



# **Solicitation Provisions, Definitions & Instructions**

RPS2024 EMS

Representative Payee and SOAR Application Assistance (RPS)



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## I. DEFINITIONS

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### A. STANDARD PURCHASING DEFINITIONS

Whenever a term defined by the Uniform Commercial Code (UCC), as enacted by the State of Texas, is used in the Contract, the UCC definition shall control, unless otherwise defined.

1. **Addendum** – a written instrument issued by the Contract Awarding Authority that modifies or clarifies the Solicitation prior to the Due Date. "Addenda" is the plural form of the word.
2. **Agreement or Grant Agreement** – a binding legal agreement between the City and the Offeror. The Agreement includes, without limitation the Terms and Conditions and applicable exhibits.
3. **Agreement Awarding Authority** – a City department authorized to enter into Grant Agreements on behalf of the City.
4. **Anti-Racist Policies and Procedures** – a policy or procedure which intends to demonstrate the commitment of conducting operations and organization governance in an anti-racist manner and environment. The implementation will continue to make best efforts to ensure that all who work and interact with the organization are able to do so in an environment free of racism and that works to combat the effects of institutional racism.
5. **Applicant** – a person, firm, or entity that submits an application in response to a Request for Grant Application. Any Applicant may be represented by an agent after submitting evidence demonstrating the agent's authority. The agent cannot certify as to his own agency status.
6. **Application** - a complete, properly signed response to a Request for Application, which if accepted, would bind the Applicant to perform the resultant Agreement.
7. **Application Guaranty** - a form of security assuring that the Offeror (a) will not withdraw the Application within the period specified for acceptance, and (b) will execute a Contract and furnish required bonds and any necessary insurance within the time specified in the Solicitation, unless a longer time is allowed by the City. The guarantee will be returned to the Offeror upon execution of a Contract.
8. **Appropriate, Appropriated, or Appropriation** – the adoption by the City Council of a budget for a fiscal year that includes payments to be made under the Contract during the respective fiscal year.
9. **Authorized City Representative** – a person designated by the City Manager to act for the Contract Awarding Authority
10. **Authorized Contact Person** – a person responsible for all communications and questions regarding the solicitation. Only answers from the Authorized Contact Person are valid regarding any questions about the solicitation.
11. **Best Application** – means the best evaluated Application in response to a Request for Application or Request for Application



12. **Best Offeror** – means the Offeror submitting the Best Application.
13. **Business Entity**- any entity recognized by law through which business is conducted, including a sole proprietorship, partnership, or corporation.
14. **City** – the City of Austin, a Texas home-rule municipal corporation.
15. **Controlling Interest** means: (1) an ownership interest or participating interest in a business entity by virtue of units, percentage, shares, stocks or otherwise that exceeds 10 percent; (2) membership on the board of directors or other governing body of a business entity of which the board or other governing body is composed of not more than 10 members; or (3) service as an officer of a business entity that has four or fewer officers, or service as one of the four officers most highly compensated by a business entity that has more than four officers
16. **DACC** – means the City of Austin Department - Downtown Austin Community Court
17. **Deliverables** - the goods, products, materials, and/or services to be provided to the City under a Purchase Order, Contract, or Master Agreement
18. **Delivery Order** - a release against a Master Agreement authorizing delivery of goods and/or performance of services. A financial system document issued by the Department to encumber funds to pay for the deliverables.
19. **Due Date** – the date and time specified for receipt of Applications, Bids, Proposals, Qualification Statements, Quotations, Responses, Submittals and Compliance Plans
20. **Grantee** - the nonprofit entity awarded a Grant Agreement through the solicitation process.
21. **Interested Party** - - a person who has a Controlling Interest in a Business Entity with whom the City contracts or who actively participates in facilitating the Contract or negotiating the terms of the Contract, including a broker, intermediary, adviser, or attorney for the Business Entity.
22. **Late Submission** – an Application, Application, Quote, Response, or Submittal that is received after the Due Date and time specified in the Solicitation.
23. **Master Agreement** - a term contract that is used when the total quantity required cannot be fixed but can be stated as an estimate or within maximum and minimum limits with deliveries on demand. A Master Agreement does not create a financial obligation.
24. **Offer** - a complete signed response to a Solicitation including, but not limited to, an Invitation for Bid, a Request for Application, a Request for Qualification Statements, or a Request for Quotation.
25. **Offeror** - a person, firm, or entity that submits an Offer in response to a City Solicitation. Any Offeror may be represented by an agent after submitting evidence demonstrating the agent's authority. The agent cannot certify as to his own agency status. Includes Bidders, Offerors, Quoters, Contractors and Consultants.



26. **Pre-Application/Pre-Bid Submittal Conference**- a conference conducted by the Grant or Contract Awarding Authority, held in order to allow Applicants and Offerors to ask questions about the proposed solicitation and particularly the solicitation specifications.
27. **Professional Services** - services that use skills that are predominantly mental or intellectual, rather than physical or manual such as accounting, architecture, land surveying, law, medicine, optometry, professional engineering, etc.
28. **Purchase Order (PO)** - an order placed by a City department for the purchase of Goods and/or Services written on the City's standard Purchase Order form and which, when accepted by the Vendor becomes a Contract. The Purchase Order is the Vendor's authority to deliver and invoice the City for Goods and/or Services specified, and the City's commitment to accept the Goods and/or Services for an agreed upon price.
29. **Purchase Office** - refers to the Purchasing Office in the Financial and Administrative Services Department of the City
30. **Request for Applications (RFA)** - a solicitation used to acquire social services from a nonprofit entity to address community needs resulting in a grant agreement for services.
31. **Request for Qualification Statements (RFQS)** - a solicitation used to acquire professional services as defined by the State of Texas Government Code, Chapter 2254
32. **Request for Quotation (RFQ)** - a solicitation used to acquire goods and/or services with a total dollar value less than the State of Texas competitive bidding amount.
33. **Resident Bidder** - a person, firm, or entity whose principal place of business is in the State of Texas, including a Contractor whose ultimate parent company or majority owner has its principal place of business in the State of Texas.
34. **Responsible Offeror** - means the financial and practical ability of the Offeror to perform the Contract and takes into consideration resources, expertise, and past performance of the Offeror as well as compliance with all City ordinances concerning the purchasing process.
35. **Responsive** - meeting all the requirements of a Solicitation.
36. **Services** - include all work or labor performed for the City on an independent Contractor basis other than construction.
37. **Solicitation** - as applicable, includes Request for Applications, Request for Application, Request for Qualification Statements, Request for Quotation, Request for Information, Request for Interest, or such other request as defined by the City.
38. **Subgrantee** - a person, firm, or entity providing goods and/or services to a prime Grantee/ to be used in the performance of the prime Grantee obligations under a Grant Agreement
39. **Vendor** - a person, firm, or entity that sells Goods and/or Services.



## B. HOMELESS SERVICES DEFINITIONS

1. **Advocacy** - services that offer information, analysis, and resources - to work in partnership with victims to strengthen their plans. See case management for more detail.
2. **Case Management** - services that help persons who are homeless move through crisis towards stability, including developing an individualized case plan, assistance obtaining identification and required documentation, connecting clients to mainstream resources and housing resources.
3. **Chronically Homeless** - defined federally by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as
  - (1) A homeless individual with a disability who
    - Lives in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter; and
    - Has been homeless continuously for at least 12 months or on at least 4 separate occasions in the last 3 years where the combined occasions must total at least 12 months
    - Occasions separated by a break of at least seven nights
    - Stays in institution of fewer than 90 days does not constitute a break
  - (2) An individual who has been residing in an institutional care facility for fewer than 90 days and met all of the criteria in paragraph (1) of this definition, before entering that facility, or
  - (3) A family with an adult head of household (or if there is no adult in the family, a minor head of household) who meets all of the criteria in paragraphs (1) or (2) of this definition, including a family whose composition has fluctuated while the head of household has been homeless.
4. **Coordinated Entry/Coordinated Assessment** - A process to assess the needs of homeless persons and to direct them to a particular housing solution in the community - Permanent Supportive Housing, Rapid Rehousing, or to determine if they only need minimal assistance to divert them from homeless shelters. The Coordinated Assessment (CA)/Austin Prioritization Index (API) is the assessment that prioritizes a person's level of vulnerability compared to other homeless persons in the community who have been assessed with the same tool and prioritizes serving persons ranked most vulnerable first. In Austin, the Coordinated Assessment is governed by the Coordinated Entry Written Standards adopted by the Continuum of Care Board, the Leadership Council. Individuals experiencing homelessness can complete an assessment at walk-in centers and by phone by qualified staff located throughout the community.
5. **Emergency Shelter** - a facility that provides temporary or transitional shelter for persons who are experiencing homelessness through providing bunks, mats, or private rooms. Shelters may serve those experiencing homelessness or specific subpopulations such as families, single adult females or males, or those with specialized needs like mental health or substance use services so long as the shelter complies with anti-discrimination and Fair Housing laws and ordinances.



6. **Family Violence** - an act by a member of a family or household against another member of the family or household that:
  - (1) Is intended to result in physical harm, bodily injury, or assault or that is a threat that reasonably places the member in fear of imminent physical harm, bodily injury, or assault, but does not include defensive measures to protect oneself; or
  - (2) Is intended to inflict emotional harm, including an act of emotional abuse.
7. **Harm Reduction** - Harm reduction is a proactive and evidence-based approach to reduce the negative personal and public health impacts of behavior associated with alcohol and other substance use at both the individual and community levels.
8. **Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)** - online database system used by programs serving persons experiencing homelessness that is used to collect client-level data and data on the provision of housing and services to individuals and families at risk of and experiencing homelessness. <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/HMIS/>
9. **Homelessness Prevention** - services to assist individuals at imminent risk of experiencing homelessness to either maintain their current housing or to transition to housing which they can maintain without assistance. Services include eviction prevention, financial assistance, increasing income, connecting to mainstream benefits, and case management.
10. **Housing First** - Housing first is a philosophy that homelessness can be most efficiently ended by providing someone with access to safe, decent, and affordable housing. Although an individual experiencing homelessness may benefit from supportive services such as mental health or substance abuse counseling, participation in these services is not a prerequisite to access housing or a condition of maintaining it. In fact, the stability that a housing unit provides bolsters a tenant's ability to participate in these services. The National Alliance to End Homelessness has developed the following Housing First principles.
  - Homelessness is foremost a housing problem and should be treated as such
  - Permanent housing is a right to which all are entitled
  - People should be returned to or stabilized in permanent housing as quickly as possible and connected to necessary resources to sustain housing
  - Issues that may have contributed to a household's homelessness can best be addressed once they are permanently housed
11. **Housing Focused Shelter** - Shelter programs which provide a path to housing, uniquely tailored to each participant's situation. Services delivery and available resources are primarily oriented towards assisting participants with exit the shelter quickly to permanent housing destinations, independently or supported by a formal housing program period.
12. **Housing Navigation** - services to assist households experiencing homelessness in identifying, removing barriers to, and obtaining permanent housing solutions. Services usually do not last beyond housing move-in.
13. **Landlord Outreach** - Services that establish relationships with property owners and acts as an intermediary, providing support and conflict resolution assistance to ensure ongoing positive relationships in order to connect individuals experiencing homelessness with units. Establishing good relationships with landlords can have many benefits, including landlords holding open apartments, waiving certain fees, or agreeing to lock-in rental payments for good tenants.



14. **Low Barrier Shelter** - crisis lodging which actively reduces or eliminates barriers to accessing and maintaining shelter services, such as requirements around income, criminal background, sobriety, pets, household members, storing belongings, or stringent behavioral expectations. Rules regarding access and safety of participants and staff are designed collaboratively with participants, and participants are able to access shelter resources at times most convenient to their situation.
15. **Motivational Interviewing** - MI is a collaborative, person-centered approach to elicit and strengthen motivation to change. MI is rooted in an understanding of how hard it is to change learned behaviors, many of which have been essential to survival on the streets.
16. **Permanent Housing** - housing that is not time limited, usually with a lease, and may include market rate apartments or those with permanent assistance or vouchers through a Housing Authority or permanent supportive housing program. It may also include living with family or housing where a client has time- limited rental assistance (through Rapid Rehousing, for example), but where the client has the option of transitioning in place to market rate rent or affordable rental rates.
17. **Permanent Supportive Housing** - housing for homeless individuals that combines non-time limited affordable housing assistance with voluntary support services to address the needs of persons with complex mental or physical health, addictions, or cognitive challenges. The services are designed to build independent living and tenancy skills and connect people with healthcare, substance use treatment and employment services. In addition to ending a person's homelessness and increasing their housing stability, Permanent Supportive Housing has been shown to improve health and wellbeing.
18. **Progressive Engagement** - Progressive engagement is a person-centered approach to ending someone's homelessness. It is based on tailoring assistance to each individual or household's needs and assessing what works best for them, with their specific strengths, and in their specific situation. Progressive engagement starts small by helping people with their immediate needs, in order to stay housed.
19. **Rapid Exit-** Rapid exit strategies are appropriate after a household has entered emergency shelter or stayed in an unsheltered setting and serves to help them move as quickly as possible back into housing with the support of services and a minimal level of financial assistance.
20. **Rapid Rehousing** - services that quickly connect persons to permanent housing by addressing their immediate barriers to permanent housing with housing location, financial assistance, and housing stability case management. Supportive services and rental assistance are provided after the household attains housing to assist the participant with assuming full rental responsibility for the unit as quickly as possible while maximizing housing stability.





21. **Shelter Diversion** -services to assist a person in finding other safe and appropriate housing options than shelter. Regarding shelters serving those fleeing domestic violence, using diversion tactics should also include safety planning; and in many cases shelter diversion is not a safe option, and should only be used if there are options that are safe and free from risk of potential violence. Diversion staff have creative and problem-solving conversations that help to identify whether individuals are fleeing an unsafe situation, have better alternative housing options, or need help to stay in the place where they have recently been staying to determine if there are any other safe housing resources available than shelter. Referrals to other shelters or transitional housing, housing financial assistance, rapid rehousing, hotel vouchers, and other housing interventions could be utilized.

### C. FUNDING DEFINITIONS

1. **General Fund** - Main operating fund for the City of Austin.

## II. STANDARD SOLICITATIONS PROVISIONS

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### A. REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

1. **Invitation:** The City of Austin invites all Responsible Offerors to submit Applications to provide the social services described in this Solicitation.
2. **Documents:** This Request for Applications ("RFA" or "Solicitation") is composed of all documents listed in the Attachments section of the Solicitation Offer Sheet
3. **Process:** The process described in this RFA is the Request for Applications process for Social Services. This process is procedurally compliant with the competitive Application processes prescribed by Texas Local Government Code Ch. 252 and Ch. 271.
4. **Changes:** The City may change or revise any of the contents of this Solicitation through the issuance of a written Addendum. Any Addenda issued will be added to the Attachments section of Form 1: Offer Sheet. The Version number displayed in Form 1: Offer Sheet will indicate the number of Addenda issued. Any explanation, clarification, interpretation or change to the Solicitation made in any other manner is not binding upon the City, and Offerors shall not rely upon such explanation, clarification, interpretation, or change. Oral explanations or instructions given before the award of the Contract are not binding.
5. **Review of Documents:** Offerors shall review the entire Solicitation, as revised. Offerors shall notify the Authorized Contact Person(s) listed on Form 1: Offer Sheet in writing of any omissions, ambiguities, inconsistencies or errors in the Solicitation prior to the Due Date and Time displayed in the Important Dates section of the Form 1: Offer Sheet. Offerors shall also notify the City of any Solicitation contents the Offeror believes may be unreasonably restrictive.



6. **Equal Employment Opportunity:** No Grantee, or Grantee's agent, shall engage in any discriminatory employment practice as defined in Chapter 5-4 of the City Code. No Application submitted to the City shall be considered, nor any Purchase Order issued, or any Agreement awarded by the City unless the Offeror has executed and filed with the City Purchasing Office a current Non- Discrimination Certification. Non-compliance with Chapter 5-4 of the City Code may result in sanctions, including termination of the agreement and the Grantee's suspension or debarment from participation on future City agreements/contracts until deemed compliant with Chapter 5-4.
7. **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliance:** No Grantee, or Grantee's agent, shall engage in any discriminatory practice against individuals with disabilities as defined in the ADA, including but not limited to employment, accessibility to goods and services, reasonable accommodations, and effective communications.
8. **Cancellation.** The City reserves the right to cancel this Solicitation at any time for any reason and to resolicit the goods and services included in this Solicitation.

#### **B. PUBLICATION AND NOTICES**

1. **Publication:** This Solicitation was published on the Downtown Austin Community Court's competition website: <https://www.austintexas.gov/department/community-court>.
2. **RFA Distribution List:** Interested organizations can subscribe to that list by subscribing to the DACC Newsletter at the following website: <https://www.austintexas.gov/department/community-court>.
3. **Newspaper Notices.** If applicable, one or more notices of this Solicitation were published in the newspaper as required by statute.

#### **C. COMMUNICATIONS AND MEETINGS**

1. **Authorized Contact Persons:** The names and contact information for the authorized contact persons for this Solicitation are displayed in the Form 1 – Offer Sheet
2. **Questions:** Offerors shall submit any questions concerning this Solicitation in writing via e-mail to the Authorized Contact Persons displayed on the Form 1 – Offer Sheet. The City will respond to all questions received by the Questions Due Date and Time displayed on the Form 1 – Offer Sheet. The City will publish on the solicitation website all timely received questions and the City's responses to each.
3. **Pre-Application/Pre-Bid Conferences:** The City may hold one or more Pre-Bid Conferences to review the Solicitation and to receive verbal questions. Form 1 – Offer Sheet will display if a Pre-Bid Conference is being held and if attendance at this meeting is mandatory. If a Pre-Bid Conference is planned, the date, location, time, and any other necessary information regarding this meeting will also be displayed in the Solicitation Offer Sheet. Attendance at any Pre-Bid Conference will be recorded and will be included on the solicitation website following the meeting. As the Solicitation is subject to changes (See Section II – Standard Solicitation Provision, Item A4 – Changes, located in this document.) Offerors shall not rely on verbal exchanges that may occur at a Pre-Bid Conference. Offerors shall continue to submit all questions in writing (See Section II – Standard Solicitation Provision, Item C2 – Questions, located in this document.)



#### D. APPLICATION PREPARATION

1. **Application Submittals:** Offerors intending to respond to this Solicitation shall download and complete each of the Submittal documents listed in Form 1 – Offer Sheet. Submittal documents will include additional Solicitation instructions specific to its contents. Offerors will complete each Submittal in accordance with the instructions in the submittal.
2. **Exceptions:** Offerors shall indicate if they take exception to any portions of the Solicitation in their Application. Any exceptions included in the Application may negatively impact the City's evaluation of the Application or may cause the City to reject the Application entirely.
3. **Application Acceptance Period:** All Applications are valid for a period of three hundred and sixty-five (365) calendar days subsequent to the RFA closing date unless a longer acceptance period is offered in the Application.
4. **Proprietary and Confidential Information:** All Applications received and opened by the City are subject to the Texas Government Code, Ch. 552, and will be made available to the public. Offerors seeking to keep any portions of their Application confidential shall mark each such portion as "Proprietary". The City will, to the extent allowed by law, endeavor to protect such information from disclosure. The City may request a review and determination from the Attorney General's Office of the State of Texas, of any Application contents marked as "Proprietary". A copyright notice or symbol is insufficient to identify proprietary or confidential information.
5. **Cost of Application Preparation and Participation:** Offerors are responsible for all costs related to the preparation of their Application and incurred while participating in this Solicitation process.
6. **Minority and Women Owned Business Enterprise (MBE/WBE) Procurement Program:** Social Services competitions are exempt from MBE/WBE procurement.
7. **Technical Assistance:** An Offeror may request Technical Assistance before the deadline for Technical Assistant listed on Form 1 – Offer Sheet by submitting a request to the Authorized Contact Person at: [communitycourtcontracting@austintexas.gov](mailto:communitycourtcontracting@austintexas.gov). The Authorized Contact Person for the solicitation will provide technical assistance via email, on the phone or may refer the Offeror to another City staff member.
8. **Signature:** The Offeror must sign each document in the Solicitation requiring a signature. Any change made to the Application must be initialed by the Offeror.
9. **Taxes:** Purchases of Goods or Services for City use are usually exempt from City, State, and most Federal Taxes. Applications should not include exempted taxes. The successful Offeror should request a Tax Exemption Certificate from the Purchasing Office. Under no circumstances shall the City be liable to pay exempt taxes under any Contract.

#### E. APPLICATION FORMAT AND SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

1. **Application submission:** DACC is accepting Applications via online submittal as stated on the RFA Offer Sheet:

(1) Confirm that your organization is a registered vendor with the City of Austin by visiting [https://financeonline.austintexas.gov/afo/account\\_services/search/svname.cfm](https://financeonline.austintexas.gov/afo/account_services/search/svname.cfm); or



- (2) To register to become a potential City of Austin vendor, go to <https://www.austintexas.gov/service/register-vendor-city>.

## F. SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

### ALL DOCUMENTS MUST BE UPLOADED THROUGH THE SOLICITATION WEBSITE AS STATED ON THE RFA OFFER SHEET.

1. Please note: Only name your uploaded documents with letters and numbers. To reduce possible submission and/or review delays, please ensure the title of any attached file from your local drive DOES NOT contain any special characters. Letters and numbers are acceptable.
2. Final Application Instructions: Submit Form 2: Scope of Work and other required forms (see Required Documents below) by **May 24, 2024, by 2 PM CST**.
3. No late submissions will be accepted. Responses should be included for each question.
4. In order to be considered responsive, Offerors must submit a complete Application, which is inclusive of:
  - (1) Form 1: Offer Sheet
  - (2) Form 2: Scope of Work
  - (3) Form 3: Program Budget and Narrative
  - (4) Form 4: Program Staff Positions and Time
  - (5) Form 5: COA Certification & Disclosures
5. Offerors may submit only one Scope of Work per Application.
6. Offerors must use this template for the Application and cannot submit an Application that does not include the questions and narrative.
7. All questions are boxed and highlighted in green in Form 2: Scope of Work. Editing is restricted in the document except in the answer boxes. For each question, please provide a response or write N/A for not applicable in the boxes provided. It is preferable to be repetitive rather than to leave sections incomplete.
8. If using this document, Offerors must type answers into the section that says "Click or tap here to enter text" after each question or in the required tables.
9. If compiling responses in a separate document, Offerors must include all questions and narrative before their answers, so the Application appears the same as the provided template.
10. **Application Acceptance Period:** All Applications are valid for a period of three hundred and sixty-five (365) calendar days subsequent to the RFA/FAA closing date unless a longer acceptance period is offered in the Application.



11. **Proprietary Information:** All materials submitted to the City become public property and are subject to the Texas Open Records Act upon receipt. If an Offeror does not desire proprietary information in the Application to be disclosed, each page must be identified and marked proprietary at time of submittal. The City will, to the extent allowed by law, endeavor to protect such information from disclosure. The final decision as to what information must be disclosed, however, lies with the Texas Attorney General. Failure to identify proprietary information will result in all unmarked sections being deemed non-proprietary and available upon public request.
12. **Exceptions:** Be advised that exceptions to any portion of the Solicitation may jeopardize acceptance of the Application.
13. **Application Preparation Costs:** All costs directly or indirectly related to the preparation of a response to the RFA, or any oral presentation required to supplement or clarify an Application that may be required by the City shall be the sole responsibility of the Offeror.
14. **Agreement Adjustments:** The City of Austin reserves the right to adjust the Agreement amount or scope of work over the contract period based on community needs, Offeror's ability to expend funds in a timely manner or any other factor. When the City determines adjustments need to be made, the City will provide at least a 90-day notice to the Grantee.

#### **G. ACCEPTANCE OF APPLICATIONS**

1. The Application must be submitted in the Application link online prior to the due dates and times outlined. The time of the submission of Application documents, which is routed to [communitycourtcontracting@austintexas.gov](mailto:communitycourtcontracting@austintexas.gov), is the official time of record. It is the sole responsibility of the Offeror to ensure timely submittal of all parts of the Application. The City will not be responsible for failure of service on the part of internet service, or any other form of delivery service chosen by the Offeror.
2. **Due Date and Time for Electronic Application:** Electronic Applications in response to this Solicitation shall be submitted via the provided link by the Solicitation Due Date and Time displayed in the Important Dates section of Form 1: Offer Sheet.
3. **Withdrawing Electronic Applications:** Electronic Applications submitted online in response to this Solicitation may be withdrawn at any time prior to the posted Application Deadline Date and Time by submitted an email to [communitycourtcontracting@austintexas.gov](mailto:communitycourtcontracting@austintexas.gov). Once an Application is withdrawn prior to the posted Application deadline, its entire Application package is no longer considered responsive to the solicitation.
4. **Resubmitting a Withdrawn Electronic Applications:** If an Offeror wishes to replace a withdrawn Application, a separate Application package must be started anew. Since all solicitation deadlines are enforced.
5. **Late Electronic Applications:** Electronic Applications to be submitted past the Solicitation's Due Date and Time will not be accepted.
6. **Hardcopy Applications:** No Hardcopies will be accepted. All Applications must be submitted through online link.



7. **Opening Electronic Applications:** Applications will not be opened by staff until after the due date and time defined in the Offer Sheet. At that time, two DACC staff will open Applications and review for completeness. A list of all bidders/offerors will be listed on the website,
8. **Rejection of Applications:** The City reserves the right to reject any or all Applications and to waive any minor informality in any Application or solicitation procedure (a minor informality is one that does not affect the competitiveness of the Application).
9. For any questions regarding the Submission or Withdrawal of an Application, contact the **RFA Authorized Contact Person:** Edna Staniszewski  
**E-Mail:** [communitycourtcontracting@austintexas.gov](mailto:communitycourtcontracting@austintexas.gov)

#### H. APPLICATION EVALUATION

1. **Basis of Competition:** The City may compare Applications based on groups or categories and will choose the basis of competition that best meets the City's needs for the resulting contracts. The basis of competition for each RFA will be described in Section II – Standard Solicitation Provision, Item F4 – Submission Instructions, located in this document.
2. **Minimum Responsiveness:** Applications are Minimally Responsive when they include all of the Submittals listed in this Solicitation, completed and with sufficient detail in each to evaluate the Application in accordance with the Solicitation's Instructions. Applications that are not Minimally Responsive may be deemed non-responsive and rejected.
3. **Responsibility:** An Offeror is responsible if they have the financial and practical ability, resources, expertise, past performance and positive compliance history with all City requirements and ordinances. An Application may be rejected if an Offeror is determined not responsible.
4. **Clarifications:** Any time after the opening of Applications, the City may contact Offerors to ask questions about their Application's contents in order to better understand these contents as written. Responses to clarification questions, whether done verbally or submitted in writing, do not change the Application's contents. Clarifications are not to be confused with Discussions as described ~~here~~.
5. **Evaluation:** Applications that are Minimally Responsive will be evaluated based on the Evaluation Factors listed in Section II – Standard Solicitation Provision, Item K3 – Evaluation of Applications. The City's evaluation may be made without Clarifications or Discussions with Offerors. Applications should, therefore, include the Offeror's most favorable terms.
6. **Discussions and Application Revisions:** After completing initial evaluations, the City may enter into Discussions (communications which may include negotiations and feedback about the Application submitted) with one or more Offerors submitting the highest rated Application(s). Following the completion of Discussions, the City may request Application revisions from these Offerors. The City may seek multiple rounds of Discussions and Application revisions as deemed necessary by the City. The City may revise its initial evaluations depending on the contents of any Application revisions received following these Discussions.



7. **Interviews/Presentations:** The City may require that one or more Offerors submitting the highest rated Applications participate in interviews and/or presentations.

#### I. CONTRACT AWARD AND EXECUTION

1. **Award Determination:** City staff will recommend Contract award to the Offeror(s) submitting the highest rated Application(s) based on the Evaluation Factors Scoring Rubric set forth in this Solicitation. The Award Determination will be published to the solicitation website and notice will be sent to all Offerors.
2. **Multiple Awards:** If the City determines that multiple contracts are needed, the City will award one or more additional contracts to the Offeror(s) submitting the next highest rated Application(s) based on the scoring rubric.
3. **Funding Availability:** The amount and composition of funding availability included in the solicitation documentation is considered approximate and may change at any time during the open solicitation period or after the close of the solicitation. Should additional funds become available, City staff will base award decisions on the recommendations from the Evaluation Factors Scoring Rubric.
4. **Contract Execution:** Contracts within the City Manager's authority will be awarded and executed simultaneously. Contracts above the City Manager's authority will be executed following their authorization by the Austin City Council.
5. The City of Austin reserves the right to adjust the funding amount or scope of work based on community needs, Awardee's ability to expend funds in a timely manner or any other factor. When the City determines adjustments need to be made, the City will provide at least 90-day notice to the Awardee.

#### J. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

1. **Solicitation File:** All documents included in this Solicitation, and all timely received Applications in response to this Solicitation, except for Application contents deemed by Offerors to be proprietary and confidential, will be available for public inspections upon the execution of the contract in accordance with the Public Information Request process.
2. **Debriefings:** Offerors may request a debriefing meeting to ask any questions concerning the Solicitation's contents, process, or the evaluation of their Application. Debriefing meetings are informal exchanges and may be requested anytime following the earlier of (i) after the contract resulting from this Solicitation is executed, or in the case of multiple awards, the last contract is executed; (ii) the date the Solicitation is cancelled. Debriefings are not publicly called meetings in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act and are usually limited to a single Offeror and any of their representatives. Only information regarding the Solicitation documents and the Offeror's Application (including City's evaluation of the Application) in response to the Solicitation will be discussed.
3. **Protests:** The DACC Court Administrator (Administrator) has the authority to settle or resolve any claim of an alleged deficiency or protest. The procedures for notifying the City of Austin of an alleged deficiency or filing a protest are listed below. If the Offeror fails to comply with any of these requirements, the Administrator may dismiss the complaint or protest.



- (1) **Protest Regarding the Solicitation (Pre-Submittal Protest):** Any protest regarding the Solicitation by the City shall be filed no later than five business days prior to the due date and time for Applications. Any protest filed after that date which raises issues regarding the Solicitation will not be considered.
- (2) **Protests Regarding the Evaluation of Applications:** Any protest regarding the evaluation of Applications by the City shall be filed with the City no later than five business days after the notification of award, or notification that the protestor's status as an Offeror has changed, such as notification that an Application has been found to be non-responsive or an Offeror has been found to be non-responsible. Any protest filed after such date which raises issues regarding the evaluation will not be considered. Offerors may only protest the evaluation of their Application.
- (3) **Protest Regarding Award of Contract (Post-Award Protest):** Any protest regarding the award of the contract shall be filed no later than ten days after the date of award. Any protest regarding the award of the contract filed after such date will not be considered.
- (4) **Process to Submit a Protest:** Protests shall be submitted via email to [communitycourtcontracting@austintexas.gov](mailto:communitycourtcontracting@austintexas.gov) and it shall include the following information in the subject line: Protest and the name of the solicitation; in the body of the email: your name, address, telephone, and email address, the Solicitation number, the specific facts and/or law upon which the protest of the Solicitation or the award is based, including all pertinent documents and evidence thereto, and the form of relief requested.
- (5) The protest shall be concise and presented logically and factually to help with the City's review.
- (6) When the City receives a timely written protest, the Administrator will determine whether the grounds for the protest are sufficient. If the Administrator determines that the grounds are sufficient, a protest hearing will be scheduled, usually within five business days. If the Administrator determines that the grounds are insufficient, the City will notify you of that decision in writing.
- (7) The protest hearing is informal and is not subject to the Open Meetings Act. The purpose of the hearing is to give you a chance to present your case, it is not an adversarial proceeding. Those who may attend from the City are representatives from the department that requested the purchase, the Department of Law, DACC staff, Financial Services Department staff, and other appropriate City staff. You may bring a representative or anyone else that will present information to support the factual grounds for your protest with you to the hearing.
- (8) A decision will usually be made within fifteen calendar days after the hearing.
- (9) The City will send you a copy of the hearing decision after the appropriate City staff has reviewed the decision.





(10) When a protest is filed, the City usually will not make an award until a decision on the protest is made. However, the City will not delay an award if the City Manager or the DACC Court Administrator determines that the City urgently requires the supplies or Services to be purchased, or failure to make an award promptly will unduly delay delivery or performance. In those instances, the City will notify you and make every effort to resolve your protest before the award.

4. **Reservations:** The City expressly reserves the right to:

- Specify approximate quantities in the Solicitation
- Extend the Solicitation closing date and time
- Waive as an informality, minor deviations from specifications provided do not affect competition or result in functionally unacceptable Goods or Services
- Waive any minor informality in any Application or Solicitation procedure (a minor informality is one that does not affect the competitiveness of the Offeror)
- Add additional terms or modify existing terms in the Solicitation
- Reject an Application containing exceptions, additions, qualifications or conditions not called for in the Solicitation
- Reject an Application received from an Offeror who is currently debarred or suspended by the City or State
- Reject an Application received from an Offeror who is currently debarred or suspended by the Federal Government (Applicable if project receives Federal funding)
- Reject an Application that contains fraudulent information
- Reject an Application that has material omissions
- Reject or cancel any or all Applications
- Cancel a Solicitation
- Reissue a Solicitation
- Procure any item by other means
- Consider and accept alternate Applications, if specified in the Solicitation, when most advantageous to the City; and/or
- Reject an Application because of unbalanced unit prices

5. **Interested Parties Disclosure:** As a condition to entering the Contract, the Business Entity constituting the Offeror must provide the following disclosure of Interested Parties to the City prior to the award of a contract with the City on Form 1295 "Certificate of Interested Parties" as prescribed by the Texas Ethics Commission for any contract award requiring council authorization. The Certificate of Interested Parties Form must be completed on the Texas Ethics Commission website, printed, and signed by the authorized agent of the Business Entity with acknowledgment that disclosure is made under oath and under penalty of perjury. The City will submit the "Certificate of Interested Parties" to the Texas Ethics Commission within 30 days of receipt from the successful Offeror. The Offeror is reminded that the provisions of Local Government Code 176, regarding conflicts of interest between the bidders and local officials remains in place. Link to [https://www.ethics.state.tx.us/whatsnew/elf\\_info\\_form1295.htm](https://www.ethics.state.tx.us/whatsnew/elf_info_form1295.htm).

## K. EVALUATION OF APPLICATIONS



1. **Competitive Selection:** This procurement will comply with applicable City of Austin Policy. This is a negotiated and multi-award procurement. Awards will be made to firms submitting the best responsive Applications, satisfying City of Austin requirements, with cost and other factors considered. The successful Offeror(s) will be selected by the City on a rational basis. Evaluation factors, outlined in Section II – Standard Solicitation Provision, Item K3 – Evaluation of Applications, of the Solicitation shall be applied to all eligible, responsive Offerors in comparing Applications and selecting the successful Offeror. Award of an agreement may be made without discussion with Offerors after Applications are received. Applications should, therefore, be submitted on the most favorable terms.
  
2. **Negotiations of Applications:** The City reserves the right to negotiate all elements which comprise the Offeror's Application to ensure that the best possible consideration be afforded to all concerned.
  
3. **Evaluation Factors:** A total of 115 points may be awarded to the Application. All Applications will be evaluated as to how the proposed program aligns with the goals of the Scope of Work, and whether each question has been adequately addressed.

<b>RFA# RPS2024EMS Supplemental Security Income (SSI) / Social Security Disability Income (SSDI) Outreach Access and Recovery (SOAR) Application Assistance Evaluation Rubric</b>		
<b>Form 1 - Offer Sheet</b>	Offerors must print, sign, scan and upload signed forms.	No points, but Offerors must submit signed form.
<b>Section</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Maximum Points Eligible</b>
Part 1 – Program Overview & Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Program Strategy</li> <li>- Program Goals and Objectives</li> <li>- Services Solicited</li> <li>- Program Requirements</li> <li>- Program Design</li> <li>- Agency/Subcontractor Experience</li> <li>- Performance</li> <li>- Service Delivery</li> <li>- Project Timeline</li> <li>- Cultural Competence &amp; Racial Equity</li> <li>- Best Practices</li> </ul>	80 points
Part II – Cost Effectiveness	Data Security & Systems Management Quality Improvement & Feedback Performance Measure	20 points
Part III – Presentation to Lived Experience Group	Short List Applicant(s) will present an overview of their Application to the Austin Homeless Advisory Council	15 points

4. **Interviews and/or presentations, Optional:** The City will score Applications based on the criteria listed above. The City may select a “short list” of Offerors based on those scores. “Short-listed” Offerors may be invited for presentations, demonstrations, or discussions with the City. The City reserves the right to re-score “short-listed” Applications as a result, and to make award recommendations on that basis.



**L. POST APPLICATION DOCUMENTS REQUIRED FROM SUCCESSFUL OFFEROR**

1. **Certificates of Insurance:** The Offeror shall provide Certificates of Insurance in the amounts and for the coverages required to Downtown Austin Community Court in conjunction with the Terms and Conditions of the Agreement and within the first month of the Agreement.
2. **Bonds:** When Bonds are required, the Offeror must provide the bonds prior to the execution of the Contract. The Offeror shall provide the Bonds, in the amounts and on the conditions required, within 14 calendar days after notification of award, or as otherwise required by the Solicitation.
3. **Chapter 176 Conflict of Interest Disclosure:** In accordance with Chapter 176 of the Texas Local Government Code, Offeror must file a Conflict-of-Interest Questionnaire with the Office of the City Clerk no later than 5:00 P.M. on the seventh (7<sup>th</sup>) business day after the commencement of contract discussions or negotiations with the City or the submission of an Application, or other writing related to a potential Contract with the City. The questionnaire is available on line at the website for the City, [Conflict of Interest Questionnaire](#). There are statutory penalties for failure to comply with Chapter 176.

**III. SUPPLEMENTAL PURCHASE PROVISIONS**

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The following Supplemental Purchase Provisions apply to this solicitation:

**A. EXPLANATIONS OR CLARIFICATIONS**

1. All requests for explanation or clarification regarding the RFA must be submitted in writing to [CommunityCourtContracting@austintexas.gov](mailto:CommunityCourtContracting@austintexas.gov) by 2 PM CST on May 24, 2024
2. Questions not submitted as stated above or after the deadline will not be addressed. Questions and Answers will be posted and available on the solicitation website.
3. **Request for Technical Assistance** regarding submitting the Application are due by 1PM CST on May 24, 2024.

**B. INSURANCE**

1. Insurance will be required for programs awarded by the City of Austin through this solicitation, in conjunction with terms and conditions of the Grant Agreement.
2. **Grantee shall have and shall require all Subgrantees of every tier providing services under this Agreement to have**, Standard Insurance meeting the General Requirements as set forth below and sufficient to cover the needs of Grantee and/or Subgrantee pursuant to applicable generally accepted business standards. Depending on services provided by Grantee and/or Subgrantee(s), Supplemental Insurance Requirements or Alternate Insurance Options shall be imposed as defined in Section 6.1: Insurance of the Exhibit B: DACC Standard Boilerplate in this RFA.



### C. TERM OF AGREEMENT

1. The Agreements funded by this agreement is intended to have a start date of September 1, 2024, for a 12-monh contract term with four possible 12-month renewals
2. If additional funding is identified within the 12-month Application Acceptance Period, an Application submitted in this RFA process may be considered for award.
3. Upon expiration of the initial term or period of extension, the Grantee agrees to hold over under the terms and conditions of this agreement for such a period of time as is reasonably necessary to re solicit and/or complete the project (not to exceed 180 days unless mutually agreed on in writing).
4. Upon written notice to the Grantee from the City's Purchasing Officer or his designee and acceptance of the Grantee, the term of this agreement shall be extended on the same terms and conditions for an additional period as indicated in item #3 above.

### D. ALLOWABLE AND UNALLOWABLE COSTS

The City shall make the final determination of whether a cost is allowable or unallowable under this agreement.

- 1) The City's prior written authorization is required in order for the following to be considered allowable costs. Inclusion in the agreement constitutes "written authorization".
  - Alteration, construction, or relocation of facilities
  - Cash payments, including cash equivalent gift cards such as Visa, MasterCard and American Express
  - Equipment and other capital expenditures.
  - Interest, other than mortgage interest as part of a pre-approved budget under this Agreement
  - Organization costs (costs in connection with the establishment or reorganization of an organization)
  - Purchases of tangible, nonexpendable property, including fax machines, stereo systems, cameras, video recorder/players, microcomputers, software, printers, microscopes, oscilloscopes, centrifuges, balances and incubator, or any other item having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost, including freight, of over five thousand dollars (\$5,000)
  - Selling and marketing
  - Travel/training outside Travis County
- 2) The following types of expenses are specifically **not allowable** with City funds:
  - Alcoholic beverages
  - Bad debts
  - Compensation of trustees, directors, officers, or advisory board members, other than those acting in an executive capacity
  - Contingency provisions (funds). (Self-insurance reserves and pension funds are allowable.)
  - Defense and prosecution of criminal and civil proceedings, claims, appeals and patent infringement



- Deferred costs
- Donations and contributions including donated goods or space
- Entertainment costs, other than expenses related to client incentives
- Fines and penalties (including late fees)
- Fundraising and development costs
- Goods or services for officers' or employees' personal use
- Housing and personal living expenses for organization's officers or employees
- Idle facilities and idle capacity
- Litigation-related expenses (including personnel costs) in action(s) naming the City as a Defendant
- Lobbying or other expenses related to political activity
- Losses on other agreements or casualty losses
- Public relations costs, except reasonable, pre-approved advertising costs related directly to services provided under this Agreement
- Taxes, other than payroll and other personnel-related levies
- Travel outside of the United States of America

#### **E. RECYCLED PRODUCTS**

1. The City prefers that Offerors offer products that contain recycled materials. When a recycled product is offered by the Offeror, the Offeror must state in their Application the percentage of the product that is recycled and must include a list of the recycled materials that are contained in the product.
2. The recycled content of paper products offered to the City shall be in accordance with the [Federal Environmental Protection Agency's](#) Recycled Product Procurement Guidelines.

#### **F. INTERLOCAL PURCHASING AGREEMENTS**

1. The City has entered into Interlocal Purchasing Agreements with other governmental entities, pursuant to the Interlocal Cooperation Act, Chapter 791 of the Texas Government Code. The Grantee agrees to offer the same prices and terms and conditions to other eligible governmental agencies that have an interlocal agreement with the City.
2. The City does not accept any responsibility or liability for the purchases by other governmental agencies through an interlocal cooperative agreement.

#### **G. OWNERSHIP AND USE OF DELIVERABLES**

The City shall own all rights, titles, and interests throughout the world in and to the Deliverables.

1. **Patents:** As to any patentable subject matter contained in the Deliverables, the Grantee agrees to disclose such patentable subject matter to the City. Further, if requested by the City, the Grantee agrees to assign and, if necessary, cause each of its employees to assign the entire right, title, and interest to specific inventions under such patentable subject matter to the City and to execute, acknowledge, and deliver and, if necessary, cause each of its employees to execute, acknowledge, and deliver an assignment of letters patent, in a form to be reasonably approved by the City, to the City upon request by the City.



2. **Copyrights:** As to any Deliverable containing copyrighted subject matter, the Grantee agrees that upon their creation, such Deliverables shall be considered as work made-for-hire by the Grantee for the City and the City shall own all copyrights in and to such Deliverables, provided however, that nothing in this Paragraph 36 shall negate the City's sole or joint ownership of any such Deliverables arising by virtue of the City's sole or joint authorship of such Deliverables. Should by operation of law, such Deliverables not be considered work made-for-hire, the Grantee hereby assigns to the City (and agrees to cause each of its employees providing services to the City hereunder to execute, acknowledge, and deliver an assignment to the City of Austin) all worldwide right, title, and interest in and to such Deliverables. With respect to such work made-for-hire, the Grantee agrees to execute, acknowledge and deliver and cause each of its employees providing services to the City hereunder to execute, acknowledge, and deliver a work-for-hire agreement, in a form to be reasonably approved by the City, to the City upon delivery of such Deliverables to the City or at such other time as the City may request.
  
3. **Additional Assignments:** The Grantee further agrees to, and if applicable, cause each of its employees to execute, acknowledge, and deliver all Applications, specifications, oaths, assignments, and all other instruments which the City might reasonably deem necessary in order to apply for and obtain copyright protection, mask work registration, trademark registration and/or protection, letters patent, or any similar rights in any and all countries and in order to assign and convey to the City, its successors, assigns, and nominees, the sole and exclusive right, title, and interest in and to the Deliverables, The Grantee's obligations to execute acknowledge, and deliver (or cause to be executed, acknowledged, and delivered) instruments or papers such as those described in this Paragraph 36 A., B., and C. shall continue after the termination of this agreement with respect to such Deliverables . In the event the City should not seek to obtain copyright protection, mask work registration or patent protection for any of the deliverables, but should arise to keep the same secret, the Grantee agrees to treat the same as confidential Information under the terms of paragraph above.

#### H. EMERGENCY RESPONSE

In the case of a public health emergency or declaration of emergency in Austin/Travis County, the Grantee agrees to provide emergency response services within the capabilities of the Grantee organization. The City may allow or require changes to program services and budgets as included in the original Application documents and/or described in the original contract to accommodate necessary efforts in the interest of a coordinated community response. The Grantee will work alongside City staff to make necessary adjustments to relevant contract documents, including, but not limited to, the Program Work Statement, Program Budget and Narrative, and Program Performance Measures. See Sections 8.6 and 8.6.1 of Exhibit B