

Questions and Answers to RFP No. HR 05-01, Temporary Staffing Services

Question #1: What were the previous RFP rates and percentage markups for this RFP? (Alternatively worded: What are the current bill rates and/or pay rates?; What is your currently hourly bill rate by position title?)

Answer #1: Such information would fall under an entirely separate process from this solicitation process. James Carroll, Manager of the Office of Communications at the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), is the point of contact for requests of documents, including contracts, from the public. His direct line is 415-865-7451. Also, please note there would be no guarantee that a response to such a request would precede the due date for proposals for this solicitation.

Question #2: Who are the current vendors providing temporary staffing services?

Answer #2: Wollborg/Michelson Personnel Service, Inc. is the current vendor under contract with the AOC to provide temporary staffing services.

Question #3: How much funding was spent on temporary staffing services in the past fiscal year? (Alternatively worded: How much did the AOC spend last year (2004) on “temporary staffing services” covered in this RFP? 2005 year to date?)

Answer #3: During the contract period FY 2004-2005 (fiscal year July 1, 2004 – June 30, 2005), the amount paid under contract was approximately \$1,426,000.

Question #4: Can we get a breakdown of position usage (i.e. 20 secretaries, 3 mail clerks, 4 office assistants, etc.) or a percentage breakdown of positions by category: clerical vs. accounting vs. legal vs. IT vs. misc.?

Answer #4: We have the following breakdown of active temporary staff (e.g. open work orders), and this breakdown is fairly representative of the average temporary usage at the AOC under the current contract:

Office Technicians: 2
Office Assistants: 2
Receptionists: 1
Secretaries: 4
Administrative Coordinators: 5
Staff Analysts: 3
Network Analysts: 1
Attorneys: 5
Library Technicians: 2

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Question #5: Is the AOC “only” seeking to award one (1) firm a contract pursuant to RFP No. HR 05-01? (Alternatively worded: How many vendors is the AOC ideally looking to select?)

Answer #5: In accordance with RFP Section 2.1, we are seeking to award one (1) firm a contract with the AOC and we will rely on that firm to subcontract for hard-to-fill or specialized positions.

Question #6: What is the average duration for the Classifications listed?

Answer #6: The average duration for each of the Classifications, as set forth in RFP Attachment C, is set forth below. These averages do not accurately reflect the length of most work orders, however, as many work orders are for a few weeks, while others are for many months.

Administrative Coordinators (I and II): 4.25 months
Secretaries (I and II): 3.75 months
File Clerk and Mail Room Clerks: no data available
Receptionists: 2.5 months
Office Technicians: 5.5 months
Office Assistants: 2.5 months
Data Entry Clerks: 0.75 months
Accounting Clerks: 1 month
Accounting Technicians: 2.25 months
Accountants: no data available
Paralegals: no data available
Attorneys: 4 months
Staff Analysts and Human Resource Analysts: 3 months
Editors: no data available
Graphic Designers: no data available
Contract Specialists: 1.5 months
Help Desk Assistants: no data available
Library Technicians: 1.5 months
Research Technicians: no data available
Systems Technicians: 2 months
Network Analysts: 7 months

Question #7: Must a firm responding to RFP No. HR 05-01 quote “all” classifications?

Answer #7: The agency awarded the eventual contract pursuant to RFP No. HR 05-01 must be able to fill all of the positions listed in RFP Attachment C, Classifications, by providing either in-house resources or through subcontracting. Proposers must propose pricing accordingly, using RFP Attachment E, Pricing Form. Submissions of cost/fee

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proposals with omissions in pricing for any of the Classifications listed would cause the proposal to be at a disadvantage in the evaluation process.

Question #8: The RFP needs staff resumes to be submitted. Does this mean we need to submit resumes of our staff or the candidates we are going to provide the State?

Answer #8: RFP Section 6.3, Credentials of Staff to be Assigned to the Account, requires the resumes of the Contractor's proposed key staff to be submitted as part of the proposal. The resumes of the agency's proposed key staff shall include any person(s) who will be working with/on the AOC account. As set forth on page 14 of 33 of RFP Attachment B, Master Agreement Terms (Special Provisions paragraph 7.D.i), the resumes of key staff, including account manager, will be incorporated into the eventual master agreement. Unlike the resumes for key staff, we are not requiring resumes of any candidates to be submitted as part of the proposal. After execution of the eventual master agreement, the contractor will be required to provide resumes of candidates for consideration of an assignment, as further set forth in the work requirements specified in RFP Section 3.3.

Question #9: In what format do we submit the response of this RFP? Do we follow the format given as in RFP Section 6.0, Specifics of a Responsive Technical Proposal?

Answer #9: In order for the technical proposal to be considered responsive, it must include the information required in RFP Section 6.0, Specifics of a Responsive Technical Proposal. Although evaluators would prefer to review technical proposals formatted to reflect the outline of requirements set forth in RFP Section 6.0, a specific format for these technical proposals is not set forth as a requirement.

Question #10: Will a certified WMBE, NCSDC and SBA in the State of California get any preference for this RFP?

Answer #10: No preference or additional consideration will be given to WMBE, NCSDC or SBA certified businesses in the evaluation process.

Question #11: Do we have to bid for all the positions listed in the RFP or can we just bid for only those positions that we provide?

Answer #11: The agency awarded the eventual contract must be able to fill all of the positions listed in RFP Attachment C, Classifications, by providing either in-house resources or through subcontracting. Proposers must propose pricing accordingly, using RFP Attachment E, Pricing Form. Submissions of cost/fee proposals with omissions in pricing for any of the classifications listed would cause the proposal to be at a disadvantage in the evaluation process.

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Question #12: Will you be having a bidder's conference for the Temporary Staffing Services RFP?

Answer #12: No.

Question #13: Can you please let us know if adding the following bolded language to page 18 of 33 in RFP Attachment B, Master Agreement Terms (paragraph 13.B.iii(a)) is possible: "by 'Additional Insured' endorsement add as insureds the State, its agents, and employees with respect to liability arising out of or connected with the service provided. In the event the Commercial General Liability policy includes a 'blanket endorsement by contract', the following language added to the certificate of insurance will satisfy the State's additional insured requirement: 'The State, its directors, agents and employees with respect to liability arising out of the work performed by or for the Contractor, **subject to policy terms & conditions**, are additional insureds under a blanket endorsement'."

Answer #13: No, the introduced condition [language set forth in bold font] is entirely too open-ended, so it is not acceptable.

Question #14: What are the payment terms?

Answer #14: The AOC cannot commit to making payments in less than 60 days after receipt of invoice, as the AOC must process invoice claims through an entity in the State's Executive Branch in order to render payments. However, the AOC will endeavor to make payments more quickly than 60 days after receipt of invoice, and can often do so, but such a schedule is dependent upon factors such as whether or not an accurate and appropriate invoice was received, volume of processing activity (e.g. fiscal year-end tends to be hectic), and impacts to processing time that may be beyond our control.

Question #15: What is the award date if the program is to commence early January 2006? How much time will the winner have to prepare before beginning? (Alternatively worded: When is the AOC looking to select its final vendors?)

Answer #15: As set forth in RFP Section 3.1, the AOC anticipates that services will commence the beginning of January 2006. The events that will occur prior to that include: proposals are due October 14th, after which these proposals will be evaluated and scored by the AOC; then, interviews, if any, will be conducted and evaluations adjusted accordingly; any negotiations will then occur before award and execution of a master agreement; and work would then be authorized via the work order process set forth in RFP Section 3.3. Upon expiration of the current contract, the AOC would prefer to provide its staff with uninterrupted temporary staffing services.

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Question #16: Will a contract be awarded solely on the written documentation and reference? Will in person presentation of capabilities be requested?

Answer #16: The contract will be awarded based on quantitative scores/rankings generated by professional staff of the AOC, in accordance with the criteria set forth in RFP Section 5.0, Evaluation of Proposals. Note that per RFP Section 11.2, there may be some follow-up interviews, if the reviewing staff require further information regarding a submission, as well as some site visits scheduled. In-person presentations will not be requested.

Question #17: If the contract is awarded to a new supplier, will all existing temporary staff transfer to new supplier? Will new supplier see immediate revenue of contract is awarded?

Answer #17: If the contract is awarded to a new supplier, an effort will be made to keep existing temporary staff. In the past, new contractors were able to retain existing temporary staff by subcontracting with the previous incumbent. Since this solution worked successfully before, and with apparently little difficulty, the AOC will attempt to institute the same procedure with any new supplier contracted to provide temporary staffing services as a result of this solicitation process. The master agreement to result from this solicitation will not encumber any funds. Funds will be encumbered per each work order authorized, if any. The State does not guarantee that a supplier will receive a specific volume of work, a specific total contract amount, or a specific order value under any master agreement executed pursuant to the solicitation, as set forth in RFP Section 9.2. Additionally, the State does not make any advance payment for services, per RFP Attachment A, Administrative Rules Governing Requests for Proposals (paragraph N.2). As set forth on page 31 of 33 of RFP Attachment B, Master Agreement Terms (paragraph 10.A), the State will reimburse the contractor for services that have been rendered.

Question #18: Shall DVBE compliance consist of subcontracting to a DVBE staffing supplier for at least 3% of program spend?

Answer #18: As further set forth in RFP Section 14.0, Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise Participation Goals, DVBE participation is based upon a good faith effort to meet a participation goal of at least 3% of contract amount. If an agency awarded the master agreement, resulting from this RFP, proposed DVBE participation to meet at least this 3% participation goal, then that agency will be obligated to provide at least 3% of total contract amount awarded to the proposed DVBE(s). Note that DVBE participation can be proposed at the prime contractor, and/or sub-tiered subcontractor and/or supplier participation levels.

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Question #19: What works about your current vendor/process? What does not work?

Answer #19: Over the past several years our relationship with our vendors and our processes have evolved. We are still in the process of discovering new and better ways to get the most out of our relationship with our vendor. Currently, the way we would like the process to work is captured in this RFP.

Question #20: Why did your current vendor win the contract last time?

Answer #20: Our current vendor was awarded a contract based on a quantitative score/ranking as evaluated by a team of professionals at the AOC, pursuant to the requirements of a solicitation.

Question #21: Who bid last time & lost? Why?

Answer #21: Such information would fall under an entirely separate process from this solicitation process. James Carroll, Manager of the Office of Communications at the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), is the point of contact for requests of documents, including solicitations, from the public. His direct line is 415-865-7451. Also, please note there would be no guarantee that a response to such a request would precede the due date for proposals for this solicitation.

Question #22: Program Volume: What is the projected annual program spend and number of contractors for 2005? What is the average length of contracts, current bill and pay rates? How will these numbers change in 2006?

Answer #22: In 2005, only one contractor, Wollborg/Michelson Personnel Service, Inc., provided temporary staffing services for the AOC, pursuant to one contract, number 1001998. The amount paid under contract number 1001998 for Fiscal Year 04-05 (July 1, 2004 – June 30, 2005) was approximately \$1,426,000. The original contract No. 1001998 had an effective date of June 1, 2002. Any additional information pertaining to that contract's requirements, such as its bill and pay rates, would fall under an entirely separate process from this solicitation process. James Carroll, Manager of the Office of Communications at the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), is the point of contact for requests of documents, including contracts, from the public. His direct line is 415-865-7451. Also, please note there would be no guarantee that a response to such a request would precede the due date for proposals for this solicitation. At this point, it remains to be seen what numbers will change during 2006.

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Question #23: What percent of current temporary staffing services are provided from prime contractors, from subcontractors, and from DVBE suppliers?

Answer #23: Currently, the prime contractor provides 95% of the temporary staffing services provided to the AOC and subcontracts 5% of the temporary staffing services provided to the AOC; DVBE participation is not a contractual requirement in the current temporary staffing agreement.

Question #24: RFP specifies email communication, no automation. How are requisitions approved, distributed, tracked? How are resumes submitted, tracked, responded to? Is the process automated?

Answer #24: With an average of 22 active temporary staff and an average of three open requests for work orders, we have not experienced the need for automated systems. Requisitions for work orders are routed for necessary approvals internally. Executed work orders are forwarded to only one contractor (no “distribution” process required). Work orders are then tracked manually at the program manager’s desk. Resumes are submitted via email, tracked manually by the program manager and responded to by the program manager (after consultation with the hiring manager) via email, as well. The process is further set forth in RFP Section 3.3. Please see RFP Section 6.5, which asks for proposals to address technology for automating any or all of the processes.

Question #25: How is spend, headcount and tenure tracked? Is it automated? Spreadsheets?

Answer #25: Spend is tracked in Oracle Financial System database by our Finance Department. Headcount, tenure, staff information, etc. are tracked in an MS Access database maintained by the program manager. The contractor will be required to comply with the funding terms of each work order; i.e., that they cannot exceed the amount of each work order. Please see RFP Section 6.5, which asks for proposals regarding technology for automating any or all of the process.

Question #26: What have you learned from the past year working with the current prime vendor? How will you implement these lessons learned in the new program?

Answer #26: Any lessons learned during the past year of the current program are reflected in the requirements set forth in the RFP for the future program.

Question #27: Does the program require work at the client site? If so, will on-site office space, phone and internet connection be provided? Or is all work done remotely?

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Answer #27: The temporary staff supplied by the contractor will work on-site at the AOC. All office space, phone and internet connections will be provided by the AOC. In fulfilling the terms of the contract, the contractor, including its key staff, such as the account manager, will conduct all of its work from its own offices.

Question #28: What are the challenges of moving to a new vendor? What are you implementing to mitigate these issues? What do you expect from you new prime supplier?

Answer #28: We do not expect to encounter much difficulty in moving to a new vendor, if applicable. A challenge could be to ensure all existing temporary staff are retained, through subcontracting, as necessary. Obviously, we would expect occurrence of a learning curve, as the vendor adjusts to AOC processes, and the AOC adjusts to vendor processes. We would expect the new supplier to work with the AOC to make the transition as smooth as possible with little to no disruption in service.

Question #29: Is there a plan in place to automate job order collection, resume presentation and fulfillment process?

Answer #29: There is no current plan in place to automate any part of the process. Please see RFP Section 6.5, which asks for proposals regarding technology for automating any or all of the process.

Question #30: Who approves the subcontractors? Prime or State? Reference “parties’ agreement” on new subcontractor. How is this being done today?

Answer #30: For use of subcontractors, see RFP Section 3.3.4, and for new subcontractors, see RFP Section 3.3.5. Subcontracting must be authorized as set forth on page 16 of 33 (Special Provisions paragraph 10).

Question #31: Attachment B: 8A – Please clarify if the hiring of 1099 workers is allowed in this program.

Answer #31: Pursuant to RFP Attachment B, Master Agreement Terms (Special Provisions paragraph 8.A), the contractor and any subcontractors will be acting as independent contractors, responsible for any personnel, including its employees, 1099 workers, or other subcontracted independent contractors, that are supplied to the AOC for temporary staffing services, to the extent described in the master agreement, in terms of employment, and the payment of compensation, including all federal, state, and local taxes, charges, fees, or contributions required to be paid to their employees; none of these personnel shall be State employees.

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Question #32: What is the current pricing model? Is it defined by mark-up or bill rate?

Answer #32: The current pricing model is a two-tiered payment schedule of bill rate ranges per classification. The two tiers represent two mark-up percentages, the second tier a discounted mark-up based on meeting minimum spending requirements.

Question #33: What skill testing is expected? Is there other testing needed?

Answer #33: The State expects the contractor to conduct typing skills tests and standard software testing (Microsoft Office programs) on administrative/clerical positions. The AOC would also like basic editing/spelling tests for secretaries and administrative coordinators. Potential candidates submitted by the Contractor may be subject to further testing by the AOC, which may consist of analytical tests for professional level positions.

Question #34: Is the AOC committed to using a “mark-up” to determine contractor pay rates and AOC bill rates? If not, would you consider using a simple bill rate range and allowing the vendor autonomy in terms of negotiating contractor pay rates?

Answer #34: Yes, the AOC is committed to using the pricing and payment structure set forth in the RFP, for a number of reasons, including but not limited to the following (1) to ensure that the AOC can evaluate all cost/fee proposals on same fair terms; (2) to control mark-up costs; (3) to determine applicable overtime payments; (4) to obtain the best value for the State; and (5) to ensure temporary staff receive established salary amount, reducing risk of disgruntled temporary staff on-site.

Question #35: Does this RFP cover only the 25 position titles listed on the pricing form? For example, we have recruited and placed Database Administrators at the AOC. Will this position be covered by this RFP? If not, will we be able to place other Information Technology skill sets at the AOC if we are not selected as part of this RFP?

Answer #35: This RFP requests information on only the 25 classifications identified on RFP Attachment E, Pricing Form, and further described on RFP Attachment C, Classifications. There are procedures for adding classifications and rate ranges to the master agreement once it has been executed. As the need arises, new classifications may be added, which may or may not include other Information Technology positions than those currently identified in the RFP. If your firm does not provide broad based staffing services, it may still be considered for subcontracting any difficult-to-fill or specialized positions, should the selected agency and the State agree on subcontracting with your firm. As of this solicitation, Database Administrators have been contracted under separate agreement.

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Question #36: Can you provide us with detailed job descriptions for each of the 25 positions listed in the pricing form? This will allow us to provide the most fair and competitive prices to you.

Answer #36: Please see Attachment C, Classifications, to the RFP for more detailed descriptions of the classifications listed on RFP Attachment E, Pricing Form.

Question #37: What is the estimated head count or spend for 2006 for “temporary staffing services” covered in this RFP?

Answer #37: Because our temporary staffing services usage is based on need, there is no way to accurately estimate a head count or spend on the eventual master agreement to be awarded pursuant to this solicitation. Historically, there is an average of 22-23 active temporary staff at the AOC at any time (average headcount during the past fiscal year). During the contract period FY 2004-2005 (fiscal year July 1, 2004 – June 30, 2005), the contract paid was approximately \$1,426,000. This historical data may not be indicative of any future usage. Please see RFP Section 9.2 for specifics on the absence of any State guaranteed usage amounts.

END OF FORM