

COUNTY OF DELAWARE
ADDENDUM # 2
VERBATIM TRANSCRIPTION TYPING SERVICES (eERD-111324)

The County of Delaware advertised on the County of Delaware's website/PennBid and in the Philadelphia Inquirer and Daily Times newspapers the Invitation to Bid for: **VERBATIM TRANSCRIPTION TYPING SERVICES (eERD-111324)** on October 15, 2024. Proposals are to be received via PennBid on Wednesday, November 13, 2024 @ 11:00 a.m.

*****BID QUESTION, CLARIFICATIONS AND ANSWERS*****

Question #1: Can you please provide the name of the incumbent vendor and provide how long they have had this contract, including past renewals?

Answer: [York Stenographic Services has had this contract since January 2022.](#)

Question #2: Is the court interested in receiving a near real-time immediate transcript while the verbatim is being produced?

Answer: [At this time, we are only looking to transcribe proceedings when we receive a request after the proceedings take place.](#)

Question #3: Are there current needs not being satisfied by the current vendor and if so, please specify?

Answer: [Our current needs are being satisfied.](#)

Question #4: Can you let us know what the "package" includes that you will be submitting to us for transcription of each proceeding. Specifically, the audio/video format (type – mp3, m4a, etc)?

Answer: [The package includes a collection of .ogg audio files as well as the CourtSmart transcription software, CPlayer, to playback the audio. The transcription software allows for channel isolation of specific microphones. It shows real time tags input by court staff and allows for foot pedal connection.](#)

Question #5: What do you mean by "transcription software will be provided" (excerpt below)?

Transcription software will be provided. The software allows for complete channel isolation, playback control and viewings of tags/notes taken with the recordings. USB foot-pedals are supported for transcription. Transcription software allows for full playback control by keyboard, mouse or foot-pedal. Fast-forward, rewind and backspace are all available. Channel selections can be any combination of recorded channels. All tags/notes made with the recording are also present. The tags may be used as short cut links to the audio. The transcription package file is a perfect digital replica of the audio recorded on the Court Smart system. All recorded channels are available.

Answer: [Each package of audio will have the CourtSmart CPlayer transcription software included as described to allow the typist to have full control of the audio captured by the court while producing the transcript.](#)

Question #6: Could you clarify the specific criteria referenced in the statement that 'All transcribers utilized by the Contractor shall, at a minimum, meet the criteria set by the American Association of Electronic Reporters and Transcribers as stated in the "comment" under Pa.R.J.A. 4005'? We would appreciate more detail on the qualifications or standards required for our transcribers to comply with this provision.

Answer: The American Association of Electronic Reporters and Transcribers (AAERT) recommends the following criteria for transcriptionists: (a) scores at least 70% on an examination with a timed, 100-question, written examination on technical aspects of electronic reporting, courtroom procedures, and vocabulary; and (b) scores at least 98% accuracy on at least ten text pages produced during a half-hour AAERT-prepared audiotape in ASCII, Word, WordPerfect, or WordStar.

Question #7: Regarding the requirement for the contractor to provide a daily Delivery Sheet PDF of all completed transcripts, does this refer to transcripts completed within that specific day, or should it include all transcripts completed throughout the lifetime of the contract? Additionally, would it be acceptable for this to be a live document that is updated continuously, rather than a static daily PDF?

Answer: This should be a static daily PDF listing all completed transcript orders delivered that day, including page numbers and delivery timeframe. These delivery sheets allow us to confirm the numbers on the invoices which should have the daily totals as line items.

Question #8: It appears that the referenced ITB-A (title page format), ITB-B (testimony index format), and ITB-C (certificate page format) are not included in the provided documents. Could you please provide these attachments or clarify the required formats for the title page, testimony index, and certificate page, so we can ensure our submission complies with the necessary specifications?

Answer: Additional materials were provided on October 21, 2024.

Question #9: Will the government accept the use of a cloud-based file storage and transfer platform, for the secure receiving and delivery of transcription orders, in place of a traditional FTP site? If not, could you please clarify the specific technical and security requirements for the file transfer method?

Answer: Yes, provided that the secure cloud-based file storage and transfer platform has the ability to upload a single folder with multiple subfolders and files.

Question #10: Section 3.24 mentions different delivery timeframes—daily (18 hours), expedited (72 hours), and ordinary (5-10 days). Are there pre-established rate multipliers or guidelines for calculating the price differences between these delivery options?

Answer: No, the purpose of this ITB is for potential vendors to give us a price for these delivery options. However, there are guidelines on what the Court can charge requesting parties for transcripts found in 201 Pa. R.J.A. 4008.

Question #11: Will the provided transcription software be compatible with both Mac and Windows operating systems, or is it restricted to a particular platform?

Answer: CourtSmart CPlayer is compatible with Windows.

Question #12: Section 3.24 outlines delivery requirements, including daily (within 18 hours) transcripts. Could you provide an estimate of the maximum number of daily transcripts that the contractor might be expected to produce within this timeframe?

Answer: It is impossible to predict how many daily transcripts will be requested but they are approximately 5% of our total orders. If the vendor has a limit to how much volume they can handle, please outline that in the operational proposal.

Question #13: What is the required bid bond amount? The performance bond form provides structure but does not specify a penal sum.

Answer: Should the bid cost exceed \$250,000, a bid bond of %10 of the total bid must be included.

Question #14: Appendix Q mentions the use of Diversity Business Enterprises (DBEs). Is there a specific DBE participation goal or percentage required for this contract? If not, how will DBE utilization be evaluated?

Answer: Currently, Appendix Q is used to gather information on the usage of DBE utilization for many of our County bids/projects. While we encourage proposals from small vendors, DBE vendors, minority vendors and vendors that have not previously performed work for the County, it is currently used for gathering information.

Question #15: What are the specific insurance coverage requirements (types and amounts) that contractors must maintain, as referenced in Section 2.8.4 of the ITB?

Answer: Vendors are expected to maintain general liability policy and a cyber liability policy with limits not less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence.

Question #16: In the case where a respondent is a small business, would the court consider a cash deposit or a letter of credit in lieu of a traditional bid bond?

Answer: Should the bid exceed \$250,000, it must be accompanied by certified good-faith check, corporate bid bond, bank check, cashier's check, or treasurer's check in the amount of 10% of the bid. As submissions are done digitally via PennBid, you are responsible for ensuring the methods are submitted to the County of Delaware by the submission deadline. We have included an optional section for a bid bond if necessary.

Question #17: Could you please provide what is currently being paid per page (or other unit used) for these services? It is extremely helpful to know if we can submit a competitive bid.

Answer:

Daily - \$4.00 per page

Expedited - \$3.00 per page

Ordinary - \$2.20 per page

Word Index - \$1.00 per page

Question #18: Could the County of Delaware, Pennsylvania, please upload a sample audio file for bidders to inspect prior to bidding?

Answer: Courtroom audio cannot be provided in a public forum to vendors we are not under contract with.

Question #19: What challenges/pain points have you faced with the existing contract?

Answer: We do not have any major challenges with the existing contract.

Question #20: What is the estimated value/budget of the contract?

Answer: Approximately 175,000 pages of original copy annually 70% Ordinary, 25% Expedited, and 5% Daily. The estimated value will depend on the submissions.

Question #21: Section 6.15 of the RFP provides a Guide to Bid Preparation, including your best estimate of the number of pages to be transcribed. Is this estimate based on your historical volume usage? If so, could you provide us with a more detailed breakdown of your historical volume usage?

Answer: Yes, this is based on historical volume usage. No, unfortunately we do not have a more detailed breakdown.

Question #22: Per Section 2.12 of the RFP the contractor agrees to commence work after the date of award by the owner and upon notice from the using department. Do you have an estimated date of award for this contract?

Answer: Estimated award date is December 4, 2024 with work commencing on January 1, 2025.

Question #23: For Daily (i.e. within 18 hours) and Expedited (i.e. within 72 hours) transcriptions, are weekends and holidays counted or included? For example, If a case is submitted for transcription on a Friday at 3:00 p.m. as a "Daily" transcription, would it be due Saturday by 9:00 p.m. or Monday by 9:00 p.m.?

Answer: Weekends and holidays are not included. A Daily request sent on a Friday would be due on Monday.

Question #24: Are Title page and Certificate page transcriptions considered billable pages?

Answer: Yes.

Question #25: During what time frame are new cases submitted for transcription (day of the week and time of day)? For example: "New cases will be submitted for transcription Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m." Does this follow or is in any way related to any kind of trial proceedings or non-trial hearing docket?

Answer: Our office is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM. If the vendor requires any sort of cutoff times, please include that within the operational proposal.

Question #26: Is there a daily cut-off time for submitting requests for daily and expedited work? If so, what time?

Answer: Currently our cut-off time is noon, but vendor's can submit their own cut-off times or no cut-off in their operational proposal.

Question #27: Is there a limit to the length of cases that can be requested on a daily and/or expedited turnaround basis?

Answer: Currently we have limits of 3 hours for Daily and 10 hours for Expedited, but vendors can submit their own limits their operational proposal.

Question #28: For cases submitted with Ordinary Turnaround Time: Will the due date be indicated at the time of order submission as five (5) business days or ten (10) business days specifically? Or could it fall within that range (8 business days, for example)? Or would all orders with this turnaround time selected be due no later than ten (10) business days?

Answer: All orders will be due no later than ten (10) business days. In rare, special circumstances we may ask for the due date to be moved up in the 5-10 day window if it can be accommodated by the vendor. If it can not be accommodated, we would inform the person requesting the transcript that it could either be upgraded to expedited or left at the ordinary ten business day due date.

Question #29: Will the Court provide the Contractor a daily summary sheet of orders placed each day to enable said Contractor to verify and confirm it received all of the intended files?

Answer: The Court can do this. If this is how the vendor would like to do it, please include it in the operational proposal. Currently, when transcript orders are placed, we send an accompanying email which is confirmed by the vendor.

Question #30: Can you clarify the conflicting specifications on data retention policy between section 3.14 and 3.15 versus 3.21? Could you please clarify which requirement takes precedence?

Answer: 3.14 refers to transcripts produced by the vendor with a minimum retention period. Section 3.21 refers to the copied audio produced by the Court and sent to the vendor. The Court will keep the original audio and the copied audio should be deleted by the vendor upon delivery of the transcript.

Question #31: Apart from the Appendixes listed and price sheet as indicated in the portal, shouldn't the bidder submit technical proposal which indicates how we manage the services? We can not find a space to upload extra information/ document.

Answer: We have created a new section to submit the technical proposal.

Question #32: Can you please confirm that no bid securities are required with the bid and no performance bond is required at this stage.

Answer: Should the bid cost exceed \$250,000, a bid bond of %10 of the total bid must be included. Performance bond is to be provided by successful bidder prior to their award.

Question #33: Since, Attachment 1 and 2 are applicable at contract awarding stage, can we comment/ accept the same and submit without signatures?

Answer: Sample contract and performance bond were included for reference purposes only. See answer to Question 32 for Attachment 2/ Performance Bond.

Question #34: In order to assure turnaround time and volume capacity, is the transcription software able to be downloaded and used by multiple transcriptionists?

Answer: Yes.

Question #35: What audio file type is produced from Courtsmart?

Answer: CourtSmart produces .ogg files.

Question #36: Are you looking for AI solutions?

Answer: No.

Question #37: Are there any specific transcription related certifications or licenses that are required? Are any certifications or licenses beneficial or more beneficial when you are reviewing proposals?

Answer: AAERT certification is recommended but we would consider transcriptionists with comparable certificates.

Question #38: The specifications mention a required word index in PDF format for certain transcripts. Could you clarify under what specific conditions the word index will be requested (e.g., only for complex cases or as a standard for all transcripts)?

Answer: A word index is available to request for any transcript, but it is rarely ordered.

Question #39: Are background checks required for personnel working on this project? If so, what type of checks are required (e.g., criminal, FBI)?

Answer: No but we reserve the right to perform one if the Court deems it necessary.

Question #40: Does the requirement that transcribers meet the criteria set by AAERT under Pa.R.J.A. 4005 mean that transcribers must be AAERT certified, or is it sufficient for them to have equivalent qualifications without certification?

Answer: The Court would consider transcriptionists with other certifications, for example a certificate from the NCRA.

Question #41: The ITB mentions that the contractor is responsible for obtaining necessary licenses and equipment. Are there any specific licenses (e.g., court-approved transcription licenses) or equipment standards that must be adhered to, particularly for the transcription software?

Answer: AAERT certification or equivalent transcription certification. Our transcription software, CourtSmart CPlayer, has foot pedal recommendations on their webpage <https://www.courtsmart.com/support/help/>.