

Q&A City of Austin Anti-Lobbying Law

What is the City's Anti-Lobbying ("No Contact") law?

For contracts approved by council, all communication between "respondents" and city staff during the "no contact period" must:

- be directed through a city "Authorized Contact Person" and be shared with all respondents or
- occur in public.

No direct lobbying of council is allowed. Violations of the Anti-Lobbying law result in disqualification from the bidding process.

Where do I find the law?

The Anti-Lobbying law is found in the City Code at Chapter 2-7 Article 6 "Anti-Lobbying and Procurement" and related rules. Both of these documents can be found at:

https://www.ci.austin.tx.us/financeonline/contract_catalog/OCCRPT.cfm

What's the purpose of this law?

The purpose of the City of Austin Anti-Lobbying law is to ensure a fair, equitable, and competitive process; that all respondents have equal access to information about a solicitation; and that all respondents have the same opportunity present information to staff and Council.

What is the No-Contact Period?

The no-contact period begins with solicitation publication and includes all rebids. The period ends when either a contract is signed with the winning vendor; the contract with the last of multiple vendors is signed; or the solicitation is withdrawn and no rebid of the same or similar solicitation is planned.

Who is a Respondent?

A Respondent includes:

- any person responding to a city solicitation such as a bidder, quoter, responder, or proposer
- An owner, board member, officer, employee, contractor, subsidiary, joint enterprise, partnership, agent, lobbyist, or other respondent representative
- A person or representative of a person that is involved in a joint venture with the respondent, or a subcontractor in connection with the respondent's response
- A respondent who has withdrawn a response or had a response rejected or disqualified

A Respondent does not include members of the public or media.

Who is the Authorized Contact Person?

During the bidding process, each solicitation has its own Authorized Contact Person, either in the Purchasing Department or Contract Management Department. The Authorized Contact Person issues the solicitation and responds to all questions. During the negotiation process, the Authorized Contact Person's role is transferred to the Lead Negotiator. For more information, go to: https://www.ci.austin.tx.us/financeonline/contract_catalog/OCCRPT.cfm