

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

PUBLIC ASSISTANCE PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT STAFF

DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES

The State of Alabama is soliciting proposals from qualified individuals/organizations that have extensive experience in providing public assistance professional staff support. The successful firm will provide the Alabama Emergency Management Agency (AEMA) with up to sixty five (65) qualified public assistance support staff that meet one of the support requirements listed in Paragraph 2. AEMA will decide how many teams and personnel will be required for a disaster and support personnel will be tailored based on a combination of AEMA's capabilities and the size and complexities of the disaster. In addition, the successful firm will have a background in providing specialized public assistance during previous federally declared emergency or disasters.

The public assistance support staff will operate in accordance with the National Incident Management System, National Response Plan, State of Alabama Emergency Operations Plan and the Incident Command System. The public assistance professional support staff should be able to be at a location designated by AEMA within the State of Alabama within 72 hours of notification by AEMA.

1. **General Support Requirements** (these are general support requirements to be provided):
 - Be able to have the required support staff at a designated disaster scene within 72 hours of notification by AEMA.
 - Must be able to provide single source billing (ie. Billing, time sheets, etc.).
 - Must be able to supply experienced emergency management personnel with superior credentials.
 - Support personnel deployed will be self-sufficient units. This means they will be deployed with temporary housing, provisions, communication devices, etc, as needed. This shall include but not be limited to travel to and from a disaster area, temporary housing services, food/beverage service (excluding alcoholic beverages), laundry services, laptops, handheld GPS devices, digital cameras, email connectivity, mobile phones, measuring devices, hard hats, vests and incidentals. The intent is to provide self-sufficient stand-alone units of personnel to respond to potentially uninhabitable disaster areas.
 - Be able to provide regular reports at intervals determined by AEMA of tasks and other activities performed by the individual/organization to document the services performed. Work products produced as a part of the support efforts will be for immediate use in an operational setting.
 - Personnel shall perform tasks at the AEMA EOC and other state and local facilities or at other locations throughout the State of Alabama.
 - Personnel must have excellent communication skills (both written and oral).
 - Personnel should be able to communicate with local, state, and federal officials at all levels.
 - Personnel should be able to write, review and amend project worksheets.
 - Personnel should understand the latest FEMA policies and procedures including but not limited to all facets of program delivery, project formulation, documentation, and close-out operations.

2. Public Assistance (PA)

- a. **Senior PA Officer** - This position requires an operational background in the Stafford Act Public Assistance program. Individuals should have a working knowledge of the Stafford Act, 44 CFR et. seq., and some experience as a Public Assistance Coordinator in all aspects of the PA program, including debris operations. Individuals in this position will be representing AEMA and will have management oversight of all levels of PA employees and activities. Individuals in this position will be advising local emergency managers, mayors, and county executives on how the PA program works and will be providing all resources needed at the local level to insure reimbursement is made as quickly as possible. Other duties include resolving eligibility issues between applicants and FEMA, establishing systems to track program activity and costs, reviewing project worksheets, and conducting close-out operations.
- b. **PA Coordinator** - Individuals should have a working knowledge of the Stafford Act, 44 CFR et. seq., and some experience such as a Project Officer or Public Assistance Coordinator in the PA program. Individuals in this position will be representing AEMA and will be assisting in setting up and facilitating and/or running kick-off meetings and applicant briefings for state and local agencies and offices. Individuals in this position will be advising local emergency managers, mayors, and county executives on how the PA program works and will be assisting in providing all resources needed at the local level to insure reimbursement is made as quickly as possible. Other duties include resolving eligibility issues between applicants and FEMA, tracking program activity and costs, reviewing project worksheets, and conducting close-out operations.
- c. **Project Officer** – Individuals should have particular subject matter expertise in some particular discipline(s)—accounting, engineering, environmental issues, fire, law enforcement, etc.—and how they relate to the preparation and review of project worksheets under the PA Program. Duties include resolving eligibility issues between applicants and FEMA, tracking program activities and costs, preparing and reviewing project worksheets, and conducting close-out operations
- d. **Insurance Specialists** – The personnel must understand the technical language of the insurance policy and the complicated procedures they must follow to comply with the policy's terms.

QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

The Respondent has a continuing obligation to disclose information throughout the RFP process should any qualifications or situations change that might render the Respondent as an unqualified candidate.

The following are the minimum qualifications:

- (a) The Respondent has been providing similar services as described in this RFP for five years.

- (b) The Respondent will be qualified with the Secretary of State to conduct business in the State of Alabama, if selected. For more information, visit the Secretary of State website at www.sos.alabama.gov and click Corporations.
- (c) The Respondent covenants that it will have no interest, direct or indirect, that will conflict in any manner or degree with the performance of its contract services. The Respondent further covenants that, in the performance of the contract, the Respondent shall employ no person having any such known interests.
- (d) The Respondent has a policy and practice of equal employment opportunity and non-discrimination based on age, race, creed and/or gender.
- (e) The Respondent attests that all workers providing the services described in this RFP are either citizens of the United States or are in proper and legal immigration status that authorizes them to be employed for pay within the United States.

In addition to the Minimum Qualifications, the successful firm must demonstrate knowledge of Mitigation and specialized experience in the field of emergency management. Preference will be given to those firms who have successfully provided similar services to the federal, state, or local governments. **The State of Alabama has the right to exercise any or all options according to its needs and available funding including but not limited rejecting a bid in excess of its funding for the Project.**

Interested firms shall submit a proposal and Statements of Qualifications (SOQ) that include:

- The name of the firm, its principal place of business and office locations.
- General information on the firm and its experience.
- Provide details of any claims, disputes, litigation, SEC or state regulatory action, or other legal proceedings relating to your firm or individual personnel in the three preceding years.
- Provide details of any claims, disputes, litigation or other legal proceedings where your firm is involved with the State of Alabama or any of its agencies, or has been involved, in the three preceding years.
- Describe any activities in which you or your firm is engaged which may constitute a conflict of interest.
- A statement of the firm's qualifications as they apply to this project and including only those projects completed within the past five years.
- The names and contact information of five clients who may be contacted, including at least two for whom services were rendered during the proceeding year, at least on projects similar to this project.
- The proposed approach to conduct the work.
- The qualifications of proposed staff, including a description of their role and availability to work on the project. Provide a resume or brief description of each person's background.
- Identify the principal person or team who would be assigned to this project.
- Will the staff initially assigned to this project remain consistent until the project completion? If not, please provide additional information.
- Rates and **total project cost.**

SELECTION CRITERIA:

All proposals timely received will be reviewed by the Selection Committee. The Committee will recommend proposals to AEMA's General Counsel that most closely meets the requirements of the RFP.

Discussions and/or Presentations. After the review and evaluation of the proposals, AEMA's General Counsel or Committee may conduct interviews. Finalists chosen for interviews will be notified, if applicable. AEMA's General Counsel reserves the right, in his sole discretion, to award a contract based upon the written proposals received without additional discussion or negotiations.

Selection. AEMA's General Counsel will select the respondent the General Counsel determines, in his sole discretion, to be fully qualified and best suited among those submitting proposals to fulfill the purposes of the RFP in a cost effective manner. The following will be used in making the selection.

1. Company experience and qualifications
2. Proposed project staff's qualifications and experience
3. Previous relevant experience
4. Rates and total project cost
5. Outline of the project approach
6. References
7. Availability to commit adequate resources to provide timely response
8. Preferences will be given to vendors in accordance to § 41-16-20(b)(3), Code of Alabama 1975, as amended. Ala. Code Section 41-16-20(b)(3) provides a preference for companies organized for business under the laws of the state as a corporation, partnership or professional association and has maintained at least one retail outlet or service center for the product or service within the state for not less than one year prior to the Submission Deadline.

Pursuant to section 41-16-72(4), the State of Alabama reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals to this RFP and will select the winning proposal based on the criteria above.

REQUIRED INFORMATION.

Proposals should be as thorough and detailed as possible so that your capabilities to provide the required services can be properly evaluated.

To be considered, responses to this RFP must include: (1) brief transmittal letter, (2) Section A, Statement of Fees with total project cost; (3) Section B, Certification; and (4) Disclosure Statement. All proposals submitted in response to this RFP must include one original and completed Disclosure Statement as required by Section 41-16-80, et seq., Code of Alabama (1975). Copies of the Disclosure Statement, and information, may be downloaded from the Alabama Attorney General's web site at www.ago.alabama.gov/ag_items.cfm.

The RFP should be limited to 25 pages, not including attachments (resumes, photographs, charts, etc., if desired). Interested parties must submit one original and four copies no later than 4:00 p.m., Central Standard Time, **October 5, 2009** (the "Submission Deadline") to:

Bryan K. Prescott
General Counsel
Alabama EMA
5898 County Road 41
P. O. Drawer 2160
Clanton, AL 35046-2160

Submission Deadline. It is the responsibility of the Respondent to ensure that its proposal is timely delivered and received in the AEMA's Office on or before the Submission Deadline. AEMA will not consider proposals received after the Submission Deadline. AEMA assumes no responsibility for late delivery by the U.S. Mail, the State's Central Mail Facility, a commercial courier service, or any other method of delivery selected by the Respondent.

All programmatic questions should be directed in writing by or before **September 30, 2009**, to benjie.abbott@ema.alabama.gov or by mail to

Benjie Abbott
Recovery Division Chief
Alabama Emergency Management Agency
P.O. Drawer 2160
Clanton, Alabama 35046-2160

Any oral communications shall be considered unofficial and nonbinding on AEMA. Written responses to written comments shall be posted on the AEMA's website.

Discussions initiated by the Respondent with AEMA staff other than Benjie Abbott concerning this RFP prior to contract award may be grounds for elimination from the selection process.

AGREEMENT.

All duties of the Respondent shall be set forth in a contract agreement between the Respondent and AEMA. The contract will incorporate reference to the requirements of the RFP and the Respondent's proposal as negotiated.

State law prohibits AEMA from agreeing to (1) indemnify the Respondent; (2) waive the right for jury trial; (3) grant a security interest; or (4) binding arbitration. Additionally, it is mandatory that Alabama laws apply to the performance of the contract and that jurisdiction and venue be in Montgomery, Alabama for state and federal courts.

PUBLIC INFORMATION

All responses received will be subject to the Alabama Open Records Act, §36-12-40, Code of Alabama and may be subject to public disclosure upon request. The Open Records Act is remedial and should therefore be liberally construed in favor of the public. The Alabama Trade Secrets Act is §8-27-1 through §8-27-6, Code of Alabama. Responders are cautioned to be familiar with these statutes. The burden is on the one asserting the trade secret to show that the information sought to be protected meets the definition of a Trade Secret as defined in the Act.

Any RFP response submitted that contains confidential, trade secrets or proprietary commercial information must be conspicuously marked on the outside as containing confidential information, and each page upon which confidential information appears must be conspicuously marked as such. Identification of the entire bid proposal as confidential is not acceptable unless the Respondent enumerates the specific grounds or applicable laws which support treatment of the entire material as protected from disclosure according to the foregoing statutes or other applicable Alabama law.

The owner of the confidential information shall indemnify and hold the State of Alabama, AEMA, and the AEMA staff harmless from all costs or expenses, including but not limited to attorney fees and expenses related to litigation concerning disclosure of said information and documents.

Section A
Fees

(Include in a separate sealed envelope marked “For Cost Phase Only”)

The Fee Proposal must contain all pricing information relative to performing the services described in this RFP. **The Respondent shall attach a cover sheet that contains a fixed fee for the entire project.** In addition to a fixed fee for the entire project, we request the rates and number of hours be given for informational purposes only. **AEMA shall not be responsible for any expenses of the Respondent. The Respondent must include all expenses, including travel and lodging, in this Fee Proposal.**

The Respondent shall invoice monthly or quarterly, in arrears.

Firm Fixed Fee Proposal:

Description	Hours	Hourly Rate	Sub-Total	Total
Labor:				
Total Staff Charges				
Out-of-Pocket Charges				
Other Charges*				
Total Firm Fixed Fee				

- Please describe Other Charges.

A total fixed fee should be provided for the entire project.

**Section B
Certification**

Firm Name: _____

Contact Person: _____

By signing this Exhibit, I certify that I am authorized to bind the company, and that the following information is correct and true to the best of my knowledge.

Signature _____

Date _____

Item	Yes	No
The Respondent has been providing similar services as described in this RFP for five years.		
The Respondent will be qualified with the Secretary of State to conduct business in the State of Alabama, if selected.		
The Respondent is organized in the State of Alabama as a corporation, partnership, limited liability company or professional association and has maintained at least one retail outlet or service center for the product or service within the state for not less than one year prior to the Submission Deadline		
The Respondent covenants that it will have no interest, direct or indirect, that will conflict in any manner or degree with the performance of its contract services. The Respondent further covenants that, in the performance of the contract, the Respondent shall employ no person having any such known interests.		
The Respondent has a policy and practice of equal employment opportunity and non-discrimination based on age, race, creed, and/or gender.		
The Respondent attests that all workers providing the services described in this RFP are either citizens of the United States or are in proper and legal immigration status that authorizes them to be employed for pay within the United States		