

STATE OF NEW MEXICO SOLE SOURCE REQUEST AND DETERMINATION FORM

A sole source *determination* is not effective until the *sole source request for determination* has been posted for thirty (30) calendar days without Protest and subsequently approved in writing by the State Purchasing Agent of the General Services Department. The foregoing requirement is regardless of whether the *sole source request for determination* has been signed by the Agency.

- I. Name of Agency: **New Mexico Department of Justice**
Agency Chief Procurement Officer: **Rosalie Trujillo**
Telephone Number: **505-681-1130**
Agency Contact for this request: **Adolfo Mendez**
Email Address: **amendez@nm DOJ.gov**
- II. Name of prospective Contractor: **SKDKnickerbocker LLC**
SHARE Vendor Number (must be active): **0000190931**
Address of prospective Contractor:
1150 18th St. NW Suite 800
Washington, DC 20036

Contact Name, Telephone Number and Email Address:
Jasmine Hooks
202-464-6620
jhooks@skdknick.com

Amount of prospective contract before tax: **\$360,000**
Estimated tax amount (tax is subject to change): **8.3%**

- III. Term of prospective contract: **1 year**
Note: Please refer to §13-1-150 for contract term limits.

If this is an amendment request to an existing contract, include current sole source posting number issued by SPD:

- IV. If this is a Sole Source for new or existing IT software licensing subscription(s), Agency is required to upload the Contractor's draft Service Level Agreement (SLA) with the Sole Source online submission.
N/A

- V. Agency is required to provide the detailed scope of work (or amendment) for this sole source. Scope of work must match the scope included in the services determination and Horizons declination.

SKDK will provide the following services in connection with the NMDOJ's Epstein/Maxwell survivor public relations engagement:

Survivor Outreach & Connection Services

SKDK will leverage its existing relationships within the Epstein and Maxwell survivor community to:

- Identify and conduct outreach to survivors of Jeffrey Epstein and Ghislaine Maxwell who have New Mexico connections, including individuals associated with the Zorro Ranch.
- Facilitate introductions between identified survivors and the NMDOJ, serving as a trusted and trauma-informed intermediary to encourage survivor participation in State proceedings, investigations, or communications initiatives.
- Provide guidance on how the NMDOJ can communicate with survivors in a manner that builds trust, respects trauma, and encourages ongoing engagement with the State's efforts.
- Coordinate with survivor legal counsel, advocates, and support organizations to ensure that outreach efforts align with survivors' legal interests and personal preferences regarding public engagement.
- Support the development of a survivor engagement framework that can be sustained beyond the initial term of this engagement, establishing lasting channels of communication between the NMDOJ and the survivor community.

Stakeholder & Community Communications

- Advise the NMDOJ on communications with New Mexico-based victim advocacy organizations, survivor support groups, and community stakeholders relevant to the Epstein/Maxwell matter.
- Support the NMDOJ in developing public-facing materials that inform New Mexico residents about the State's survivor engagement efforts and accountability work.
- Facilitate coordination between the NMDOJ communications team and national survivor advocacy networks with which SKDK has established relationships.

Public Relations Strategy — Epstein/Maxwell Survivor Narrative

- Develop and implement a comprehensive public relations strategy specifically tailored to the NMDOJ's communications obligations regarding Epstein/Maxwell survivors with New Mexico connections.
- Advise the NMDOJ on media positioning, message development, and narrative framing that reflects trauma-informed principles and centers survivor dignity.
- Prepare key messaging documents, talking points, and media statements for use by NMDOJ leadership in connection with survivor-related announcements, proceedings, or inquiries.
- Provide strategic guidance on the timing and sequencing of public communications to protect survivor privacy, manage legal sensitivities, and advance the State's accountability narrative.

Media Relations & Earned Media Management

- Serve as the primary communications intermediary between the NMDOJ and media outlets

reporting on Epstein/Maxwell-related survivor matters in New Mexico.

- Manage incoming media inquiries on survivor-related topics, ensuring consistent, legally vetted, and trauma-sensitive responses.
- Proactively identify and pursue earned media opportunities that advance the State's narrative of accountability and survivor support, including placement of opinion content, interviews with senior NMDOJ officials, and coordination with national media contacts familiar with Epstein/Maxwell coverage.
- Monitor media coverage of Epstein/Maxwell survivor matters with a New Mexico nexus and provide real-time alerts and response recommendations to the NMDOJ.

Crisis Communications Preparedness

- Develop a crisis communications protocol for the NMDOJ specifically addressing scenarios arising from Epstein/Maxwell survivor disclosures, legal developments, or adverse media coverage.
- Provide rapid-response communications counsel as needed in connection with breaking developments in Epstein/Maxwell-related litigation, legislative activity, or media reporting that implicates New Mexico.
- Advise NMDOJ leadership on communications in the event of new survivor disclosures, document releases, or judicial proceedings that require immediate public response.

- VI. Provide a detailed explanation of the criteria developed and specified by the agency as necessary to perform and/or fulfill the contract and upon which the state agency reviewed available sources. (Do not use “technical jargon;” use plain English. Do not tailor the criteria simply to exclude other contractors if it is not rationally related to the purpose of the contract.)

Established, Trust-Based Relationships with Epstein/Maxwell Survivors

- Because outreach and engagement cannot be effectively initiated without existing trust, the provider must already have ongoing, credible relationships with survivors connected to New Mexico.
- This criterion is essential for facilitating introductions, encouraging survivor participation, and serving as a trauma-informed intermediary between survivors and the NMDOJ.

Subject-Matter Familiarity with Epstein/Maxwell and Its National Media Landscape

- The provider must possess a deep understanding of Epstein/Maxwell, including its history, its legal posture, and the media ecosystem surrounding it.
- This criterion is necessary to ensure accurate narrative framing, effective crisis response, and consistent messaging within a complex, high-visibility matter.

Trauma-Informed Communication Expertise

- The provider must have demonstrated experience working with survivors of trauma

(specifically sexual assault), including an understanding of survivor-centered messaging, privacy protection, and trust-based engagement.

- This is necessary to ensure that all communications respect survivor dignity and do not cause retraumatization.

Public Relations and Strategic Communications Experience for Sensitive Legal Matters

- Because this engagement involves legally sensitive public communications, the provider must have prior experience developing and executing public relations strategies that align with legal constraints, confidentiality considerations, and ongoing investigations.

Ability to Serve as the Primary Media Intermediary

- The provider must be able to manage media inquiries, advise on messaging, coordinate interviews, and provide real-time guidance.
- This requires established media contacts, especially with outlets that have covered Epstein/Maxwell extensively, and the ability to communicate clearly under time-sensitive conditions.

Capacity for Real-Time Monitoring and Rapid Response

- The scope requires the provider to monitor media coverage continuously and alert the agency to developments.
- The provider must be able to supply rapid-response recommendations in connection with breaking news, new survivor disclosures, legal filings, and public statements.

VII. Provide a detailed, sufficient explanation of the reasons, qualifications, proprietary rights or unique capabilities of the prospective contractor that makes their company ***the only source*** capable of providing the required professional service, general service, construction or item(s) of tangible personal property. (Please do not state the source is the “best” source or the “least costly” source. Those factors do not justify a “sole source.”)

SKDK will provide highly specialized survivor outreach services and public relations counsel in connection with investigations, proceedings, and public communications related to the sexual abuse networks operated by Jeffrey Epstein and Ghislaine Maxwell, with particular attention to survivors who have direct ties to New Mexico.

The lead partner who would be assigned to this engagement has received national recognition for her work representing survivors of sexual abuse. Her individual award reflects not only professional excellence but a demonstrated commitment to survivor-centered communications, a philosophy that will guide every aspect of SKDK's work for the NMDOJ. Her portfolio includes work alongside numerous survivors of both Harvey Weinstein and Jeffrey Epstein, giving her both the professional credentials and the direct experiential knowledge that this engagement demands.

The services required fall within a highly specialized area that the firm publicly identifies as one

of its core competencies. SKDK is known for its expertise in trauma-informed survivor engagement, sensitive communications involving victims of sexual violence, and media strategy related to high-profile abuse cases. This is not a service general communications firms offer, nor is it a capability that can be replicated without significant subject-matter experience and established relationships. Because this specialty is both unique and directly aligned with the purpose of the contract, SKDK is the only provider identified that can meet the agency's needs.

VIII. Provide a detailed, sufficient explanation of how the professional service, general service, construction or item(s) of tangible personal property is/are ***unique and how this uniqueness is substantially related to the intended purpose of the contract.***

SKDK is among the nation's foremost public affairs and communications firms, with a dedicated practice representing survivors of sexual abuse in high-profile legal and media environments. The firm has represented survivors across some of the most consequential sexual abuse cases of the past decade, developing deep institutional knowledge in trauma-informed communications, media strategy on behalf of vulnerable clients, and the management of sensitive narratives in adversarial public environments.

SKDK has specific, firsthand experience representing survivors of Jeffrey Epstein. This experience extends beyond general crisis communications. The firm has worked directly within the survivor community, understands the particular sensitivities of Epstein-related cases, and has established relationships with survivors and their legal counsel. Of particular relevance to this engagement, the firm has experience with survivors who have New Mexico connections, including those with direct ties to Epstein's Zorro Ranch operations.

This direct experience is foundational to the NMDOJ engagement. SKDK's familiarity with the Epstein survivor community means the firm can facilitate introductions, build trust with survivors, and serve as a credible bridge between the State and individuals who may be reluctant to engage with government entities directly.

The services required under this contract combine trauma-informed survivor engagement, sensitive legal communications, and Epstein-specific media strategy, capabilities that are not common in the marketplace. SKDK has specialized familiarity with Epstein/Maxwell and maintains established relationships with national and regional media outlets that routinely cover it. This positions the Contractor to manage earned media, respond to inquiries, and guide NMDOJ communications in a legally sensitive, high-profile environment.

These services cannot be safely or effectively performed by a provider without these specific, established capabilities.

IX. Provide a narrative description of the agency's due diligence in determining the basis for the procurement, including procedures used by the agency to conduct a review of available sources such as researching trade publications, industry newsletters and the internet;; contacting similar service providers; and reviewing the State Purchasing Divisions'

Statewide Price Agreements. Include a list of businesses contacted (***do not state that no other businesses were contacted***), date of contact, method of contact (telephone, mail, e-mail, other), and documentation demonstrating an explanation of why those businesses could not or would not, under any circumstances, perform the contract; or an explanation of why the agency has determined that no businesses other than the prospective contractor can perform the contract.

To assess whether other providers could perform the required services, the agency online search for “media consulting firms specializing in working with victims of sexual assault.” The results primarily included victim-service organizations and general crisis-communication firms, none of which offered the combination of trauma-informed survivor engagement, matter-specific expertise, and media strategy required for this contract. While the agency reviewed multiple search results, none reflected services comparable to those provided by SKDK. Based on this review, no other readily identifiable firms appeared capable of meeting the specific needs of the engagement.

Because of the sensitive and trauma-informed nature of the work, as well as the existing trust-based relationships SKDK has already established with Epstein/Maxwell survivors, no other provider demonstrated the ability to perform the required services to the standard necessary for this engagement. The scope of work requires a firm that can simultaneously manage complex public relations strategy, legal-sensitive media communications, and direct survivor outreach in a manner that protects survivor dignity, trauma histories, and privacy while supporting the NMDOJ’s legal and operational obligations.

SKDK is uniquely positioned to fulfill this work because it maintains ongoing relationships with survivors connected to New Mexico and is already recognized by those individuals as a safe and trusted intermediary. This existing rapport is essential to performing key components of the scope, including conducting survivor outreach, facilitating introductions to the NMDOJ, advising on trauma-informed messaging, and coordinating with survivor legal counsel and advocacy organizations. These tasks require a provider who can immediately engage with survivors without risking retraumatization or undermining their willingness to participate in State proceedings or communications.

Additionally, SKDK has established relationships with national media outlets and survivor-advocacy networks that have covered Epstein/Maxwell-related matters extensively. This provides the NMDOJ with a level of access, credibility, and contextual understanding that other firms were not able to demonstrate during the review of available sources. The coordinated PR strategy, media management, and crisis-communications functions outlined in the scope all require a provider with specific subject-matter familiarity and trust within both the advocacy and media ecosystems surrounding Epstein/Maxwell.

Based on the agency’s review, no other business was able to demonstrate the combination of trauma-informed survivor relationships, subject-matter expertise, specialized media experience, and credibility with the affected community necessary to perform the full scope of services required under this contract.



New Mexico
Department
of Justice

2026 Sole Source Form

Certified by:

Date: 03/27/26



Rosalie Trujillo (Mar 27, 2026 14:02:26 MDT)

Agency Chief Procurement Officer

Agency Approval by:

Date: 03/27/26



Lauren Rodriguez (Mar 27, 2026 14:26:10 MDT)

Cabinet Secretary/Agency or Entity Head or Designee

APPROVED:

Date: _____

State Purchasing Agent

If this sole source is being submitted by a governmental agency or governmental entity not under the final authority of the State Purchasing Agent, the State Purchasing Agent's signature is not required. The signature line may be removed from this form or marked as N/A. Hard Copy Documentation for Courtesy Postings do not need to be submitted to SPD for approval.

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Final Audit Report

2026-03-27

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