

11—117.19 (8A) General instructions, terms and conditions for vendors. The following instructions, terms and conditions shall apply to all solicitations unless otherwise stated in the solicitation.

117.19(1) *Instructions for vendors.* The vendor must follow all instructions in the manner prescribed and furnish all information and samples as stated in the solicitation. Minor deficiencies and informalities may be waived if, in the judgment of the department, the best interests of the state will be served.

117.19(2) *Deadline for submission of bid or proposal.* It is the responsibility of the vendor to submit a response to a solicitation according to time, date, and place stated in the solicitation documents. Late responses will be rejected. Unfamiliarity with a geographical location, weather events, labor stoppages, failure of a carrier to meet promised delivery schedules, mechanical failures, and similar reasons are not sufficient justifications for the department to accept a late bid or proposal. At its sole discretion, the department may accept a late response if the delay is due to a catastrophic event and acceptance by the department does not result in an advantage to a competitor.

117.19(3) *Confidential information in a solicitation response.* Unless material submitted in response to a solicitation is identified as proprietary or confidential by the vendor in accordance with Iowa Code section 22.7, all submissions by a vendor are public information. To facilitate a fair and objective evaluation of proposals, submissions by vendors will not be released to competitors or the public prior to issuance of the notice of intent to award. If a vendor's claim of confidentiality is challenged by a competitor or through a request by a citizen to view the proposal, it is the sole responsibility of the vendor to defend the claim of confidentiality in an appropriate venue. The department will not release the subject material while the matter is being adjudicated.

117.19(4) *Recycled products.* A vendor shall be required to include for all applicable procurements a product content statement providing the percentage of the content of the item that is reclaimed material.

117.19(5) *Modifications or withdrawal of a solicitation response.* A solicitation response may be withdrawn or modified prior to the time and date set for opening. Withdrawal or modification requests shall be in writing. With the approval of the director or designee, a bid or proposal may be withdrawn after opening only if the vendor provides prompt notification and adequately documents the commission of an honest error that might cause undue financial loss. The department may contact a vendor to determine if an error occurred in the vendor's proposal.

117.19(6) *Security.* The department may require bid or proposal security in accordance with subrule 117.12(5). When required, security shall not be waived.

117.19(7) *Assignments.* A vendor may not assign an order or a master agreement to another party without written permission from the department.

117.19(8) *Strikes, lockouts or natural disasters.* A vendor shall notify the department promptly whenever a strike, lockout or catastrophic event prevents the vendor from fulfilling the terms of an order or contract. The department and affected agency may elect to cancel an order or master agreement at their discretion.

117.19(9) *Subcontractors or secondary suppliers.* Vendors shall be responsible for the actions of and performance of their subcontractors or secondary suppliers. Vendors shall be responsible for payment to all subcontractors or secondary suppliers. Vendors awarded a state construction contract shall disclose the names of all subcontractors within 48 hours after the award of the contract and advise the department of changes in the names of subcontractors throughout the duration of the project.

117.19(10) *Material and nonmaterial compliance.* At its sole discretion, the department reserves the right to waive technical noncompliance with instructions when such noncompliance, as viewed by a reasonable and prudent person, did not result in an advantage to the vendor submitting the apparent lowest bid or best proposal or would not result in a disadvantage to other vendors submitting competing bids or proposals.

117.19(11) *Item and pricing.* Price information shall be submitted in response to a solicitation as stated in the instructions. In the case of an error, unit price shall prevail. Unless otherwise stated, all prices shall be submitted with free-on-board (FOB) destination including freight and handling costs.

Prices for one-time purchases must be firm, and preference will be given to firm prices in multiple award contracts. If the department believes it is in the best interest of the state, an economic price adjustment clause based on an acceptable economic indicator may be included in multiple delivery contracts.

a. Price during testing. Items may require testing either before or after the final award is made. In these cases, the vendor must guarantee the price through the completion of testing.

b. Unless otherwise contained in the specifications, all items for which a vendor submits a quotation shall be new, of the latest model, crop year or manufacture and shall be at least equal in quality to those specified.

c. Escalator clauses. Unless specifically provided for in the solicitation document, a response containing an escalator clause that provides for an increase in price will not be considered.

d. Discounts. Only cash discounts that apply to payment terms of 30 days or more will be considered in determining awards. Other payment terms will not be considered. The state will attempt to earn any discounts offered and will compute the period from the latest of the following:

(1) From date of invoice.

(2) From the date the complete order is received.

(3) From the date the vendor's certified invoice is received.

When additional testing of a product is required after delivery, the discount period shall not begin until testing is completed and final approval made.

117.19(12) *Notice of intent to award.* After evaluating responses to a solicitation, the department shall notify each vendor submitting a response to the solicitation of its intent to award to a particular vendor or vendors subject to execution of a written contract(s). This notice does not constitute the formation of a contract(s) between the state and the vendor(s) to which the notice of intent to award has been issued.

If a vendor is not registered on the vendor on-line system and does not provide an E-mail address or fax number, the notice will be sent by ordinary mail.

117.19(13) *Time of acceptance of award.* If a time is not stated in the competitive selection document, the vendor may state the length of time that the state has to accept the vendor's offer. This period shall not be less than 10 days for informal quotations or less than 30 days for formal bids. If the vendor states no minimum time period, the offer shall be irrevocable for 90 days. The department may require a longer evaluation period for technical equipment.

117.19(14) *Delivery.*

a. Delivery date. A vendor shall show in a response to a solicitation the earliest date on which delivery can be made. The department may include in a solicitation the acceptable delivery date for a commodity. The department may consider delivery dates as a factor in determining to which vendor the notice of intent to award shall be issued. Goods in transit remain the responsibility of the vendor.

b. Notice of rejection. The reason for any rejection of a shipment, based on apparent deficiencies that can be disclosed by ordinary methods of inspection, will be given by the receiving agency to the vendor and carrier within a reasonable time after delivery of the item with a copy of this notice provided to the purchasing section. Notice of latent deficiencies that would make items unsatisfactory for the intended purpose may be given at any time after acceptance.

c. Disposition of rejected item. The vendor must remove at the vendor's expense any rejected item. If the vendor fails to remove the rejected item within 30 days of notification, the department or an agency may dispose of the item by offering it for sale, deduct any accrued expense and remit the balance to the vendor.

d. Testing after delivery. Laboratory analysis of an item or other means of testing may be required after delivery. In such cases, vendors will be notified in writing that a special test will be made and that payment will be withheld until completion of the testing process.

e. Risk of loss or damage. Risk of loss or damage remains with the vendor until delivery and acceptance by the agency at the destination shown on the order.

f. Vendor responsibility for removal of trade-ins. Whenever the purchase of an item of equipment has been made with the trade-in of equipment, it shall be the vendor's responsibility to remove the traded equipment within 30 days of the final acceptance of the purchased equipment by the agency, if not otherwise specified in the competitive selection document. The department or agency will not assume responsibility for equipment that is not removed within this time period and may cause the equipment to be removed by and shipped to the vendor and may bill the vendor for all packing, crating and transportation charges.

117.19(15) *Master agreement and purchase order modifications.* When consistent with the purpose and intent of the original master agreement or order, amendments or modifications may be issued. All modifications shall be documented and approved by the department or agency and the vendor before modifications take effect. Modifications shall not be used unreasonably to avoid further competition.

117.19(16) *Federal and state taxes.* The state of Iowa is exempt from the payment of Iowa sales tax, motor vehicle fuel tax and any other Iowa tax that may be applied to a specified commodity or service. A vendor shall be furnished a revenue department exemption letter upon request.

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