

**DOING BUSINESS
WITH
THE CITY OF LINCOLN & LANCASTER COUNTY**

EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 2008

FORWARD

This Guide is not an all encompassing manual of purchasing policies and procedures. Those are contained within the City's Charter and Municipal Code, Mayor's Executive Orders, and the County Purchasing Act for County acquisitions. By reading this guide you can learn more about how you fit into the City/County purchasing process. If at any time you're unsure of the procedures described or we haven't made ourselves clear, please contact the Purchasing Division of the City Finance Department.

Vince M. Mejer, Purchasing Agent

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Keyword: Purchasing

PURCHASING POLICIES

The Purchasing Division is responsible for administrating purchasing policies, programs, and procedures for the acquisition of materials, equipment, supplies, services and construction projects for City/County government. The following policies have been established as guidelines for these services:

1. All requests for prices or services and all purchases should be made via the Purchasing Division. This authority may be delegated to others if certain criteria exists in accordance with the City of Lincoln's Code, or the County Purchasing Act.
2. The Purchasing Division has the authority to investigate the quality, quantity, and type of materials purchased in order to best serve the interests of the City of Lincoln, Lancaster County and the taxpaying citizens.
3. The Purchasing Division shall not knowingly issue a purchase order or contract where there is evidence of a conflict of interest.
4. Acceptance of gifts, other than advertising novelties, is prohibited. No City/County Purchasing employee shall personally receive a benefit or profit from any purchase or contract made in conjunction with their position with the City or County.

WHERE TO CALL

Purchasing is located in the "K" Street Complex, 440 South 8th Street, SW Wing, Suite 200, Lincoln, Nebraska 68508. Telephone number (402) 441-7410 or (402) 441-7416 and FAX (402) 441-6513. You may review specifications for bids, quotes and requests for proposals at our office or on the Purchasing E-Bid web site for projects advertised by the City/County. Office hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday - Friday. Vendors are welcome to visit our office to discuss their services and product lines. We may, on occasion, direct you to other City/County departments which may be interested in your products or services. Please call and set up an appointment to ensure time is available to discuss your business.

ELECTRONIC BIDDING

The Purchasing Division has implemented an Electronic Bidding System (E-Bid). Through this process, you will receive immediate electronic notification of bids via e-mail. You will then be able to review, download or print the specs and plans and submit your bid online. Following the bid process, you will be able to access the bid results from your own PC.

VENDOR REGISTRATION E-BID

All vendors will be required to register.
Bidders/Proposers may register as follows:

lincoln.ne.gov

TYPE "e-bid" IN SEARCH BOX
CLICK "SUPPLIER REGISTRATION"
ENTER INFORMATION AS REQUIRED
IT'S QUICK, IT'S EASY, IT'S SECURE!!

Once registered, vendors will receive two e-mail notifications, the first one acknowledges registration, the second, registration activation. Upon e-mail notification of registration activation, you may submit your electronic bid on the City/County Purchasing website.

To submit a bid electronically via the E-Bid System:

- Enter your user name and password
- Click on the bid you would like to submit
- Click "Respond" to fill out your bid.
- Click "Submit" when you have completed all areas of the bid.

E-BID SECURITY

The E-Bid System was designed to maintain the security of the solicitation process, including protecting the integrity of sealed bid responses. Key security features include, but are not limited to:

- All sealed bid data is stored in encrypted fields while the bid is still available for supplier response.
- Each buyer and supplier user is required to use a unique password.
- Passwords are stored in an encrypted format using a one-way hash.
- Other security features are available for your protection.

HOW THE CITY/ COUNTY BUYS

CITY/COUNTY Departments may make one-time purchases via their own staff for supplies or services which total an amount less than \$1,500.00 unless that commodity or service is already under contract. When the Department/Agency makes the purchase, they shall obtain and record at least three (3) quotations, either written or verbal. Usually no purchase order is generated. Under no circumstances shall orders by Departments or Agencies be split into smaller orders to avoid a quote or bid by the Purchasing Division.

Bid Thresholds are as Follows:

City, Formal Bids – \$ 25,000 and Up
County, Formal Bids – \$ 20,000 and Up
City, Informal Bids – \$1,501 - \$ 25,000
County, Informal Bids - \$1,501 - \$20,000
City/County Department gets Quotes for \$ 1,500 and Under

PURCHASING will obtain Informal Bids or Quotes for equipment, supply items or services with a single purchase value above the departmental limit, but less than \$25,000 (City) / \$20,000.00 (County). It is the policy of the Purchasing Division to solicit Informal Bids or Quotes via the E-Bid System. All registered vendors will receive immediate electronic notification of Informal Bids for their respective commodity or service via email.

CITY/COUNTY Departments and Agencies must adhere to the "Formal Sealed Bid" procedure when making a purchase or contract for \$25,000.00 (City) / \$20,000.00 (County) or more. This procedure includes public notice in a regional newspaper and requesting Formal Bids via the E-Bid System from qualified suppliers. All registered vendors will receive immediate electronic notification of Formal Bids for their respective commodity or service via email.

SPECIFICATION DOCUMENTS

We make every effort to prepare detailed specifications which accurately define the products or services to be purchased. In some cases a brand name may be used to describe a particular product. When a brand name is used, it is for the purpose of establishing a grade or quality level of material. It is not our desire to prevent competition. Alternates may be offered and will be considered if the City/County determines them to be of equal value to the specified brand. It is the Bidder's responsibility when offering an alternate to provide supporting documentation and/or product literature outlining the features and benefits of the product offered.

SAMPLES AND LITERATURE

Bidder should examine the specification documents carefully to ascertain if they are required to submit samples or descriptive literature with their offer. When samples or descriptive literature are required, it is understood, unless otherwise indicated in the specification, that they are offered without cost or obligation to the City/County. Samples will be held for evaluation until analysis and award recommendation is complete, after which time they may be picked up by the Bidder.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

Each prospective bidder must agree that they will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, religion, sex, disability, national origin, age, ancestry, or marital status.

INFORMAL BIDS OR QUOTES

This process does not have a public opening and does not require a specific number of days for submission. Normally, Quotes are posted on the E-Bid System for 1-5 days.

FORMAL BIDS

This process is used for commodities or services with a value of over \$25,000.00 (City) / \$20,000.00 (County) where a firm fixed price for the products or services described is required to award the bid. All Formal Bids are advertised for a minimum of 14 days (10 days in cases of emergencies). All formal bids are received via the E-Bid System at a date and time specified in the bid. Bids are then unsealed and available for public viewing on the log-in page of the E-Bid system.

To view unsealed bids:

- Click on "Current Bid Opportunities"
- Scroll down to "Closed Bids"
- Click on the selected bid
- Click on the Bid Tabulation by Supplier Doc. OR Bid Tabulation by Line Item Doc.

Bids will be awarded to the lowest responsible, responsive bidder meeting the specification requirements.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

This process is designed to be a competitive negotiation platform for professional services, commodities or services that require more than a price to determine what is the best product or service for the City/County. This process allows the City/County the flexibility to negotiate with a select company/firm or selected companies/firms to arrive at a mutually agreeable relationship. Registered Vendors will receive notification of RFP's automatically via the E-Bid System for the commodities or services they have registered for. Most RFP's require a written and electronic response via the E-Bid System.

AWARD TO THE SUCCESSFUL FIRM

A checkmark in the electronic signature box of the E-Bid shall be considered an offer on the part of the vendor. Such offer shall be deemed accepted upon issuance by the City/County of purchase orders, contract award notifications, or other contract documents appropriate to the work. The City/County reserves the right to accept or reject any or all offers; request rebids; to award item-by-item, by groups, or "lump sum"; to waive irregularities and technicalities; as shall best serve the requirements and interests of the City/County.

***Thank you for your interest in doing business with
City/County Government.***