

Board of Chosen Freeholders

County of Burlington

Mount Holly, New Jersey 08060 - 6000

How to Sell Your Products or Services to the COUNTY of BURLINGTON

BOARD of CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS

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Board of Chosen Freeholders of the County of Burlington

Mount Holly, New Jersey 08060 - 6000

INTRODUCTION

This booklet will assist you in that endeavor by acquainting you with the purchasing policies and procedures that are followed by the Division of Purchase in carrying out the purchasing activities for the County of Burlington.

We solicit your interest and participation in doing business with the County of Burlington.

Familiarity with these procedures will assist you considerably in presenting your product or service to the County. It will also assist in developing cordial and businesslike relationships.

This booklet is intended as a general guide and as such, may not respond to all the questions which you may have. If you do have questions which are not answered here, please telephone or make a personal visit to the:

Division of Purchase County of Burlington

County Office Building
1st Floor; Room 104
Post Office Box 6000
49 Rancocas Road
Mount Holly, New Jersey 08060-6000

Telephone:

609.265.5012 Division of Purchase
609.265.5438 Fax Telephone

Visit our Web Site: www.co.burlington.nj.us/purchasing

Business Hours:

Monday thru Friday
8:00 a.m. thru 5:00 p.m.

Sharon M. Brauckmann, RPPS., CCPO, QPA
County Purchasing Agent

PURCHASING POLICIES

In an average year, the Division of Purchase issues over 12,000 purchase orders with a value of approximately \$135,000,000. Because of the substantial amount of money involved, the Division of Purchase is guided in its purchasing procedures by a number of basic policies.

These policies are:

1. To conduct all purchasing in accordance with:
 - Local Public Contracts Law (N.J.A.C. 40A:11 et seq.) State of New Jersey,
 - Local Public Contracts Law Rules (N.J.A.C. 5:34-1 et seq.),
 - (U.C.C.) Uniform Commercial Code,
 - Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction for New Jersey Department of Transportation and other laws as pertinent;
2. To obtain the quantity and necessary quality of goods and services at the least cost and at the time and place which they are needed;
3. To stimulate competitive bidding in order to obtain such goods and services at the least cost;
4. To provide all viable vendors with an opportunity to offer their goods or services to the County;
5. To be treated fairly by all vendors.

INTRODUCING YOUR PRODUCT/SERVICES

The County of Burlington engages in a variety of activities in providing services for its residents. These include road and bridge maintenance, snow removal, solid waste disposal, resource recovery, emergency management, recreation facilities, health services, hospital, detention facilities, property title and mortgage records and senior citizen transportation services. A variety of equipment, supplies and services must be purchased for the departments and divisions performing these services. These requirements for supplies and services are purchased by the Division of Purchase.

While it is beyond the scope of this booklet to list all of the products and services which the County buys, the Division of Purchase is interested in your product or service if it is required by the County. Therefore, it is important to both you and the County that your product or service be introduced in the most efficient and effective manner possible.

The following information will assist you in introducing your product or service to the Division of Purchase.

HOW THE COUNTY BUYS

The County of Burlington has a centralized purchasing function. The **Division of Purchase** is the authority for all purchases. Employees outside the Division of Purchase do not have the authority to commit County funds.

The Division of Purchase acts as liaison between all vendors and the County. This Division is located on the First Floor, Room 104, County Office Building, 49 Rancocas Road, Post Office Box 6000, Mount Holly, New Jersey 08060 - 6000 and is headed by the Purchasing Agent.

The County of Burlington entities **not covered** by the Division of Purchase are:

Burlington County Library	Burlington County College
Burlington County Special Services School	Burlington County Social Services
Burlington County Institute of Technology	Burlington County Bridge Comm.

The Division is open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Salespeople are welcome during office hours, please call to make an appointment with the Purchasing Agent so that both your time and our time may be more efficiently utilized.

All supplies, equipment and contractual services having a projected annual cost in excess of the State of New Jersey threshold of 36,000.00 (Purchasing Agent with QPA status and resolute by the Freeholder Board) are purchased on the basis of formal, written, competitive, sealed solicitation of bids. The County of Burlington bid solicitation documents must be used and are supplied by the Division of Purchase. Commodity totals are aggregated across all County departments. The County awards to the lowest responsive/responsible bidder.

The County can and does participate with the State of New Jersey in cooperative purchasing. The State of New Jersey formally bids commodities and extends to the County the opportunity to purchase from these contracts. It is an effective means of procurement and satisfies the bidding law.

Purchases valued at between \$5,400.00 and \$35,999.00 are made on a competitive basis utilizing an informal request for quotation format of two (2) written quotes and awarding to the lowest quoted vendor.

Purchases valued between \$100.00 and \$5,399.99 are made by soliciting written quotations from at least one vendor.

In case of an emergency, and with the consent of the Purchasing Agent, department heads may purchase necessary supplies, materials or equipment. This may be carried out only when it is absolutely essential that such purchases be made in order to safeguard County property or to provide services which affect the life, public health, safety or welfare of the citizens of the County of Burlington.

At all times a County of Burlington Purchase Order will be issued.

BIDDING PROCEDURES

Specific bidding procedures have been established by the County to conform to the requirements established by the State of New Jersey and the County of Burlington which provide for uniform treatment of all vendors. It is important that each vendor be familiar with the following requirements and adhere to them. The purchasing procedures, including these requirements, are discussed in the following sections of this booklet.

NOTICE OF INVITATION TO BID

The process of purchasing by formal, competitive solicitation of bids is initiated by the County of Burlington. A bid notice of solicitation is published in the Burlington County Times. When deemed appropriate, advertisements are also placed in other newspapers having specific planned coverage or having national exposure. Trade journals (i.e., Dodge, Brown's, Construction Data News, Public Business, Bidnet) are notified of all solicitations. Those responding to a solicitation advertisement will be given full opportunity to submit a bid proposal and will not be discriminated against on any basis.

A bidders list is maintained by the Division of Purchase for each class of commodity and service which is purchased by the County. The names and addresses of vendors who furnish the required products or services and who have indicated an interest in being contacted when the County purchases such items are maintained on a current basis. Vendors that do not respond after receiving three (3) consecutive invitations may be deleted from the bidder's list. Please ensure that you respond if you wish to remain on the bidders list, even if you do not submit a bid. An appropriate form page is included in the bid package for your use.

Application for placement on a bidder's list may be made on line at the web site noted below.

SPECIFICATIONS

One of the most important factors in determining what the County buys is the quality requirement of the user department or division. This requirement is not necessarily the highest quality level nor the least quality of a commodity. The County determines specific quality levels for each individual application; that is, the items that are both economical and deemed most suitable for the particular use.

The quality or function required in an item or service is identified in a specification and these may become quite technical. In some instances, a brand name may be used. In either case the specification is an expression of the quality level required and NOT a preference for a particular name brand item.

Vendors with products meeting or exceeding the quality requirements are invited to bid even though the brand name of their products may not be mentioned in the specifications.

SUBMISSION OF FORMAL BIDS

Bid submissions must be submitted on the forms provided by the County. Completion of the bid package constitutes the most convenient method for both the County and the vendor. If a vendor cannot bid on all items, the bidder should mark the items on which there is no bid with the words "no bid". Care should be taken that all amounts on the bid form are correct. Extensions should be checked to ensure their accuracy.

In case of a difference between the unit price and the extended totals, the unit price shall govern. In cases of a difference between written words and figures, the amount stated in written words shall govern. The bid must be signed by a representative or official of the bidder who has authority to bind that company, in the place so designated on the bid solicitation or quotation form.

N. J. BUSINESS REGISTRATION CERTIFICATE

All vendors doing business with The County of Burlington are required to provide a copy of their State of New Jersey Registration Certificate per P.L. 2004,c57. This new law requires all business organizations doing business with local contracting agencies to be registered with the State and provide proof of registration to the contracting agency before the contracting agency can enter into a contract with the business. Proof of registration is a copy of the organization's "Business Registration Certificate" issued by the New Jersey Division of Revenue. Businesses may call the Division of Revenue at 609.292.1730 or go online:

www.nj.gov/njbgs

There is no cost to file and renewal is not required.

DEVIATIONS

Vendors have the responsibility to list all deviations to the technical specification of the solicitation requirements, this must be done on the deviations sheet provided in all bid packages; if a vendor does not list deviations it is implied that the specifications as listed are being bid.

APPLICABLE TAXES

The County is not subject to federal, state or other taxes.

DELIVERIES and DELIVERY DATES

Vendors should always state the number of days required before delivery of a product will be made or indicate the specific date upon which delivery will be made. The time required for delivery may be one of the most important considerations in determining who shall be awarded the bid. Successful bidders are expected to deliver materials and/or services which they are providing within the specified time. Late deliveries could jeopardize award of future orders.

All merchandise received that does not meet the specifications will not be accepted. Vendors will arrange to have the unacceptable merchandise picked up at no cost to the County.

PAYMENT TERMS

Bidders must ensure that payment terms are specifically stated on their bid.

SHIPPING POINT

All bids are to be submitted as specified in the bid solicitation or quotation documents, with the bid price to include all shipping and delivery charges to the specified address. Any variations from this requirement must be clearly described in the bidder's written response. Generally all purchases are F.O.B. County of Burlington; Freight Paid by vendor.

SAMPLES

Bidders should always closely examine the solicitation documents to determine if they are required to submit samples with a bid or quotation. When samples are requested, they will be retained by the Division of Purchase to verify compliance to specifications prior to award and during the term of the contract. If a bidder wishes to submit a sample of the proposed product for trial or use, the product must be presented at no obligation to the County.

Samples required for prolonged testing will be paid for by the County. All samples are submitted at the bidder's risk.

SUBMITTING THE BIDS

All bids must be properly identified and submitted in a sealed envelope to the Division of Purchase. The County Bid Solicitation Number must always be used to identify your proposal. i.e.. CPU-09-0001; CEG-09-0002; 4BuCCP-0901.

All submissions must be received by the Division of Purchase prior to the time and date noted in the solicitation documents. Bids WILL NOT be accepted after the designated time and will be returned unopened and will not be considered under any circumstances. All bid envelopes are date stamped by the Division of Purchase personnel when received.

BID GUARANTEE

Bid guarantee with a Power of Attorney (if guarantee is in the form of a bond) are required to be submitted with formal, sealed bid solicitations. They are required as a guarantee that the successful bidder will accept the order and will perform at the price noted on the bid submission. The County of Burlington accepts bid guarantees in the form of bid bonds, certified and registered checks. The guarantee shall be in the amount of 10% of the bid, but not to exceed \$20,000.00, or as otherwise noted.

When a Performance Guarantee is required a Consent of Surety is also required (if the performance guarantee is in the form of a bond) when submitting your bid. All Consent of Surety's must be made in the name of County of Burlington.

Performance Guarantee vary from 5% to 100% of the contract value. Each bid specification details the appropriate percentage requirement. Each bid describes the acceptable form(s) of performance guarantee (cashiers check, performance guarantee or letter of credit).

Failure to submit your bid guarantee and/or consent of surety(if required) with your bid submission is grounds for rejection of your complete bid submission.

BIDDER LISTS not available

Bidder lists will not be made available to anyone prior to the bid opening date.

A County's bidder's list is not a public record required to be kept by law; therefore, it is not subject to disclosure under the Right to Know Law. Further, under the common law right to examine public documents, a contractor's interest in obtaining access to bidder's lists is outweighed by the potential for bid rigging that could result from disclosure of the list.

BID OPENING

All formal solicitations are opened and read publicly in the presence of any parties bidding or their agents, who are then and there present, and shall also make proper record of the prices and terms, upon the tabulation worksheets, at the County Office Building at the time and date shown in the solicitation documents.

Bid solicitations are normally opened on Tuesdays at 10:30 a.m.; the cover sheet for each bid specification has the specific date and time for that particular bid opening.

TABULATIONS AND AWARDS

All submissions are evaluated by the Division of Purchase and the user department and the award is made to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder providing a submission that results in the lowest ultimate cost to the County of Burlington. In determining the responsiveness of a bid submission, the County Purchasing Agent will review the bidder's response as to its conformity with all stated requirements of the bid solicitation. Once a bidder is determined to be responsive, bids will be reviewed as to price and value consideration of their comparative products as normally stated within the technical specifications section of the solicitation.

For Request for Proposals, a committee approach is used in the evaluation of bid responses. In such an approach, the Division of Purchase works with technical personnel within user departments to reach a decision as to responsiveness and to make an award recommendation.

Vendor or bidder responsiveness is also considered prior to any award recommendation. The likelihood as to whether a vendor can perform a contract is reviewed. Past performance histories are considered and any requested bidder references are checked.

excel/fish/purchasingoperations/handbook

RIGHT TO REJECT BIDS

The County of Burlington reserves the right to reject any or all bids. The County reserves the right to accept or reject any specific item or group of items on a bid unless the vendor states that the entire bid must be accepted in total. The County of Burlington will not accept any vendor that is listed on any of the Debarred Lists administered by the State of New Jersey.

DELIVERIES

All shipments to the County of Burlington must be made to the locations designated on the purchase order. Deliveries may be required to be made to various departments and divisions throughout the County. A County of Burlington purchase order number must appear on all shipping documents. Failure to meet specified delivery schedules may result in cancellation of the order or jeopardize all future orders.

PARTIAL DELIVERIES

A delivery normally must be made in the exact quantity called for in the purchase order. Partial deliveries, however may be required and accepted in some instances.

VENDORS' INVOICES

In order to receive payment for goods or services furnished to the County of Burlington, the vendor must submit to the user department shown on the County purchase order an original and at least one copy of an invoice for such goods or services and a properly completed County Voucher Form. Invoices should not be sent to the Division of Purchase. To do so will delay payment.

Invoices must show:

1. County of Burlington purchase order number;
2. Complete description of the goods or services furnished;
3. Quantity shipped, date and carrier;
4. Unit prices and extensions;
5. The terms of payment;
6. Vendor's invoice number and date;
with,
7. County of Burlington voucher completed and attached.

PAYMENT

After a purchase order has been awarded to a vendor, five steps remain before the transaction is completed. These steps are:

1. Delivery and acceptance of the goods or services to the user department;
2. Submitting an original invoice(s) with signed Burlington County voucher to the user department;
3. The user department submits receiving documents and original invoice and signed County voucher to the County Audit Department;
4. County Audit Department matches receiving reports, invoices and purchase order; submits to Freeholders for authorization to pay;
5. Payment by the County.
6. Payments are approved the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month.
7. Payment checks are mailed the Friday following the approval meeting.

UNLAWFUL CONTRACTS NULL and VOID

All vendors, offerors, and contractors are cautioned and strongly advised to ensure that a written, legally binding contract, purchase order, amendment, or other contract document is obtained and includes signatures from the appropriate officials of the County prior to performing any service or incurring any expense.

The County of Burlington shall not be responsible for any expenditures of moneys or other expenses incurred by the bidder unless the bidder has received a signed contract and a purchase order.

ETHICS

The County of Burlington expects a high standard of ethics in conducting its business, and reserves the right to reject any supplier whose performance breaches these standards.

Employees of the County of Burlington may not accept gifts, gratuities, trips or anything of value from a vendor even though the intent of such a gesture may be honorable or a customary practice.

The Division of Purchase maintains membership in the National Institute of Governmental Purchasing and subscribes to their Code of Ethics.

Burlington County Code of Ethics, 1991 and the State of New Jersey Local Government Ethics Law, May 21, 1991 are the governing laws and regulations.

SURPLUS MATERIALS

Surplus materials are offered to the general public through online auction and public sale. Sales are announced periodically as the need to dispose of surplus items arises. Advertisements are published in the Burlington County Times and you may receive a notice by submitting your name to the Division of Purchase to be added to the bidder list for surplus sales.

RESOLUTION OF CONTRACT CLAIMS

The Purchasing Agent has the authority to settle and resolve contract claims controversies. Appeals from the decision of the Purchasing Agent may be made in writing to the Chief Financial Officer.

PREPARING FOR SUCCESS

These recommended actions will enhance a bidder's opportunity for success in preparing a proposal/bid for the County.

1. Give an incoming quote or bid solicitation an immediate and thorough reading. Pay special attention to any special terms and to any mandatory items or required specifications to be met.
2. Contact the Division of Purchase to answer any questions or to settle any points of confusion. Don't wait until the last moment and hope to accomplish this clarification. If a clarification may be material to the outcome of the bid, submit your questions in writing.
3. Present a clear, well organized and well prepared bid response. Follow any bid preparation instructions that are given with the solicitation document. Whenever possible, type a bid response and thoroughly proof read the prepared response. Pay careful attention to the accuracy of pricing data.
4. Attend the pre-bid conferences and pre-bid site visits when a solicitation calls for this type of information exchange.
5. Sign all required signature pages and return the complete solicitation document. An unsigned bid and /or substantially incomplete bid will not be considered and is the same as not bidding at all.
6. Bid a reasonable, competitive and firm contract price.
7. Provide the product that meets or exceeds the specifications.
8. Process all demands against the contract promptly and accurately.
9. Make sure that a bid response is received by the County Division of Purchase prior to the designated date and time for scheduled bid opening. Late bids are not considered.
10. Use the check list contained in the bid solicitation package to assure your compliance with all requirements.

PRE-BID CONFERENCES and PRE-BID SITE VISITS

Pre-bid conferences and Pre-bid Site Visits may be held for formal solicitations. The intent of the conference is to respond to the inquiries by vendors and to clarify all points of concern.

It is highly recommended that you attend and contribute at the pre-bid conference and to visit the sites.

Notice of pre-bid conferences and pre-bid site visits are shown in the legal advertisements and the solicitation documents. Responses to questions or clarifications are sent to holders of solicitation packages as an official addenda by certified mail, facsimile or listed on line. A signed copy of the addenda then becomes a part of the Bid. Pre-bid site visits may be scheduled for both bid solicitations and quotations.

RIGHT TO KNOW ACT

The New Jersey Work and Community Right to Know Act requires public and private employers to provide information about hazardous substances at their workplaces to:

- o Give public employees information about what chemicals are located at their workplace and how to work with these hazardous substances safely;
- o Help firefighters, police, and other emergency personnel respond properly at hazardous substance incidents such as fires, explosions, or spills;
- o Help public officials plan for safer communities;
- o Provide data for monitoring and tracking hazardous substances in the workplace and environment.

Your responsibility is to provide All Hazardous Substance Fact Sheets for products supplied by your firm.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

All County contracts prohibit the discrimination in the hiring of persons who are qualified and available to perform work to which the contract relates by reason of age, race, creed, color, national origin, or ancestry, marital status, sex, affectional or sexual orientation in accordance with P.L. 1975, c. 127 (N.J.A.C. 17:27).

County of Burlington

Division of Purchase

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