

**County of El Dorado
Chief Administrative Office
Procurement and Contracts Division**
on behalf of the
Health and Human Services Agency



**Request for Qualifications (RFQ)
#24-952-021**

for

Coordinated Entry System

Submittal Deadline:

December 4, 2023, not later than 3:00:00 PM (Pacific)

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Attachment A - Sample Agreement for Services*

Attachment B – Budget Tool

Attachment C – Reference Worksheet

Attachment D – Respondent Response Information and Certification

*The attached Sample Agreement for Services is for reference only. Other terms and conditions may apply based on the types of services and funding involved.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The County of El Dorado (hereinafter referred to as County) is located in Northern California and is bordered by Sacramento, Placer, Amador and Alpine counties in California, and Douglas County, Nevada. The two (2) incorporated cities in the County are Placerville and South Lake Tahoe. The United States (U.S.) Census estimates that, as of 2020, the population of the County is 194,940. The largest city in the County is South Lake Tahoe, a resort city located in the Sierra Nevada Mountains, with a reported US Census 2020 population of 22,487.

According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), a Continuum of Care (CoC) is “a regional or local planning body that coordinates housing and services funding for homeless families and individuals.” HUD as the governing authority for CoCs requires each CoC to establish and operate a “coordinated entry process” (hereinafter referred to as a “Coordinated Entry System” [CES]) in their jurisdiction, with the goal of increasing the efficiency of local crisis response systems and improving fairness and ease of access to housing and homelessness resources, including mainstream resources. Within the County, El Dorado Opportunity Knocks (EDOK) CoC is the regional planning body responsible for coordinating the community’s policies, strategies, and activities toward preventing and ending homelessness. The County Health and Human Services Agency (HHS) acts as the Administrative Entity on behalf of EDOK CoC.

The County Procurement and Contracts Division, on behalf of HHS (in coordination with the EDOK CoC), is soliciting Statements of Qualifications (SOQ) from interested firms (hereinafter referred to as Respondent or firm) to operate the CoC CES within El Dorado County.

As a result of this competitive solicitation, HHS shall establish a list of qualified firms experienced in providing the services outlined in this RFQ and utilize the resulting Qualified List (QL) over the next three (3) years. As a direct result of this competitive RFQ, HHS intends to enter into one (1) Agreement for Services (contract) with the most successful Respondent, however, should future contract needs arise for CES services throughout the duration of the QL, HHS may enter into an additional contract. The resulting agreement is for operations of the CoC’s CES for three (3) years with the option for annual renewals for each of the following two (2) years pending County Board of Supervisors approval.

The County makes no specific guarantee of a minimum or maximum amount of services which shall be requested of any Respondents named to the resulting QL. The County shall make awards based on the experience and expertise required for the work, Respondent’s current workload, ability to respond, or other relevant criteria. This RFQ includes a description of the Scope of Work, submittal requirements, and instructions for submitting your SOQ.

The County is an equal opportunity employer (EOE). All individuals are encouraged to participate. The County shall not discriminate against any individual because of race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, physical handicap, mental disability, medical condition, genetic information, military or veteran status, marital status, age, gender, gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation.

The following schedule for this RFQ process is listed below for reference purposes and is subject to change:

RFQ Issuance	November 7, 2023
Deadline for Final Questions	November 17, 2023
Answers Posted on or About	November 27, 2023
Due Date for Submissions	December 4, 2023
Tentative Date Reserved for Interviews (if deemed necessary by County)	Week of December 18, 2023

In the event that it becomes necessary to revise any part of this RFQ, written addenda will be issued and posted at:

<https://pbsystem.planetbids.com/portal/48157/portal-home> ("PlanetBids").

Any amendment to this RFQ is valid only if in writing and issued by the Chief Administrative Office, Procurement and Contracts Division. Verbal conversations or agreements with any officer, agent, or employee of the County that modify any terms or obligations of this RFQ are invalid.

All interpretations or corrections, as well as any additional RFQ provisions that the County may decide to include, will be made only as an official addendum that will be posted to PlanetBids and it shall be the Respondent's responsibility to ensure they have received all addendums before submitting their submittal. Any addendum issued by the County shall become part of the RFQ and shall be incorporated into the submittal.

County will not be bound by oral responses or inquires or written responses other than written addenda.

2.0 SCOPE OF WORK

Any reference in this RFQ to specific terms of the resulting agreement are for illustrative purposes only and shall not limit the scope of the obligations to be assumed by the successful Respondent under the agreement. In the event of any conflict between a provision of this RFQ and the provisions of the finalized agreement (similar to the sample agreement attached to this RFQ, labeled Attachment A), the terms of the agreement shall govern. In performing the Scope

of Work, the successful Respondent shall provide the following CES services and meet specified requirements.

2.1 Coordinated Entry Requirements

A. Coordinated Point of Entry into Homelessness System of Care

The Homeless Emergency and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act of 2009 included a requirement that all local CoCs establish a centralized or coordinated entry point for individuals to gain access to the local homelessness system of care.

The CoC Program interim rule at 24 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 578.3 defines centralized or coordinated assessment as, “a centralized or coordinated process designed to coordinate program participant intake assessment and provision of referrals. A centralized or coordinated assessment system covers the local geographic area, is easily accessed by individuals and families seeking housing or homelessness services, is well advertised, and includes a comprehensive and standardized assessment tool.”

The EDOK CoC’s CES is Low Barrier and Housing First oriented, to ensure that people are housed quickly without preconditions or service participation requirements. All individuals in the EDOK CoC’s geographic area shall have fair and equal access to the CES, regardless of where or how they present for services. Fair and equal access means that people can easily access the CES, whether in person, by phone, or through some other method, and that the process for accessing help is well-known. Additionally, all coordinated entry activities shall be conducted in a manner that is trauma-informed, culturally and linguistically competent, low barrier, and Housing First. Housing First is a homelessness assistance approach that prioritizes providing permanent housing to people experiencing homelessness, thus ending their homelessness and serving as a platform from which they can pursue personal goals and improve their quality of life. This approach is guided by the belief that people need basic necessities like food and a place to live before attending to anything less critical, such as getting a job, budgeting properly, or attending to substance use issues. Additionally, Housing First is based on the understanding that client choice is valuable in housing selection and supportive service participation, and that exercising that choice is likely to make a client more successful in remaining housed and improving their life.

The CES Contractor shall maintain policies in accordance with HUD’s Equal Access and Gender Identity Rules. The following classes are protected from discrimination:

- Race
- Color

- Religion
- National Origin
- Sex
- Actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity
- Disability
- Familial Status
- Marital Status

HUD considers the terms “Centralized or Coordinated Assessment System” and “Coordinated Entry Process” to be interchangeable.

B. Required Locations for Homelessness Point of Entries

The CoC Program interim rule at 24 CFR Part 578.7(a)(8) requires that, at a minimum, all CoC coordinated entry processes must cover the entire geographic area claimed by the CoC. The successful Respondent must coordinate or provide multiple physical entry points to utilize various routes or methods of conducting outreach to enable all eligible persons in the County to access the system in the absence of special outreach – such as those encamped in rural locations or those with special needs.

The EDOK CoC Coordinated Entry process shall comply with all federal, state, and local Fair Housing laws and regulations. This includes that all fixed entry points shall be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), ensuring that physical CES access locations are accessible to individuals with disabilities or who use wheelchairs.

Entry points are the access points – either virtual, physical, or by phone – where an individual or family in need of assistance accesses the coordinated entry process. The EDOK CoC’s CES covers the CoC’s entire geographic area.

The County is divided into two (2) geographic areas requiring successful Respondent to coordinate the provision of coordinated points of entry into the County’s homelessness system of care, and arrange at least one (1) physical entry point at the following County slopes:

- 1) Eastern Slope – South Lake Tahoe Basin;
- 2) Western Slope – City of Placerville and unincorporated areas west of the Echo Summit.

In addition, the successful Respondent shall incorporate new routes or methods of conducting outreach to enable all eligible persons in the County to access the CES on an equal basis, especially those who would be least likely to access the system in the absence of special outreach.

C. Operation of CES

The successful Respondent must fulfill all the requirements of the HUD-approved CES including outreach, assessment, prioritization, matching, and referral for those currently experiencing homelessness or those at-risk of homelessness who may come in contact with the system and need prevention, diversion, or other housing resources.

The successful Respondent shall provide the following four (4) distinct elements of the centralized CES that connect coordinated entry participants to potential housing and services:

- 1) **Assessment:** Assessment refers to the use of one (1) or more standardized assessment tool(s) to determine a household's current housing situation, housing and service needs, risk of harm, risk of future or continued homelessness, and other adverse outcomes.
- 2) **Scoring:** Scoring is assigning an indicator or measurement of risk, vulnerability, or need based on responses to assessment questions and other factors, including but not limited to case conferencing.
- 3) **Prioritization:** Prioritization is the process by which all persons within the system are ranked for referrals in order of priority. Prioritization policies are established by the CoC, with input from community stakeholders, and must ensure Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) projects are able to serve clients in accordance with 24 CFR Part 576.400(e).
- 4) **Determining Eligibility:** Determining eligibility is a project-level process governed by written standards, by which the coordinated entry process determines whether potential participants meet project-specific requirements for project eligibility and referral.

In adherence with the CoC Program interim rule at 24 CFR Part 578.7(a)(8), successful Respondent shall, at a minimum, ensure that all CoC coordinated entry processes:

- 1) Cover the entire geographic area claimed by the CoC;
- 2) Be easily accessed by individuals and families seeking housing or services;
- 3) Be well-advertised;
- 4) Include one (1) or more comprehensive and standardized assessment tool(s);
- 5) Provide an initial, comprehensive assessment of individuals and families for housing and services; and
- 6) Include a specific policy to guide the operation of the centralized or coordinated assessment system to address the needs of individuals and families who are fleeing, or attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, but who are seeking shelter or services from non-victim specific providers.

D. Successful Respondent Staffing

The successful Respondent must provide sufficient staffing to fulfill all requirements of a HUD-approved CES, including outreach, assessment, prioritization, matching, and referral for those currently experiencing homelessness, or those at-risk of homelessness who may come in contact with the system and need prevention, diversion, or other housing resources.

The successful Respondent shall be responsible for selection of its employees, including:

- 1) Hiring, training, supervision, management and termination;
- 2) Maintenance of Workers' Compensation or a self-insurance program, and providing coverage for all other appropriate benefits covering employees assigned to provide services outlined in this scope of work;
- 3) Regularly evaluating employee performance based upon performance criteria and feedback from consumers, their organization, the EDOK CoC Board, and County staff.

E. Client Confidentiality

The successful Respondent shall at no time release or divulge any protected personal health information (PHI) or protected information received related to the clients served, without a signed client release of information (ROI) and a verifiable need for the purposes of eligibility for shelter or rehousing services. Source documentation retained should be administered by qualified professionals certifying or otherwise establishing that eligibility criteria has been met without violating patient or client confidentiality protections.

F. Coordinated Entry System Access:

The EDC CoC uses the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) to collect and manage data associated with assessment and referrals. Access to the CES shall be authorized only to those designated as assessors. The successful Respondent, acting as the CES Operator, shall serve as the main entry point.

The successful Respondent shall conduct intake and assessment and enter client data in the HMIS. HMIS data entry includes client universal data elements, VI-SPDAT assessment, results of assessment, record-keeping of outreach, prioritization, matching/eligibility for programs, and referral for those currently experiencing homelessness or those at-risk of homelessness who may come in contact with the CES and need prevention, diversion, or other housing resources. The successful Respondent shall maintain a single By Name List (BNL) based on prioritization and ensure that client data is protected pursuant to EDOK CoC HMIS Policies and Procedures and HUD HMIS Data and Technical Standards.

The successful Respondent must train, mentor, and coordinate with all Entry Points and Assessors to ensure that the intake and assessment processes are consistent across the CoC and all clients receive the same information regardless of the Entry Point location.

G. Coordination with County, EDOK CoC, and Community Partners

The CES successful Respondent must regularly consult with County, EDOK CoC, and Community Partners to present monthly status reports on the progress of the CES and solicit feedback on how to adjust the system. The successful Respondent is required to regularly attend CoC General Membership, Board Meetings, and Coordinated Entry Workgroup meetings.

The Monthly Status Report shall contain at minimum:

1. Number of contacts for assessment
 - a. Number of calls
 - b. Number of in-person requests and locations
2. Disposition of requests
 - a. Assessments completed
 - b. Persons not eligible due to location (outside of area)
 - c. Households not meeting Homelessness or At-Risk of Homeless Criteria
3. Assessments completed
 - a. New intakes to the system (including persons who had previously been exited)
 - b. Annual reassessments
 - c. Updated assessments due to changes in household status or vulnerability
4. Referrals to Services
 - a. Number of referrals requested – monthly cumulative and by service type (Permanent Supportive Housing, Rapid Rehousing, Temporary Housing, Emergency Shelter, etc.)
5. Exits from Coordinated Entry Project
 - a. Persons housed
 - b. Loss of contact/Data clean-up
6. BNL Data
 - a. Number of Households on BNL
 - b. Households by Assessment Type (Individual, Family, Youth)
 - c. Number of households by assessment scores
 - d. Number of individuals by gender
 - e. Persons by age grouping

To connect clients to available resources, successful Respondent shall hold regular case conferences with those providers and partners that have

been given express permission to attend. The successful Respondent shall ensure all participants have active signed confidentiality forms on file, and only clients with signed ROI's shall be discussed. At all times, the successful Respondent shall make every effort to discuss client's needs without revealing personally identifiable information (PII), such as name, address or location, social security number, medical conditions or disability, or other identifying information, unless otherwise needed to connect a client to services.

H. **Community Engagement**

The successful Respondent must regularly consult with EDOK CoC partners to report on the progress of the CES and solicit feedback on how to adjust the system as applicable, including attending quarterly EDOK CoC General Membership and Board Meetings and leading monthly Coordinated Entry Workgroup meetings, and periodic meetings with HHSA staff to present progress reports, as requested.

3.0 **SUBMITTAL FORMAT REQUIREMENTS**

Each response to this RFQ shall include the information described in this section. Failure to include all of the elements specified may be cause for rejection. Additional information may be provided but should be succinct and relevant to the goals of this RFQ. Excessive information will not be considered favorably. The response documents shall be 8-1/2 inches by 11 inches in size or shall be folded to that size. Unnecessarily elaborate responses, enclosures, and specialized binding are not desired, and may be construed as an indication of Respondent's lack of cost consciousness.

All SOQs shall contain the following elements, and in the order given:

3.1 Team Qualifications and Experience: Describe the qualifications and experience of the entire team that will be dedicated to providing the proposed services. For the key team members, please emphasize the specific qualifications and experience with projects similar to the requested services, including local government or municipality experience. Include an organization chart of the proposed staff to be assigned to the CES Project. Include a brief discussion of current project commitments made to other agencies, showing the percentage of time key staff members are available during the effective period of the resulting contract. For any subcontractor to be used, provide firm name, area of expertise, the names of individual staff assigned to this Project, and their role on the team.

3.2 Experience of Firm: Provide a narrative of the responding firm's qualifying background and experience with providing services as outlined in this RFQ, including any experience with local CoCs and government agencies.

- 3.3 Proposed Work Plan and Workload:** Provide a work plan addressing the Scope of Work identified in Section 2.0 of this RFQ. Respondents shall clearly identify and provide a brief narrative regarding their plan for services as related to each task. Respondents that plan on utilizing subcontractors shall provide a brief narrative to explain how the use of subcontractors will not negatively impact the Respondent's work plan and quality of service provided to the County. Include thorough discussions of methodologies you believe are essential to this Project, including: 1) Project constraints; 2) milestones; and 3) required approvals relating to the Project, to ensure services are performed in a timely manner. Provide a list of the proposed locations of CES points of entry into the homelessness system of care that will be offered in El Dorado County. Provide a narrative of proposed staffing size, current workload, and with consideration of the Respondent's current projects, and confirm the Respondent's ability to perform the work as described herein.
- 3.4 References:** Include at least three (3) references of related projects, (government references are preferred), including client's name, name of the project, contact person's first and last name with current email address and direct phone number along with a brief description of the project (including project completion date). Verify that all reference information is current and accurate especially that of the contacts and contact information prior to submitting the response. Respondents must complete and submit a fully completed **Attachment C, Reference Worksheet** (included with this RFQ), to be attached to the SOQ submission labeled "Attachment C."
- 3.5** Submit a completed and signed **Attachment D, RFQ Response Information and Certification form** (included with this RFQ) to be attached to the SOQ submission labeled "Attachment D."
- 3.6 Cost Proposal:** All Respondents must complete and submit a proposed budget using **Attachment B – HHS Budget Tool**, outlining the expected cost of the services, broken down by major cost categories. Important considerations are as follows:
- 1) The completed budget should include all Direct Costs necessary to perform the services identified in Section 2.0, Scope of Work, in this RFQ for an anticipated three (3) year initial term (complete budget tab in Attachment B labeled Contractor Budget) **as well as** complete the optional two (2) year additional term budget tab budget (labeled 2 Additional Years (Optional)), thereby providing a total five (5) year term budget for proposed costs. Proposed Direct Costs are those costs directly related to the services solicited. They may include staff time, or performing other activities directly related to the Scope of Work.

- 2) All proposed costs should include a description or formula indicating how the total cost amount was determined. Attachment B provides a sample for creating a consistent format.
- 3) Respondents should identify all personnel/position costs inclusive of salary and benefits, any contract or subcontract costs that will be incurred (whether for goods or services), any operational costs, as well as Indirect Costs (Facilities & Administrative [F&A] costs).
- 4) Indirect Costs (F&A costs) can only be reimbursed as a percentage of actual costs billed on a monthly basis. As a result, Respondents must factor these costs as a percentage of the total direct costs proposed. Indirect cost rates in excess of ten percent (10%) of the total direct costs proposed will not be evaluated favorably.

3.7 Exceptions: List all exceptions to this RFQ and related attachments, if applicable.

4.0 RESPONDENT QUESTIONS

- 4.1** Questions regarding this RFQ must be submitted in writing by email or U.S. mail to the Procurement and Contracts Office, or using the PlanetBids website, and must be received no later than 5:00:00 p.m. (Pacific) on **November 17, 2023**.
- 4.2** All emails must have “**RFQ #24-952-021 – QUESTION**” as their subject, and all envelopes or containers must be clearly marked “**RFQ #24-952-021 – QUESTION**” for convenience purposes. Emails, envelopes, and/or containers not clearly labeled may be overlooked and not responded to.
- 4.3** Questions will **not** be accepted by telephone, facsimile (fax), or orally.
- 4.4** The County reserves the right to decline a response to any question if, in County’s assessment, the information cannot be obtained and shared with all potential organizations in a timely manner.
- 4.5** A summary of the questions submitted, including responses deemed relevant and appropriate by County, will be posted to the PlanetBids website on or about **November 27, 2023**. Any addenda to this RFQ is valid only if in writing and issued by the County Procurement and Contracts Division.
- 4.6** All inquiries shall be submitted by email to: matthew.mckain@edcgov.us
or by U.S. Mail to:

County of El Dorado
Procurement and Contracts
330 Fair Lane
Placerville, California 95667
RFQ #24-952-021 – Question

- 4.7 Respondents are cautioned that they are not to rely upon any oral statements that they may have obtained. Respondents shall direct all inquiries to the contact above and shall not contact the requesting department directly regarding any matter related to this RFQ. Information provided by persons other than Procurement and Contracts staff may be invalid and responses which are submitted in accordance with such information may be declared non-responsive.

5.0 SUBMITTAL INSTRUCTIONS

- 5.1 Respondents are strongly encouraged to submit their responses online to assure a complete and timely response. To respond online firms must register with the County's online bidding system, PlanetBids, at <https://pbsystem.planetbids.com/portal/48157/portal-home>. Respondents are cautioned that the timing of their online submission is based on when the submittal is RECEIVED by PlanetBids, not when a submittal is initiated by a Respondent. Online submittal transmissions can be delayed in an "Internet Traffic Jam" due to file transfer size, transmission speed, etc. For these reasons, the County recommends that Respondents allow sufficient time to upload their response and attachment(s) (if applicable) and to resolve any issues that may arise. The closing date and time shall be governed by the PlanetBids' web clock, which does not allow submittals after the closing date and time. PlanetBids will send a confirmation email to the Respondent advising that their online submission (eBid) was submitted. If you do not receive a confirmation email you are advised to contact the PlanetBids Support team by phone (818-992-1771 Monday through Friday between 7 a.m. and 5 p.m. Pacific, excluding statutory U.S. holidays) or by submitting a Support Ticket (visit: <https://home.planetbids.com/support/> to complete and submit the ticket form).
- 5.2 Respondents that decide to submit a hard-copy response do so at their own risk. All hard-copy submittals must include all of the same information required for online submittals. Incomplete submittals will be rejected as non-responsive. Respondents shall submit one (1) original copy and one (1) electronic copy of your submittal in PDF format on a flash/USB drive. IMPORTANT: Respondents who submit hard-copy responses must submit their Fee Schedules (refer to Section 3.6 above) in a separate, sealed envelope clearly marked "**RFQ 24-952-021 – Fee Schedule**" on the outside of the envelope. All hard-copy submittals shall be submitted in a sealed envelope or container and clearly marked with the RFQ number, title, and closing date and time noted on the outside of the parcel.
- 5.3 It is the sole responsibility of the Respondent to ensure that the submittal is received in the Procurement & Contracts Division prior to the RFQ submittal

deadline. All responses must be submitted not later than the date and time posted on PlanetBids. Hard-copy responses shall be submitted ONLY to:

County of El Dorado
Procurement and Contracts Division
330 Fair Lane
Placerville, CA 95667

- 5.4** The County shall not be responsible for submittals delivered to a person or location other than specified herein. Submittals submitted to a location other than the above will not be considered duly delivered or timely. The County shall not be responsible for rerouting submittals delivered to a person or location other than that specified above.
- 5.5** Faxed or emailed submittals will not be accepted.
- 5.6** Late submittals will not be accepted or considered.
- 5.7** All submittals, whether selected or rejected, shall become the property of the County and shall not be returned.
- 5.8** The County reserves the right to waive minor defects and/or irregularities in submittals, and shall be the sole judge of the materiality of any such defect or irregularity.
- 5.9** All costs associated with submittal preparation and submission, including any interviews conducted at the sole discretion of the County, shall be borne by the Respondent.
- 5.10** County staff will open submittals following the submittal deadline. The only information that will be made available to the public after the submittal deadline has passed will be the names of the Respondents that submitted submittals. The contents of all submittals, or any other medium which discloses any aspect of the submittal, shall be held in strictest confidence until the County releases a Notice of Award or Notice of Intent to Award.
- 5.11** Any hard-copy submittal received prior to the date and time specified for receipt of submittals may be withdrawn or modified by written request of the Respondent. Requests for modification must be received in writing, and in the same number of copies as the original submittal, prior to the date and time specified above for receipt of submittals.

6.0 EVALUATION PROCESS

All submittals will be evaluated initially to determine if they are responsive to the requirements of this RFQ. An evaluation panel, consisting of County staff and

members selected by County staff, will review and evaluate all responsive submittals received by the submittal date as set forth in this RFQ, or as amended by addenda, and the submittals will be evaluated based on the thoroughness, clarity, and quality of the material presented. The County reserves the right to request additional information and clarification of any information submitted and to allow corrections of errors or omissions.

Respondents who have the qualifications (expertise and skills) and experience (documented, successful, and relevant) necessary to meet the requirements of this RFQ will be scored and ranked using the criteria and point assignments listed below. Respondents submitting the most highly ranked submittals may be invited for interviews.

	Evaluation Criteria – Written Submittals	Maximum Possible Points
A.	Team Qualifications and Experience	35
B.	Experience of Firm	30
C.	Proposed Work Plan and Workload	35
D.	References (inclusion of 3 references for max points)	10
E.	Cost Proposal (Budget Template)	20
	TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS	130

Evaluation Criteria – Interviews (if held)

If the County elects to hold interviews, the following evaluation criteria and rating points will be used to evaluate the Respondents who are invited to interview.

	Evaluation Criteria – Interviews	Maximum Possible Points
A.	Presentation on Plan for Delivering Scope of Work	35
B.	Experience and Qualifications of Staff	15
	TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS	50

7.0 SELECTION PROCEDURE

7.1 Submittals will be reviewed for responsiveness. A selection committee will then evaluate responsive submittals in accordance with the criteria specified in Section 6.0 above. The firm(s) submitting the highest ranked submittals may be invited for an interview. Interviews will be conducted

solely at the County's option. The County reserves the right to select the most qualified firm solely on the content of the submittal. If the County chooses to conduct interviews, the Respondent's Primary Contact identified in the Respondent's RFQ Response Information and Certification form (completed Attachment D) shall represent the Respondent at the interview at a minimum. After evaluation of the interviews, the Committee will recommend the firm(s) with the highest overall value, based on evaluation ranking, for approval by the County Purchasing Agent or Board of Supervisors.

- 7.2** The County reserves the right to make an award without further discussion of the submittal with the Respondent. Therefore, the submittal should be submitted initially on the most favorable terms that the firm or individual may propose.
- 7.3** The County reserves the right to award one or more contracts to the firms or individuals who, in the sole judgment of the County, present the most favorable response to this RFQ pursuant to the evaluation criteria indicated above.
- 7.4** The County reserves the right to reject any and all submittals, or to waive minor irregularities in said submittals, or to negotiate minor deviations with the successful firm. The County shall be the sole judge of the materiality of any such defect or irregularity.
- 7.5** The Procurement and Contracts Division does not mail out hard copy letters advising participating Respondents of RFQ results. For RFQ results, please visit the PlanetBids website at:
- <https://pbsystem.planetbids.com/portal/48157/portal-home>
- RFQ results are also available at:
- <https://www.edcgov.us/Government/Contracts/Pages/Bid-Results.aspx>
- 7.6** The results of this RFQ will be posted on the PlanetBids and County websites listed in Section 7.5 above at the earliest possible opportunity in accordance with County policy. The timeline for posting RFQ results may vary depending on the nature and complexity of the RFQ.
- 7.7** Response and selection of a submittal will not necessarily result in the award of a contract with the County. The act of opening a submittal and selecting a Respondent does not constitute awarding of a contract. Contract award is by action of the Purchasing Agent or Board of Supervisors and is not in force until fully executed.

7.8 Once contract negotiations are initiated, the County reserves the right to select the next ranked Respondent if for any reason a contract cannot be negotiated with the selected Respondent.

8.0 EL DORADO COUNTY WEBSITE REQUIREMENTS

It is the Respondent's responsibility to monitor the PlanetBids website for possible addenda to this RFQ to inform him/herself of the most current specifications, terms, and conditions, and to submit his/her submittal in accordance with original RFQ requirements and all required addenda. All available RFQs and related addenda can be found at:

<https://pbsystem.planetbids.com/portal/48157/portal-home>

Failure of Respondent to obtain this information shall not relieve him/her of the requirements contained therein. Those Respondents not acknowledging and returning Addenda as required will not be considered and will be rejected as "non-responsive."

9.0 REJECTION OF SUBMITTALS

Respondents interested in being considered must submit a submittal in compliance with this RFQ. Failure to meet the minimum requirements of the RFQ shall be cause for rejection of the submittal. The County reserves the right to reject any or all submittals.

The County may reject a submittal if it is conditional, incomplete, contains irregularities, or reflects inordinately high cost rates.

10.0 VALID OFFER

Submittals shall remain valid for one hundred twenty (120) days from the due date. The County reserves the right to negotiate with the successful Respondent any additional terms or conditions not contained in their submittal which are in the best interest of the County or to otherwise revise the scope of this RFQ. This RFQ does not constitute a contract or an offer of employment.

11.0 COUNTY'S RIGHTS

The County reserves the right to:

1. Request clarification of any submitted information.
2. Waive any irregularity or immaterial deviation in any submittal.
3. Not enter into any agreement.
4. Not select any Respondent.

5. Cancel this process at any time.
6. Amend this process at any time.
7. Interview Respondents prior to award.
8. To request additional information during an interview.

Waiver of an immaterial deviation shall in no way modify the RFQ documents or excuse the Respondent from full compliance with the contract requirements if the Respondent is awarded the contract.

12.0 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Respondents warrant and covenant that no official or employee of the County, or any business entity in which an official of the County has an interest, has been employed or retained to solicit or aid in the procuring of the resulting agreement, nor that any such person will be employed in the performance of such agreement without immediate divulgence of such fact to the County. Submittals shall contain a statement to the effect that the Respondent is not currently committed to another project that would constitute a conflicting interest with the project defined in this RFQ.

13.0 PUBLIC RECORDS ACT

Pursuant to the California Public Records Act, the County may be required to produce records of this transaction, upon third party request, subject to various statutory exemptions. Please indicate what exemptions may apply to the information you submit (such as a 'proprietary information' exemption – refer to Section 3 for submittal instructions).

In the event of a request for such information, the County will make best efforts to provide notice to Respondent prior to such disclosure. If Respondent contends that any documents are exempt from the CPRA and wishes to prevent disclosure, it is required to obtain a protective order, injunctive relief or other appropriate remedy from a court of law in El Dorado County before the County's deadline for responding to the CPRA request. If Respondent fails to obtain such remedy within County's deadline for responding to the CPRA request, County may disclose the requested information. The County shall not in any way be liable or responsible for the disclosure of any such records.

Respondent further agrees that it shall defend, indemnify and hold County harmless against any claim, action or litigation (including but not limited to all judgments, costs, fees, and attorney's fees) that may result from denial by County of a CPRA request for information arising from any representation, or any action (or inaction), by the Respondent.

14.0 BUSINESS LICENSE REQUIREMENT

It is unlawful for any person to furnish supplies or services, or transact any kind of business in the unincorporated territory of El Dorado County without possessing a County business license unless exempt under County Code Section 5.08.070. Contact the Tax Collector's Office at 360 Fair Lane, Placerville, CA 95667, or phone (530) 621-5800, for further information.

It is not a requirement to possess a County business license at the time of submittal. Selected Respondents may be required to possess a County business license to award contract.

15.0 PUBLIC AGENCY

It is intended that other public agencies (i.e., city, special district, public authority, public agency, and other political subdivisions of the State of California) shall have the option to participate in any agreement created as a result of this RFQ with the same terms and conditions specified therein, including pricing. The County shall incur no financial responsibility in connection with any agreement from another public agency. The public agency shall accept sole responsibility for contracting for services and making payment to the vendor.