

Procurement Standards – Federal Contracts

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Conflict of Interest

The District maintains a written code of standards of conduct which governs the performance of District employees who may be engaged in the award and administration of contracts. These standards will include a prohibition against employees who are involved in the selection, award or administration of a contract supported by Federal funds, if a conflict of interest, real or apparent, would be involved.

A conflict of interest would arise if a District board member or employee, any member of their family, their partner, or an organization which employs or is about to employ any of the parties named in this paragraph, has a financial or other interest in the firm selected for the award.

Neither District board members, nor employees will accept gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value from contractors, potential contractors or parties to sub-agreements. This rule will not apply to gifts of less than ten dollars (\$10.00), or is an unsolicited item of nominal intrinsic value. Violations of these conflict of interest provisions will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination for employees, and up to and including public sanction of a violating Board member.

Avoidance of Unnecessary/Duplicate Purchase

The District will review proposed procurements to avoid purchases of unnecessary or duplicative items. Consideration will be given to consolidating or breaking out procurements to obtain a more economical purchase. Where appropriate, an analysis will be made of lease versus purchase alternatives, and any other appropriate analysis to determine the most economical approach. Where appropriate to foster great economy and efficiency, the District will consider entering into state and local intergovernmental agreements for procurement, or lease of common goods and services. Moreover where appropriate, the District will use Federal excess and surplus property in lieu of purchasing new equipment and property.

The District will, when appropriate, consider and utilize value engineering clauses in contracts for construction projects for cost reductions. In making awards, the District will select contractors to successfully perform under the terms of the procurement. In analyzing the suitability of contractors, consideration will be given to contractor integrity, compliance with public policy, past performances, as well as, financial and technical services.

Recordkeeping

The District will maintain records sufficient to detail the significant history of a procurement. These records will include, but not be limited to, the following:

- rationale for the method of procurement;
- selection of contract type;
- contractor selection/rejection; and
- basis for the contract price.

Time and Material Type Contracts

The District will use time and material contracts only after a determination has been made that no other contract is suitable and, if the contract includes a ceiling price, which the contractor may exceed only at its own risk.

Contractor Compliance Resolution

The District is responsible for resolution and settlement of all contractual and administrative issues arising out of Federal related procurements including, but not limited to, source evaluation, protests, disputes and claims. Violations of law will be referred to the local, state or federal authority having jurisdiction.

The District will maintain procedures to handle and resolve procurement disputes, including provisions to share information regarding the protest to the awarding agency.

Competition for Contract Awards

The District will conduct all procurement transactions in a manner providing full and open competition. In doing so, the District will avoid:

- placing unreasonable requirements on firms seeking to qualify to do business;
- requiring unnecessary experience or excessive bonding;
- noncompetitive pricing practices among bidders;
- noncompetitive awards to consultants that are retainer contracts;
- organizational conflicts of interest;
- specifying only a brand name product instead of allowing an equal product to be offered; and
- any arbitrary actions in the procurement process.

The District will avoid in such Federal procurements administratively imposed in – state or local geographical preferences in the evaluation of bids or proposals, except where federal law expressly mandates or encourages such preferences. However, when contracting for architectural and engineering services, geographic locations may be a selection criteria provided that the use of such criteria leaves a sufficient number of qualified firms to compete for the contract.

Procedures for Procurement Transactions

The District will ensure a clear and accurate description of the technical requirements for the material, product or service to be provided under federally related procurements. The description may include a statement of the qualitative nature of the material, product or service to be procured and when appropriate will set forth those minimum essential characteristics and standards to which it need conform in order to satisfy the intended use. Where appropriate, a “brand name or equal” description may be used to define the performance or other requirements of a procurement.

The District will ensure that all prequalified lists of persons, firms, or products are current and include enough qualified sources to ensure maximum open and free competition. Potential bidders will not be precluded from qualifying during the solicitations process. Prior to purchases exceeding \$25,000, the District will review the current “Excluded Parties List” to ensure that the successful vendor is not debarred or suspended.

Methods of Procurement Affecting

Micro Purchases

Where small purchases under Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000.00) price quotations will be obtained from an adequate number of qualified sources. Micro Purchases will be distributed equally among qualified vendors.

Small Purchases

The District will utilize the following procurement procedures for purchases of \$250,000 or less. The District where feasible will obtain at least three (3) bids or quotes for each such purchase. The District will maintain documentation for all “small purchases” including the small purchase item; identity of quotes/bids; amount of such bid/quotes; and the date of purchase.

Sealed Bids

When procurement is by sealed bid (formal advertising), bids are publically solicited and a firm-fixed price contract is awarded, the award will be made to the responsible bidder whose bid, conforming with all material terms and conditions of the invitation to bid, is the lowest in price. The sealed bid procurement method will be utilized for all purchases in excess of \$250,000. The sealed bid method is preferred for construction if the following conditions apply:

- a complete adequate and realistic specification is available;
- two or more responsible bidders are willing and able to compete for the project;
- the procurement lends itself to a firm price contract; and
- selection of the successful bidder can be made principally on the basis of lowest price.

If sealed bids are used, the following requirements apply:

- invitation to bid will be publically advertised and bids will be solicited from an adequate number of known suppliers providing them sufficient time to bid;
- invitation to bid will define the items or services to be bid;
- all bids will be publically opened at a time and place described on the invitation to bid;
- firm fixed-price contract award is made to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder; and
- any and all bids may be rejected when there is a sound documented reason.

Competitive Proposal

The District will utilize a competitive proposal method when conditions are not appropriate for the use of sealed bids. This method will be utilized where either a firm-fixed price is capped or cost reimbursement contract is available. When this method is used, the following requirements will apply:

- requests for proposals will be publicized along with evaluation factors and their relative importance;
- proposals will be solicited from any adequate number of qualified sources;
- a clear method of technical evaluations of the proposals and selective of any awardee will be utilized;
- awards will be made to the firm whose proposal is most advantageous to the program with price and other factors considered; and
- this method may be used for selection of architectural and engineering firms where qualifications are evaluated and the most qualified firm is selected subject to negotiations; and
- more than one contractor/vendor is submitted an offer.

Noncompetitive Sole Source

Where appropriate, procurement may be made by a proposal from any one source or after solicitation, competition is deemed inadequate. This method will be used when small purchase procedures, sealed bid, or competitive proposals are not feasible and one of the following applies:

- item is available from only one source, or there is an emergency situation;
- using the services of the Small Business Administration and the Minority Business Development Agency;
- requiring the prime contractor, where subcontracts are to be left to utilize the steps set out above sole source purchases will be well documented concerning the necessity for all sole source purchases.

Contract Cost and Price

The District will perform a cost or price analysis in connection with every procurement action. At a minimum, the District will make independent estimates before receiving bids or proposals. A cost analysis will be required when adequate price competition is lacking and for sole source procurements, unless price reasonableness can be established on the basis of catalog or mailed price. The District will negotiate profit as a separate element of the process for each contract.

- public emergency will not permit a delay in competitive solicitation; and
- the awarding Federal agency authorizes this method.

Contracting with Small and Minority Firms, Women's Business Enterprise and Labor Surplus Area Firms

The District will take all necessary steps to assure participation of such firms. Affirmative steps will include:

- placing such firm on a solicitation list;
- assuring that such firms are solicited whenever possible;
- when economically feasible dividing total requirements into smaller contracts or quantities; and
- when economically feasible establishing delivery requests which encourage participation for such firms in which there is no price competition and small cases where cost analysis is performed. Consideration will be given to the complexity of the work, the risk to be borne, contractor's investment, the amount of subcontracting, quality of contractors' work on similar work.

Costs or prices on estimated costs will be allowable only to the extent that costs incurred or cost estimates are consistent with Federal cost principals. The District will not use a cost plus a percentage of cost and a percentage of construction cost method.

Agency Review

The District will make available, upon request of the Federal agency, all documents, including but not limited to, procurement specifications; invitations to bid; procurement procedures; pre-award documents.

Biding Requirements

The District will require bonding for all construction or facility improvements ensuring that the awarding Federal agency's interests are adequately protected as provided in federal regulations.

Contract Provisions

The District's contracts under the Regulation will include:

- administrative, contractual or legal remedies for contractor breaches and provide appropriate remedies for such breaches;
- compliance with Executive Order (EO 11246);
- compliance with Copeland Anti-Kickback Act;
- compliance with Davis Bacon Act;
- compliance with § 103 and 107 of the Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act;
- notice of awarding agency's requirements and regulations pertaining to reporting;
- notice of awarding agency's requirements and regulations pertaining to patent rights;
- notice of awarding agency's requirements and regulations relating to copyrights and rights in data;
- access to contractor's book documents, papers and records which are pertinent to the contract;
- compliance with all applicable standards, order or requirements under §306 of the Clean Air Act, §508 of the Clean Water Act (EO 11738) and Environmental Protection Act Regulations; and
- mandatory standards and policies relating to emergency efficiency contained in the state emergency conversation plan.

Background Checks

All District vendors shall conduct criminal record and sexual offender background checks on each of its employees who, under a procurement contract, may provide services on District property or at District events. Copies of such record requests will be provided to the District upon request.

Faith Based Organizations

Faith based organizations are eligible to contract with those Districts on federally related contracts on the same basis as any other private organization. In such contracting, the District will not discriminate for or against an organization based on the organization's religious character or affiliation. However, private organizations that engage in inherently religious activities, such as religious workshops, instruction or proselytization must offer these services separately in a time or location separate from any programs or services supported by a federally related District contract.

A faith based organization that contracts with the District on a federally related contract may retain its independence, autonomy, right of expression, religious character and authority over its governance.
