

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

251 CAUSEWAY STREET, SUITE 500
BOSTON, MA 02114-2151



REQUEST FOR RESPONSE (RFR)

RFR File # AGR-MAMunicipalVet-FY20

The purpose of this RFR, is to solicit municipalities to participate in the Mass Animal Fund Spay/Neuter Program for costs associated with the vaccination, spaying and neutering of homeless dogs and cats incurred by municipalities throughout the Commonwealth in the course of performing their official duties associated with animal control activities.

Contact: Sheri Gustafson-
Program Coordinator, Massachusetts Animal Fund
Telephone #: 617-626-1740
Email: sheri.gustafson@mass.gov



Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources
251 Causeway Street, Suite 500
Boston, MA 02114

REQUEST FOR RESPONSE

1. OVERVIEW AND GOALS:

BACKGROUND: Section 1 of Chapter 193 of the Acts of 2012 created the Massachusetts Homeless Animal Prevention and Care Fund (the "Mass Animal Fund" or the "Fund"). The Mass Animal Fund is administered by the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources ("MDAR" or the "Department") used to end the problem of animal homelessness in Massachusetts.

PURPOSE OF PROCUREMENT: Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 10, Section 35WW, the Department is authorized to use the Fund to offset costs associated with spaying, and neutering of homeless dogs and cats and the vaccinations which are specifically related to the surgery; to offset costs associated with the vaccination, spaying, and neutering of dogs and cats owned by low-income residents; and to assist with the training of animal control officers. The Department, through this RFR, is seeking municipalities to participate in the Mass Animal Fund Spay/Neuter Program (the "Program") for costs associated with the vaccination, spaying and neutering of homeless dogs and cats incurred by municipalities throughout the Commonwealth in the course of performing their official duties associated with animal control activities within their municipality.

2. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS:

The Mass Animal Fund is seeking municipalities to participate in the Program.

Participating municipalities must:

- Request Mass Animal Fund vouchers through designated municipal animal control officers.
- Receive Mass Animal Fund vouchers for eligible animals prior to services being performed.
- Use a licensed veterinarian to provide spay/neuter services for homeless cats/dogs in animal control officer care/municipal holding facilities.
- Provide completed animal intake form.
- Obtain spay/neuter medical record from veterinarian providing services and be able to provide records to Mass Animal Fund on request.
- Submit municipal invoice, and completed voucher for flat-fee reimbursement from the Mass Animal Fund, using the following pay schedule, which is inclusive of the entire surgery and related treatment including vaccines associated with the surgery:

The following Tier system shall be followed for reimbursement of the Contractor:

| | | |
|----------|--|-------|
| Tier I | Cat neuter | \$75 |
| Tier II | Cat spay/small dog (<50lbs.) neuter | \$150 |
| Tier III | Small dog (<50lbs.) Spay/ Large dog neuter (>50lbs.) | \$225 |
| Tier IV | Big dog (>50 lbs.) spay | \$300 |

If the veterinarian performing the procedure discovers a complication/condition that needs to be addressed in order to safely complete the surgery, municipalities may request an additional reimbursement from the Mass Animal Fund to help cover costs according to the list below:

A municipality may ask for a tier reimbursement for pyometra surgery. In the case of a cat/small dog (<50lbs.) with pyometra, municipality may ask for a reimbursement rate of \$300. In the case of a big dog (>50lbs.) with pyometra, municipality may ask for a reimbursement rate of \$450.

A municipality may ask for a tier reimbursement for a dystocia/spay surgery. Please note a spay must be performed at the time of surgery to be eligible for reimbursement. In the case of a cat/small dog (<50lbs.) with dystocia, municipality may ask for a reimbursement rate of \$300. In the case of a big dog (>50lbs.) with dystocia, municipality may ask for a reimbursement rate of \$450.

A municipality may ask for the equivalent spay reimbursement amount for abdominal cryptorchid males. In the case of an abdominal cryptorchid male cat, municipality may ask for the reimbursement rate of \$150. In the case of an abdominal cryptorchid male dog (<50 lbs.), municipalities may ask for \$225. In the case of an abdominal cryptorchid male dog (>50 lbs.), municipality may ask for \$300.

A municipality may ask for additional reimbursements for the following complications, limit 1 per surgery:

1. Inguinal cryptorchid additional \$25 reimbursement
2. Older than 5 years (if additional bloodwork is deemed necessary) additional \$25 reimbursement
3. Extra Large (+100 lbs.) additional \$25 reimbursement
4. Estrus additional \$25 reimbursement
5. Obese (must state body condition score) additional \$25 reimbursement
6. Parasite treatment for active infestation additional \$10 reimbursement.

To receive any of the additional reimbursement amounts, the veterinarian must write the complication or reason on the voucher under "additional services needed". The additional amount must also be indicated on the invoice sent from the municipality. Limit 1 reimbursement increase per surgery.

Interested municipalities should respond to this RFR with a proposal outlining their ability to meet the above requirements. Proposals will be accepted on an open basis

3. INSTRUCTIONS FOR APPLICATION SUBMISSION

Interested applicants must submit the following to be considered complete proposals:

- A completed Mass Animal Fund Voucher Program Municipal Application and submit form via COMMBUYS quote system. See *instructions attached to RFR and COMMBUYS posting*.
- Once completed, forward the Quote Confirmation email you receive from COMMBUYS to:
Sheri Gustafson- Program Coordinator, Massachusetts Animal Fund
Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources
sheri.gustafson@mass.gov
- This will verify submission and then the Program Manager will reach out to you once your application is fully received and reviewed.

Only electronic quotes submitted via COMMBUYS will be accepted in response to this RFR. Responses must be sent via the “Create Quote” functionality contained in COMMBUYS. For instructions concerning COMMBUYS and how to submit a Quote, please see Appendix B & C. Department contact can assist with questions concerning COMMBUYS.

Any submission which fails to meet the submission requirements of the RFR will be found non-responsive without further evaluation unless the evaluation team, at its discretion, determines that the non-compliance is insubstantial and can be corrected. In these cases, the evaluation team may allow the vendor to make minor corrections to the submission.

4. REVIEW PROCESS:

This will be a rolling RFR and will remain open through January 31, 2026 and interested applicants who submit a complete proposal will be evaluated based on their experience, references, and meeting the licensure requirements. Those applicants who meet the criteria will be added to a master agreement and be eligible to participate in the Program. If all renewal options are exercised, all agreements under this RFR will end June 30, 2026.

5. FORMS TO BE COMPLETED UPON AWARDING OF CONTRACT: Any successful bidder will be asked to complete and sign, in addition to the **Standard Contract**, the following forms as part of their agreement. (Forms are available via the State Internet site <http://www.comm-buys.com>).

1. **Verification of Taxation Reporting Information (W-9) Form.**
2. **Electronic Funds Transfer Form (EFT).**
3. **Contractor Authorized Signature Verification Form.**

6. DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS:

Animal Control Officers (“ACOs”) may issue vouchers for free spay/neuter for animals who meet the eligibility guidelines below.

| HOMELESS ANIMALS | |
|---|---|
| <i>Eligible</i> | <i>Ineligible</i> |
| Dogs and cats that are housed in a municipal animal control facility or dogs and cats held on behalf of a municipality at a private shelter that is in a formal agreement to act as a holding facility for that municipality. | Dogs and cats housed in a private shelter, rescue, or foster group. (unless pre-approved by MDAR for assistance through the Emergency Fund) |

On the day of surgery, the ACO/municipal representative must present the physical voucher to the veterinarian, who will fill in PART III of the voucher and return to the voucher to the ACO/municipal representative, who will submit completed voucher, Municipal intake form, along with an invoice, for payment from the Mass Animal Fund.

7. ACQUISITION METHOD: Fee for Service Contracts

8. SINGLE OR MULTIPLE CONTRACTORS FOR CONTRACT PERFORMANCE:

Multiple Contractors

9. SINGLE OR MULTIPLE DEPARTMENTS MAY CONTRACT UNDER THIS RFR: Single

10. TOTAL ANTICIPATED DURATION OF CONTRACTS

| <i>Contract Duration</i> | <i>Number of Options</i> | <i>Number of Years/Months</i> | <i>Details</i> |
|---|---------------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| Initial Duration | | <u>@2 Years</u> | @Two years: from Contract Effective Date to 6-30-22 |
| Renewal Options | <u>2 Options to Renew</u> | <u>2 Years</u> | Two, 2 Year options to renew. 7-1-22 to 6-30-24 7-1-24 to 6-30-26 |
| Total Possible/ Maximum Contract Duration | | <u>6 Years</u> | Two year for the Initial Term Plus 2 options to Renew for 2 years each. Max through 6-30-26. |

**Options to renew based solely on the discretion of the Department.*

11. Estimated Value of Procurement: Approximately \$80,000-\$100,000.

Will Federal Funds be used to fund part of Contract(s) X No

12. PROCUREMENT CALENDAR: This RFR will be distributed electronically using the Comm-BUYS system and on the MDAR website. It is the responsibility of every Applicant to check Comm-BUYS for any addenda or modifications to an RFR to which they intend to respond. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts and its subdivisions accept no liability and will provide no accommodations to Applicants who fail to check for amended RFRs and submit inadequate or incorrect responses. Potential Respondents are advised to check the

“last change” field on the summary page of RFRs for which they intend to submit a response to ensure they have the most recent RFR files. Respondents may not alter RFR language or any RFR component files. Those submitting a proposal must respond in accordance to the RFR directions and complete only those sections that prompt a Respondent for a response. Modifications to the body of this RFR, specifications, terms and conditions, or which change the intent of this RFR are prohibited. Any unauthorized alterations will disqualify response.

The procurement schedule is provided below.

| Procurement Activity | Date |
|--|---|
| <i>Bid Release Date</i> | 01/15/2020 |
| <i>Quotes/Bid Responses Accepted:</i> | 01/15/20 through 01/31/2026 |
| <i>Final deadline for Quotes/Bid Responses (“Bid Opening Date/Time” in COMMBUYS)</i> | 01/31/2026 |
| <i>Notification of Apparent Successful Bidder (s) and Contract Start Date (Estimated)</i> | Open/Rolling- as received and reviewed by Department |
| <i>Contract End Date: *if all renewal options are exercised*</i> | 06/30/2026 |

13. RFR Attachments: Appendix A, B, & C

Appendix A: Required Specifications

Appendix B: How to register, navigate & prepare for submissions via COMMBUYS

Appendix C: Instructions for Vendors Responding to Bids Electronically through COMMBUYS

Appendix A: Required Specifications
OPERATIONAL SERVICES DIVISION
RFR - REQUIRED SPECIFICATIONS FOR COMMODITIES AND SERVICES

Revision Date: June 6, 2016

In general, most of the required contractual stipulations are referenced in the *Standard Contract Form and Instructions* and the *Commonwealth Terms and Conditions*. However, the following RFR provisions must appear in all Commonwealth competitive procurements conducted under 801 CMR 21.00.

The terms of *801 CMR 21.00: Procurement of Commodities and Services* are incorporated by reference into this RFR. Words used in this RFR shall have the meanings defined in 801 CMR 21.00. Additional definitions may also be identified in this RFR. Other terms not defined elsewhere in this document may be defined in OSD's [Glossary of Terms](#). Unless otherwise specified in this RFR, all communications, responses, and documentation must be in English, all measurements must be provided in feet, inches, and pounds and all cost proposals or figures in U.S. currency. All responses must be submitted in accordance with the specific terms of this RFR.

COMMBUYS Market Center. COMMBUYS is the official source of information for this Bid and is publicly accessible at no charge at www.commbuys.com. Information contained in this document and in COMMBUYS, including file attachments, and information contained in the related Bid Questions and Answers (Q&A), are all components of the Bid, as referenced in COMMBUYS, and are incorporated into the Bid and any resulting contract.

Bidders are solely responsible for obtaining all information distributed for this Bid via COMMBUYS. Bid Q&A supports Bidder submission of written questions associated with a Bid and publication of official answers.

It is each Bidder's responsibility to check COMMBUYS for:

- Any amendments, addenda or modifications to this Bid, and
- Any Bid Q&A records related to this Bid.

The Commonwealth accepts no responsibility and will provide no accommodation to Bidders who submit a Quote based on an out-of-date Bid or on information received from a source other than COMMBUYS.

COMMBUYS Registration. Bidders may elect to obtain a free COMMBUYS Seller registration which provides value-added features, including automated email notification associated with postings and modifications to COMMBUYS records. However, in order to respond to a Bid, Bidders must register and maintain an active COMMBUYS Seller account.

All Bidders submitting a Quote (previously referred to as Response) in response to this Bid (previously referred to as Solicitation) agree that, if awarded a contract: (1) they will maintain an active seller account in COMMBUYS; (2) they will, when directed to do so by the procuring entity, activate and maintain a COMMBUYS-enabled catalog using Commonwealth Commodity Codes; (3) they will comply with all requests by the procuring entity to utilize COMMBUYS for the purposes of conducting all aspects of purchasing and invoicing with the Commonwealth, as added functionality for the COMMBUYS system is activated; (4) Bidder understands and acknowledges that all references to the Comm-PASS website or related requirements throughout this RFR, shall be superseded by comparable requirements pertaining to the COMMBUYS website; and (6) in the event the Commonwealth adopts an alternate market center system, successful Bidders will be required to utilize such system, as directed by the procuring entity. Commonwealth Commodity Codes are based on the United Nations Standard Products and Services Code (UNSPSC).

The COMMBUYS system introduces new terminology, which bidders must be familiar with in order to conduct business with the Commonwealth. To view this terminology and to learn more about the COMMBUYS system, please visit the [COMMBUYS Resource Center](#).

Multiple Quotes. Bidders may not submit Multiple Quotes in response to a Bid unless the RFR authorizes them to do so. If a Bidder submits multiple quotes in response to an RFR that does not authorize multiple responses, only the latest dated quote submitted prior to the bid opening date will be evaluated.

Quote Content. Bid specifications for delivery, shipping, billing and payment will prevail over any proposed Bidder terms entered as part of the Quote, unless otherwise specified in the Bid.

Supplier Diversity Program (SDP). Massachusetts [Executive Order 565](#) reaffirmed and expanded the Commonwealth's policy to promote the award of state contracts in a manner that develops and strengthens certified Minority Business Enterprises (MBEs), Women Business Enterprises (WBEs), Minority and Women Nonprofit Organizations (M/WNPOs), Veteran Business Enterprises (VBEs), Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Business Enterprises (SDVOBEs), Disability-Owned Business Enterprises (DOBEs), and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Business Enterprises (LGBTBEs).

Partnerships with certified diverse businesses: All bidders are **required** to make a significant financial commitment to partner with certified M/WBEs, M/WNPOs, VBEs, SDVOBEs, DOBEs and/or LGBTBEs certified or verified by the Supplier Diversity Office (SDO). Bidders must identify a commitment in the form of a specific percentage of sales made under the resulting contract that will be spent with an SDP Partner(s) on a Massachusetts fiscal year basis, using SDP Plan Form #1 – SDP Plan Commitment. This percentage commitment will extend for the life of any resulting contract.

This requirement extends to all bidders regardless of their certification status, and no bidder will be awarded a Contract unless and until the above requirement is met. Bidders may not list themselves or affiliates as SDP Partners. In order to ensure compliance with this section and encourage bidder participation, SDP Plans will be evaluated at 10% or more of the total evaluation score for all for Large Procurements (those with a total value of greater than \$150,000). SDP Plan submission is encouraged but not required for Small Procurements (those with a total value equal to or less than \$150,000).

Once an SDP commitment is approved, the agency will monitor the Contractor's performance, and use the Contractor's reported expenditures with M/WBEs, M/WNPOs, VBEs and SDVOBEs to fulfill their own SDP expenditure benchmarks. The Commonwealth reserves the right to contact SDP Partners at any time to request that they attest to the amounts reported to have been paid to them by the Contractor.

SDP Forms: Unless otherwise specified in the RFR, the following SDP forms are required to be submitted by the deadlines noted below in order to meet the mandatory participation requirements of the SDP:

| SDP Plan Form #/Name | Submitted By | When Submitted |
|--|---------------------------|---|
| SDP Plan Form #1 – SDP Plan Commitment | All Bidders | With Bid Response |
| SDP Plan Form #2 – Declaration of SDP Partners | Newly Awarded Contractors | Within 30 days of contract execution |
| SDP Plan Form #3 – SDP Spending Report | Contractors | Within 45 days of the end of each quarter |

In addition to the requirements above, all bidders must follow the requirements set forth in the Supplier Diversity Program (SDP) Plan Section of the RFR. During the life of the contract, the Commonwealth reserves the right to expand the range of certified business categories available for SDP partnerships to all those mentioned above and/or request reports on the Contractors' spending with such certified business categories.

Supplier Diversity Program (SDP) Resources: Bidders may refer to the [SDP Resources for Vendors and Contractors](#) webpage for additional program information, training and compliance resources.

Agricultural Products Preference (only applicable if this is a procurement for Agricultural Products) - Chapter 123 of the Acts of 2006 directs the State Purchasing Agent to grant a preference to products of agriculture grown or produced using locally grown products. Such locally grown or produced products shall be purchased unless the price of the goods exceeds the price of products of agriculture from outside the Commonwealth by more than 10%. For purposes of this preference, products of agriculture are defined to include any agricultural, aquacultural, floricultural or horticultural commodities, the growing and harvesting of forest products, the raising of livestock, including horses, raising of domesticated animals, bees, fur-bearing animals and any forestry or lumbering operations.

Best Value Selection and Negotiation. The Strategic Sourcing Team or SST may select the response(s) which demonstrates the best value overall, including proposed alternatives that will achieve the procurement goals of the department. The SST and a selected bidder, or a contractor, may negotiate a change in any element of contract performance or cost identified in the original RFR or the selected bidder's or contractor's response which results in lower costs or a more cost effective or better value than was presented in the selected bidder's or contractor's original response.

Bidder Communication. Bidders are prohibited from communicating directly with any employee of the procuring department or any member of the SST regarding this RFR except as specified in this RFR, and no other individual Commonwealth employee or representative is authorized to provide any information or respond to any question or inquiry concerning this RFR. Bidders may contact the contact person for this RFR in the event this RFR is incomplete or the bidder is having trouble obtaining any required attachments electronically through COMMBUYS.

Contract Expansion. If additional funds become available during the contract duration period, the department reserves the right to increase the maximum obligation to some or all contracts executed as a result of this RFR or to execute contracts with contractors not funded in the initial selection process, subject to available funding, satisfactory contract performance and service or commodity need.

Costs. Costs which are not specifically identified in the bidder's response, and accepted by a department as part of a contract, will not be compensated under any contract awarded pursuant to this RFR. The Commonwealth will not be responsible for any costs or expenses incurred by bidders responding to this RFR.

Electronic Communication/Update of Bidder's/Contractor's Contact Information. It is the responsibility of the prospective bidder and awarded contractor to keep current on COMMBUYS the email address of the bidder's contact person and prospective contract manager, if awarded a contract, and to monitor that email inbox for communications from the SST, including requests for clarification. The SST and the Commonwealth assume no responsibility if a prospective bidder's/awarded contractor's designated email address is not current, or if technical problems, including those with the prospective bidder's/awarded contractor's computer, network or internet service provider (ISP) cause email communications sent to/from the prospective bidder/awarded contractor and the SST to be lost or rejected by any means including email or spam filtering.

Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). All bidders responding to this RFR must agree to participate in the Commonwealth Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) program for receiving payments, unless the bidder can provide compelling proof that it would be unduly burdensome. EFT is a benefit to both contractors and the Commonwealth because it ensures fast, safe and reliable payment directly to contractors and saves both parties the cost of processing checks. Contractors are able to track and verify payments made electronically through the Comptroller's Vendor Web system. A link to the EFT application can be found on the [OSD Forms](#) page (www.mass.gov/osd). Additional information about EFT is available on the [VendorWeb](#) site (www.mass.gov/osc). Click on MASSfinance.

Successful bidders, upon notification of contract award, will be required to enroll in EFT as a contract requirement by completing and submitting the *Authorization for Electronic Funds Payment Form* to this department for review, approval and forwarding to the Office of the Comptroller. If the bidder is already enrolled in the program, it may so indicate in its response. Because the *Authorization for Electronic Funds Payment Form* contains banking information, this form, and all information contained on this form, shall not be considered a public record and shall not be subject to public disclosure through a public records request.

The requirement to use EFT may be waived by the SST on a case-by-case basis if participation in the program would be unduly burdensome on the bidder. If a bidder is claiming that this requirement is a hardship or unduly burdensome, the specific reason must be documented in its response. The SST will consider such requests on a case-by-case basis and communicate the findings with the bidder.

Executive Order 509, Establishing Nutrition Standards for Food Purchased and Served by State Agencies. Food purchased and served by state agencies must be in compliance with Executive Order 509, issued in January 2009. Under this Executive Order, all contracts resulting from procurements posted after July 1, 2009 that involve the purchase and provision of food must comply with nutrition guidelines established by the Department of Public Health (DPH). The nutrition guidelines are available at the Department's website: [Tools and Resources for Implementation of Executive Order 509](#).

HIPAA: Business Associate Contractual Obligations. Bidders are notified that any department meeting the definition of a Covered Entity under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) will include in the RFR and resulting contract sufficient language establishing the successful bidder's contractual obligations, if any, that the department will require in order for the department to comply with HIPAA and the privacy and security regulations promulgated thereunder (45 CFR Parts 160, 162, and 164) (the Privacy and Security Rules). For example, if the department determines that the successful bidder is a business associate performing functions or activities involving protected health information, as such terms are used in the Privacy and Security Rules, then the department will include in the RFR and resulting contract a sufficient description of business associate's contractual obligations regarding the privacy and security of the protected health information, as listed in 45 CFR 164.314 and 164.504 (e), including, but not limited to, the bidder's obligation to: implement administrative, physical, and technical safeguards that reasonably and appropriately protect the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of the protected health information (in whatever form it is maintained or used, including verbal communications); provide individuals access to their records; and strictly limit use and disclosure of the protected health information for only those purposes approved by the department. Further, the department reserves the right to add any requirement during the course of the contract that it determines it must include in the contract in order for the department to comply with the Privacy and Security Rules. Please see other sections of the RFR for any further HIPAA details, if applicable.

Minimum Quote (Bid Response) Duration. Bidders Quotes made in response to this Bid must remain in effect for at least 90 days from the date of quote submission.

Prompt Payment Discounts (PPD). All bidders responding to this procurement must agree to offer discounts through participation in the Commonwealth Prompt Payment Discount (PPD) initiative for receiving early and/or on-time payments, unless the bidder can provide compelling proof that it would be unduly burdensome. PPD benefits both contractors and the Commonwealth. Contractors benefit by increased, usable cash flow as a result of fast and efficient payments for commodities or services rendered. Participation in the Electronic Funds Transfer initiative further maximizes the benefits with payments directed to designated accounts, thus eliminating the impact of check clearance policies and traditional mail lead time or delays. The Commonwealth benefits because contractors reduce the cost of products and services through the applied discount. Payments that are processed electronically can be tracked and verified through the Comptroller's Vendor Web system. The PPD form can be found as an attachment for this Bid on [COMMBUYS](#).

Bidders must submit agreeable terms for Prompt Payment Discount using the PPD form within their proposal, unless otherwise specified by the SST. The SST will review, negotiate or reject the offering as deemed in the best interest of the Commonwealth.

The requirement to use PPD offerings may be waived by the SST on a case-by-case basis if participation in the program would be unduly burdensome on the bidder. If a bidder is claiming that this requirement is a hardship or unduly burdensome, the specific reason must be documented in or attached to the PPD form.

Public Records. All responses and information submitted in response to this RFR are subject to the Massachusetts Public Records Law, M.G.L., c. 66, s. 10, and to c. 4, s. 7, ss. 26. Any statements in submitted responses that are inconsistent with these statutes, including marking by bidders of information as confidential during the quote submission process in COMMBUYS, shall be disregarded.

Reasonable Accommodation. Bidders with disabilities or hardships that seek reasonable accommodation, which may include the receipt of RFR information in an alternative format, must communicate such requests in writing to the contact person. Requests for accommodation will be addressed on a case by case basis. A bidder requesting accommodation must submit a written statement which describes the bidder's disability and the requested accommodation to the contact person for the RFR. The SST reserves the right to reject unreasonable requests.

Restriction on the Use of the Commonwealth Seal. Bidders and contractors are not allowed to display the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Seal in their bid package or subsequent marketing materials if they are awarded a contract because use of the coat of arms and the Great Seal of the Commonwealth for advertising or commercial purposes is prohibited by law.

Subcontracting Policies. Prior approval of the department is required for any subcontracted service of the contract. Contractors are responsible for the satisfactory performance and adequate oversight of its subcontractors. Human and social service subcontractors are also required to meet the same state and federal financial and program reporting requirements and are held to the same reimbursable cost standards as contractors.

Appendix B:

How to register, navigate and prepare for submissions via COMMBUYS

Proposal Submission Method

Online Proposal Submission via COMMBUYS is required.

All Respondents must submit Proposals online using tools available only to Sellers registered in COMMBUYS. COMMBUYS provides Seller registration functionality at no charge.

To register, go to www.COMMBUYS.com and click on the “Register” link on the front page. All Respondents who are awarded a contract resulting from this Bid, if any, will be required to maintain an active account during the duration of the Contract, by reviewing their registration information regularly and maintaining its accuracy.

COMMBUYS Proposal Submission Training and Instructions

The following resources are provided to assist Respondents in submitting Proposals:

- Online job aids for navigating COMMBUYS [HERE](#)
- Webcast video on [Overview of COMMBUYS Registration](#)
- Webcast video on [How to Create a Proposal \(Quote\) in COMMBUYS](#)
- COMMBUYS Help Desk: 888-627-8283 (Open M-F 8am-5pm)

COMMBUYS Support

Technical assistance is available during the procurement process. Every effort is made to respond to inquiries within one business day.

Website: Go to www.mass.gov/osd/commbuys and select the COMMBUYS Resource Center link offered under Key Resources.

Email: Send inquiries to the COMMBUYS Helpdesk at COMMBUYS@state.ma.us

Telephone: Call the COMMBUYS Help Desk at 1-888-MA-STATE (1-888-627-8283). The Help Desk is staffed from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM Monday through Friday Eastern Standard or Daylight time, as applicable, except on federal and state holidays.

Respondents are advised that COMMBUYS will be unavailable during regularly scheduled maintenance hours of which all users will be notified.

Bid Opening Date/Time

All Respondents are advised to allow adequate time for submission by considering potential online submission impediments like Internet traffic, Internet connection speed, file size, and file volume. OSD and MDAR are not responsible for delays encountered by Respondents or their agents, or for a Respondent’s local hardware failures, such as computers or related networks, associated with bid compilation or submission. Bids submitted via COMMBUYS are time stamped by the COMMBUYS system clock which is considered the official time of record.

Proposal Contents

Respondents must comply with the requirements listed in Sections 2 & 3.

Electronic Signatures

Proposals submitted via COMMBUYS must be signed electronically by the Respondent by accepting the terms and conditions of the proposal on the “Terms & Conditions” tab of the proposal in COMMBUYS. By selecting “Save & Continue” on the “Terms and Conditions” tab after accepting the terms and conditions of the proposal, the submitter attests that s/he is an agent of the Respondent with authority to sign on the Respondent’s behalf, and that s/he has read and assented to each document’s terms.

Ink Signatures

Original ink signatures are required only after contracts have been awarded. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts requires Contractors to submit original ink-signature versions of the following forms:

- Standard Contract Form
- Commonwealth Terms and Conditions
- Contractor Authorized Signatory Listing
- Request for Taxpayer Identification & Verification (MA Substitute W9 Form)
- Electronic Funds Transfer Sign Up Form

Successful Respondents who agreed to the terms and conditions of these forms electronically via COMMBUYS online Proposal submission tool must still submit the above forms with ink signatures or their contract may not be executed by the Commonwealth. Respondents who have previous contract(s) with the Commonwealth and have up-to-date, ink-signature versions of the Commonwealth Terms and Conditions and Request for Taxpayer Identification and Verification (Mass. Substitute W9 Form) on file with the Office of the State Comptroller may submit copies of the signed forms. However, a new Standard Contract Form and Contractor Authorized Signatory Listing with original ink signatures must be submitted for each new contract with the Commonwealth.

Limits and Restrictions

File Size Limits

The system will not accept files that approach or exceed 10 MB. If a large file fails to upload, the Respondent must save the contents as multiple files.

File Format Restrictions

All scanned documents must be in .pdf format, and must be scanned in such a way that they can be read on a computer monitor and printed on 8-1/2” x 11” paper, unless otherwise specified. Forms provided for the Respondent to complete, with the exception of the forms requiring ink signatures, must be completed and submitted in their original formats, NOT scanned and submitted as PDF or other file types.

D. Written questions via the Bid Q&A on COMMBUYS

The “Bid Q&A” provides the opportunity for Bidders to ask written questions and receive written answers regarding this Bid. All Bidders’ questions must be submitted through the Bid Q&A found on COMMBUYS (see below for instructions). Questions may be asked only prior to the Deadline for Submission of Questions stated in the Estimated Procurement Calendar. The issuing department reserves the right not to respond to questions submitted after this date. It is the Bidder’s responsibility to verify receipt of questions.

Please note that any questions submitted using any other medium (including those that are sent by mail, fax, email or voicemail, etc.) **will not be answered.** To reduce the number of redundant or duplicate questions, Bidders are asked to review all questions previously submitted to determine whether the Bidder’s question has already been posted.

Bidders are responsible for entering content suitable for public viewing, since all of the questions are accessible to the public. Bidders must not include any information that could be considered personal, security sensitive, inflammatory, incorrect, collusory, or otherwise objectionable, including information about the Bidder’s company or other companies. MDAR reserves the right to edit or delete any submitted questions that raise any of these issues or that are not in the best interest of the Commonwealth or this Bid.

All answers are final when posted. Any subsequent revisions to previously provided answers will be dated.

It is the responsibility of the prospective Bidder and awarded Contractor to maintain an active registration in COMMBUYS and to keep current the email address of the Bidder’s contact person and prospective contract manager, if awarded a contract, and to monitor that email inbox for communications from MDAR, including requests for clarification. MDAR and the Commonwealth assume no responsibility if a prospective Bidder’s/awarded Contractor’s designated email address is not current, or if technical problems, including those with the prospective Bidder’s/awarded Contractor’s computer, network or internet service provider (ISP) cause email communications sent to/from the prospective Bidder/Awarded contractor and MDAR to be lost or rejected by any means including email or spam filtering.

Locating Bid Q&A

Log into COMMBUYS, locate the Bid, acknowledge receipt of the Bid, and scroll down to the bottom of the Bid Header page. The “Bid Q&A” button allows Bidders access to the Bid Q&A page.

Appendix C:

Instructions for Vendors Responding to Bids Electronically through COMMBUYS

Introduction

COMMBUYS refers to all solicitations, including but not limited to Requests for Proposals (RFP), Invitations for Bid (IFB), Requests for Response (RFR), Requests for Quote (RFQ), as “Bids.” All responses to Bids are referred to as “Quotes.”

Steps for Bidders to Submit a Quote

1. Launch the COMMBUYS website by entering the URL (www.COMMBUYS.com) into the browser.
2. Enter Bidder login credentials and click the **Login** button on the COMMBUYS homepage. Bidders must be registered in COMMBUYS in order to submit a Quote. Each Vendor has a COMMBUYS Seller Administrator, who is responsible for maintaining authorized user access to COMMBUYS.
3. Upon successful login, the Vendor home page displays with the Navigation and Header Bar as well as the Control Center. The Control Center is where documents assigned to your role are easily accessed and viewed.
4. Click on the **Bids** tab
5. Clicking on the Bid tab opens four sections:
 - a. Request for Revision
 - b. Bids/Bid Amendments
 - c. Open Bids
 - d. Closed Bids
6. Click on the blue **Open Bid** hyperlinks to open and review an open bid
7. A new page opens with a message requesting you acknowledge receipt of the bid. Click **Yes** to acknowledge receipt of the bid. Bidders should acknowledge receipt to receive any amendments/updates concerning this bid.
8. After acknowledgement, the bid will open.

The top left half of the page contains the following information:

- a. Purchaser
- b. Department
- c. Contact for this bid
- d. Type of purchase
 - i. Open Market
 - ii. Blanket
- e. Pre-Bid Conference details (if applicable)

- f. Ship-to and Bill-to addresses
- g. Any attachments to the bid, which may include essential bid terms, response forms, etc.

The top right half of the bid includes the following information:

- h. Bid Date
- i. Required Date
- j. Bid Opening Date – date the bid closes and no further quotes will be accepted
- k. Informal Bid Flag
- l. Date goods/services are required

9. The lower half of the page provides information about the specific goods/services the bid is requesting.

10. Click **Create Quote** to begin.

11. The General tab for a new quote opens. This page is populated with some information from the bid. Fields available to update include:

- a. Delivery days
- b. Shipping terms
- c. Ship via terms
- d. Is “no” bid – select if you will not be submitting a quote for this bid
- e. Promised Date
- f. Info Contact
- g. Comments
- h. Discount Percent
- i. Freight Terms
- j. Payment Terms

It is important to note that the bid documents (RFR and attachments) may specify some or all of these terms and may prohibit you from altering these terms in your response. Read the bid documents carefully and fill in only those items that are applicable to the bid to which you are responding.

Update these fields as applicable to the bid and click **Save & Continue** to save any changes and create a Quote Number.

The page refreshes and messages display. Any message in Red is an error and must be resolved before the quote can be submitted. Any message in Yellow is only a warning and will allow processing to continue.

The following messages are received:

Terms & Conditions is not acknowledged – to resolve this, click on the Terms & Conditions tab and accept the terms. Your quote has not been submitted – information message; no action required

12. Click on the Terms & Conditions Tab. This tab refers to the terms and conditions that apply to this bid. The terms and conditions must be accepted before your quote can be

submitted. If your acceptance is subject to any exceptions, those exceptions must be identified here. Exceptions cannot contradict the requirements of the RFR, or required Commonwealth standard forms and attachments for the bid. For instance, an RFR may specify that exceptions may or will result in disqualification of your bid.

13. Click the **Items** tab. The Items tab displays information about the items requested in the bid. To view additional details about an item, click the item number (blue hyperlink) to open.
14. The item opens. Input all of your quote information and click **Save & Exit**.
15. **CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION:** If documents uploaded in your quote response contain confidential information (security sensitive, EFT, W9, Commonwealth Terms and Conditions), **you must mark each item as confidential**. The confidential column on the Attachments view allows the user to select whether the attached form is confidential or not. Place a check box under the confidential column for each confidential attached form.
16. Click on the **Attachments** Tab. Follow the prompts to upload and name all required attachments and forms and bid response documents in accordance with the instructions contained in the solicitation or bid documents. After uploading each individual file or form, click **Save & Continue**. After you have uploaded all required documents click **Save & Exit**. Be sure to review your attachments to make sure each required document has been submitted.
17. Click the Summary tab. Review the information and update/correct, as needed. If the information is correct, click the **Submit Quote** button at the bottom of the page.
18. A popup window displays asking for verification that you wish to submit your quote. Click **OK** to submit the quote.
19. The Summary tab redisplay with an updated Status for the quote of **Submitted**.
20. Your quote submission is confirmed only when you receive a confirmation email from COMMBUYS. If you have submitted a quote and have not received an email confirmation, please contact the COMMBUYS Help Desk at COMMBUYS@state.ma.us.

If you wish to revise or delete a quote after submission, you may do so in COMMBUYS: (1) for a formal bid, prior to the bid opening date, or (2) for an informal bid (which may be viewed upon receipt), prior to the opening of your quote by the issuing entity or the bid opening date, whichever is earlier.

Bidders may not submit Multiple Quotes in response to a Bid unless the Bid authorizes Multiple Quote submissions. If you submit multiple quotes in response to a bid that does not allow multiple quotes, only the latest submission prior to the bid opening date will be evaluated.