The Connecticut General Assembly

Joint Committee on Legislative Management



Connecticut General Assembly

Procurement Code

Office of Legislative Management Contracting Section, Rm. 5100 Hartford, CT 06106

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I. PURPOSE

This document establishes the CGA Contracting Standards and Practice Code (Code) which reflects an efficient and consistent process for the procurement of goods and services as required by Section of C.G.S. 4e-12. This procurement code is applicable to all CGA expenditures, including but not limited to, purchasing or leasing of supplies, materials or equipment, consultant or consultant services, personal service agreements and contracts for renovations, alterations or repairs. The JCLM has adopted this Code to avoid any fraud, collusion and/or favoritism in the CGA procurement process.

II. FUNDAMENTALS

A. Statutory Authority

The CGA statutory procurement authority is based C.G.S. 2-71p through C.G.S. 2-71v and this Code.

B. Applicability

This Code applies to all partisan and non-partisan offices of the CGA as well as all Commission and Legislative Committees.

C. Noncompliance with Purchasing Statutes and Policies

Any purchases or contracts entered into without compliance with the purchasing statutes is void. "Any purchase or contract for supplies, materials, equipment or contractual services contrary to the provisions of this section shall be void and of no effect." ¹

III. UNDERSTANDING THE PROCUREMENT NEED

Procurement Staff must make every effort to completely understand the procurement needs of the Project Owner/Requisitioner and may utilize the following the methodology outlined in this section to do so.

A. Requisition

A Requisitioner should submit the requisition with as much information as possible for all purchases of goods or services (except for P Card purchases). The submission of a requisition by an Office or Commission begins the procurement process. The requisition is then routed to their supervisor for approval. Requisitions over \$10,000 are also routed to the Financial Administrator (or their designee) for approval. Procurement Staff will follow up with the Project Owner to request the information that is missing from any requisitions. Procurement will not begin until the Project

¹ C.G.S. §2-71p(i)

Owner provides complete information in the requisition.

Procurement staff should utilize the "Procurement Information Checklist" to communicate these requirements to the project owners. (Attachment 1) Contracting staff should enter Requisitions for renewals of ongoing services.

Requisitions should include the following information:

- Begin and end date of the project, if applicable and the dates are known;
- Estimated expenditure value. (> \$20,000? > \$50,000? Or > \$500,000?);
- Account coding for funding (if known);
- Detailed specifications for the good or service (Can be attachment to Requisition);
- Project deliverables;
- Timelines for completion of deliverables;
- Payment methodology (Hourly, upon completion of milestones, lump sum);
- Contact Person for approval of invoices;
- Name and Contact Information of prospective contractors;
- List of Evaluation Criteria and percentage weights for those criteria; and
- List of Evaluation Committee members.

B. Investigating the Procurement Need

Procurement staff should analyze the procurement need upon receipt of the requisition and discuss with the Project Owner if appropriate. Topics may include the following:

- 1) Roles/Responsibilities
- 2) Procurement Need, details of the Requisition
- 3) Evaluation Committee Team
- 4) Magnitude of Cost
- 5) Potential Vendors
- 6) Utilize RFI?
- 7) Develop Solicitation Strategy (Use RFQ, RFP or RFB?
- 8) Contract Type (Fixed price; Time/Materials or per Deliverable?)
- 9) Payment Methodology
- 10) Deliverables, Performance Milestones
- 11) Who will track work

C. Conducting Market Research

Providing information about the CGA procurement needs could give some vendors a competitive advantage and disqualify them from participating in the procurement. Procurement Staff and Project Owners may educate themselves by gathering information on the goods and services in the industry, but must exercise extreme caution to avoid disqualification of vendors. Procurement Staff and Project Owners are prohibited from providing detail about the CGA procurement needs. If a vendor

assists in the preparation of the specifications, they can also be disqualified from submitting a proposal in response to that solicitation. The methods below provide opportunities for Procurement Staff to just "kick the tires" and understand what goods/services are available. The Procurement Staff person assigned to each procurement will be the sole point of contact with vendors. Procurement Staff and Project Owners should utilize the following recommended methods of gathering information.

1) Demonstrations

Procurement Staff may invite vendors to make presentations and answer questions about the attributes of their product/service or their capabilities. Demonstrations should be a one-way conversation. Procurement Staff and Project Owners are prohibited from providing any detail regarding the procurement needs of the CGA. If an Evaluation Committee will be utilized to recommend a vendor award selection, all members of the Evaluation Committee must attend all demonstrations.

2) Other Agencies

Procurement Staff and Project Owners are encouraged to discuss products, services or vendor capabilities with other Connecticut Agencies, Agencies from other states, Federal agencies, or municipalities. Procurement Staff should also review other similar state contracts for procurement strategies and pricing methodologies.

3) GSA Advantage

GSA Advantage is a federal government online ordering system. This allows the Procurement Staff and Project Owners to research pricing and product availability that are posted online.

4) GSA Ebuy

GSA Ebuy is a Federal government website this is the equivalent of the State of Connecticut portal website. Procurement Staff may post RFIs on this website in addition to the State of Connecticut portal website to reach a broader audience.

5) Internet

Procurement staff and project owners may engage in research regarding products, services or vendor capability on the internet.

6) Request for Information

A Request For Information (RFI) can be issued before an RFP to gather information about available goods and/or services and capabilities of vendors for planning purposes. An RFI allows Procurement Staff and Project Owners to gain insight into the suppliers and/or solutions that are available to better define the CGA business need. RFIs are drafted by the Procurement Staff in conjunction with the Project Owner.

Responses to the RFI will not be returned to the respondents and will not be accepted to form a binding contract. Responses are submitted in writing which then may be followed-up with a demonstration if requested by the CGA. These demonstrations should be handled as described above.

IV. PROCUREMENT RULES FOR GOODS AND CONTRACTUAL SERVICES

A. Good and Contractual Services Defined

Goods are defined as "supplies", "materials" and "equipment" that mean any and all articles of personal property furnished to or used by the Legislative Department, including all printing, binding, publication of laws, stationery, forms and reports. ² Contractual Services are defined to mean "any and all laundry and cleaning service, pest control service, janitorial service, security service, the rental and repair, or maintenance, of equipment, machinery and other stateowned personal property, advertising and photostating, mimeographing, data entry, data processing and other similar service arrangements where the services are provided by persons other than state employees;".³

B. Purchases up to \$5,000 per contract year (De Minimis Exception)

A non-repetitive purchase of a good and/or contractual service under \$5,00 per contract year may be made without obtaining competitive pricing for the item or service. This procurement will be handled by Purchasing staff. A contract is not required, however, the purchasing group may prepare contracts for this type of procurement at the discretion of the Project Owner.

The CGA may waive the requirement of competitive bidding or competitive negotiation in the case of minor nonrecurring and emergency purchases of ten thousand dollars or less in amount.⁴

C. Purchases over \$5,000 but less than \$10,000

Purchases greater than \$5,000 but less than \$10,000 shall be based upon, when possible, at least three written Quotations, from responsible and qualified sources of supply. This procurement will be handled by Purchasing staff. A Request for Quote (RFQ) may be utilized to obtain quotations. All purchases or sales of ten thousand dollars or less in amount shall be made in the open market, but shall be based, when possible, on at least three competitive quotations.⁵

² C.G.S. § 2-71p(a)

³ C.G.S. § 2-71p(a)

⁴ C.G.S. §2-71p(c)

⁵ C.G.S. § 2-71p(b)(1)

D. Purchases over \$10,000 but less than \$50,000

Purchases greater than \$10,000 but less than \$50,000 shall be based upon, when possible, at least three written Proposals from responsible and qualified sources of supply. A Request for Proposal (RFP) would be utilized to obtain proposals. Contracting Staff will be assigned to this procurement.

E. Purchases greater than \$50,000

Purchases greater than \$50,000, shall be based upon, when possible, at least three written Proposals from responsible and qualified sources. A Request for Proposal (RFP) would be utilized to obtain proposals. Contracting Staff will be assigned to this procurement.

- RFPs shall be published on the State Contracting Portal for a period of not less than 30 calendar days.
- > Legal advertisements are required.
- RFPs shall be submitted through the mail and shall be kept sealed or secured until opened all at once by the Contracting group subsequent to the proposal due date.
- Procurements over \$50,000 are always handled by the Contracting group and shall result in a contract executed by the vendor and the CGA.

All purchases of, and contracts for, supplies, materials, equipment and contractual services required by the Legislative Department.... shall be based, when possible, on competitive bids or competitive negotiation. ...The committee shall solicit competitive bids or proposals by sending notices to prospective suppliers and by posting notice on a public bulletin board in a building under the supervision and control of the Joint Committee on Legislative Management. Each bid and proposal shall be kept sealed or secured until opened publicly at the time stated in the notice soliciting such bid. If the amount of the expenditure or sale is estimated to exceed fifty thousand dollars, competitive bids or proposals shall be solicited by public notice, inserted at least once in not fewer than three daily newspapers published in the state, and at least five calendar days before the final date for submitting bids. ⁶

⁶ C.G.S. §2-71p(b)(1)

F. Purchases greater than \$500,000 and are Public Works Projects (Construction Projects).

A procurement of goods and contractual services that exceed \$500,000 and are considered public works (construction) projects shall be procured through a Request for Bid (RFB).⁷ Please see Preparation of a Bid White Paper for specific details on drafting a RFB.

- RFBs shall be published on the State Contracting Portal for a period of not less than 30 days.
- > Legal advertisements are required.
- RFBs shall be submitted through the mail and shall be kept sealed or secured until opened all at once by the Contracting group subsequent to the proposal due date.
- > RFBs are always handled by the Contracting group.

G. Non-Competitive Purchases

Non-Competitive Purchases may be made without obtaining quotations or bids for the following items only:

- Employee training or certification (i.e., local seminars and/or professional designation/certification type training or workshops),
- Rental of conference and/or hotel facilities,
- Publications,
- Subscriptions (including electronic subscriptions),
- Advertising,
- Dues,
- ≻ Fees,
- Certain public utility services (electric generation services, electric distribution services; water services, and natural gas distribution services);
- Cable and satellite television equipment and services;
- Postage,
- Licenses (excluding software licenses),
- eyeglasses, dentures, hearing aids and hearing aid supplies, transportation of persons and freight, prosthetics,
- Media,
- Rehabilitation technology and placement equipment;
- Donations to charitable organizations and scholarship funds;
- ➢ Gift cards;
- Sponsorships,
- Exhibit space and booths at trade-shows/conventions or other events;

⁷ C.G.S. §4b-91(a)(2)

- Hiring of guest speakers (i.e., notable persons or personalities) for conferences and/or other events;
- Payments of parking fees for parking validations;
- Reimbursements to educational institutions (i.e., regional education service centers) for training, professional development and program evaluation services required by the Department of Education; and
- > No annual limits or restrictions are established.

Although not controlling, this list is based on Department of Administrative Services General Letter (GL) 71 that is controlling for the Executive Branch but persuasive for the Legislative Branch.

H. Emergency Repairs and Purchases non-recurring and under \$10,000 per fiscal year.

Emergency repairs and emergency purchases which are non-recurring and cost up to \$10,000.00 may be made without obtaining quotations or bids. However, the Project Owner must first submit a written justification of the emergency for approval to the Executive Director of Joint Committee on Legislative Management prior to any emergency procurement being made.

The CGA may waive the requirement of competitive bidding or competitive negotiation in the case of minor nonrecurring and emergency purchases of ten thousand dollars or less in amount.⁸

Whenever an emergency exists by reason of extraordinary conditions or contingencies that could not reasonably be foreseen and guarded against, or because of unusual trade or market conditions, the committee may, if it is for the best interest of the state, waive the requirement that purchases be based on competitive bids or competitive negotiation as provided in this section.⁹

V. PROCUREMENT RULES FOR PURCHASES OF PERSONAL SERVICES

A. Personal Services Defined

Personal Service Vendor is defined as "any person, firm or corporation not employed by the state, who is hired by the committee for a fee to provide services to the General Assembly. The term "personal service contractor" does not include (A) a person, firm or corporation providing "contractual services", as defined in section 2-71p, to the committee, (B) a "design professional", as defined in section 2-71q, or (C) an agency of the federal government, of the state

⁸ C.G.S. §2-71p (c)

⁹ C.G.S. §2-71p (d)

or of a political subdivision of the state."¹⁰

A Personal Service Agreement is defined as "a written agreement defining the services or end product to be delivered by a personal service contractor to the committee." ¹¹ "Typically, a PSA is used to purchase infrequent and non-routine services or end products, such as consulting services, technical assistance, and training." ¹²

B. Procurement of Personal Services up to \$5,000 per contract year (De Minimis Exception)

A non-repetitive purchase of a personal service under \$5,000 per contract year may be made without obtaining competitive pricing for the personal service. This procurement will be handled by Purchasing staff. A contract is not required, however, the purchasing group may prepare contracts for this type of procurement at the discretion of the Project Owner.

C. Purchase over \$5,000 but less than \$20,000 per fiscal year and a term of less than one year

Purchases greater than \$5,000 but less than \$20,000 per year and a term of less than one year shall be based upon, <u>when possible</u>, at least three written Proposals from responsible and qualified sources of supply. ¹³ This procurement will be handled by Contracting staff. The CGA shall not hire a personal service contractor without executing a personal service agreement with such contractor. ¹⁴ Personal service procurements require a contract.

D. Procurement over \$20,000 and a term of greater than one fiscal year

Purchases greater than \$20,000 per year and a term of greater than one year <u>shall be based</u> on competitive negotiation or competitive quotations, unless the committee waives such requirements based on its determination that a sole source is required. ¹⁵ Personal service procurements require a contract.

Each personal service agreement having a cost of more than twenty thousand dollars or a term of more than one year shall be based on competitive negotiation or competitive quotations, unless the committee waives such

¹⁰ C.G.S. §2-71t (a) (3)

¹¹ C.G.S. §2-71t (a) (4)

¹² Excerpt from the "Office and Policy Management Report to the General Assembly – Personal Service Agreements dated December 5, 2011.

¹³ C.G.S. § 2-71t(c)(1)

¹⁴ C.G.S. §2-71t(b)

¹⁵ C.G.S. §2-71t(c)(2)

requirement based on its determination that a sole source purchase is required.¹⁶

E. Elements to consider when issuing an RFP or entering into personal services agreement.

The CGA shall consider the following factors with the Project Owner prior to determining whether to enter into a Contract with a personal service contractor for a contract having a cost of more than twenty thousand dollars or a term of more than one year:

- > A description of the services to be purchased and the need for such services;
- An estimate of the cost of the services and the term of the agreement;
- Whether the services are to be ongoing;
- Whether the committee has contracted out for such services during the preceding two years and, if so, the name of the contractor, term of the agreement with such contractor and the amount paid to the contractor; and
- Whether the committee intends to purchase the services by competitive negotiation and, if not, the reason why. ¹⁷

VI. WAIVER OF COMPETITIVE PROCUREMENT

A Project Owner may submit a waiver to circumvent competitive procurement in accordance with the following guidelines.

A. WHY submit a waiver letter?

The Project Owner may submit a waiver letter to forego competitive procurement requirements (i.e. Request for Proposal) and enter into a contract for goods or services with a specific vendor directly. The Project Owner must establish <u>either</u> that:

- (a) it is "not possible" to obtain competitive pricing for purchases of, and contracts for, supplies, materials, equipment and contractual services .¹⁸;
- (b) the vendor anticipated to provide the personal services is a "sole source.¹⁹."

OR

(c) An "emergency" exists by reason of by reason of extraordinary conditions or contingencies that could not reasonably be foreseen and guarded against.²⁰

¹⁶ C.G.S. § 2-71t (c)(2)

¹⁷ C.G.S. §2-71t(d)

¹⁸ C.G.S. 2-71p

¹⁹ C.G.S. 2-71t

²⁰ C.G.S. 2-71p

B. HOW to write a "NOT POSSIBLE " waiver letter pursuant to Conn. Gen. Stat. 2-71p?

The Project Owner may submit a <u>"NOT POSSIBLE"</u> waiver letter when it is the opinion of the Project Owner that it is not possible to obtain competitive pricing for <u>purchases of</u>, and contracts for, supplies, materials, equipment and contractual services.

The Project Owner needs to clearly state what products or services they would like to contract for, with whom they would like to contract, for how much compensation and for how long. The Project Owner must also establish in the letter why it is not possible to obtain competitive pricing for purchases of, and contracts for, supplies, materials, equipment and contractual services.

C. HOW to write a "SOLE SOURCE " waiver letter pursuant to Conn. Gen. Stat. 2-71t?

The Project Owner may submit a <u>"SOLE SOURCE"</u> waiver letter when it is the opinion of the Project Owner that the vendor anticipated to <u>provide the personal services</u> is a "sole source."

The Project Owner needs to clearly state what personal services they would like to contract for, with whom they would like to contract, for how much compensation and for what duration. The Project Owner must also establish in the letter that the vendor they are requesting to contact with is a Sole Source provider of these services. The Project Owner should provide specific reasons why the vendor is the only vendor that is able to provide these services in accordance with the following guidelines:

The qualifying services shall include, but not be limited to, (A) services for which the cost to the state of a competitive selection procedure would outweigh the benefits of such procedure, as documented by the committee, (B) proprietary services, (C) services to be provided by a contractor mandated by the general statutes or a public or special act, (D) emergency services, including services needed for the protection of life or health and (E) services that in the committee's judgment are for unique purposes or require specially skilled services; may be provided on a one-time or recurring basis; and may not be for "contractual services" as defined in section 2-71p, a "design professional" as defined in section 2-71q, or for services provided by an agency of the federal government, the state, or a political subdivision of the state.

D. HOW to write an "EMERGENCY " waiver letter pursuant to Conn. Gen. Stat. 2-71t?

The Project Owner may submit an "EMERGENCY" waiver letter when an emergency exists by reason of extraordinary conditions or contingencies that could not reasonably be foreseen and guarded against.

The Project Owner needs to clearly state what products or services they would like to contract for, with whom they would like to contract, for how much compensation and

for how long. The Project Owner must also establish in the letter why this procurement should be considered an emergency and what the circumstances are that led to the emergency that could not have been avoided. The Project Owner needs to establish that this is an actual emergency and not merely urgent a result of a lack of planning.

E. To WHOM should the waiver letter be addressed?

The Project Owner shall submit all waiver letters directly to the Executive Director of JCLM prior to contacting any vendors.

F. WHEN can I contact a vendor?

<u>Never.</u> A Project Owners are prohibited from contacting vendors directly. Procurement Staff will contact vendors upon approval of a Waiver letter. Waiver letters must be submitted to and approved by the Executive Director prior to contact with vendors.

G. Is there a specific form that I should utilize when writing the <u>"NOT POSSIBLE,"</u> a <u>"SOLE SOURCE "</u> waiver letter or an <u>"EMERGENCY"</u> waiver letter?

No, just a standard memo format that addresses the justifications listed is acceptable.

VII. PROCUREMENTS USING PURCHASING CARDS (P-Card)

The P-Card program is a credit card program co-sponsored by the Department of Administrative Services and the Office of the State Comptroller. The P-Card is a MasterCard issued by JPMorgan Chase. It works just like a personal credit card with custom designed features and built in controls to meet the specific needs of the cardholder's agency.

Depending on the value and the nature of the procurement, the purchasing group might recommend to the Project Owner that the goods/services be procured through the use of a P-Card. This approach requires no involvement by the purchasing or the contract group to finalize the purchase. The Project Owner uses the P-Card to make the purchase entirely on their own and then submits their credit card statement and support at the end of the month for the Purchasing group to reconcile.

The Office of Legislative Management on behalf of the State of Connecticut has the authority to issue P-cards. The following guidelines, specific to JCLM, must be strictly adhered to by the Project Owner in order to maintain a state credit card.

A. Work rules

All travel must be preauthorized and recorded by the OLM travel coordinator. OLM contracts with Sanditz travel. P-Cards should not be used for travel. Only the authorized card holder may use the card. All Credit Card receipts along with a monthly reconciliation must be submitted to OLM prior to the monthly cut-off date. Purchases should be for non-recurring goods/services valued at less than \$2,500, except for contracted food purchases.

B. Restricted purchases

A P-Card cannot be used for the following restricted purchases: Cash advances, Personal items; Alcohol / Taverns; Travel; Gifts/Donations; Utility payments; Gasoline for state owned vehicles. SCPD may be issued separate cards for gasoline.

C. Tax Exemption

The OLM is exempt from paying state sales tax because it is a state agency. The tax exempt number is located on the bottom of the P-card. It is the responsibility of the cardholder to inform the merchant of sales tax exemption, and pursue credit for any sales taxes applied to purchases. CERT 134 is available upon request from the LBD.

D. Disputed Charges

Cardholders should contact MasterCard directly when there is a disputed charge. If the dispute is not resolved upon submission of the monthly statement enter "Dispute." File this claim with the JPMorgan Chase Disputes Team @1-888-297-0768. Waivers for contracted food purchase can be obtained by requesting OLM to submit the request to DRS.

E. Reporting Requirements

An online system (Smart Data – SDG2) is available to monitor purchases, review transactions and approve transactions. All cardholders have access to login to SDG2 to review and update transactions. The following tasks associated with SDG2 are required for credit card holders.

- Cardholders must enter descriptions of purchases into the SDG2 system on a timely basis.
- > Cardholders must mark transactions as reviewed on the SDG2 system.
- Cardholders should review the following Office of the State Comptroller and Department of Administrative Services (DAS) P-card guidelines.

1. State of Connecticut Credit Card Use Policy http://www.ct.gov/mil/lib/mil/Credit Card Policy.pdf

2. P-Card Cardholder work rules http://www.osc.ct.gov/manuals/pcard/workrules/manual.htm

VIII. Cooperative Purchasing Strategies

The CGA has the statutory authority to utilize cooperative purchasing strategies such as ²¹ cooperative purchasing arrangements ²²or piggyback ²³onto other existing contracts in lieu of traditional competitive procurements.

Cooperative Purchasing is defined as "a procurement conducted by, or on behalf of, one or more Public Procurement Units. ²⁴ The legal central procurement agency often will collect an administrative fee to recover the costs of administering the cooperative procurement program. The cooperative procurement will follow competitive procurement rules and standards. ²⁵

Piggybacking is defined as "a form of intergovernmental cooperative purchasing in which an entity will extend the pricing and terms of a contract entered into by a larger entity. Piggybacking permits public entities to purchase off the contract awarded by another public entity, although the solicitation and resulting contract may not have specifically identified that purchasing entity as a specific buyer under the contract."²⁶

The potential advantages of using cooperative purchasing strategies are superior pricing and expediency. Procurement staff must review all procurement needs closely to determine if the required goods/services are already available using any of the following cooperative purchasing strategies.

A. Cooperative Purchasing

(a) WSCA/NASPO Value Point

WSCA/NASPO Value Point cooperative contracts seek to increase purchasing quantities for items to obtain preferred pricing. This process uses a "lead state" model to carefully ensure open, competitive cooperative contracts. The lead state owns and manages the contract. All contracts have been awarded by a competitive solicitation process, usually an RFP, to all contracted vendors in compliance with the lead state's statutory requirements. Use of this strategy allows OLM to purchase items from these existing contracts.

http://www.naspovaluepoint.org/#/current-contracts/search#pagetop

²¹ C.G.S.§2-71v

²² C.G.S.§2-71v(a)

²³ C.G.S.§2-71v(b)

²⁴ Section 10-101(1) of the Model Procurement Code for State and Local Governments

²⁵ State and Local Government Procurement: A Practical Guide. P. 171

²⁶ National Institute of Governmental Purchasing's Public Procurement Dictionary of Terms and State and Local Government Procurement: A Practical Guide. P. 175

(b) State Contracts

The JCLM can purchase goods and/or service using the terms and conditions from the existing state contracts available through the Department of Administrative Services allow for use. The JCLM can utilize state contracts when goods and services needed are covered under an active state contract. <u>http://www.biznet.ct.gov/SCP_Search/</u>

B. Piggybacking

(a) GSA Schedules

Long-term government wide contracts with commercial firms to provide access to millions of commercial products and services at volume discount pricing. Would piggyback onto the agreement between the Federal Government and the Vendor. Need to negotiate own Statement of Work and Contract. <u>www.gsa.gov/schedules</u>.Browse the SINs to determine what is available for services. Better for larger projects and consulting needs.

(b) GSA Advantage

Long-term government wide contracts with commercial firms to provide access to millions of commercial products and services at volume discount pricing. Order through the online shopping and ordering system. <u>www.gsaadvantage.gov</u>. Purchase Products online. Good use for Price Estimates and Quick Purchases of items

(c) GSA EBuy

Is an electronic RFQ/RFP system designed to allow government buyers to request information, find sources, and prepare RFQs/RFPs online for millions of services and products offered through GSA's Multiple Award Schedule (MAS) and GSA Technology Contracts.

<u>www.ebuy.gsa.gov/advantage/ebuy/</u>. Can obtain competitive pricing through the use of RFP.

IX. COMPETITIVE PROCUREMENT PROCESS

A. Choice of Competitive Procurement Methods

Once it is determined that competitive procurement is necessary, procurement staff will determine which procurement method is most appropriate in accordance with the guidelines outlined in the Legislative Procurement Guidelines Reference included in Attachment 2.

1. Request for Quotation (RFQ)

An RFQ is prepared and administered by the Purchasing Group for a procurement less than \$10,000. An RFQ would also be used by the Purchasing

Group for (a) a commodity-only procurement greater than \$10,000; or (b) a copier lease greater than \$10,000. The following guidelines apply to the use of an RFQ:

- DAS portal posting of the RFQ is recommended for a minimum of 10 calendar days, but not required;
- Legal advertisements about an RFQ should not be posted, unless procurement staff decide it is necessary;
- Quotations must be submitted in a sealed envelope and sent to the via any major mail carrier including USPS, Fed Ex or UPS or via email.
- Quotations must be kept sealed or secured until opened all at once by staff subsequent to the proposal due date in accordance with the Competitive Sealed Quotations/Proposal guidelines; and
- > A question and answer period is recommended, but not required; and
- RFQ procurements greater than \$2,500 may require a contract.
- 2. Request for Proposal (RFP)

An RFP is prepared and administered by the Contracting Group for procurements over \$10,000 that involve services and any procurements greater than \$50,000. The following guidelines apply to the use of an RFP:

- Question and Answer period is required;
- Legal Advertisements should be posted in three newspapers if over \$50,000;
- DAS portal posting of the RFP is strongly required for a minimum of 30 calendar days (An RFP can be posted for fewer days with the approval of the Contract Group Supervisor);
- Proposals must be submitted in a sealed envelope and sent to the via any major mail carrier including USPS, Fed Ex or UPS;
- Proposals shall be identified with the RFP Title on the outside of the shipping box or envelope; and
- Proposals shall remain sealed until opened all at once by Procurement staff subsequent to the proposal due date/time. Proposals shall not be opened publicly because this could undermine subsequent contract negotiations with the awarded respondent and would violate Freedom of Information (FOI) laws.²⁷.

3. Request for Bid (RFB)

An RFB is a solicitation for goods and contractual services that exceed \$500,000 and are considered public works projects. A "Public Works Project" is defined as the construction, reconstruction, alteration, remodeling, repair or demolition of any public building or any other public works by a public entity. ²⁸ The following guidelines apply to the use of an RFB:

²⁷ C.G.S 1-210(b)(24)

²⁸ C.G.S. 31-56(a)(3)

- a. Follow all rules that apply to procurements greater than \$50,000 in section II(A)(2); and
- b. Procurement Staff shall open the bids on the bid due date in a public forum. The Base Bid for each Bid submitted shall be read aloud publicly, however, the remainder of the contents of the bid shall remain confidential because this could undermine the contract negotiations that will need to occur with the awarded respondent.

B. Rejection of Request for Solicitation (RFS) Responses

A Request for Solicitation is a general term that includes all types of procurements including RFQ, RFP and RFB. Procurement Staff shall reject proposal responses submitted past the deadline stated in the RFS. RFS Responses can be submitted any time before the deadline and the CGA front office shall affix a date/time stamp on the response as soon as it is received. The official submittal date/time recorded for each quote, proposal or bid shall be based on the date/time stamped on the document. Procurement staff shall not deviate from this rule, unless they have written approval from the Contract Group Manager. Procurement staff may also reject all bids or proposals if it is in the best interest of the state. ²⁹

C. Review of Solicitation Responses

Upon receipt, the Procurement Staff will review the responses to determine if those received are complete submissions and contain everything requested in the RFS. The Procurement Staff will complete an:

- Administrative Analysis which lists what was submitted, where it is located in the RFP and any missing information. This Analysis assists the project owner when reviewing the responses submitted; and
- The Cover Letter reflecting the results of their review; any missing information, any contractor exceptions to the terms and conditions or specifications in the RFS.
- Utilize standard templates for the administrative analysis and the cover letter to ensure consistent analysis by all Procurement Staff; and
- Submit the Administrative Analysis and cover letter to the Contract Manager for approval.
- Forward a copy of the Administrative Analysis and cover letter along with copies of all complete quotations/proposals to the Project Owner.

D. Evaluation Committee

The Project Owner has discretion to evaluate the proposals with or without an evaluation committee. If the Project Owner decides to utilize an Evaluation Committee (Committee), the Project Owner acts at the Evaluation Committee Chairperson (Committee Chairperson).

²⁹ C.G.S. 2-71p(h)

The Committee is comprised of a Committee Chair who can appoint Committee members at their discretion. The Committee is charged with (1) evaluating the quotations/proposals received in accordance with the Evaluation Criteria set out in the RFQ/RFP document, (2) reaching a consensus and (3) submitting a contract award recommendation memo to the Financial Administrator for approval. Legislative Procurement staff may invite Management contractors to serve as members of the Evaluation Committee.

For additional information, please refer to the Evaluation Committee Chairperson Information Sheet included in Attachment 3 and the Evaluation Committee Member Information Sheet included in Attachment 4 for additional details.

E. Personal Policies Subcommittee (PPS) Approval

Procurement staff is required to obtain PPS approval for any contract greater than \$50,000.

Procurement staff will draft a letter to the Legislative Leaders requesting this approval and send it to the Financial Administrator for final approval who will submit it to the Legislative Leaders for approval. The Procurement Staff must obtain concurrence of two-thirds (2/3) of the members present and/or voting, provided that such concurrence shall include the affirmative vote of at least one (1) member of the minority party.

F. Contract Award

Once the Project Owner has submitted an Award Recommendation and Personal Policies Subcommittee approval has been received (if applicable), the Procurement Staff will draft the contract in cooperation with the Project Owner. Once the contract is fully executed, the purchase order will be issued. Work shall not begin until the purchase order is issued to the vendor. Procurement Staff will also handle all contract negotiations and any performance issues throughout the term of the contract.

X. PROCUREMENT ETHICS

A. Conflicts of Interest

A public official or Procurement Staff person must abstain from taking official action on the matter that presents a conflict for them, his or her immediate family, or any associated business. All Procurement Staff shall report any conflicts of interest the types which are outlined below:

1. "Substantial" Conflict of Interest

A "substantial" conflict of interest is defined as follows:

Exists if a public official or state employee has reason to believe or expect that he or she, his or her spouse, a dependent child, or a business with which he or she is associated will derive a direct monetary gain or suffer a direct monetary loss by virtue of his or her official activity.

"Business with which...associated" is defined to include any entity through which business for profit or not for profit is conducted in which the public official or state employee, or a member of his or her immediate family, is a director, officer, or holder of significant ownership interest. Unpaid service as an officer or director of a non-profit entity is exempted from the definition of "Business with which...associated." ³⁰

Does not exist if any benefit or detriment accrues to any such person as a member of a profession, occupation or group to no greater extent than any other member of such profession, occupation or group.³¹

2. "Potential" Conflict of Interest.³²

A "potential" conflict of interest is defined as follows:

- Exists if a public official or Procurement Staff member, in the discharge of his or her official state duties, would be required to take an action that would affect his or her financial interest, or the financial interest of his or her spouse, parent, brother, sister, child, spouse of the child, or a business with which the official or employee is associated.
- There is no requirement that the financial impact be direct or that it affect the individual differently from other members of his or her profession, occupation, or group.
- There still must be a reasonable expectation on the part of the Procurement Staff member or public official that there will be some financial impact based on his or her actions.
- A "potential" conflict of interest does not exist if the financial interest is "de minimus" (under \$100) or if the interest is not distinct from that of a substantial segment of the general public (e.g., all taxpayers).³³

B. Reporting of Ethics Violations

Any state agency head or deputy or person in charge of state agency

³⁰ Office of State Ethics "Public Officials and State Employees Guide to the Code of Ethics"

³¹ Conn. Gen. Stat § 1-85.

³² Office of State Ethics "Public Officials and State Employees Guide to the Code of Ethics"

³³ C.G.S. §1-86

procurement, contracting or human resources, who has reasonable case to believe that a person has violated the provisions of the Code of Ethics of Public officials set forth in part 1 of General Statutes § 101pp or any law or regulation concerning ethics in state contracting shall report such belief to the Office of State Ethics, which may further report such information of the Auditors of Public Accounts, the Chief State's Attorney or the Attorney General.³⁴

XI. COMMUNICATION WITH VENDORS

A Procurement Staff member will be designated to manage the transmittal of information for each procurement. All other CGA staff are prohibited from discussing procurement information with anyone but the assigned Procurement Staff member. The designated Procurement Staff member will maintain the integrity of the procurement process by documenting all information shared with vendors and ensuring that information is provided to all vendors at the same time.

If information regarding future procurements is shared with some vendors and not others, some vendors would receive a competitive advantage over other vendors and could be disqualified and/or the contact award could be challenged.

The Supreme Court of Connecticut has held that only "where fraud, corruption or favoritism has influenced the conduct of the bidding officials or when the very object and integrity of the competitive bidding process is defeated by the conduct of municipal officials," does an unsuccessful bidder have standing to challenge the award. (Spiniello Construction Co. v. Manchester, 189 Conn. 539, 456 A.2d 1199 (1983), Id., at 544, 456 A.2d 1199.) Inappropriate sharing of information with the vendor community may violate or appear to violate the standard of "fraud, collusion and favoritism" upon which all procurements are judged.

Prohibited Communication with vendors includes:

- a. Information shared with some but not all vendors;
- b. Information that is not publicly documented or available; and
- c. Information that provides any insight into the procurement needs of the CGA.

See the DAS Guidance Publication, "Communications With Vendors" included in Attachment 5.

³⁴ C.G.S. § 1-101pp

XII. BEST PRACTICES

A. Understanding the Business Need

Procurement staff should fully understand the business needs of the Project Owner before drafting the RFS. Procurement staff should discuss the details of the requisition with the Project Owner as well as any other stakeholders with an interest in the procurement before drafting the RFS. Procurement staff should also conduct research to develop working knowledge of the business need by:

- Researching potential providers of goods/services;
- Researching the industry for the goods/services; and
- Looking for sample RFS or contracts.

B. Lead Time

A competitive procurement will typically take up to ninety (90) days from the date the requisition is submitted (assuming it includes all the required information) until the contract is awarded. This duration can be broken down into three parts: (a) RFP development, (b) RFP process, (c) proposal evaluation and contract negotiation.

C. Length of Procurement

A non-mandatory pre-bid meeting is typically held a week after the RFS is published and questions are usually submitted up to two days from the date of the nonmandatory pre bid meeting. The answers to questions are then published on the DAS Portal to all vendors up to three days from the date the questions were due. Quotes, Bids or Proposals are usually due four weeks after the RFS is published.

D. Option to Extend

The contract term for all contracts should include an option to extend the term of the contract. The option to extend should be no longer than the original term of the contract. When Procurement Staff exercises the option to extend, they should either do so for the entire term of the allowable extension or extend and preserve the remainder of the allowable extension term. The Project Owner and the contractor must mutually agree to the extension.

E. Restrictions on Contract Extensions

The CGA may extend a contract beyond the contract term (including the option to extend) for the purchase of supplies, materials, equipment or contractual services without complying with competitive bidding requirements. However, the CGA must do so in accordance with the following requirements:

"(1) the committee makes a written determination, supported by documentation, that

(A) soliciting competitive bids for such purchase would cause a hardship for the state;

(B) such solicitation would result in a major increase in the cost of such supplies, materials, equipment or contractual services; OR

(C) the contractor is the sole source for such supplies, materials, equipment or contractual services,

(2) the committee solicits at least three competitive quotations in addition to the contractor's quotation AND

(3) the committee makes a written determination that no such competitive quotation which complies with the existing specifications for the contract is lower than or equal to the contractor's quotation. Any such contract extension shall be based on the contractor's quotation. No contract may be extended more than two times under this section.³⁵"

F. Extension ³⁶

The CGA may extend a personal service agreement as defined in section C.G.S 2-71t, or a contract based on competitive negotiation as defined in C.G.S. 2-71p, without complying with the requirements of said sections, if the committee finds that an extension is in the best interests of the state. Such finding shall be based on a written determination that:

"(1) Issuing a request for proposals would cause a hardship for the state;

(2) issuing a request for proposals would result in a major increase in the cost of such service;

(3) the contractor is the sole source for such service;

(4) the expiring contract is for a specific project, rather than an ongoing need for a service, which is still in progress; or

(5) the expiring contract is for no more than three years and a change in contractors would entail substantial cost or disruption."

No agreement or contract may be extended more than one time under this section.

The extension must require a minimum wage of at least (1) fifteen dollars per hour, or (2) if applicable, the amount required to be paid under subsection (b) of section 31-57f, whichever is greater in accordance with C.G.S 2-71u.

G. Set-Aside Projects

The CGA is required to set-aside 25% of the total value of all contracts let in a fiscal year to small businesses and 25% of this set aside total value shall be reserved for award to minority business enterprises. ³⁷

³⁵ C.G.S. § 2-71s

³⁶ C.G.S. § 2-71u

³⁷ C.G.S. § 4a-60g(b)(2)

A list of small and minority registered business can be found at the following website: <u>http://www.biznet.ct.gov/SDSearch/SDSearch.aspx</u>

H. Void Purchases

Any procurement conducted in a manner contrary to the provisions of C.G.S. 2-71p, C.G.S. 2-71t or the written procurement policies contained in this document are void. Additionally services shall not be rendered or goods provided until a signed purchase order is received by the vendor. ³⁸

I. Alternative Responses

Procurement staff should direct vendors to respond to the RFS as is and then allow them to submit any alternative responses as well. Following this practice ensures that the vendor will at least be considered for the proposal submitted even if the alternate proposal is not considered as a viable alternative.

J. Advertising

Vendors may list the CGA as a reference. When answering a reference check, Procurement Staff may only confirm that the CGA has contracted for these goods or services with the vendor in question. Procurement Staff should not provide any judgement with regard to the performance of the vendor. No vendor will be allowed to use the CGA for advertising or promotional purposes without prior written permission from the Executive Director of the JCLM. Permission is not often granted.

K. Unsolicited Proposals

The CGA may receive and review unsolicited proposals, but should immediately alert the vendor in writing that the proposal will be reviewed for informational purposes only. Information found in unsolicited proposals can help CGA Procurement Staff keep up to date with industry trends and familiarize themselves with new vendors to state contracts.

Vendors might also offer to provide an unsolicited presentation and/or demonstration to introduce the CGA to their product. While not prohibited, the CGA procurement staff should be very careful when having discussions with just one vendor prior to issuance of any RFI which would invite a broader range of vendors to provide information rather than just one. A decision to meet with only one vendor could invite the appearance of one vendor being favored over the others.

Legislative staff and Project Owners must immediately notify Procurement staff of receipt of any unsolicited offers for proposals or demonstrations.

³⁸ C.G.S. § 4-33a

L. Standard Nomenclature

Procurement staff should utilize the following nomenclature system when naming contracts:

Contract Number	Description of Nomenclature
JCLMYRREG00XX	The JCLM and REG indicate that this is a
	contract for goods/contractual services,
	handled by the Contracting Group.
<u>JCLM</u> YR <u>PSA</u> 00XX	The JCLM and PSA indicate that this is a
	contract for personal services handled
	by the Contracting Group.
ITS YROOXX	The ITS indicates this contract is a
	purchase order only, handled by the
	Purchasing Group, for goods/ services
	for Department of Information
	Technology.
<u>STATE</u> YR <u>PSX</u> 00XX	The STATE and PSX indicate that this is
	a purchase made in accordance with a
	State Contract and only a purchase
	order was required. These types of
	contracts are handled by the Purchasing
	Group.
<u>SEEC</u> YR00XX	The SEEC denotes that this is not a true
	contract but rather is set up for SEEC
	tracking purposes.
PRCHYRREG00XX	The PRCH and REG indicate that this is a
	contract for goods/contractual services,
	handled by the Purchasing Group.
PRCHYRPSA00XX	The PRCH and PSA indicate that this is a
	contract for personal services handled
	by the Purchasing Group.

M. Insurance

OLM used to grant these types of temporary insurance to Legislators who held events off the State Capitol campus but we do not any longer. OLM has asked the legislators to no longer schedule events where this insurance is required. This decision was made because these venues that required insurance never want to hold the state harmless, which is in direct conflict with the Sovereign Immunity law.

XIII. COMPENSATION AND BILLING

A. Invoices

Once a purchase order is issued and work has begun, invoices will be submitted to the CGA. Invoices should be sent directly to the Accounts Payable group for payment at Accounts Payable Group; Office of Legislative Management; 300 Capitol Avenue, Room 5100; Hartford, CT 06106 or emailed to <u>OLM.AP@cga.ct.gov</u>.

- Properly Prepared Invoice shall include:
 - State Contract Number (If Applicable)
 - The purchase order number,
 - Invoice date,
 - o Invoice number,
 - o Separate invoice line for labor, materials and equipment,
 - \circ $\;$ Description of the service provided and the services dates, and
 - \circ $\;$ All invoices shall reflect the lines on the signed purchase order.
- The CGA can reject invoices for payment if they are not considered properly prepared as defined above.
- Support for Hourly Labor Charges
 - Signed work tickets (the number of hours and days worked should match those on the certified payrolls and the invoice);
 - \circ Sign-in Records (should match both payrolls and work tickets);
 - Copies of certified payrolls including Classification of worker, as well as wage and benefit rate; http://www.ctdol.state.ct.us/wgwkstnd/forms/payrollcert1.pdf;
 - Contractor Wage Certification Forms. http://www.ctdol.state.ct.us/wgwkstnd/forms/contractwage.pdf;
 - No reimbursements shall be made for travel or travel related expenses;
- Support for Fixed Price Labor Charges
 - Copies of signed work tickets (the days worked should match those on the certified payrolls and the invoice);
 - Sign-in Records (the days worked should match both payrolls and work tickets);
 - Copies of certified payrolls including Classification of worker, as well as wage and benefit rate;
 - Description of work and service dates.

Support for Materials Charges

All charges on invoices for material charges shall be broken down between list price and markup OR percentage discount off list price. Support establishing the list price shall accompany the invoice.

Support for Equipment Charges

Equipment charges shall be supported by a breakdown of cost or a statement that the equipment is owned by the company so as to establish the list price. The invoice must include the list price and the calculation of the markup on that equipment to arrive at the charge on the invoice.

Frequency of Billing

Invoices may be submitted in a number of ways. Typical ways that invoices are submitted are either on a lump sum, monthly, annual, or quarterly basis OR upon completion of the specific deliverables outlined in the RFP.

Payment Terms

Payments for Goods and Services shall be made only after the CGA receives and accepts that equipment and/or services and after it receives a properly completed invoice. Payment for all accepted Goods and/or Services shall be due within forty five (45) days after acceptance of the Goods and/ or Services (in arrears) in accordance with Conn. Gen. Stat. §4a-71 or thirty (30) days if the Contractor is a certified small contractor or minority business enterprise as defined in Conn. Gen. Stat. § 4a-60g.

Any annual payments for Software Support and System Maintenance may be paid at the beginning of each contract year.

American Institute of Architecture (AIA)

For construction projects, invoices shall be submitted on American Institute of Architecture (AIA) forms directly to the architect or engineer on record for approval. Once approved, the architect or engineer assigned to the project will submit those invoices to the CGA for payment. Invoices will not be paid unless submitted on AIA forms with architect or engineer approval.

XIV. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

A. Statutory Authority

Except as otherwise provided by any federal law or state statute, all records maintained or kept on file by any public agency, whether or not such records are required by any law or by any rule or regulation, shall be public records and every person shall have the right to (1) inspect such records promptly during regular office or business hours, (2) copy such records in accordance with subsection (g) of section 1-212, or (3) receive a copy of such records in accordance with section 1-212. However the following is not required to be disclosed under the Freedom of Information Act:

Responses to any request for proposals or bid solicitation issued by a public agency or any record or file made by a public agency in connection with the contract award process, until such contract is executed or negotiations for the award of such contract have ended, whichever occurs earlier, provided the chief executive officer of such public agency certifies that the public interest in the disclosure of such responses, record or file is outweighed by the public interest in the confidentiality of such responses, record or file.⁴⁰

B. What can be disclosed BEFORE contract award?

CGA can only disclose the following before contract award:

- Previous Contract and proposals (if available) for the same service or commodity; and
- > Pre-solicitation meeting sign-in sheets.

C. What can be disclosed AFTER contract award?

CGA is required to disclose everything in the file related to the procurement, with the exception of aspects of the proposal that are specifically noted as proprietary by the contractor, after the contract award. The procurement staff shall disclose the following information:

- Fully Executed contracts;
- > All proposals submitted in response to an RFP;
- Evaluation committee chairperson tally-sheets and contract award recommendation letter;
- Individual evaluation committee chairperson evaluation sheets (including names); and
- Administrative Analysis Spreadsheet and Cover Letter.

⁴⁰ C.G.S § 1-210.

D. In what format do we provide the information? Is there a charge?

The CGA may provide this information electronically or in hardcopy form.

- > The CGA shall not charge for any information provided electronically; and
- The CGA shall charge for information provided in hard copy form. The fee is \$.25 per page plus the cost of postage. Check needs to be received prior to providing the information for the inquiring party. The check shall be made payable to "Treasurer/State of Connecticut."

E. Who and when do procurement staff notify when the FOI requests are made?

The procurement staff shall notify the Financial Administrator of any FOI requests via email. If the FOI requests are submitted during the Q&A period for a RFP, then the staff member shall compile all the questions and submit them to the Financial Administrator upon close of the open question period. Once approved by the Financial Administrator, the procurement staff members shall proceed and answer the questions either as part of the Q&A document or individually if not submitted in regards to an RFP.

- F. How should procurement staff respond to FOI inquires?
- Procurement staff member shall <u>acknowledge</u> all FOI requests within (3) THREE days of receipt.
- Procurement staff member shall <u>answer</u> the FOI request once that information can be reasonably gathered and approval to answer has been provided by the Financial Administrator.

Attachment 1 - Procurement Information Checklist

 \triangleright

	Submit a requisition in the PeopleSoft System.
	Along with the requisition, please attach a document in PeopleSoft that contains the following information (if applicable)
	Completion date for product/service.
	Estimated value of the request.
	Account Coding (if known)
	Specification for the product/service being requested.
	Product/Service deliverables including timeline.
	Payment methodology (ex. Hourly, upon completion of milestones, etc.)
	Point person for payment approval.
	List of contractors (contact person/email) who can provide product/service.
	List of Evaluation Criteria and percentage weights of those criteria
	🗌 Facilities Only: Does the project require Service Wage 🗌 / Prevailing Wage 🗌
	Facilities Only : Provided electronic copies of the drawings & specifications.
	Members of the Evaluation Committee. (Indicate below)
Evalu	ation Committee Member #1 Name

Evaluation Committee Member #1 Name	
Evaluation Committee Member #2 Name	
Evaluation Committee Member #3 Name	
Evaluation Committee Member #4 Name	

Contractual Supplies, Materials, Equipment and Services (REG):

C.G.S. 2-71 p governs all purchases of and contracts for "supplies", "materials" and "equipment" and "contractual services."

- "Supplies", "materials" and "equipment" are defined as any and all articles of personal property furnished to or used by the Legislative Department, including all printing, binding, publication of laws, stationery, forms and reports;
- "Contractual services" means any and all laundry and cleaning service, pest control service, janitorial service, security service, the rental and repair, or maintenance, of equipment, machinery and other state-owned personal property, advertising and photostating, mimeographing, data entry, data processing and other similar service arrangements where the services are provided by persons other than state employees;

	RESPONSIBILITY MATRIX										
Contract Value	< \$5,000 per year & non- recurring	< \$5,000 per year & recurring	Between \$5,001 & \$10,000 per year	Greater than \$10,000 > \$50,000							
Responsible Group	Purchasing	Purchasing	Purchasing	Purchasing - 1. Commodity only; 2. On State K; or 3. Copier Leases Contracting - 1. Commodity & Contractual Servic 2. Contractual Service	e; or						
RFQ	NO	When Possible	When Possible	At discretion of Procurement Staff	NO						
RFP	NO	NO	NO	At discretion of Procurement Staff	YES						
Legal Ads	NO	NO	NO	At discretion of Procurement Staff	YES						
Post on Portal	NO	NO	If applicable	At discretion of Procurement Staff	YES						
PPS Approval *	NO	NO	NO	NO YES							

Personal Service Agreement Guidelines (PSA):

C.G.S. 2-71t governs the retention of personal service contractors and personal service agreements.

- "Personal service contractor" means any person, firm or corporation not employed by the state, who is hired by the committee for a fee to provide services to the General Assembly. The term "personal service contractor" does not include (A) a person, firm or corporation providing "contractual services", as defined in section 2-71p, to the committee, (B) a "design professional", as defined in section 2-71q, or (C) an agency of the federal government, of the state or of a political subdivision of the state.
- "Personal service agreement" means a written agreement defining the services or end product to be delivered by a personal service contractor to the committee.

	RESPONSIBILITY MATRIX										
Contract Value	< \$5,000	\$5,001 - \$10,000	\$10,000 - \$20,000	> \$20,000							
		AND A Contract Term < 1year.	AND A Contract Term < 1year.	AND A Contract Term > 1 year							
Responsible	Purchasing	Purchasing	Contracting	Contracting							
group	8		C	5							
RFQ NO		YES	NO	NO							
RFP NO		NO	YES	YES							
Legal Ads	NO	NO	At discretion of Procurement Staff	If Applicable (only above \$50,000)							
Post on Portal NO		At discretion of Procurement Staff	At discretion of Procurement Staff	YES							
PPS Approval *	NO	NO	NO	If Applicable							

De Minimis Exception:

Competitive Pricing and a written contract are not required, although recommended, for any contract or personal service agreement that is non-recurring and less than \$5,000.

* Personnel Policies Subcommittee Approval (PPS) Approval:

Pursuant to the <u>Administrative Regulations Rules of Procedure of the Joint Committee on Legislative Management</u>, the following rules govern the Personnel Policies Subcommittee Approval Process:

"10. All actions of the Personnel Policies Subcommittee shall be by a majority vote of those present and voting, except that: (1) no major policy decision, contract in excess of \$50,000, expenditure in excess of \$10,000 that was not previously authorized, or the employment of any person by the personnel policies subcommittee to a full-time nonpartisan position, shall be effective without the concurrence of two-thirds (2/3) of the members present and/or voting, provided that such concurrence shall include the affirmative vote of at least one (1) member of the minority party and (2) if a committee member present and voting of either chamber requests, a vote of the majority of the members of each chamber present and voting shall be required for approval of a question by the full subcommittee.

11. Expenditures of appropriations for the operations of the Senate Majority office, the Senate Minority office and the House Majority office and the House Minority office shall be subject to the exclusive approvals of the Senate President Pro Tempore, the Senate Minority Leader, the Speaker of the House and the House Minority Leader, respectively, except for contracts in excess of \$50,000."

Evaluation Committee Chairperson Roles and Responsibilities

Introduction

This guidance document outlines the role and the responsibilities of the Evaluation Committee Chairperson (Chairperson).

Freedom of Information

Once a contract is awarded, all solicitations, proposal responses, evaluation committee members names and final evaluation documentation are public information and subject to Freedom of Information Act requests.¹

Roles of the Chairperson

- 1. The Chairperson acts as a member of the Evaluation Committee who individually evaluates the proposal responses, and
- 2. The Chairperson acts as the sole point of communication between the Evaluation Committee Members and the Office of Legislative Management (OLM) procurement staff member. All communication regarding the contract evaluation is entirely confidential until a contract is awarded. Once a contract is awarded all communication then becomes public information. Evaluation Committee Members shall not discuss the evaluation with anyone, including but not limited, any respondent vendors, OLM procurement staff members and other CGA employees.

Evaluation Process

- 1. The OLM procurement staff member will collect proposal responses and conduct an overall administrative review of the proposal responses for completeness.
- 2. The OLM procurement staff member will draft a Cover Letter and Spreadsheet documenting the administrative analysis.
- The OLM procurement staff member will provide the following documentation to the Evaluation Committee Chairperson (Chairperson) and the Committee members: Administrative Review Cover Letter and Spreadsheet, Proposal Responses, Individual Scoresheets and the Evaluation Committee Chairperson Summary Sheet.
- 4. The Chairperson shall email the Evaluation Committee Members (Members) to:
 - Ensure they have received all required evaluation forms and proposal responses. coordinate and facilitate meetings with committee members;
 - Encourage the Members to review the Evaluation Committee Member Roles and Responsibilities;

¹ § 1-210 (b) (1) and § 1-210 (b) (24)

- Inquire as to whether any of the members have a Conflict of Interest.
- Emphasize that all communication prior to contract award is confidential, and that they should not communicate with anyone but the Evaluation Committee Chairperson about their review of the proposals.
- Emphasize their participation and all communication is subject to FOI subsequent to the contract award.
- Answer any questions;
- Set a deadline by which Members are required to have reviewed the proposal responses; and
- Schedule a meeting with the Members to discuss the proposals.
- 5. Hold a meeting with Evaluation Committee members to:
 - Discuss the details of the proposal responses between the Members,
 - Determine if Members would like to Follow-up with Respondents:
 - > Meeting with respondents to clarify parts of the proposal response
 - Requesting written responses from respondents to clarify parts of the proposal response.
 - Onsite demonstrations of the goods/services
 - Site visits at the respondents
 - ALL Committee members must attend a site visit or meeting (in-person or virtual) with a respondent.
 - Evaluation Committee should draft written questions prior to engaging with the respondent as noted above. No Member shall have direct contact with respondents otherwise.
 - Determine availability of Members for any meetings, onsite demonstrations or site visits.
- 6. Contact the OLM procurement staff member to discuss the results of the meeting and provide:
 - List of questions or clarifications from the Committee
 - Member decision to follow-up with respondents.
- 7. The OLM Procurement staff member will contact respondents and provide:
 - List of questions or clarifications from the Committee
 - Schedule a meeting with the respondents and the Evaluation Committee to (1) clarify the proposal, (2) demonstrate goods/services or (3) arrange a site visit.
- 8. The Chairperson shall schedule a second meeting for evaluation committee members to present their completed evaluations to the group and to reach a consensus about the contract award.

- If members cannot reach a consensus, a majority vote should be taken. This majority vote will determine the Evaluation Committee's consensus score.
- 9. Review the Completed Evaluations to ensure that the forms have been both completed properly and each individual evaluation has been **signed and dated**.
- 10. The Chairperson will complete the Evaluation Committee Summary sheet and provide the Individual Evaluation Forms and the Summary sheet to the OLM Procurement staff member. The Chairperson must:
 - Ensure that the scores are correctly transferred from the individual scoring sheets
 - Ensure that the unweighted scores are first averaged and then multiplied by the percentage weights.
 - Ensure that all formulas are correct in spreadsheet and the scores are calculated correctly.
- 11. The Chairperson shall also provide a written Contract Award recommendation memo to the OLM Procurement staff member including the following detail:
 - Detailed justification as to why this vendor is selected beyond merely price.
 - Discussion of how the vendor met/exceeded the evaluation criteria.
 - How their experience/proposed solutions met the needs of the CGA and why.
- 12. Upon receipt of the Evaluation Committee Summary sheet and the Contract award recommendation, the OLM procurement staff member will review the documentation and provide any changes/updates that are required.
- 13. The OLM procurement staff member will draft Personal Policies Subcommittee (PPS) Approval letter if the expenditure exceeds \$50,000.
- 14. Upon receipt of four of the six approvals (one being from the minority party), the OLM Procurement staff will negotiate a contract with the award vendor.
- 15. Once the contract is finalized and a purchase order is issued, the OLM procurement staff person will schedule a contract commencement meeting at which the Evaluation Committee Chairperson shall attend.

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read and agree to abide by the preceding Evaluation Committee Chairperson Roles and Responsibilities guidelines.

Name

Title

Signature

Date

Form Rev. 3/18/21

Evaluation Committee Member Information Sheet

Introduction

This guidance document outlines the role and the responsibilities of the Evaluation Committee Member (Member).

Freedom of Information

Once a contract is awarded, all solicitations, proposal responses, evaluation committee members names and final evaluation documentation are public information and subject to Freedom of Information Act requests.¹

Conflict of Interest

As a Member, you or those in your immediate family cannot have a past or current financial interest, ownership interest, employee interest, personal interest, or be seeking employment with any of the respondents who are submitting proposals in response to any solicitations published by the Office of Legislative Management. Members must not discuss any details related to the solicitation or their evaluation role to any prospective respondents. Please let the Evaluation Committee Chairperson know immediately if you or someone in your immediate family has one of the conflicts of interests listed above. Legislative procurement staff reserves the right to remove a member from the Evaluation Committee if a conflict of interest is detected or for any other reason deemed by Legislative procurement staff to be in the best interest of the State.

Roles of the Member

- 1. Read the Request for Proposal and Q&A.
- 2. Independently review each Proposal and complete a corresponding evaluation sheet.
- 3. Attend all meetings, demonstrations or site visits.
- 4. Maintain strict confidentiality regarding participation in the evaluation process.
- 5. Submit signed and dated scoring forms and any questions or concerns to the evaluation Committee Chairperson.

¹ § 1-210 (b) (1) and § 1-210 (b) (24)

Evaluation Process

- 1. The OLM procurement staff member will collect proposal responses and conduct an overall administrative review of the proposal responses for completeness.
- 2. The OLM procurement staff member will draft a Cover Letter and Spreadsheet documenting the administrative analysis.
- 3. The OLM procurement staff member will provide the following documentation to the Evaluation Committee Chairperson (Chairperson) and the Committee members: Administrative Review Cover Letter and Spreadsheet, Proposal Responses, Individual Scoresheets and the Evaluation Committee Chairperson Summary Sheet.
- 4. The Chairperson shall email the Evaluation Committee Members (Members) to:
 - Ensure they have received all required evaluation forms and proposal responses. coordinate and facilitate meetings with committee members;
 - Encourage the Members to review the Evaluation Committee Member Roles and Responsibilities;
 - Inquire as to whether any of the members have a Conflict of Interest.
 - Emphasize that all communication prior to contract award is confidential, and that they should not communicate with anyone but the Evaluation Committee Chairperson about their review of the proposals.
 - Emphasize their participation and all communication is subject to FOI subsequent to the contract award.
 - Answer any questions;
 - Set a deadline by which Members are required to have reviewed the proposal responses; and
 - Schedule a meeting with the Members to discuss the proposals.
- 5. Hold a meeting with Evaluation Committee members to:
 - Discuss the details of the proposal responses between the Members,
 - Determine if Members would like to Follow-up with Respondents:
 - > Meeting with respondents to clarify parts of the proposal response
 - Requesting written responses from respondents to clarify parts of the proposal response.
 - Onsite demonstrations of the goods/services
 - Site visits at the respondents
 - ALL Committee members must attend a site visit or meeting (in-person or virtual) with a respondent.
 - Evaluation Committee should draft written questions prior to engaging with the respondent as noted above. No Member shall have direct contact with respondents otherwise.

- Determine availability of Members for any meetings, onsite demonstrations or site visits.
- 6. Contact the OLM procurement staff member to discuss the results of the meeting and provide:
 - List of questions or clarifications from the Committee
 - Member decision to follow-up with respondents.
- 7. The OLM Procurement staff member will contact respondents and provide:
 - List of questions or clarifications from the Committee
 - Schedule a meeting with the respondents and the Evaluation Committee to (1) clarify the proposal, (2) demonstrate goods/services or (3) arrange a site visit.
- 8. The Chairperson shall schedule a second meeting for evaluation committee members to present their completed evaluations to the group and to reach a consensus about the contract award.
 - If members cannot reach a consensus, a majority vote should be taken. This majority vote will determine the Evaluation Committee's consensus score.
- 9. Review the Completed Evaluations to ensure that the forms have been both completed properly and each individual evaluation has been **signed and dated**.
- 10. The Chairperson will complete the Evaluation Committee Summary sheet and provide the Individual Evaluation Forms and the Summary sheet to the OLM Procurement staff member. The Chairperson must:
 - Ensure that the scores are correctly transferred from the individual scoring sheets
 - Ensure that the unweighted scores are first averaged and then multiplied by the percentage weights.
 - Ensure that all formulas are correct in spreadsheet and the scores are calculated correctly.
- 11. The Chairperson shall also provide a written Contract Award recommendation memo to the OLM Procurement staff member including the following detail:
 - Detailed justification as to why this vendor is selected beyond merely price.
 - Discussion of how the vendor met/exceeded the evaluation criteria.
 - How their experience/proposed solutions met the needs of the CGA and why.
- 12. Upon receipt of the Evaluation Committee Summary sheet and the Contract award recommendation, the OLM procurement staff member will review the documentation and provide any changes/updates that are required.
- 13. The OLM procurement staff member will draft Personal Policies Subcommittee (PPS) Approval letter if the expenditure exceeds \$50,000.

- 14. Upon receipt of four of the six approvals (one being from the minority party), the OLM Procurement staff will negotiate a contract with the award vendor.
- 15. Once the contract is finalized and a purchase order is issued, the OLM procurement staff person will schedule a contract commencement meeting at which the Evaluation Committee Chairperson shall attend.

Confidentiality

Members shall keep all proposal details, discussions and evaluation deliberations confidential. Unauthorized disclosure of any of this information is strictly prohibited. Members shall:

- 1. Refrain from discussing the proposal responses with anyone, including other evaluation committee members outside of designated evaluation committee meetings.
- 2. Direct all questions to the Evaluation Committee Chairperson.
- 3. Refrain from communicating directly with any respondents.
- 4. Refer any respondents who contact you to the Legislative Management procurement staff member.

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read and agree to abide by the preceding Evaluation Committee Roles and Responsibilities guidelines.

Name

Title

Signature

Date

ATTACHMENT 5

Communications with Vendors

In light of the recent focus on ethics, and open, public, transparent and fair contracting, DAS Procurement staff have frequently been asked the question if agency personnel can communicate with vendors when preparing for a procurement. Certainly, to adequately do our jobs, we need to speak to companies to educate ourselves on their products and services and the industry well in advance of soliciting bids for new products/services. Here are a few things to keep in mind before starting those communications:

- Observe all ethics rules. Staff must have read and understood all State and the agency's particular ethics rules.
- Never have only one employee meet with a vendor; have at least two, one of whom should be a purchasing/fiscal person and one could be a technical person or a product user. The idea here is to have people from different areas of the agency involved and have everything out in the open.
- Whether vendors visit your office to give a presentation or agency staff visit a trade show, they should <u>never make any promises/commitments</u> to vendors about using their product or services. The agency employees should really just be "kicking the tires" and getting educated on what's available, nothing more.
- If a vendor is to provide substantive help to the agency on a procurement or potential procurement, this help must be provided only pursuant to an existing contract with that vendor and the contract must provide that the vendor shall not submit a bid or proposal. If they help on the front end, then they can't play on the back end.
- There must only be one point of contact (one person) with vendors once it has been decided to issue an invitation to bid or request for proposals. That person is responsible for answering all questions that come in from the outside, for asking questions of vendors and for coordinating the entire procurement in general. If DAS is that contracting authority, your agency should not talk to any vendors at any time. That's the role for DAS.
- The procurement playing field must always be kept level. This is paramount. So, no conduct of any agency employee must ever be such that it can be construed as collusive or fraudulent.
- Staff must be encouraged repeatedly to consult with in-house counsel on these matters, even if their question is a slam/dunk. It's important to establish an open culture inside the agency. If there's no in-house counsel, please contact DAS Procurement.
- When in doubt, consider issuing a request for information (RFI). A request for information can be as simple as a single paragraph requesting information on products or services. The RFI can be placed on the state contracting portal openly and publicly and vendors will have the ability to provide information on their products and services

Please be sure to share these guidelines with all of your agency personnel, and do not hesitate to contact DAS procurement with any questions or concerns.

Attachment 6 - Glossary of Terms

Bids: Solicitation of competitive pricing utilized for public works projects more than \$500,000.

CGA: Connecticut General Assembly

Committee: Joint Committee on Legislative Management

OLM: Office of Legislative Management

P-Card: The Office of Legislative Management on behalf of the State of Connecticut has the authority to issue purchasing credit cards.

Personal Services: Services or end product to be delivered by a personal service contractor. Purchases governed by C.G.S. 2-71t.

Procurement Staff: Purchasing and Contracting staff.

Project Owner: Any CGA employee submitting a request for goods or services to be paid for with State Funds. This person is responsible to work with procurement staff to specify the items or services needed, assist with evaluating the bid responses to determine the best value for the CGA and ensure the goods or services received meet expectations prior to recommending payment.

Proposals: Solicitation of competitive pricing utilized for goods/services more than \$10,000.

Quotation: Solicitation of competitive pricing utilized for goods/services less than \$10,000

Requisition: Request for goods or services entered into PeopleSoft.

Responses: Collectively refers to Quotes, Proposals or Bids.

RFI: Request for Information

RFP: Request for Proposal

RFQ: Request for Quote

RFS: Request for Solicitations. Refers to RFQs, RFPs and RFBs collectively.

Requisitioner: Any CGA employee who submits a requisition in the PeopleSoft system.



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63	3		Attachments Received	1 day	Thu 6/1/17	Thu 6/1/17	62						× 0%	
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