



**QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**  
**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)**  
**[RFP #S-C00055-00010854]**

Date of Issue: July 1, 2024

Closing Date and Time: September 2, 2024 5:00 PM PDT

Updated: July 15, 2024

**1. Question: Do I need separate applications for [individual] zone[s]?**

Answer: Yes. Each service area should be applied for with a separate application.

**2. Clarification: “3.1.3b The Ambulance Service Area the Proposer desires to serve, the location(s) from which ambulance services will be provided, and the level of service to be provided.**

Answer: The “location(s)” indicated in the requirement above are the physical addresses of stations, garages, and other buildings where services will be deployed from.

**3. Question: Can you please provide an example of previous ASA RFP's that required all of this information and used this format?**

Answer: Questions about the County’s decision to use an RFP format are outside the scope of questions/requests for clarification in Section 3.3 of the RFP. Notwithstanding the foregoing, Columbia County’s procurement guidelines and RFPs from other Oregon counties were used as reference when developing this RFP.

- 4. Question: Why has the county departed from the previous application process to an RFP (Page 69)?**
- a. We have never had to participate in a process like this, ever.**
  - b. Please comment on, how on page 27 of the current ASA (page 43 of the bid packet), where it talks about an application process why we did not use the more simple method? Application processes can still be competitive, but less strict than an RFP.**
  - c. Why was there a need to do an RFP over an application process?**

Answer: Questions about the County's decision to use an RFP format are outside the scope of questions/requests for clarification in Section 3.3 of the RFP. Notwithstanding the foregoing, this RFP is the request for application process.

- 5. Question: Page 1, 2.3.1 Purpose**
- a. It seems as though the intent of the RFP is to have the fire districts competing against themselves, each other and to allow for private ambulance companies bid for service. What is the purpose of the competition for a community / public based organization that has been offering this service for over 30 years?**
  - b. The language states that the county is seeking franchisees that offer the highest level of care; has the County identified a problem with any of the current ASA providers? This language is inferring that the current level of care is not high.**

Answer: Questions about the County's decision to use an RFP format are outside the scope of questions/requests for clarification in Section 3.3 of the RFP. Notwithstanding the foregoing, current providers can contact the Administrator directly with questions about current compliance for their franchise(s).

This RFP is designed to reflect the adopted ASA Plan and the standards established by the ASA Plan.

- 6. Question: The proposer is concerned about personally identifiable information and the potential for information used in section 3.1.3 to be used by malicious actors and or individuals that may seek to harm our employees or the agency. In the electronic age and or Internet Of Things (IOT), information related to calling out specific people and equipment on the web can be dangerous. Therefore, will it be acceptable to provide the following information generically and then either self certify as the RFP identifies for 3.1.3e or, after an award is made, can the proposer then provide the information to the County so that it does not have to be on a website. The specific sections we are seeking relief for are:**
- a. 3.1.3d**
  - b. 3.1.3f**

Answer: The information requested is required by Ordinance No. 2016-1 and does not require disclosure of Personally Identifiable Information. See Section 3.2.1. If Proposer believes any of its Proposal is exempt from disclosure under Oregon Public Records Law (ORS 192.410 to 192.505), Proposer shall submit one complete fully redacted version of its Proposal, clearly identified as the redacted version. Please identify the statutory exemption from disclosure with the proposal. The Affidavit of Trade Secret is only required if Proposer is claiming a trade secret. The County will determine if exemption criteria is met.

- 7. Question: What is the purpose of 3.1.3i?**
- a. Where is the need for a proposer to cover every county employee, officer and agent in the county? This is not realistic.**
  - b. Are there specific officers, agents and employees of the county that need to be covered?**
  - c. Is the county, officers, agents and employees expected to be able to have access to the proposers property, vehicles and proposers employees at all times all hours? If not, why is this necessary?**
  - d. If an IGA is to be drawn up, for an ASA, would this not be covered in indemnification using similar but different language?**

**e. Is it reasonable to expect that the County is trying to deflect any and all responsibility with this coverage, despite the fact that the County is required by law to administer and or provide ambulance service?**

Answer: This is standard indemnification language used by the County and is required by Ordinance No. 2016-1.

**8. Question: Page 7, 3.2.1 Proposal format and quantity**

**a. How many copies are required?**

One copy is required.

**b. This section identifies several different formats but requires an electronic copy.**

Answer: Proposers may choose to submit one original, signed electronic PDF document via email. If the electronic document is too large to email, a file sharing service may be utilized or the Proposer may send multiple files in more than one email with appropriate file labeling. It is the proposer's responsibility to confirm the receipt of email(s).

Alternatively, one copy of a proposal may be submitted through the mail, parcel carrier, or hand delivered to the SPC at 230 Strand Street, St. Helens, OR 97051.

**c. If an electronic copy is too large to email, will the County accept a thumb drive?**

Answer: Thumb drives will not be accepted.

**d. If a thumb drive is acceptable, what security requirements will be required by the county IT professionals to protect the County from viruses and or malware?**

**9. Question: Page 8, 3.5 Proposal Due**

**a. The RFP states that there are 60 days to submit. However the County did not notify the potential proposers until after close of business on July 1st. Additionally, with**

**this being fire season, the 60 day time frame may not be achievable for the current ambulance providers who may be requested to deploy to protect our communities and or other communities in the state and North West region. Can the County delay the process by an additional 30 days or give us an additional 30 days in the event of a deployment?**

Answer: The RFP closing date will be extended to Monday, September 2, 2024, at 5:00pm PDT.

**10. Question: Proposal Content Requirements**

- a. Please explain the scoring criteria with respect to "Ability to work with PSAP?" This is very subjective and should have more clarifying meaning of "Ability."**
- b. Please define GPS transponder. There are thousands of types of transponders.**
- c. Specific to GPS Transponders, we are assuming this is supposed to mean AVL. If so, why is this a criteria for scoring? If the County commissioners are not enforcing something that is not possible in the County at this time why is this part of the evaluation?**

Answer: The intent of this question is for the Proposer to either acknowledge they currently work with the PSAP or demonstrate a plan and timeline for being able to do so.

- d. Columbia County does not have a hospital. Therefore, there is no need for emergency, non emergency and inter-facility transfers. Why is this part of the scoring process? Everything in our current system is driven by 911 calls.**
  - i. Currently, medicare, medicaid and private insurance do not recognize inter-facility transfers without specific paperwork that is usually generated between hospitals. Since this type of paperwork is not currently available for any of the non emergency type transport requests, everything must be via 911.**

- ii. Is there really an expectation for a provider to support a for profit company (retirement center or other) that is situated in an "Urban Renewal Zone" or "Enterprise Zone," where no taxes can be collected or fee for service be collected when there is no paperwork to support a request?**
- iii. Should the County and cities be requiring these types of facilities that may generate additional workload to an ASA to pay their fair share or require their own way to transport?**

Answer: ASA Plan V.2 (pg 11 of ASA Plan, pg 26 of RFP) outlines the responsibilities of the ASA provider.

- e. What evaluation process is the County using for the work life balance evaluation? What is the purpose of this evaluation criteria?**

Answer: "Work/life balance" is an aspect of the Personnel criteria. It would be affected by staffing overtime and paid time off.

- f. What is the expectation of community education? There is no mention of community education in the ASA document. What criteria are being used for evaluating community education?**

Answer: "Community Education" relates to involvement (events, feedback response) within the community operated in.

- g. Can you please define how "clear record keeping" has anything to do with budget and what metrics are expected to for the evaluation?**

Answer: "Clear Record Keeping" is consistent and documented records.

- h. Please define what the criteria/expectations are for allowances for growth in staff/new equipment. Can you provide more information with what the County is looking for and or separate these two items?**

Answer: Is there an allocation in the budget for additional staff and equipment or for training of current staff and replacement/upgrade of equipment? These may be identified in the Proposer's budget.

**11. Question: We would like to see section 5 (Ownership/Permission To Use Materials) be amended and changed.**

- a. The proposer does not agree to a non exclusive, perpetual, irrevocable, royalty free license to the products produced by the proposer. As a public entity, you would never give these rights away to another government entity. Why should we?**

Answer: This is standard language used by the County in an RFP. This provision grants the County permission to print copies of the proposals for use during the evaluation process.

**12. Question: What contingency plan does the County have in place if current ASA providers do not submit an RFP package?**

Answer: Questions about the County's contingency plans are outside the scope of questions/requests for clarifications in Section 3.3 of the RFP.

**13. Question: For the agencies who have been providing service for over 30 years, who have voter initiatives to fund the ambulance service, what steps is the County going to take if the County does not support the existing community based ambulance providers? How will the County justify this to the community?**

Answer: Speculative questions about steps the County might take are outside the scope of questions/requests for clarifications in Section 3.3 of the RFP.

**14. Question: If one of the criteria relates to community education / involvement, what steps has the county taken to educate the citizens in the 7 ASA'a about this process and the future intentions for ambulance coverage in Columbia county?**

Answer: Questions about the County's decision to use an RFP format and communication with its citizens are outside the scope of questions/requests for clarifications in Section 3.3 of the RFP.

- 15. Question: I am not sure what is exactly needed. I understand that a copy of the budget is needed. The references and or statement of past ambulance service has me confused.**

Answer: The proposed budget for the current fiscal year, a Profit & Loss Budget vs Actual for the previous two years, and detailed expenditures of funds for the last two years.

- 16. Question: 3.1.3d states "A list of all vehicles to be used in providing ambulance services including year, make, and model, and verification that each vehicle is certified as a basic life support, intermediate life support and/or advanced life support vehicle by the State of Oregon".**

**The State of Oregon does not "Certify ambulances as basic life support, intermediate life support and/or advanced life support vehicle. There is not a notation listed on ambulance licenses listing what level it is certified to. What is the county actually looking for in this area**

Answer: Proposals should include a list of all vehicles to be used in providing ambulance services including year, make, and model along with the level of service each vehicle is to provide: BLS, ALS, Specialty, or Reserve.