Adapt Security to Enable Macros in Excel
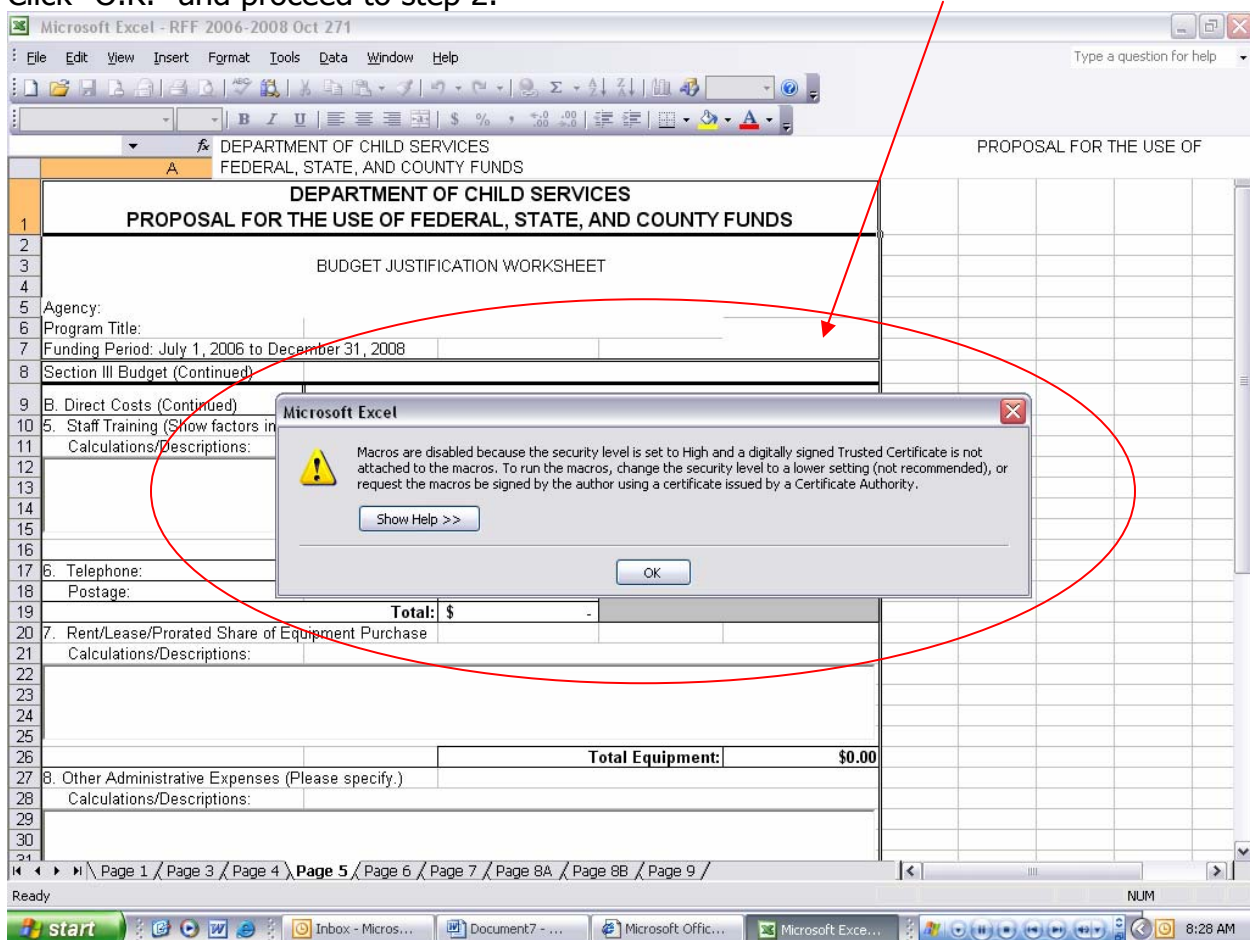
Microsoft Office software (especially Excel) uses what are called "macros" to perform a series of steps for you. Excel spreadsheets use macros to perform calculations or paste information throughout a document. These require security measures to make sure what you are using is safe and not infected with a virus. In order to use an existing spreadsheet effectively, you may have to change the security settings in Excel. The following tutorial will give a narrative explanation of these steps, as well as a series of "screen shots" that will walk you through this process.

Step 1:

First, you will know when you need to either disable or change the security settings of a spreadsheet's macros, as you may get a dialogue box that prompts something like:

"Macros are disabled because the security level is set too high and a digitally signed Trusted Certificate is not attached to the macros. To run the macros, change the security level to a lower setting (not recommended), or request the macros be signed by the author using a certificate issued by a Certificate Authority."
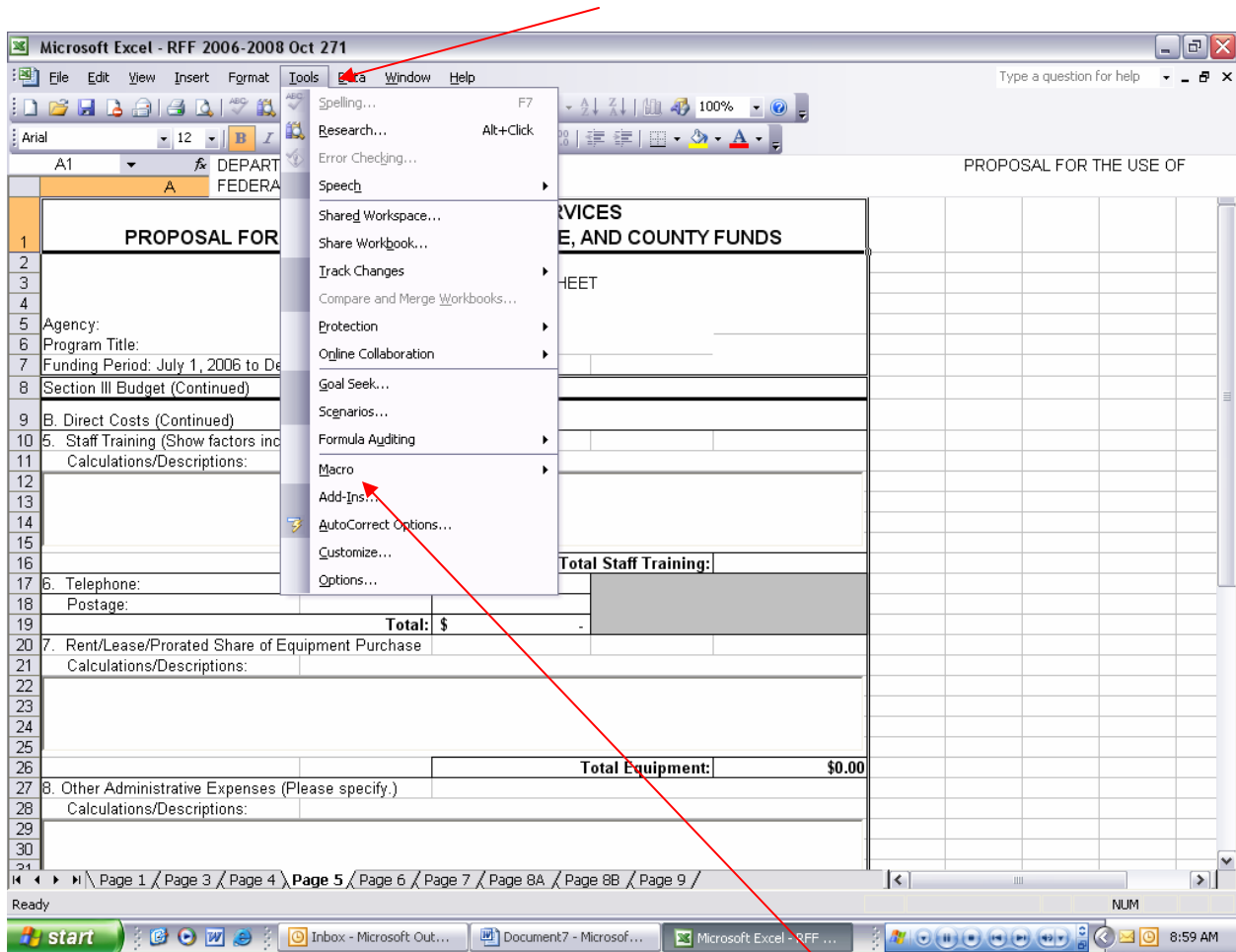
Click "O.K." and proceed to step 2.

Note: While this may sound like a serious message, in order to view/use some spreadsheets effectively it is necessary. The content included in the RFF is considered "trusted content," and has not been written with any malicious macros hidden.
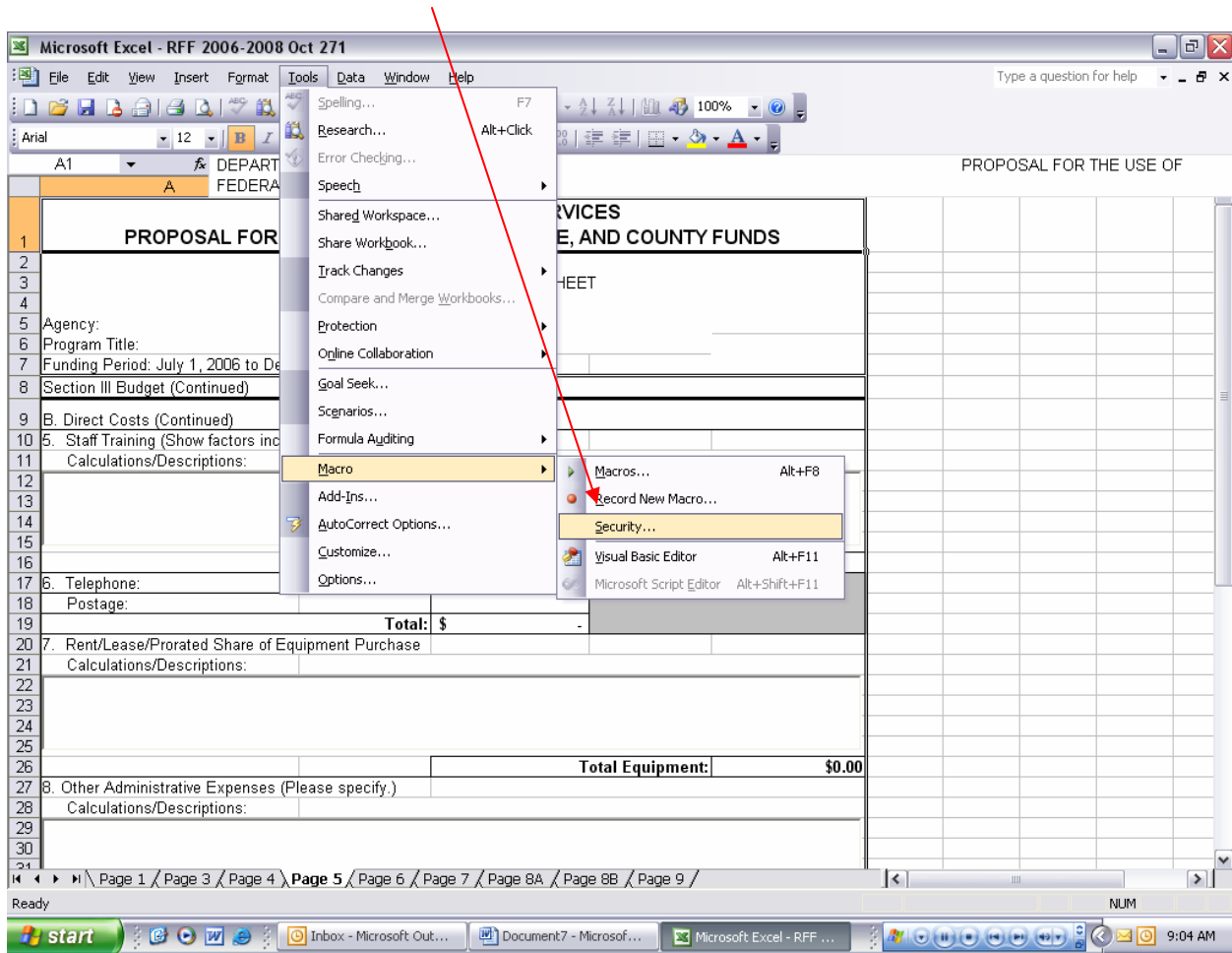
Step 2:

In order to change the security settings to allow macros to run in Excel, you must first go to the "Tools" menu, located at the top of the Excel window.
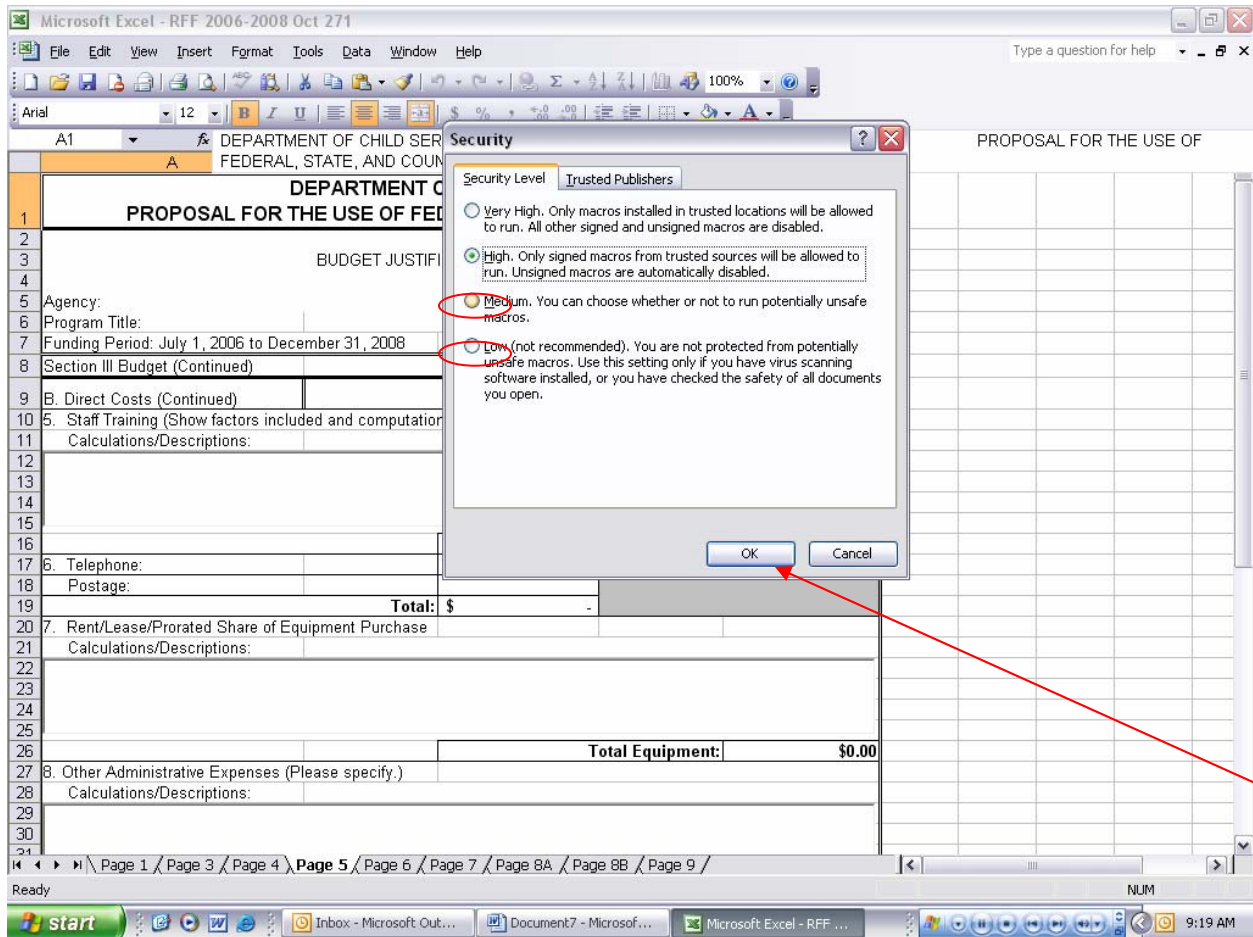

You must then select "Macro" from this drop-down menu (*note*: If you don't see this option at first, click the double arrow pointing down at the bottom of the drop-down menu. This expands this menu to display all the options that are available to you).

Step 3:
Once you place the pointer over the "Macro" menu option, a second slide-out window appears revealing the options available for working with macros. You now want to select "Security" from this slide-out window.
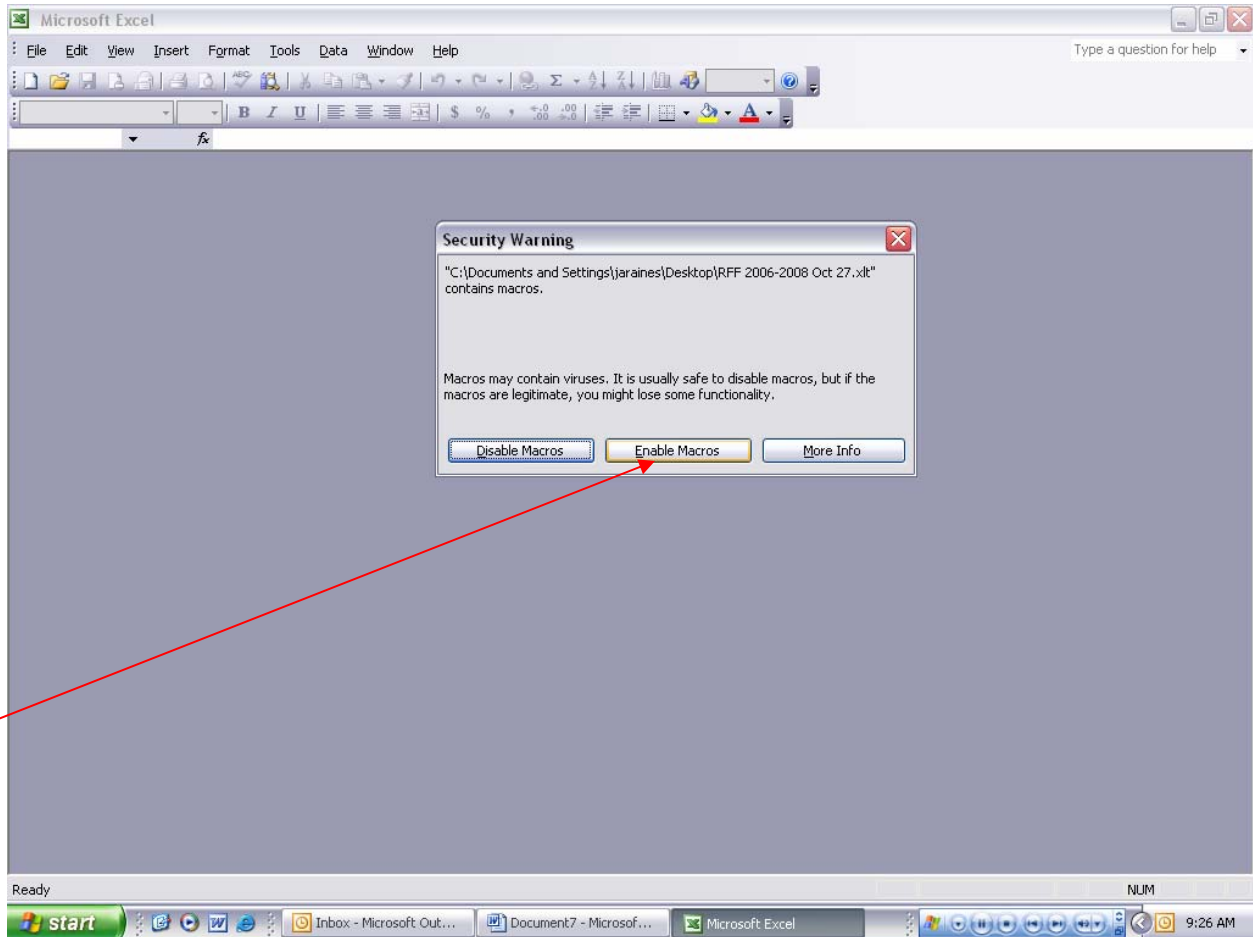

After clicking on the "Security" option from the "Macro" menu, a new window pops up that will allow you to change your security settings. You must change your settings to either "Medium" or "Low" in order to use the spreadsheet properly. After selecting the setting of your choice, click "O.K." and close the spreadsheet (you will be asked whether or not you would like to save your changes. Go ahead and do so before closing).

Step 4 *(if you chose the "Medium" security setting*):

If you changed your settings to medium, you will be prompted when opening a spreadsheet that uses macros whether to enable or disable these macros. You need to enable the macros in order for the spreadsheet to work properly.

After enabling the macros, you can start using your spreadsheet!

Step 5 *(if you chose the "Low" security setting)*:
If you chose to set your security settings to "Low," then you just have to close the spreadsheet, save the changes, and you will be ready to use the spreadsheet the next time you open it!