

REQUEST FOR PROPSAL FOR LEGAL SERVICES

RFP 2024-02



INQUIRIES AND PROPOSALS SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO:

HEATHER RANTALA
ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT, BUSINESS AND ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

MENDOCINO COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION
2240 OLD RIVER ROAD
UKIAH, CA 95482
(707) 467-5034
HRANTALA@MCOE.US

I. GENERAL INFORMATION.

A. Objective. The Mendocino County Office of Education (“MCOE”) is requesting proposals to contract for legal services to be provided to the Mendocino County Schools Legal Consortium (hereinafter referred to as “Consortium”), which is comprised of Arena, Fort Bragg, Laytonville, Leggett Valley, Manchester, Mendocino Community College, MCOE, MCOE Board of Education, Mendocino USD, Point Arena, Potter Valley, Round Valley, Ukiah, and Willits local educational agencies. The overall objective of this Request for Proposals Number 2024-02 (“RFP”) is to permit law firms and entities permitted to practice law in the State of California (“Offerors”) the opportunity to submit their relevant legal experience, client references, and proposed schedule of charges for consideration. This RFP invites proposals from qualified attorneys and law firms to provide legal services in the areas outlined in the Scope of Services Section below. Consortium reserves the right to award the proposal to multiple Offerors.

B. Who May Respond. Only attorneys who are currently licensed to practice law in California and maintain an office in California may respond to this RFP.

C. Instructions on Proposal Submission.

(1) Timeline. Consortium reserves the right to change or alter the times and activities outlined below.

(a) RFP Issuance. This RFP will be issued on or after April 17, 2024.

(b) Deadline for Inquiries. Questions regarding this RFP and submissions must be received by April 30, 2024.

(c) Proposals Due. Proposals must be submitted no later than 3:00 p.m. on May 2, 2024, to the address listed in the RFP.

(d) Preliminary Decision Announced. The preliminary decision will be announced on July 25, 2024.

(2) Inquiries. Inquiries concerning this RFP should be mailed to:

HEATHER RANTALA

ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT, BUSINESS AND ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

MENDOCINO COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION

2240 OLD RIVER ROAD

UKIAH, CA 95482

Or e-mailed to: HRANTALA@MCOE.US

(3) Conditions of Proposal. All costs incurred in the preparation of a proposal responding to this RFP will be the responsibility of the Offeror and will not be reimbursed by the Consortium or MCOE.

(4) Instructions to Prospective Offerors. Your proposal should be delivered in person, mailed return receipt requested, or couriered to the following address:

HEATHER RANTALA
ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT, BUSINESS AND ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES
MENDOCINO COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION
2240 RIVER ROAD
UKIAH, CA 95482

It is important that the Offeror's proposal be submitted in a sealed envelope, clearly marked in the lower left-hand corner with the following information:

Request for Proposal # 2024-02
DUE: May 2, 2024 by 3:00 p.m.
TIME and DATE of Submission
SEALED PROPOSAL for Legal Services

Failure to do so may result in the premature disclosure of your proposal. It is the responsibility of the Offeror to ensure that the proposal is received by Consortium, by the date and time specified above. Late proposals will not be considered.

(5) Right to Reject. Consortium reserves the right to reject any and all proposals received in response to this RFP. Consortium reserves the right to accept all or part of any proposal or to cancel this RFP in part or in its entirety.

(6) Withdrawal of Proposal. Any Offeror may withdraw their/its proposal without penalty by written request received by Consortium prior to the date for the receipt of proposals. Written requests to withdrawal proposals must be mailed to:

HEATHER RANTALA
ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT, BUSINESS AND ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES
MENDOCINO COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION
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(7) Notification of Award. It is expected that a decision selecting the successful Offeror(s) will be made within twelve (12) weeks of the closing date for the receipt of proposals. Upon conclusion of final negotiations with the successful Offeror(s), all Offerors submitting proposals in response to this RFP will be informed, in writing, of the name of the successful Offeror(s). The contract shall be a one-year fixed price contract with an option for renewal.

D. Description of Entity. MCOE operates the Consortium that currently serves Arena, Laytonville, Leggett Valley, Manchester, Mendocino Community College, Mendocino County Office of Education, Mendocino County Board of Education, Mendocino USD, Point Arena, Potter Valley, Round Valley, Ukiah, and Willits local educational agencies. Consortium members have the right to withdraw from the consortium at any time.

II. **SCOPE OF SERVICES.** The Offeror shall be readily available to perform the following legal services, as requested by the Consortium:

1. Review, draft, and negotiate contracts and leases.
2. Advise on labor and employment matters.
3. Review personnel, fiscal, and other policies, and bylaws.
4. Advise on Special Education and student matters.
5. Attend various meetings as necessary.
6. Advise on responses to subpoenas, court orders, and requests for information from third parties.
7. Defend lawsuits, administrative claims, or other legal claims.
8. Advise on business, facility, and charter school practices.
9. Conduct litigation as necessary.
10. Other legal services as needed.

III. **PROPOSAL CONTENTS.** All information required by the RFP must be completely and accurately provided. A partially completed proposal may be deemed nonresponsive. Proposals not conforming to these instructions may be deemed nonresponsive. Nonresponsive proposals may be rejected and not considered by Consortium. All proposals, whether selected or rejected, shall become the property of Consortium. The Offeror, in their/its proposal, shall, at minimum, include the following:

A. **Submittal Letter.** All proposals shall include a letter of interest describing the Offeror's interest in representing Consortium. The letter must include the RFP number, title and submittal due date, and the name, address, fax number and telephone number of the responding Offeror. The letter shall also identify a contact person and corresponding e-mail address. The letter shall affirm that the proposal shall be valid for a 60-day period unless

withdrawn and that the staff proposed is available immediately to work for Consortium. The person authorized by the Offeror to negotiate a contract with Consortium shall sign the cover letter.

- B. Legal Experience.** All proposals shall include an overview and history of the Offeror’s practice/firm, the areas of expertise of the Offeror’s practice/firm, and how this expertise will be beneficial to Consortium. The Offeror should describe their/its legal experience, including the names, addresses, contact people, and telephone numbers of at least three (3) clients, preferably including clients similar to Consortium. Experience should include the following categories:
- (1) Experience advising K-14 local educational agencies.
 - (2) Experience advising clients conducting similar programs and government-funded services.
- C. Organization, Size, Structure, and Areas of Practice.** Offeror should describe their/its organization, size, structure, areas of practice, and office location(s).
- D. Attorney Qualifications.** The Offeror should describe the qualifications of attorneys to be assigned to the representation. Descriptions should include:
1. Professional and educational background of each attorney.
 2. Prior experience of individual attorneys. Only include resumes of attorneys likely to be assigned to the representation. Education, position in firm, years and types of experience, and continuing professional education will be considered.
- E. Proposed Approach to Scope of Work.** The Offeror should describe their/its proposed approach to the Scope of Work outlined in Section II, including but not limited to, their/its specific experience in each category of legal services in the Scope of Work. The description should include the Offeror’s business practices for responding to requests for legal services by clients, expected turnaround times for various legal services and assignments, and Offeror’s practice of assigning work to individuals described in Section III(D).
- F. List of Representative Clients.** All proposals shall include a representative list of at least three (3) school districts, county offices of education, community college districts or similar consortiums the Offeror currently represents, highlighting any local educational agencies with similar demographics, along with the name(s) and contact information of individual(s) familiar with the Offeror’s work, and the length of time and dates services were provided. Proposals must expressly indicate if the Offeror has not represented a

school district, county office of education, community college district or similar consortium. Consortium may contact any identified representative clients as a reference.

- G. **Fee Schedule.** The Offeror's proposed fee schedule should include information on the hourly billing rates of each attorney or other legal staff who is expected to work on this representation. This section must also describe, in detail, any charges for travel, telephone calls, and other expenses to be separately billed, must indicate how billing is specific for each area/case, and identify billing increments (i.e., 1/10 hour, 1/4 hour, etc.) Consortium reserves the right to negotiate with the Offeror on the structure of the billing and/or retainer fee. Hourly billing rates shall be fixed rates. Consortium members retain the right to utilize as few as zero (0) hours and engage with alternate legal firms for contractual purposes.
- H. **Miscellaneous.** All proposals shall include details of any litigation or disciplinary action against the Offeror, or any attorneys in the firm or entity within the last five (5) years. The proposal shall expressly state if no such litigation or disciplinary action exists. All proposals shall also include a copy of the Offeror's Professional Liability Certificate of Insurance.

IV. PROPOSAL EVALUATION

- A. **Submission of Proposals.** All proposals shall include an original and sixteen (16) copies.
- B. **Evaluation Procedure and Criteria.** Consortium and/or appropriate MCOE staff will review proposals and make recommendations to the Consortium board for final approval by the Consortium board. Consortium or appropriate MCOE staff will evaluate and select those Offerors deemed to be the most highly qualified to perform the required services. Upon evaluation of all submitted proposals, a limited number of Offerors deemed most qualified to provide the requested legal services may be invited to present their qualifications and respond to questions from Consortium and MCOE staff. The evaluation of proposals and the basis of award will be based on the review and analysis of numerous factors, which will include, but not be limited to, the following:
- (1) Proposed approach to Scope of Work.
 - (2) Level of experience of the individual(s) identified to work on Consortium matters.
 - (3) The Offeror's experience with similar clients and legal matters.
 - (4) Response(s) from references.
 - (5) Fee Schedule.
 - (6) Interviews, if conducted.