



# Request for Proposals (RFP)

Contracted Human Resources Services

CITY OF WHITTIER, ALASKA

## 1. Introduction

The City of Whittier, Alaska (City), invites proposals from qualified human resources firms to provide professional HR services tailored to the needs of a municipal organization with fewer than 30 employees. This Request for Proposals (RFP) is issued under the professional services provisions of Whittier Municipal Code Section 3.32.210. This process emphasizes the qualifications and proposed methodologies of respondents while allowing the City to engage in discussions and negotiate terms with the most qualified firm. Unlike traditional competitive bidding, this RFP seeks a comprehensive evaluation of qualifications, services, and cost proposals to determine the best overall fit for the City's needs.

## 2. Purpose

The purpose of this RFP is to identify a firm with expertise in delivering human resources solutions to small municipalities or organizations with comparable employee structures. The selected firm will provide strategic and operational HR services that align with the City's goals, foster a positive workplace culture, and ensure compliance with applicable federal, state, and local regulations.

## 3. Scope of Services

The contracted HR firm will be expected to provide the following services:

### 1. **Compliance and Policy Development**

- Ensure compliance with all applicable labor laws and regulations.
- Develop, review, and update employee handbooks and policies.
- Provide guidance on employment practices and HR compliance issues.

### 2. **Employee Relations**

- Advise on employee conflict resolution and disciplinary actions.
- Conduct workplace investigations, if necessary.
- Assist in fostering a positive workplace culture.

### 3. **Recruitment and Onboarding**

- Develop and execute recruitment strategies for new hires.
- Assist with candidate screening and interview processes.
- Oversee onboarding processes to ensure seamless integration of new employees.

### 4. **Benefits Administration**

- Assist with the management of employee benefits programs.
- Advise on competitive benefits packages tailored to the City's size and needs.

### 5. **Training and Development**

- Provide training programs for supervisors and staff (e.g., harassment prevention, leadership development).
- Identify opportunities for employee skill development.

### 6. **Other HR Support**

- Develop and implement performance evaluation systems.
- Provide ongoing consultation and HR expertise to City leadership.

## 4. Proposal Submission Requirements

Interested firms must submit a proposal that includes the following:

### 1. **Cover Letter**

- Brief overview of the firm and primary contact information.
- **MUST** include an acknowledgement of receipt of all addenda. Failure to acknowledge addenda may result in the proposal being considered non-responsive and subject to rejection.

### 2. **Firm Background and Experience**

- Summary of the firm's experience in providing HR services to municipalities or similar-sized organizations.
- Key personnel who will provide services under this contract, including their qualifications and relevant experience.

### 3. **Approach and Methodology**

- Description of the firm's approach to delivering the services outlined in the scope of work.

### 4. **Draft Contract**

- A draft contract for the proposed services that outlines terms and conditions for review by the City.

#### 5. References

- Provide three references from organizations for which similar services were provided, including contact information.

#### 6. Cost Proposal

- Detailed fee schedule, including rates for specific services and any retainer or additional costs.

#### 7. Additional Information

- Any additional information the proposer deems relevant to the evaluation process.

## 5. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Qualifications and Experience (40%)
- Approach and Methodology (20%)
- Cost Proposal (30%)
- References (10%)

Whittier Municipal Code 3.32.170 allows for a preference of five percent of the lowest responsive and responsible bid, not to exceed \$5,000, to those proposers whose principal place of business is in the City of Whittier.

## 6. Submission Instructions

### 6.1 Proposal Development

Submitted proposals will remain confidential until the selection of a proposer is publicly announced. All materials submitted in response to this RFP become the property of the City and are available for public inspection under a public records request after the City's announcement of the successful proposer. Proposals should be clear and concise as to the proposer's capabilities to satisfy the requirements of the RFP, with emphasis on conforming to the RFP instructions. The City will not return proposals, unless received after the deadline for submission, and the City reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to waive minor irregularities in the RFP process at the City's discretion. This solicitation of proposals by the City does not commit the City to selecting a proposer. All costs associated with the proposer's preparation, submission, and presentation, if any, shall be the responsibility of the Proposer and shall not be billed to the City. Any hard copy proposals must be signed and received in the number of copies and in the manner stated in the RFP no later than the date and time specified herein. All hard copies of the proposal must be under sealed cover and plainly marked. Proposals not received by the date and time specified will not be considered and will be returned unopened.

## 6.2 Receipt and Opening of Proposals

Proposers may provide proposals by either hard copy, electronic copy, or both.

**Hard copy proposals** should be submitted with three (3) hard copies of the proposal in a sealed envelope bearing the name and address of the proposing firm, clearly marked with the Proposer's name and "Proposal for Contracted Human Resources Services". Hard copy proposals must be received by the City Clerk's office prior to **2:00 p.m. local time on January 23, 2025**, or such later time as may be announced by addendum.

Proposals can be delivered in person or by courier to: City Clerk, 2nd Floor, 660 Whittier Street, Whittier, AK 99693. Proposals delivered via US Postal Service must be mailed to: City of Whittier, Attn: City Clerk, PO Box 608, Whittier, AK 99693-0608.

*Please note: Mail delivery to Whittier takes considerably longer than other areas of Alaska. Mail service can be unreliable, including courier services. Whittier is subject to third-party parcel distributors who deliver on behalf of UPS, but service is sporadic and inconsistent with UPS's standard delivery times. There is no FedEx service to Whittier.*

Hard copy proposals will be time-stamped by the City Clerk's office at the time of receipt, with such stamp reflecting the official time of receipt of the proposal. Late proposals will not be accepted and will be returned unopened.

**Emailed proposals** will be accepted only if received by the City Clerk's office prior to **2:00 p.m. local time on January 22, 2025**, and only provided the City Clerk's office has responded to the proposer with confirmation of receipt of the e-mailed proposal prior to 11:00 a.m. local time on January 23, 2025. Proposals may be emailed in PDF format to the City at [cityclerk@whittieralaska.gov](mailto:cityclerk@whittieralaska.gov) with the subject line "Proposal for Contracted Human Resources Services."

Regardless of the award of proposal, no proposal shall be withdrawn for a period of ninety days after the bid opening date without the consent of the City. Submittal of a proposal indicates acceptance of the conditions contained in this RFP.

The City reserves the right to accept or reject any and all submissions and/or waive technical defects, irregularities and omissions, and to award the contract to the proposer deemed, in the City's sole discretion, to be able to perform in the City's best interests. The City is an affirmative action – equal opportunity employer in accordance with all applicable local, state, and federal requirements and does not discriminate in its hiring. The City is committed to complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

The award of this proposal is subject to (a) approval by the Whittier City Council and (b) negotiation of a contract, the terms of which are in form and substance satisfactory to the City.

## 6.3 Questions Regarding Request for Proposals

Questions regarding this RFP should be directed to the City Clerk via email on or before January 13, 2025, at [cityclerk@whittieralaska.gov](mailto:cityclerk@whittieralaska.gov). The City will not respond to questions submitted orally. Answers to questions that materially change the conditions and specifications of this RFP will be posted on the City's website by January 15, 2025, as an addendum to this document. Any discussions or documents will be considered non-binding unless incorporated in an addendum to the original. When addenda are issued, the bid opening date may be extended at the discretion of the City and in that case, the updated timeline will be posted on the City's website at [www.whittieralaska.gov/rfps](http://www.whittieralaska.gov/rfps).

## 7. Timeline

RFP Issued	December 10, 2024
Questions Due	January 13, 2025
Final Addendum	January 15, 2025
Emailed Proposal to City Clerk	January 22, 2025 @ 2:00 p.m.
Emailed Proposals Confirmation of Receipt	January 23, 2025 @ 11:00 a.m.
<b>Proposals Due</b>	<b>January 23, 2025 @ 2:00 p.m.</b>
Evaluation Period	January 24 – January 31, 2025
Notification of Selection	February 3, 2025

The City of Whittier reserves the right to amend the timeline at its discretion.

## 8. Terms and Conditions

Vendor/merchants conducting business with the City are required by law to register with, and periodically report to, the City's Tax Administrator for the collection and remittance of sales and property taxes. Proposers must be in good standing with the City prior to award, any contract renewal, and in any event no later than five business days following notification by the City of Intent to Award or renew. Good standing means all amounts owed to the City are paid in full, including business license fees, taxes and any other fees owed to the City, and that vendor/merchant is current in reporting (sales tax filings, business property tax reporting). Failure to meet these requirements, if so subject, shall be cause for rejection of your proposal and/or contract renewal. To determine if your business is in good standing, or for further information, contact the City at 907-472-2327 ext. 201.

The City of Whittier reserves the right to:

- Reject any and all proposals.
- Waive irregularities or informalities in the selection process.
- Negotiate terms and conditions with the selected firm.

The RFP process adheres to the City of Whittier's procurement regulations as outlined in Section 3.32.210 of the Whittier Municipal Code. This process ensures that qualifications, methodologies, and cost proposals are evaluated to identify the most qualified firm.