

1. Sealed Proposals will be received for “HIDALGO COUNTY-Section 125 Voluntary Insurance Products COBRA Administration Services” (Including all funding sources, programs, and entities), in accordance with the requirements attached hereto as Exhibit "A." Proposals should address all requirements set forth. Proposers may suggest substitutions of features which they feel would be in the best interest of Hidalgo County ("County"). Strong rationale must be presented for any deviation from the requirements. Hidalgo County reserves the right to reject the deviation and its effect on the overall Proposals.
2. **One (1) original, seven (7) copies of all Proposals and (2) CDs in PDF Format** are required with the proposers name and address clearly typed/printed on upper left hand corner and the proper notation clearly typed/printed on the lower left hand corner of the envelope and/or package, **RFP No:- 2015-221-00-00-SMA-“HIDALGO COUNTY-Section 125 Voluntary Insurance Products”**, and in County's Purchasing Department, Physical Location: 2802 S. Business Hwy. 281 Postal/Mailing: 2812 S. Business Hwy. 281 New Administration Building, Edinburg, Texas, **on or BEFORE 9:30 A.M., WEDNESDAY, September , 2015.**

NO FACSIMILES OR LATE ARRIVALS WILL BE ACCEPTED. ANY PROPOSAL RECEIVED AFTER THAT TIME WILL NOT BE OPENED AND WILL BE RETURNED. OVERNIGHT MAIL MUST ALSO BE PROPERLY LABELED ON THE OUTSIDE OF EXPRESS ENVELOPE OR PACKAGE IN REFERENCE TO PROPOSAL.

Hidalgo County reserves the right to refuse and reject any/all Proposals and to waive any/all formalities or technicalities, or to accept the proposal considered the best and most advantageous to Hidalgo County.

3. Hidalgo County reserves the right to separate and accept, or eliminate any item(s) listed under this Proposal that it deems necessary to accommodate budgetary and/or operational requirements. Hidalgo County also reserves the right to reject any or all Proposals submitted and further reserve the right to design the evaluation criteria to be used in selecting the lowest and best Proposal for approval. Receipt of any Proposal shall under no circumstances obligate County to accept the lowest dollar Proposal. The award of this contract shall be made to the responsible offeror whose Proposal is determined to be the best evaluated offer resulting from negotiation, taking into consideration the relative importance of price and other evaluation factors as herein set forth.
4. Failure of the delivered item to perform as specified or failure to meet the stated delivery schedule shall release Hidalgo County from all obligations to the contracting party with regard to the item(s) in question. In such event, County may elect to award the contract to the next-lowest responsible respondent, or to reject all Proposals and re-advertise.
5. For work to be performed at a County owned or operated location, each respondent shall, in its sole discretion, visit the job site before preparing the Proposal and thoroughly familiarize himself/herself with existing conditions. Respondent should take field dimensions and note all circumstances which affect the dollar amount of the Proposal.
6. Descriptive specifications are referenced in this document to indicate the general kind and quality of equipment desired by Hidalgo County. Due to various styles and models of equipment, Proposers are required to include illustrations, specifications, explanation of warranties, and service data with their Proposal including catalogue numbers and any necessary references.

7. Proposed prices are to remain firm for a minimum of ninety (90) days after priced Proposal opening.
8. County reserves the right to accept or reject any or all Proposals.
9. Any interpretations, amendments, corrections or changes to this Proposal document must be in a written addendum and signed by the County Judge or his designee. Addenda will be mailed to all who are known to have received a copy of the Request for Proposals. Proposers shall acknowledge receipt of all addenda as a part of their Proposal.
10. Costs are to be net F.O.B., County Prepaid.
11. County is exempt from Federal Excise Tax, State Tax and Local Tax. Do Not include tax in cost figure. If it is determined that tax was included in the cost figures it will not be included in the tabulation of any awards. Tax exemption certificates will be furnished upon request.
12. Funds for this procurement have been provided through the County budget for this fiscal year only. County, on an annual basis, has the right to reconsider a contract during the budget process for ensuing years if financial resources of County are insufficient to meet the liabilities of said contract. The award of a Proposal or contract hereunder will not be construed to create a debt of the County which is payable out of funds beyond the current fiscal year.
13. **DELIVERY INSTRUCTIONS:**
 - No deliveries accepted after 3:00 P.M., Monday-Friday.
 - At least seventy two (72) hours prior notice of delivery must be given to Martha L. Salazar, CPPB, Purchasing Agent before delivery will be accepted.
 - If you need additional information call the office listed below:

Hidalgo County Purchasing Department
Martha L. Salazar, CPPB, Purchasing Agent
(956) 318-2626
14. **BILLING AND PAYMENT INSTRUCTIONS:**
 - Invoices must include:
 - a) Name and address of successful respondent
 - b) Name and address of receiving department or official
 - c) Purchase Order Number and Contract number (if any)
 - d) Notation-**HIDALGO COUNTY-“Section 125 Voluntary Insurance Products COBRA Administration Services”**, (Including all funding sources, programs, and entities”
 - e) Descriptive information as to the items or services delivered, including product code, item number, quantity, etc.
 - Discount payments will be considered when offered.
 - Contact person for Billing and Payment questions:

HIDALGO COUNTY AUDITOR'S OFFICE
Postal/Mailing 2808 S. Business Hwy. 281
Edinburg, Texas 78539
(956) 318-2511

15. SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Proposal Opening, 9:30 A.M.
 Award of Contract:
 Commence Work or Products:

September 00 , 2015
, 2015

16. HIDALGO COUNTY HOLIDAYS:

2015 YEAR	
New Year's Day	01/01/15
Martin Luther King Day	01/19/15
President's Day	02/16/15
Good Friday	04/03/15
Memorial Day	05/25/15
Independence Day	07/03/15
Labor Day	09/07/15
Columbus Day	10/12/15
Veteran's Day	11/11/15
Thanksgiving Day	11/26/15 and 11/27/15
Christmas Day	12/24/15 and 12/25/15
New Year's Eve	12/31/15

17. ~~BID OR PERFORMANCE BOND AND DEBARMENT CERTIFICATION; PAYMENT UNDER CONTRACT:~~

- ~~If the contract proposed is for the construction of public works or is for a contract for goods and services exceeding \$100,000, all bidders shall furnish a good and sufficient bid bond in the amount of five percent of the total contract price. A bid bond must be executed with a surety company authorized to do business in Texas. All Proposers are also required to furnish a certification or acknowledgment stating that the contractor or vendor is free from suspension or debarment pursuant to federal regulation 45CFR76.~~
- ~~Together with the signing of a contract or issuance of a purchase order following the acceptance of a Proposal, and prior to commencement of the actual work, the respondent shall furnish a performance bond to the County for the full amount of the contract, if that contract exceeds \$50,000.~~
- ~~If the contract is for \$50,000 or less, no money will be paid to the contractor until completion and acceptance of the work or the fulfillment of the purchase obligation to the County, and, if applicable, the receipt by County of satisfactory evidence that all subcontractors and material men have been paid.~~
- ~~If a contract is for the construction, alteration or repair of public buildings or public works, the contractor shall provide a payment bond for a contract in excess of Twenty Five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000.00), as required by Tex. Govt. Code Ch. 2253.~~
- ~~For requirements contracts, bond requirements are determined by applying the proposed unit price to the estimated quantities included in the specifications.~~

18. ETHICAL STANDARDS:

- It shall be a breach of ethics to offer, give or agree to give any elected official, department head or employee, or former elected official, department head or employee, of the County, or for any elected official, department head or employee or former elected official, department head or employee of the County, to solicit, demand, accept or agree to accept from another person, entity or organization, a gratuity or an offer of employment in connection with any decision, approval, disapproval, recommendation, preparation or any part of a program requirement or purchase request, influencing the content of any specification or procurement standard, rendering of advice, investigation, auditing, or in any other advisory capacity in any proceeding or application, request for ruling, determination, claim or controversy, or other particular matter pertaining to any program requirement or a contract or subcontract, or to any solicitation or Proposal therefore pending before any department or agency of the County.
- It shall be a breach of ethics for any payment, gratuity or offer of employment to be made by or on behalf of a subcontractor under a contract to the prime contractor or higher tier subcontractor for any contract for the County, or any person associated therewith, as an inducement for the award of a subcontract or order.
- No public official shall have an interest in a contract awarded hereunder except in accordance with Tex. Loc. Govt. Code Chapter 171.
- **NOTICE:**
ALL COMMUNICATIONS BY A VENDOR TO THE COUNTY, ITS OFFICIALS, AND DEPARTMENT HEADS REGARDING THIS PROCUREMENT SHALL BE DONE THROUGH THE HIDALGO COUNTY PURCHASING DEPARTMENT.

No vendor, its representative, agent, or employee shall engage in private communication with a member of the Hidalgo County Commissioners Court or county department heads regarding any procurement of goods or services by the County from the date that the bid, RFP, or RFP is released. No private communication regarding the purchase shall be permitted until the procurement process is complete and a purchase order is granted or a contract is entered into. Members of the commissioners court are required to make a reasonable effort to inform themselves regarding potential procurements and have a duty to inquire of vendors, their representatives or employees, the nature of any private communication being sought prior to engaging in any communication. "Private Communication" means communication with any vendor outside of a posted meeting of the governing body, a regular meeting of a standing or appointed committee, or a negotiation with a vendor which has been specifically authorized by the governing body.

19. DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

- **Effective January 1, 2006, Chapter 176 of the Texas Local Government Code requires that any vendor, person, consultant or contractor considering doing business with Hidalgo County (“the County”) to disclose in the Conflict of Interest Questionnaire (the “CIQ”) attached as Exhibit D, the vendor, person, consultant or contractor’s affiliation or business relationship that might cause a conflict of interest with the County. By law, the CIQ must be filed with the Hidalgo County Clerk’s Office no later than the seventh business day after the date the person becomes aware of facts that require that statement to be filed. The disclosure requirement applies to a person or business that contracts or seeks to contract with Hidalgo County for the sale or purchase of property, goods or service. Any purchase order or contract resulting from this process shall be considered null and void if the successful respondent fails to comply with Texas Local Government Code Chapter 176. Vendors, consultants, contractors and others who desire to conduct business with Hidalgo County are encouraged to refer to Texas Local Government Code Chapter 176 for the details of this law. An offense under Texas Local Government Code Chapter 176 is a Class C Misdemeanor.**

Please submit completed CIQ forms to the Hidalgo County Clerk’s Office located at 100 N. Clossner, Edinburg, Texas 78539Hidalgo County Courthouse.

COMPLETION AND SUBMISSION OF FORM CIQ IS THE SOLE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PROSPECTIVE RESPONDENT.

20. If, during the life of any contract or Proposal awarded, the successful respondent's net prices generally available to other customers for items awarded herein are reduced below the contracted price, it is understood and agreed that the benefits of such reduction shall be extended to County.
21. Proposals, and all goods and services provided thereunder, shall comply with all federal, state and local laws concerning this type(s) of goods and/or services.
22. Minimum Standards for Responsible Prospective Proposers: A prospective respondent must affirmatively demonstrate respondent's responsibility. A prospective respondent, by submitting a Proposal, represents to County that it meets the following requirements:
 - Possess or is able to obtain adequate financial resources as required to perform under the Proposal;
 - Be able to comply with the required or proposed delivery schedule;
 - Have a satisfactory record of performance;
 - Have a satisfactory record of integrity and ethics;
 - Be otherwise qualified and eligible to receive an award.
23. Successful respondent will pay or cause to be paid, without cost or expenses to County, all FICA, FUTA/SUTA and Federal Income Withholding Taxes of all employees, and all wages and benefits as required by Federal or State law. Successful respondent's officers, agents and/or employees will not be entitled to any benefits of an employee or elected official of County, including, but not limited to, benefits associated with County's civil service system.

24. Any contract award to a successful respondent will be in effect until (a) the contract expires, (b) delivery and acceptance of products, and/or performance of services ordered, or (c) terminated by County with thirty (30) day's written notice prior to cancellation.
25. County reserves the right to enforce performance of any contract awarded hereunder in any manner prescribed by law or deemed to be in the best interest of the County in the event of breach or default by successful respondent; County reserves the right to terminate any contract immediately in the event a successful respondent fails to:
 - A. Meet schedules;
 - B. Pay any required fees or taxes; or
 - C. Otherwise perform in accordance with the requirements.
26. Successful respondent shall defend, indemnify and save harmless County and all its elected officials, officers, agents and employees from all suits, actions, or other claims of any character, name and description brought for or on account of any injuries or damages received or sustained by any person, persons, or property on account of any negligent act or fault of the successful respondent, or of any agent, employee, subcontractor or supplier in the execution of, or performance under, any contract which may result from Proposal award. Successful respondent indemnifies and will indemnify and save harmless County from liability, claim or demand on their part, agents, servants, customers, and/or employees whether such liability, claim or demand arise from event or casualty happening or within the occupied premises themselves or happening upon or in any of the halls, elevators, entrances, stairways or approaches of or to the facilities within which the occupied premises are located. Successful respondent shall pay any judgment with costs which may be obtained against county growing out of such injury or damages, and shall, upon request, provide a defense to County by counsel reasonably acceptable to County. Successful respondent's indemnity hereunder shall include, but is not limited to, claims relating to patent, copyright or trademark infringement, and the like, arising out of the goods or services provided by successful respondent.
27. Successful respondent shall warrant that all items/services shall conform to the specifications and/or all warranties provided under the Uniform Commercial Code and be free from all defects in material, workmanship and the like. Items supplied under a contract pursuant to this Request for Proposals shall be subject to County's approval. Items found to be defective or not meeting specifications shall be replaced by successful respondent within two business days at no expense to County. Items not picked up within one (1) week after notification shall be deemed a donation to County and may be used or disposed of at County's discretion and without waiver of any other rights of County as to the item's nonconformity.
28. This document and any disputes arising hereunder shall be governed and construed according to the laws of the State of Texas, and will be performable exclusively in Hidalgo County, Texas.
29. The successful respondent shall not assign, sell, transfer or convey its rights under any awarded contract, in whole or in part, without the prior written consent of County.
30. Proposers shall provide with the Proposal response, a list of at least three (3) references where like services have been supplied by their firm. Include the name of the business or government, address, telephone number and name of representative or contact person.
31. Proposers must provide **all** documentation requested with this Proposal in their response. Failure to provide this information may result in rejection of the Proposal as none conforming.

Request for Proposals
for

HIDALGO COUNTY

(Including all funding sources, programs, and entities)

“Section 125 Voluntary Insurance Product Insurance and COBRA Administration Services”

To: Martha L. Salazar, CPPB, Purchasing Agent
Hidalgo County Purchasing Department
Physical Location: 2802 S. Business Hwy. 281
Postal/ Mailing: 2812 S. Business Hwy. 281
New Administration Building
Edinburg, Texas 78539

In accordance with the Requirements, and subject to all laws and regulations of the United States and state and local laws, the undersigned respondent proposes and commits to furnish all labor, equipment, material, software and services as set forth in the documents hereinbefore mentioned. The undersigned further agrees, upon acceptance of its Proposal, to execute a contract and/or Purchase Order issued by Hidalgo County for performing and completing the work described in the Requirements within the time stated and for the prices proposed in the documents attached hereto and made a part hereof.

Respondent acknowledges receipt of all of the pages of the documents referenced in the Request for Proposal Checklist presented in connection with this procurement. Respondent understands that Hidalgo County reserves the right to reject any or all Proposals and further reserves the right to design the evaluation criteria to be used in selecting the lowest and best Proposal.

Respondent agrees that this Proposal shall be good and may not be withdrawn for a period of ninety (90) calendar days after the scheduled closing time for receiving Proposals, as contained in the Requirements.

Respectfully Submitted,

FIRM: _____

ADDRESS: _____

BY: _____

PRINTED NAME: _____

TITLE: _____