



**State of Rhode Island
Department of Administration / RI Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
One Capitol Hill, Ground Level, Providence, Rhode Island 02908-5855
Tel: (401) 574-8100 Fax: (401) 574-8387**

**Solicitation Information
February 7, 2020**

ADDENDUM #1

RFP #BIDCDHH1A3

**TITLE: Process for American Sign Language Interpreting and Communication
Access Real-Time Services Agencies/Companies**

Bid Closing Date & Time: **March 13, 2020 @ 11:59 PM Eastern Time (ET)**

Notice to Vendors

**Attached are vendor questions with State responses. No further
questions will be answered.**

**Earnest Covington
Executive Director**

*Interested parties should monitor this website, on a regular basis, for any additional
information that may be posted.*

Vendor Questions with State Responses for RFP #BIDCDHH1 Process for American Sign Language Interpreting and Communication Access Real-Time Services Agencies/Companies

Question 1: We are currently reviewing the requirements for this solicitation – I wonder if you (or Mr. Covington) could confirm the appropriate NIGP class for interpreting services (for the RI-FANS Supplier Registration Package / New Vendors) is #961 (Miscellaneous Services – No. 1)?

We would also like clarification if interested bidders must bid on all mentioned services in this RFQ (i.e., ASL interpreting, video remote interpreting, and CART services), or if bidders are allowed to bid only on one type of service (i.e., ASL interpreting services)?

Answer to question 1: This is a learning process for all of us, and I am currently checking with the Division of Purchasing to get clarity about the appropriate NIGP class. In regard to your second question, all the services you provide (ASL and CART) would be grouped together in a single RFQ. You would not be able to include language services outside of ASL under this RFQ

AMENDED ANSWER TO QUESTION 1: *The RIFANS Supplier Registration Package is no longer necessary. This requirement was changed after the bid posting. New Vendors should register here:*
<https://www.ridop.ri.gov/vendor-registration/>

****** Please note that the full-registration is required ******

Question 2: Could you please let us know if this RFQ is for ASL services only or will you be looking for other languages for interpreting Services?

Answer to question 2: This RFQ pertains to interpreting and real time captioning for the deaf and hard of hearing.

Question 3: Do you know about the turn-around time to have this approved?

Answer to question 3: The review committee determines if all requirements have been met. Their review process will likely average between a month to a month and a half. This timeline is an estimate, as it is all dependent on the review committee's process.

Question 4: If we aren't approved for Tier II by 2/1 that means Perspectives can't help out the state even if we have available interpreters on 2/1?

Answer to question 4: The correct deadline for submission is February 28, 2020. January 31st was the deadline for submitting questions and concerns. In error, it had been previously conveyed as the deadline for submission. All service

providers with a current MPA contract can continue to work until the February 28th deadline.

AMENDED ANSWER TO QUESTION 4: *The deadline for submission has been extended to March 13, 2020.*

Question 5: Is the complete submission deadline for presenting an RFQ February 28th, 2020?

Answer to question 5: Yes, the complete submission deadline for presenting an RFQ is February 28th, 2020.

AMENDED ANSWER TO QUESTION 5: *The deadline for submission has been extended to March 13, 2020.*

Question 6: Can the RFQ be submitted via email or does it need to be submitted by physical mail?

Answer to question 6: The RFQ must be submitted by physical mail.

AMENDED ANSWER TO QUESTION 6: *The RFQ must be submitted by mail or can be dropped off at the following location:*

***RI Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Department of Administration Building
One Capitol Hill, Ground Level
Providence, RI 02908***

Question 7: One of the certifications requested is for NCRA. We are a technology company and 70% of our initial transcription is via Artificial Intelligence. It is the main reason why we are so cost efficient. I presented our solution to Dr. Brenda McGill of Rhode Island Community College, which she then presented internally to the accessibility coordinators and the dean, and they absolutely love the solution and the cost. It will save them 50% from their current costs. I have been working with Dr. McGill over the last six months to try and implement our remote CART services at the state level, saving the institutions tens of thousands of dollars. She is eager to have our company added to the Master Price List. However, if NCRA certification is required, then unfortunately we will not be able to participate.

Answer to question 7: Your company will be able to participate without the NCRA certification since your agency's focus is on postsecondary education. If your company wants to be involved with legal or judicial services NCRA certification will be required.

Question 8: We are in the MPA and we provide Interpreting Services to all State agencies, including ASL. So, this is an additional request for proposal just for ASL correct?

Answer to question 8: The MPA expires February 28th. You will need to reapply for the RFQ to satisfy MPA requirements.

AMENDED ANSWER TO QUESTION 8: *The deadline for submission has been extended to March 13, 2020.*

Question 9: The RFQ BIDCDHH1A1 states under "BID SCOPE OF WORK AND REQUIREMENTS 1. American Sign Language Interpreter (ASL) 2. Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) 3. Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART)"

Does this mean the bidding agency MUST provide all 3 of these services to submit a bid and be considered for Tier II? Perspectives Corporation does not house any CART providers (yet) nor do we have VRI services. If we are solely providing ASL interpreters and NOT CART or VRI are we still able to place a bid just for the scope of work that is interpreting?

Answer to question 9: The bidding agency must be able to satisfy one of three services to be eligible for Tier II. The bidding agency is not required to provide all three services to submit a bid to be considered for Tier II.

Question 10: The insurance requirements stated: " Automobile liability - \$1million each occurrence combined single limit".

This was modified for Tier I - will this be modified for Tier II as well?

Answer to question 10: The automobile liability insurance will not be modified for Tier II. The bidding agency must be able to provide their Business Automobile Policy to satisfy the requirement.

Question 11: "PROPOSAL CONTENTS & SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS re: Proof of Insurance ACCORD".

Is this requesting for a company insurance ACCORD from Perspective's insurance, or is this asking for each individual contracted interpreter's ACCORD insurance?

Answer to question 11: The bidding agency will be responsible for meeting state insurance requirements and providing company insurance at their expense to cover their service providers.

Question 12: Does this start 4/1/2020 when the current MPA contract expires?

Answer to question 12: The new MPA will start effectively on April 1, 2020. The current MPA will expire on March 31, 2020.

Question 13: Under "FAILURE TO APPEAR ON A SCHEDULED ASSIGNMENT" it states "If an interpreter fails to appear at a scheduled assignment at the day and time requested by the State, he or she is subject to immediate termination of participation and performance of this contract and removal from the MPA for translation/interpretation services."

Should there be a standard procedure in place instead of immediate grounds for terminating the contract? 1- verbal warning 2- written warning 3- immediate termination. Mistakes happen, car accidents happen, sick kids happen - there should be a fair system in place with timelines. 3x in so many months/years and then the counter resets again. If an interpreter arrives late one time at year three of a 5-year contract should not be grounds for immediate termination of the interpreter.

Answer to question 13: The RFQ is currently being amended to reflect appropriate disciplinary procedures for addressing failure to appear at a scheduled assignment.

Question 14: It states on "APPLICABILITY OF FEES FOR IN-PERSON INTERPRETING CANCELLATION AND OTHER FAILURES TO PROCEED:" #2 states "Contractor may charge a State Agency Requestor two (2) hours at the hourly rate set forth in their terms if RICDHH ICRS or State Agency Requestor fails to provide a minimum of 3 hours' notice prior to the start of the proceeding for which the appearance was scheduled."

Is this stating there is a 3-hour cancellation policy? If canceled 2 hours and 59 minutes prior to the event the agency is the only reimbursement for 2 hours? Additionally, if the state books 2 interpreters for a conference 9-4 and the state cancels at 3 hours and 30 minutes advance notice the agency cannot bill for services?

Answer to question 14: The RFQ cancellation policy is currently being amended to reflect national standards for cancellation.

Question 15: If Tier II providers are getting these requests at 72 hours-notice (first goes to Tier I) is it fair to establish a 3-hour cancellation policy if the agency fills the State's last-minute needs? What would the incentive be to fill the job if the agency risks a last-minute cancellation with no payment if canceled 4-hours in advance?

Answer to question 15: The RFQ cancellation policy is currently being amended to reflect national standards for cancellation. National standards for cancellation on confirmed assignments is 48 business hours-notice, which the amendment will reflect.

Question 16: "EMERGENCY AND NON-SCHEDULED REQUESTS". If the agency does not provide emergency services are they not permitted to apply or be considered for Tier II? This is further limiting an already limited resource. If we don't provide emergency services but we do provide services during business hours this would be eliminating the agency's resources for day time use.

Answer to question 16: The RFQ allows bidding agencies the ability to provide their services. The ability to provide emergency services is not a qualification to apply through the RFQ process.

Question 17: Do interested parties need to bid on both mentioned services (including CART and VRI), or can we only bid on one type of service (i.e., only ASL in-person interpreting)

Answer to question 17: The contractor will be able to bid on all the three services (CART/VRI/ASL Interpreting). Bidding on a single service is also possible.

Question 18: Please provide information as to estimated hours of work/volume available through this RFQ.

Answer to question 18: The pay schedule for interpreting services shall be established based on hourly rates and are split up into 7 categories:

- General (Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm)
- Medical
- Legal
- Education
- Added Hourly Fee – After Hours (Monday through Friday after 4:00 pm)
- Added Hourly Fee – Weekend (Saturday and Sunday)
- Added Hourly Fee – Emergency (Less than 24 hours)

Question 19: Please provide information as to which state agencies in Rhode Island will be under this contract.

Answer to question 19: The contractor shall provide their services for all state agencies within the state of Rhode Island.

Question 20: Can two different billing rate(s) be proposed – one for in-state interpreters, and one for out-of-state interpreters?

Answer to question 20: The contractors are responsible for the development of pay scales and the payment of all salaries. The RICDHH's MPA pay scale can be sourced as an example to create billing rates.

Question 21: Page 4 states: “Contractor may charge a State Agency Requestor two (2) hours at the hourly rate set forth in their terms if RICDHH ICRS or State Agency Requestor fails to provide a minimum of 3 hours’ notice prior to the start of the proceeding for which the appearance was scheduled.” Is there any flexibility in changing the cancellation notice time amount (i.e., to 48 hours)?

Answer to question 21: The RFQ cancellation policy is currently being amended to reflect national standards for cancellation.

Question 22: Will this RFQ be awarded to a single agency or to multiple interpreting agencies?

Answer to question 22: This RFQ will be awarded to multiple interpreting agencies who have submitted their Supplier Registration Package to RICDHH.

Question 23: With regard to sub-contractors – does this section mean that all interpreters referred by ACS must be Rhode Island State certified? If not, will RID generalist and specialist certifications suffice, and if not, how would interpreters not currently certified by Rhode Island be able to provide services? This is especially important in cases of VRI where interpreters could be stationed anywhere in the nation.

Answer to question 23: All interpreters referred by ACS must be Rhode Island certified.

Question 24: In the section at the end of the document, Proposal Contents and Submittal Instructions, the first bullet point mentions “Proof of Certifications.” Does this refer to proof of interpreter/CART writer certifications? Would we need to provide such documentation for EVERY interpreter/CART writer with whom we contract (this would be MANY people) or are we able to certify in some way that our subcontractors meet the requirements outlined in the RFQ regarding certifications/qualifications?

Answer to question 24: Each independent contractor of the Tier 2 will need to meet the insurance requirements and provide their proof of certification unless your subcontractors were employed under Tier 2 and already has the insurance required to cover all the subcontractors. Then, your subcontractors would be able to meet the requirements outlined in the RFQ regarding certifications/qualifications.

Question 25: The link under “Additional Information for New Vendors” is not working. It gives an error 404 Page Not Found. Are there additional forms or items that need to be completed in this Supplier Registration Package? I have registered as a vendor but am unable to find your RFQ listed in either State or external RFQs that are open at this time, though I did input both the solicitation number and selected the RICDHH name from the list of

external agencies. Could you provide me a new link at which I could access the Supplier Registration Package?

Answer to question 25: I will provide you the copy of the RFQ that I will attach for you in this email. I apologized that our website was not working out. We will revamp our website very soon.