

GENERAL CONDITIONS AND INSTRUCTIONS TO BIDDERS FOR SERVICES

1. **SUBMISSIONS OF BIDS:**

- a. Bids are requested for the Specified Services. Bidders must complete the Service Bid/Contract form, including: name and address; federal identification number or social security number; license or registration number, if applicable; telephone number; and pricing section. Bid prices must be typewritten or in ink. Bidders must properly sign the Service Purchase Bid/Contract form in ink. Bids which are priced or signed in pencil will be rejected.
- b. The Service Bid/Contract form, as well as the other documents required by the invitation for bids (collectively referred to as the "Bid"), shall be enclosed and sealed in an envelope which is clearly marked "Bid" and includes the assigned contract inquiry number. It is the responsibility of each Bidder to ensure that its Bid is received at the Issuing Office location prior to the date and time set for the opening of Bids, regardless of medium used. If a Bidder decides to mail in its Bid, the Bidder should allow adequate time for delivery. No Bid shall be considered if it arrives at the Issuing Office location (shown on the Service Bid/Contract form) after the date and time set for Bid opening. In the event that, due to inclement weather, natural disaster, or other cause, the Commonwealth offices are officially closed on the date scheduled for Bid opening, the Bid opening date shall be automatically postponed until the next Commonwealth business day, unless the Bidders are otherwise notified by the Commonwealth. The Bid opening time shall remain the same.
- c. Bids must be firm. If a Bid is submitted with conditions or exceptions or not in conformance with the terms and conditions referenced in the Service Bid/Contract form it shall be rejected. The Bid shall also be rejected if the services offered by the Bidder are not in conformance with the specifications as determined by the Commonwealth.

2. **QUESTIONS:** Any questions concerning conditions and specifications must be directed in writing to the Issuing Office, to the attention of the Contracting Officer referenced on the Service Bid/Contract form. Inquiries must reference date of Bid opening and contract inquiry number and must be received prior to date of Bid opening.

3. **BIDDER'S REPRESENTATION AND AUTHORIZATION:**

- a. Each Bidder, by making its Bid, understands, represents, and acknowledges that:
 - 1) The Bidder has read and understands the terms and conditions of the Service Bid/Contract form and the Bid is made in accordance with those terms and conditions.
 - 2) The services offered in the Bid will be in conformance with the specifications referenced on the Service Bid/Contract form without exceptions.
 - 3) The price(s) and amount of the Bid have been arrived at independently and without consultation, communication, or agreement with any other contractor, Bidder, or potential Bidder.
 - 4) Neither the price(s) nor the amount of the Bid, and neither the approximate price(s) nor the approximate amount of the Bid, have been disclosed to any other firm or person who is a Bidder or potential Bidder, and they will not be disclosed before Bid opening.
 - 5) No attempt has been made or will be made to induce any firm or person to refrain from bidding on the Contract, or to submit a bid higher than the Bid, or to submit any intentionally high or noncompetitive bid or other form of complementary bid.
 - 6) The Bid is made in good faith and not pursuant to any agreement or discussion with, or inducement from, any firm or person to submit a complementary or other noncompetitive bid.
 - 7) To the best of the knowledge of the person signing the Bid for the Bidder, the Bidder, its affiliates, subsidiaries, officers, directors, and employees are not currently under investigation by any governmental agency and have not in the last four (4) years been convicted or found liable for any act prohibited by State or Federal law in any jurisdiction, involving conspiracy or collusion with respect to bidding on any public contract, except as disclosed by the Bidder in its Bid.
 - 8) The Bidder is not currently under suspension or debarment by the Commonwealth, or any other state, or the federal government, and if the bidder cannot certify, then it shall submit along with the Bid a written explanation of why such certification cannot be made.
 - 9) To the best of the knowledge of the person signing the Bid for the Bidder, and except as otherwise disclosed by the Bidder in its Bid, the Bidder has no outstanding, delinquent obligations to the Commonwealth including, but not limited to, any state tax liability not being contested on appeal or other obligation of the Bidder that is owed to the Commonwealth.
 - 10) The Bidder has not, under separate contract with the Issuing Office made any recommendations to the Issuing Office concerning: the Service Bid/Contract form, the need for the services described in the Service Bid/Contract form, or the specifications for the services described in the Service Bid/Contract form.

- 11) All information provided by, and representations made by, the Bidder in the Bid are material and important and will be relied upon by the Commonwealth in awarding the Contract. Any misstatement shall be treated as fraudulent concealment from the Commonwealth of the true facts relating to the submission of the Bid. A misrepresentation shall be punishable under Section 4904 of Title 18 P.C.S.A.
 - b. Each Bidder, by making its Bid, authorizes all Commonwealth agencies to release to the Commonwealth information related to liabilities to the Commonwealth including, but not limited to taxes, unemployment compensation, and workers' compensation liabilities.
 - c. If an award is made to the Bidder, the Bidder agrees that it intends to be legally bound to the Contract which is formed between the Commonwealth and the Bidder.
4. **PRICES:** The successful Bidder will be required to provide the specified services at the prices quoted in its Bid.
5. **MODIFICATION OR WITHDRAWAL OF BID:**
- a. Bid Modification Prior to Bid Opening. Bids may only be modified by written notice received at the Issuing Office location prior to the exact hour and date specified for Bid opening. The written notice shall specifically identify the Bid to be modified and shall be signed by the Bidder. The Bid modification must be received in a sealed envelope and the envelope must identify the assigned contract inquiry number and the Bid opening date, and should state that enclosed in the envelope is a Bid modification. Modifications of Bids received after the exact hour and date specified for receipt of Bids shall not be considered.
 - b. Bid Withdrawal Prior to Bid Opening. Bids may be withdrawn by written, facsimile, or telegraphic notice received at the Issuing Office location prior to the exact hour and date specified for Bid opening. The notice shall specifically identify the Bid to be withdrawn and shall be signed by the Bidder. If by telegram, written confirmation over the signature of the Bidder must have been mailed and postmarked on or before the date and time set for Bid opening. A Bid may also be withdrawn in person by a Bidder or his authorized representative prior to the exact hour and date specified for Bid opening, provided the person's identity is made known and the person signs a receipt for the Bid.
 - c. Bid Withdrawal After Bid Opening. Bidders are permitted to withdraw erroneous Bids after Bid opening only if the following conditions are met:
 - 1) The Bidder submits a written request for withdrawal.
 - 2) The Bidder presents credible evidence with the request that the reason for the lower Bid price was a clerical mistake as opposed to a judgment mistake and was actually due to an unintentional arithmetical error or an unintentional omission of a substantial quantity of work, labor, material, or services made directly in the compilation of the Bid.
 - 3) The request for relief and supporting evidence must be received by the Contracting Officer within three (3) business days after Bid opening, but before award of the Contract.
 - 4) The Contracting Officer shall not permit a Bid withdrawal if the Bid withdrawal would result in the award of the Contract on another Bid of the same Bidder, its partner, or a corporation or business venture owned by or in which the bidder has a substantial interest.
 - 5) If a Bidder is permitted to withdraw its Bid, the Bidder cannot supply any material or labor or perform any subcontract or other work agreement for the awarded Contractor, without the written approval of the Contracting Officer.
 - d. Firm Bid. Except as provided above, a Bid may not be modified, withdrawn, or cancelled by any Bidder for a period of sixty (60) days following the time and date designated for Bid opening, unless otherwise specified by the Bidder in its Bid. If the lowest responsible Bidder, as determined by the Commonwealth, withdraws its Bid prior to the expiration of the award period or fails to comply with the requirements set forth in the Service Bid/Contract form including but not limited to any requirement to submit performance or payment security or insurance certificates within the required time period, the Bidder shall be liable to the Commonwealth for all costs and damages associated with the re-award or re-bid including the difference between the Bidder's price and the actual cost that the Commonwealth pays for the service.
 - e. Clarification and Additional Information. After the receipt of Bids, the Commonwealth shall have the right to contact Bidders for the purpose of seeking:
 - 1) Clarification of the Bid which confirms the Commonwealth's understanding of statements or information in the Bid or;
 - 2) Additional information on the services offered; provided the Service Bid/Contract form does not require the rejection of the Bid for failure to include such information.

6. **REJECTION OF BIDS:** The Commonwealth reserves the right to reject any and all Bids, to waive technical defects or any informality in Bids, and to accept or reject any part of any Bid if the best interests of the Commonwealth are thereby served.
7. **AWARDS:** Unless all Bids are rejected, and except as otherwise provided by law, award will be made to the lowest responsible and responsive Bidder. Unless otherwise specified by the Commonwealth in the Service Bid/Contract form the Commonwealth reserves the right to award by item or on a total Bid basis, whichever is deemed more advantageous to the Commonwealth. In cases of discrepancies in prices, the unit price will be binding unless the unit price is obviously in error and the extended price is obviously correct, in which case the erroneous unit price will be corrected. As a condition for receipt of award of a contract/purchase order, the lowest responsible and responsive Bidder must be registered in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Vendor Master file. In order to register, bidders must visit the vendor registration website, <http://www.vendorregistration.state.pa.us/>, or call the Central Vendor Management Unit toll free at 866-775-2868 or 717-214-2868.
8. **TIE BIDS:** All tie Bids will be broken by the Issuing Office.
9. **PROMPT PAYMENT DISCOUNTS:** Prompt payment discounts will not be considered in making an award. If prompt payment discounts are offered by any Bidder, however, the Commonwealth will take advantage of such offer.
10. **BID PROTEST PROCEDURE:**
 - a. **Who May File the Protest.** Any Bidder or prospective bidder who is aggrieved in connection with the IFB or award of the contract solicitation or award of a contract may file a protest. Protests relating to cancellation of invitations for bids and protests relating to the rejection of all bids are not permitted. A Bidder is a person that submits a bid in response to the IFB. A prospective bidder is a person that has not submitted a bid in response to the IFB.
 - b. **Time for Filing.**
 - 1) If a protest is submitted by a prospective bidder, the protest must be filed before bid opening time or proposal receipt date.
 - 2) If a protest is filed by a Bidder, the protest must be filed within seven days after the protesting Bidder knew or should have known of the facts giving rise to the protest EXCEPT THAT IN NO EVENT MAY A PROTEST BE FILED LATER THAN SEVEN (7) DAYS AFTER THE DATE THE CONTRACT OR PURCHASE ORDER WAS AWARDED. Date of filing is the date of receipt of protest.
 - 3) Untimely filed protests shall be disregarded.
 - c. **Form of Protest.**
 - 1) A protest must be in writing and filed with the agency head (or designee) of the purchasing agency.
 - 2) A protest must state all grounds upon which the protesting party asserts that the solicitation or award was improper. Issues not raised by the protesting party in the protest are deemed waived and may not be raised on appeal.
 - 3) The protesting party may submit with the protest any documents or information deemed relevant.
 - d. **Notice of Protest.** If award has been made, the agency head (or designee) shall notify the successful Bidder or contractor of the protest. If the protest is received before award and substantial issues are raised by the protest, all Bidders who appear to have a substantial and reasonable prospect of winning the award shall be notified and may file their agreement/disagreement with the purchasing agency within three (3) days after receipt of notice of the protest.
 - e. **Stay of Procurement.** The head of the purchasing agency (or designee) shall immediately decide, upon receipt of the protest, whether or not the solicitation or award shall be stayed, or if the protest is timely received after the award, whether the performance of the contract should be suspended. The Issuing Office shall not proceed further with the IFB or with the award of the contract, and shall suspend performance under the contract if awarded, unless the agency head of the purchasing agency makes a written determination that the protest is clearly without merit or that award of the contract/purchase order without delay is necessary to protect the substantial interests of the Commonwealth.
 - f. **Procedures.**
 - 1) **Contracting Officer Response.** Within fifteen (15) days of the receipt of a protest, the contracting officer may submit a written response to the head of the purchasing agency (or designee). The response may include any documents or information that the contracting officer deems relevant to the protest.
 - 2) **Protesting Party Reply.** Within ten (10) days of the date of the contracting officer response, the protesting party may file a written reply.
 - 3) **Review.** The head of the purchasing agency (or designee) shall:

- a) Review the protest and any response or reply.
 - b) Request and review any additional documents or information he deems necessary to render a decision.
 - c) Give the protesting party and the contracting officer reasonable opportunity to review and address any additional documents or information requested by the agency head.
 - d) In his sole discretion, conduct a hearing.
 - e) Within sixty (60) days of the receipt of the protest, issue a written determination stating the reasons for the decision.
 - f) If additional time is required to investigate the protest, inform the protesting party of the additional time needed to render a determination and obtain the protesting party's consent.
- 4) **"Clearly Without Merit" Determinations.** If the head of the purchasing agency (or designee) determines, upon receipt, that the protest is clearly without merit and does not stay the procurement, the head of the purchasing agency (or designee) shall immediately issue the decision as required by Subparagraph h below.

g. **Settlement.** The Issuing Office has the authority to settle and resolve bid protests.

h. **Decision.** The head of the purchasing agency (or designee) shall promptly, but in no event later than sixty (60) days from the filing of the protest, issue a written decision. The decision shall:

- 1) State the reasons for the decision.
- 2) If the protest is denied, inform the protesting party of its right to file an appeal in Commonwealth Court within fifteen (15) days of the mailing date of the decision.
- 3) If it is determined that the solicitation or award was contrary to law, enter an appropriate order.

The agency head (or designee) shall send a copy of the decision to the protesting party and any other person determined by the agency head (or designee) to be affected by the decision.