

INVITATION TO BID - LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY SECRETARIAL, TELEPHONE MESSAGE, AND BILL AND JOURNAL ROOM SERVICES

Please submit your bid in accordance with the instructions. Please use this invitation to submit your bid and attach supplemental pages as necessary. One copy of your bid must be received in the Legislative Council office no later than 10:00 a.m. on Friday, September 19, 2014. The bids will be opened and read on that date. It is anticipated the bids will be reviewed by the Legislative Procedure and Arrangements Committee at its meeting in September. The decision to accept a bid will depend on the quality of the bid, not necessarily on the lowest bid price. If your bid is accepted, your bid constitutes a binding contract and includes the specifications of this invitation to bid.

BACKGROUND - 2013 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Background

In 2013 the Legislative Assembly contracted with one employment contractor to provide secretarial services, telephone message services, and bill and journal room services.

Secretarial Services

The contractor prepared correspondence and envelopes, news releases, and other miscellaneous documents, e.g., written testimony presented by legislators to committees, floor speeches, and charts. The secretarial service also makes photocopies of these documents as needed. In addition, materials faxed to the Legislative Assembly are received in the secretarial services area, are sorted, and are delivered to the appropriate individuals in the legislative chambers. The contractor's employees were assigned work without regard to the political affiliation of the requester. For example, no employee was assigned to do work solely for the majority party or solely for the minority party.

During the 2013 legislative session, the contractor provided three and one-half employees assigned primarily to the secretarial and telephone message services area, one of whom was the onsite supervisor.

Telephone Message Services

Secretarial services also includes telephone message services through which North Dakota residents use toll-free incoming wide area telephone service (WATS) lines to obtain information about pending legislative proposals and to leave messages for their senators and representatives. Telephone calls are rotated to an available attendant or to the next available attendant on a basis that attempts to equalize the calls received by each attendant. Rather than a busy signal if all attendants are busy with calls, voice mail instruction gives the caller an option to wait until the next available attendant or to leave a voice mail message. Calls received after hours are routed to voice mail, and these messages are handled the next business day by the first attendant on duty.

There usually are two types of calls--either seeking information or leaving a message. If a caller asks for information on whether a bill on a particular subject has been introduced or on the status of a specific bill, the telephone attendant accesses the bill status information on the legislative branch website through that attendant's computer and either uses the subject index to review the subject matter of bills introduced or accesses the bill by number to determine the current status of that proposal. The attendant then gives the information to the caller. If the caller asks to leave a message for a legislator (by policy a caller may leave a message only for that caller's local legislators--the senator and two representatives of the district in which that caller resides--and the legislators of the city of the caller and for specifically named legislators identified by the caller), the attendant determines who the caller's legislators are (if the caller does not know); accesses the computerized constituent message and viewpoint application; and enters the caller's name, address, telephone number, email address, the specific bill number for the message, and any message. The legislator then receives this information on the legislator's computer.

Bill and Journal Room Services

The employment contractor also staffed and operated the bill and journal room, which is located on the ground floor in the legislative wing of the State Capitol. The bill and journal room attendant is responsible for receiving copies of bills, resolutions, journals, daily calendars, weekly committee hearing schedules, and daily *Bill Status Reports* from the printers. All of these documents are available on the legislative branch website. The attendant sorts and places the copies of bills, resolutions, and journals in file cabinets; delivers copies of bills, resolutions, journals, daily calendars, weekly committee hearing schedules, and daily *Bill Status Reports* to the Legislative Council office; hands out copies of these items to individuals who request those items at the "walkup" window in the bill and journal room (a limited number of bills and resolutions will be kept in the room, printers will be

available to provide copies as requested); receives subscription fees for transmittal to the Legislative Council office and maintain a list of subscribers to sets of those items; maintains "boxes" in the bill and journal room for distribution of those items to entities that have subscribed to those materials or reserved those boxes for receipt of those materials; and mails copies to those entities that have subscribed to receive sets of those items by mail and to any other entities who request individual copies of those items by mail. The Legislative Assembly pays the postage costs for documents mailed by the bill and journal room personnel.

During the 2013 legislative session, the contractor provided one employee primarily assigned to the bill and journal room services area.

2013 Contract Price

Under the 2013 contract, secretarial, telephone message, and bill and journal room services were to be provided through four and one-half employees at \$507 per day. The contractor used flexible work scheduling, reduced the number of employees to reflect actual workload, and billed only for actual costs incurred at an average cost of \$502.41 per day for 80 legislative days.

GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS

Secretarial, Telephone Message, and Bill and Journal Room Services

During the 2013 legislative session, the secretarial and telephone message services area was located in a room to the west of the Senate balcony. **During the 2015 legislative session, secretarial and telephone message services will be collocated in the bill and journal room on the ground floor.** Equipment, supplies, and postage will be provided by the Legislative Assembly. Each employee will be provided a computer and a telephone. A fax machine will be provided in the room. The word processing software will be Microsoft Word.

Secretarial services are provided through standardized formats, which will be furnished by the Legislative Council. Legislators have computers and drafts of work may be sent from legislators to the secretarial service through email.

Employees will be required to answer calls, operate computers, access programs to obtain bill status information or transmit messages to legislators, personally deliver telephone messages or faxes to legislators, and print and provide copies of bills and resolutions to individuals as requested.

The contractor, through the onsite supervisor, is accountable to the Chief Clerk of the House with respect to projects or messages for representatives and is accountable to the Secretary of the Senate with respect to projects or messages for senators.

The onsite supervisor is to:

1. Supervise employees of the contractor, assign or rotate employees between the secretarial and telephone message services and bill and journal room services as needed, and provide for flexible work schedules. The supervisor must designate an assistant to assign work when the supervisor is not at work.
2. **Ensure secretarial and telephone message services are provided between the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on each legislative day.**
3. **Ensure bill and journal room services are provided between the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on each legislative day. On any Friday when both houses have recessed before 3:00 p.m., the services may be ended at 3:30 p.m.**
4. Assign all work, keeping track of all incoming and outgoing secretarial services documents.
5. Supervise a proofreading process.
6. Supervise the process for ensuring appropriate handling of subscription requests and requests made by telephone or mail.
7. Ensure that the employees are proficient and diplomatic in responding to requests.
8. Answer the telephone and delegate this responsibility when necessary.
9. Supervise the checking in and checking out of hand-held dictation units to legislators.
10. Notify the Majority Leader or Minority Leader of a request for a restricted work project in violation of the *Policy Regarding Secretarial Services to Legislators* by a member of that leader's caucus.

11. Work with the Legislative Council staff in determining the appropriate number of bills, resolutions, journals, daily calendars, weekly hearing schedules, and *Bill Status Reports* to be printed.
12. Collect subscription fees and photocopying fees as determined by the Legislative Council and transmit those fees along with the appropriate completed subscription forms to the Legislative Council office.

The staff employed to provide secretarial and telephone message services must:

1. Possess proficiency in Microsoft Windows.
2. Possess proficiency in using Microsoft Word after attending two days' training provided by the Legislative Council. The Legislative Assembly will reimburse the contractor at the hourly rate the contractor pays the employee for the length of the training.
3. Possess proficiency in handling telephone messages after attending approximately three hours of training provided by the Legislative Council. The Legislative Assembly will reimburse the contractor at the hourly rate the contractor pays the employee for the length of the training.
4. Be able to operate a computer, telephone, copier/printer, fax machine, and transcription equipment.
5. Be able to hear telephone callers in a room containing other secretarial and telephone message services staff answering calls.
6. Be proficient and diplomatic in responding to telephone callers.
7. Be proficient in proofreading documents.
8. Be proficient in the English language and proper rules of grammar.
9. Be able to go to a legislator's desk in the chamber and deliver messages and take instructions or notes regarding a project.
10. Be able to deliver the finished product to the legislator, if necessary.

The normal turnaround for a project should be within 24 hours. A press release submitted by 12:00 noon Friday must be completed by 3:30 p.m. Friday. For any extensive project or mailings, the turnaround time should be within a reasonable period, recognizing the importance of timely response to requests.

The contractor must provide the following basic level of bill and journal distribution services:

1. One person must be onsite between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday during the period beginning Monday, December 8, 2014, through Monday, January 5, 2015, excluding Christmas Eve Day, Christmas Day, New Year's Eve Day, and New Year's Day to organize the bill and journal room, receive copies of bills and resolutions from the printer, sort and place those copies in the file cabinet, and distribute copies to individuals who come to the walkup window.
2. One person must be in the bill and journal room providing copies of items as requested anytime either house of the Legislative Assembly is in session after 4:30 p.m.
3. One person must be available during all hours of operation to respond to requests for bills, resolutions, and journals from persons who make the requests at the walkup window.
4. Bills and resolutions must be placed in the boxes in the bill and journal room as soon as possible after receipt from the printer and must be mailed to subscribers on the same day received from the printer. Printed documents will be limited in number with the expectation that copies will be printed as necessary.
5. Daily journals, daily calendars, and weekly committee hearing schedules must be placed in the boxes in the bill and journal room as soon as possible and not later than three hours after receipt from the printer and must be mailed to subscribers on the same day received from the printer.
6. *Bill Status Reports* must be placed in the boxes in the bill and journal room as soon as possible and not later than two hours after receipt from the printer and must be packaged and labeled for distribution to subscribers the same day received from the printer.
7. Daily calendars and weekly committee hearing schedules must be made available for distribution immediately upon receipt from the printer.
8. Any person who requests an item for which a copy is available in the bill and journal room should receive that document within three minutes of the request.

9. If documents provided by the printer are not sufficient, the bill and journal room employees shall use the provided copier/printer to provide the requested copies.

Workdays

Except for bill and journal room services, the period of the contract is from the first day of the 2015 regular legislative session (Tuesday, January 6, 2015) through the last day of the legislative session (unknown, but probably in late April 2015).

With respect to bill and journal room services, the period of the contract is from the first day that bills are delivered to the bill and journal room (approximately Monday, December 8, 2014) through the last day of the legislative session.

The Legislative Assembly meets in session Monday through Friday, with the possibility of meeting in session on a few Saturdays. The Legislative Assembly may be in session on Martin Luther King Jr. Day, George Washington's Birthday, and Good Friday. The Legislative Assembly is scheduled for a recess from Saturday through Tuesday, February 28 through March 3, 2015. The Legislative Assembly is responsible for paying any overtime required under state or federal law if the Legislative Assembly meets on a Saturday or Sunday. Otherwise, the contractor is responsible for overtime required to complete projects on a timely basis.

Number of Employees for Bid Proposal

The bid proposal is for three and one-half employees:

- One onsite supervisor;
- Two full-time employees; and
- If necessary, one part-time employee to work daily from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

NOTE: The number of employees for 2015 has been reduced from that in 2013 due to a review and evaluation of workload needs during the 2013 legislative session.

Hourly Wage Requirement

The bid proposal must provide:

- Payment to the onsite supervisor of at least \$15 per hour.
- Payment to the employees of at least \$14.50 per hour.

Supervision

The contractor is responsible for the discipline or the dismissal of any employee. The Chairmen of the House and Senate Employment Committees may discuss with the contractor the discipline or dismissal of any employee.

Employees of the contractor will be working with confidential information and are required to sign a nondisclosure agreement. The contractor must enforce this agreement and terminate an employee who violates the nondisclosure agreement.

The contractor must provide:

1. Continuous monitoring of the performance of employees and provide a replacement if a current employee does not perform as required.
2. Payroll services for its employees and maintenance of all required payroll records, including necessary employee forms, taxes, Social Security, and workers' compensation and any other employment-related taxes and fees.
3. All recruiting and testing to ensure employees will possess high-quality skills and workmanship.
4. A signed nondisclosure form from each employee.

The contractor must designate an account manager or liaison to manage the communication process between the Legislative Council, the onsite supervisor, and the contractor.

BID SPECIFICATIONS

Your proposal must be accompanied by a list of similar projects you have handled and a list of no fewer than three references who can attest to your capability to handle a contract of this magnitude.

This contract can be amended only by a written modification signed by both parties to the contract.

Bids are requested based on the general specifications outlined above. For purposes of this proposal, a legislative day is a day when the Legislative Assembly is in session.

BID PROPOSAL

Bid proposal: Three and one-half employees, which includes an onsite supervisor for approximately 75 legislative days \$ _____ (amount per day)

One employee to handle bill and journal room services for 17 days before the Legislative Assembly convenes \$ _____ (amount per day)

Pay ranges:

List the pay rate or ranges for employees included in the bid proposal (hourly rate of pay):

Onsite supervisor \$ _____

Employees \$ _____

What arrangements will be made to adjust the daily contract amount if fewer or more employees are needed to adequately perform the work? For example, the secretarial and telephone message services could operate with one to three fewer employees during the first two to three weeks of the session and during the last two to three weeks of the session.

If the Legislative Assembly meets for more than 75 legislative days, each additional day of service beyond 75 days will be provided for (amount per day)

\$ _____

Bidder: _____

Mailing address: _____

Telephone: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____