RFP, and all other reports, charts, displays, schedules, exhibits, and other documentation submitted by the offerors shall become the property of NCPC when received by NCPC or its agent.

10. **OFFEROR'S REPRESENTATIVE:** Each offeror shall submit with its proposal the name, address, and telephone number of the person(s) with authority to bind the firm and answer questions or provide clarification concerning the firm's proposal.
11. **PROPRIETARY INFORMATION:** Trade secrets or similar proprietary data which the offeror does not wish disclosed to other than personnel involved in the evaluation or contract administration will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by 01 NCAC 05B.1501 and G.S. 132-1.3 if identified as follows: Each page shall be identified in boldface at the top and bottom as "CONFIDENTIAL". Any section of the proposal that is to remain confidential shall also be so marked in boldface on the title page of that section. Cost information may not be deemed confidential. Despite what is labeled as confidential, the determination as to whether or not it is shall be determined by North Carolina law.