



Barbara Jo Crea, Director
Gary Quinn, Deputy Director
Virginia E. Haines, Commissioner
John P. Kelly, Commissioner
Frank Sadeghi, Commissioner

Tristin J. Collins, Director, Management & Budget
Jennifer L. Bowens, Purchasing Agent

County of Ocean
Administration Building
101 Hooper Avenue
Toms River, NJ 08754

CC

SHORT-TERM BASIC SKILLS SERVICES

2024

ADVERTISEMENT DATE: December 11, 2024
OPENING: January 9, 2025, 4:00 pm

NOTICE OF COMPETITIVE CONTRACT

The Ocean County Board of Commissioners is requesting Competitive Contracting proposals from organizations to provide services for Short-Term Basic Skills Services.

All proposals must be received prior to **4:00 pm**, prevailing time on Thursday, January 9, 2025.

Proposals will be received electronically via the County's Online Procurement Portal. Specifications are available on the Procurement Portal or for viewing only, in the Department of Purchase, Room #224, Administration Building, 101 Hooper Avenue, Toms River, New Jersey. Direct all inquiries to Jennifer L. Bowens, Purchasing Agent.

The County will not be responsible for late submissions, and no proposals will be accepted after the time stipulated on this notice.

By order of the Board of Commissioners of the County of Ocean.

Signed:

BARBARA JO CREA, Director

JENNIFER L. BOWENS, Purchasing Agent

Introduction to Proposers

Summary

The Ocean County Board of Commissioners requests Competitive Contracting proposals from organizations to provide Short-Term Basic Skills Services for a contract period commencing February 1, 2025, and ending on June 30, 2026.

Contact Information

For further information regarding these specifications, contact

Cheryl Meyer

Senior Program Monitor

Email: cmeyer@co.ocean.nj.us

Phone: [\(732\) 506-5374](tel:(732)506-5374)

Department:

Human Services

Timeline

Advertising Date	December 11, 2024
Question Submission Deadline	December 26, 2024, 12:00pm
Competitive Contract Receipt Date	January 9, 2025, 4:00pm Administration Building, 101 Hooper Ave., Room 119, Toms River, NJ, 08753

Instructions to Proposers

INTRODUCTION

The Ocean County Department of Human Services is seeking sealed proposals for Short-Term Basic Skills Services to be funded through allocations received by the Ocean County Local Workforce Development area.

The successful proposer will provide short-term basic skill services to eligible residents of Ocean County under the provisions of the Adult Literacy Innovations Initiative grant program for the period of February 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026.

Research by Organization for Economic CO-operation and Development (OECD) states that in the “world of work where skill requirements are rising, particularly because of the digital transition and adoption of AI, adults with low literacy skills do not fare well. The foundation skills are crucial to navigate new opportunities at work and understand societal changes. Closing the literacy gap requires adult learning programs focused on foundational skills and an active outreach to those who need them the most.”

English language learners, individuals who are economically disadvantaged, and individuals with disabilities in particular struggle with literacy. According to the U.S Census, in Ocean County, 7.8% of residents are foreign born and 12.1% speak a language other than English. There are areas within the County with a larger concentration of English language learners: in Lakewood public schools, 40.9% of students are multilanguage learners as are 9.6% of students in Seaside Heights. 11.8% of the population of Ocean lives below the poverty line. More than 90% of students in Lakewood and Seaside Heights are economically disadvantaged, qualifying for free or reduced-price lunch. Among residents under the age of 65, 7.1% report living with a disability. One in five public school students receive special education services.

Not only does a lack of high diploma cause employment challenges, but many individuals are also not equipped with work skills such as simple communication or how to act or dress in a work environment. 11.9% of 18 to 24-year-olds and 6.7% of adults over the age of 25 in Ocean County have less than a high school education. According to a 2024 Q3 Lightcast report, the most common skill required in job postings is communication with customer service as the second most common required skill.

METHOD OF SUBMISSION

The County of Ocean is accepting **only electronic proposals** for this Competitive Contract. Submitting your proposal manually is cause for rejection.

You may only provide one (1) final submission which includes one (1) complete Competitive Contract proposal. **DO NOT** submit a hard copy of your electronic submission.

Important Instructions for Electronic Submittal

The County is accepting electronic bid submissions with Open Gov by following these instructions:

Sign up for a FREE account at <https://procurement.opengov.com/portal/oceancounty>

Once you have completed account registration, browse back to this page: [County's OpenGov Electronic Bid Portal \(https://procurement.opengov.com/portal/oceancounty/\)](https://procurement.opengov.com/portal/oceancounty/)

Click on the bid of interest, then click "Draft Response".

Follow the instructions to submit the electronic bid.

It is important to note that this process should be completed well in advance of the bid deadline / bid opening. **DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE.** The County's electronic submission system will not allow electronic bids to be submitted once the deadline has passed, even if you've already started the process. The deadline is based on the countdown timer found on the OpenGov bid submission page.

Mandatory Equal Employment Opportunity

N.J.S.A. 10:5-31 et seq. (P.L. 1975, C. 127)

N.J.A.C. 17:27

GOODS, PROFESSIONAL SERVICE AND GENERAL SERVICE CONTRACTS

During the performance of this contract, the contractor agrees as follows:

The contractor or subcontractor, where applicable, will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of age, race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, marital status, affectional or sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, nationality or sex. Except with respect to affectional or sexual orientation and gender identity or expression, the contractor will ensure that equal employment opportunity is afforded to such applicants in recruitment and employment, and that employees are treated during employment, without regard to their age, race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, marital status, affectional or sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, nationality or sex. Such equal employment opportunity shall include, but not be limited to the following: employment, upgrading, demotion, or transfer; recruitment or recruitment advertising; layoff or termination; rates of pay or other forms of compensation; and selection for training, including apprenticeship. The contractor agrees to post in conspicuous places, available to employees and applicants for employment, notices to be provided by the Public Agency Compliance Officer setting forth provisions of this nondiscrimination clause.

The contractor or subcontractor, where applicable will, in all solicitations or advertisements for employees placed by or on behalf of the contractor, state that all qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to age, race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, marital status, affectional or sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, nationality or sex.

The contractor or subcontractor will send to each labor union, with which it has a collective bargaining agreement, a notice, to be provided by the agency contracting officer, advising the labor union of the contractor's commitments under this chapter and shall post copies of the notice in conspicuous places available to employees and applicants for employment.

The contractor or subcontractor, where applicable, agrees to comply with any regulations promulgated by the Treasurer pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:5-31 et seq., as amended and supplemented from time to time and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The contractor or subcontractor agrees to make good faith efforts to meet targeted county employment goals established in accordance with N.J.A.C. 17:27-5.2.

The contractor or subcontractor agrees to inform in writing its appropriate recruitment agencies including, but not limited to, employment agencies, placement bureaus, colleges, universities, and labor unions, that it does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, marital status, affectional or sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, nationality or sex, and that it will discontinue the use of any recruitment agency which engages in direct or indirect discriminatory practices.

The contractor or subcontractor agrees to revise any of its testing procedures, if necessary, to assure that all personnel testing conforms with the principles of job-related testing, as established by the statutes and court decisions of the State of New Jersey and as established by applicable Federal law and applicable Federal court decisions.

In conforming with the targeted employment goals, the contractor or subcontractor agrees to review all procedures relating to transfer, upgrading, downgrading and layoff to ensure that all such actions are taken without regard to age, race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, marital status, affectional or sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, nationality or sex, consistent with the statutes and court decisions of the State of New Jersey, and applicable Federal law and applicable Federal court decisions.

The contractor shall submit to the public agency, after notification of award but prior to execution of a goods and services contract, one of the following three documents:

- Letter of Federal Affirmative Action Plan Approval
- Certificate of Employee Information Report
- Employee Information Report Form AA302 (electronically provided by the Division and distributed to the public agency through the Division's website at www.state.nj.us/treasury/contract_compliance)

The contractor and its subcontractors shall furnish such reports or other documents to the Division of Purchase & Property, CCAU, EEO Monitoring Program as may be requested by the office from time to time in order to carry out the purposes of these regulations, and public agencies shall furnish such information as may be requested by the Division of Purchase & Property, CCAU, EEO Monitoring Program for conducting a compliance investigation pursuant to **Subchapter 10 of the Administrative Code at N.J.A.C. 17:27.**

Americans with Disabilities Act

Equal Opportunity For Individuals With Disabilities

The CONTRACTOR and the COUNTY do hereby agree that the provisions of title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (the "Act") (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability by public entities in all services, programs and activities provided or made available by public entities, and the rules and regulations promulgated pursuant thereto, are made a part of this contract. In providing any aid, benefit, or service on behalf of the COUNTY pursuant to this contract, the CONTRACTOR agrees that the performance shall be in strict compliance with the Act. In the event that the CONTRACTOR, its agents, servants, employees, or subcontractors violate or are alleged to have violated the Act during the performance of this contract, the CONTRACTOR shall defend the COUNTY in any action or administrative proceeding commenced pursuant to this Act. The CONTRACTOR shall indemnify, protect and save harmless the COUNTY, its agents, servants and employees from and against any and all suits, claims, losses, demands, or damages of whatever kind or nature arising out of or claimed to arise out of the alleged violation. The CONTRACTOR shall, at its own expense, appear, defend and pay any and all charges for legal services and any and all costs and other expenses arising from such action or administrative proceeding or incurred in connection therewith. In any and all complaints brought pursuant to the COUNTY'S grievance procedure, the CONTRACTOR agrees to abide by any decision of the COUNTY which is rendered pursuant to said grievance procedure. If any action or administrative proceeding results in an award of damages against the COUNTY or if the COUNTY incurs any expense to cure a violation of the ADA which has been brought pursuant to its grievance procedure, the CONTRACTOR shall satisfy and discharge the same at its own expense.

The COUNTY shall, as soon as practicable after a claim has been made against it, give written notice thereof to the CONTRACTOR along with full and complete particulars of the claim. If any action or administrative proceeding is brought against the COUNTY or any of its agents, servants and employees, the COUNTY shall expeditiously forward or have forwarded to the CONTRACTOR every demand, complaint, notice, summons, pleading, or other process received by the COUNTY or its representatives.

It is expressly agreed and understood that any approval by the COUNTY of the services provided by the CONTRACTOR pursuant to this contract will not relieve the CONTRACTOR of the obligation to comply with the Act and to defend, indemnify, protect and save harmless the COUNTY pursuant to this paragraph.

It is further agreed and understood that the COUNTY assumes no obligation to indemnify or save harmless the CONTRACTOR, its agents, servants, employees and subcontractors for any claim which may arise out of their performance of this Agreement. Furthermore, the CONTRACTOR expressly understands and agrees that the provision of this indemnification clause shall in no way limit the CONTRACTOR'S obligations assumed in this Agreement, nor shall they be construed to relieve the CONTRACTOR from any liability, nor preclude the COUNTY from taking any other actions available to it under any other provisions of this Agreement or otherwise at law.

Evaluation Criteria

No.	Evaluation Criteria	Scoring Method	Weight (Points)
1.	<p>Technical Criteria</p> <p>1. Technical Criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Does the proposal demonstrate a clear understanding of the scope of work and related objectives? b. Is the proposal complete and responsive to the specific requirements? c. Is there evidence to support the efficacy of the proposed methodology? d. Plan of Service – design and approach includes mandated services and measurable skills attainment goals, method of service delivery will enhance participants’ job prospects and career opportunities, ability to use skills attainment formats in activities, innovative strategies, coordination with employer community. e. Partnerships and Coordination - Understanding of and commitment to an integrated service delivery model in the One Stop Career Center system and effective working relationships with the Board, partner organizations, businesses, and the community. Ability to leverage resources with other partners resulting in innovative service approaches will be considered. Consortium applications preferred. 	Points Based	40 <i>(40% of Total)</i>

2.	<p>Management Criteria</p> <p>1. Management Criteria:</p> <p>a. Organizational Stability, Background, Qualifications, Performance History – whether proposer adequately addressed all the response items and appears to be a solid organization and extent to which proposer demonstrated evidence of ability to perform the functions described in its project plan.</p> <p>b. Staffing Plan and Organizational Chart– completeness of response to the items in the instructions, quality of response, strength of experience, and demonstrated achievements/results.</p>	Points Based	40 <i>(40% of Total)</i>
3.	<p>Cost Criteria</p> <p>1. Cost Criteria:</p> <p>a. How does the cost compare to other similarly scored proposals?</p> <p>b. Is the price and its component charges, fees, etc. adequately explained or documented?</p> <p>c. Reasonableness of pricing consistent with the plan of service proposed and the qualifications of proposer</p>	Points Based	20 <i>(20% of Total)</i>

Scope of Work

SCOPE OF WORK

Please refer to the PDF under "Attachments" to view the downloadable Competitive Contract document and Scope of Work.

Vendor Questionnaire

OpenGov Vendor Account Verification*

I hereby confirm that I am logged into OpenGov using an account directly associated with the Business Name (and corresponding Tax ID number) as provided in all solicitation documentation. I fully understand that, if awarded a contract with Ocean County, the company information listed in the Contract Information Field will be used for the preparation of all contract documents. *Failure to adhere to these requirements may result in the rejection of this bid.*

Please confirm

*Response required

DOCUMENTS TO BE EXECUTED*

Documents include:

- Signature Page
- Non-Collusion Certification
- Affirmative Action Questionnaire
- **Statement of Ownership (N.J.S.A. 52:25-24.2) (Mandatory Document)**
- Disclosure of Investment Activities in Iran
- Certification of Non-Involvement in Prohibited Activities in Russia or Belarus

FAILURE TO SUBMIT ANY OF THESE DOCUMENTS MAY BE CAUSE FOR REJECTION OF YOUR PROPOSAL.

All documents should be from this proposal package as forms change frequently and the most updated forms are provided in this specification. The forms must not be dated or executed prior to the date of advertising.

NOTE: For detailed instructions on how to complete the forms via DocuSign, please access the "Instructions for Completing Forms in DocuSign" document available in the Attachments.

Please note: The County's preferred method of submission is DocuSign.

[Click here to go to the form](#)

*Response required

COMPETITIVE CONTRACT PROPOSAL *

Please upload your Competitive Contract proposal for Short-Term Basic Skills Services.

This should include your Program Narrative as well as your Computed Budget Proposal and Narrative.

Please note, the only acceptable file forms are as follows:

Documents (doc, docx, rtf, txt, xls, xlsx, pdf)

Images (jpg, png, bmp, tif)

*Response required

CERTIFICATE OF INSURANCE

Please upload your Certificate of Insurance for Short-Term Basic Skills Services.

Please note, the only acceptable file forms are as follows:

Documents (doc, docx, rtf, txt, xls, xlsx, pdf)

Images (jpg, png, bmp, tif)

CURRENT LIST OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Please upload your company's current list of Board of Directors.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

Please upload your company's Organizational Chart.

CERTIFIED AUDIT OR FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Please upload your company's certified audit or financial statement.

Copy of New Jersey Business Registration Certificate/Copy of IRS letter granting tax exempt status under Sec. 501(c)3

A Valid BRC or Copy of IRS letter granting tax exempt status under Sec. 501(c)3 is required Prior to Award of Contract. Please upload your company's BRC or Copy of IRS letter granting tax exempt status under Sec. 501(c)3.

Use the following link to check the status of your company's BRC:

https://www1.state.nj.us/TYTR_BRC/jsp/BRCLoginJsp.jsp

NOTE: a BRC/copy of IRS letter granting tax exempt status is not required at the time of submission, only prior to award of the contract.

Please note, the only acceptable file forms are as follows:

Documents (doc, docx, rtf, txt, xls, xlsx, pdf)

Images (jpg, png, bmp, tif)

Certificate of Employee Information Report

Within seven (7) days after receipt of the notification of intent to award the contract or receipt of the contract, whichever is sooner, a Contractor should present one of the following to the County of Ocean:

(a) An existing federally approved or sanctioned affirmative action program.

(b) A New Jersey Certificate of Employee Information Report Approval.

(c) If the Contractor cannot present "a" or "b", the Contractor is required to submit a completed Employee Information Report (Form AA302). This form will be made available to the Contractor by the County of Ocean.

QUESTIONS BELOW MUST BE ANSWERED BY ALL CONTRACTORS:

1. Do you have a Federally approved or sanctioned Affirmative Action Program?

If yes, please upload a photocopy of such approval.

2. Do you have a State of New Jersey "Certificate of Employee Information Report" approval?

If yes, please upload a photocopy of such certificate.

Please note, the only acceptable file forms are as follows:

Documents (doc, docx, rtf, txt, xls, xlsx, pdf)

Images (jpg, png, bmp, tif)

Mandatory Equal Employment Opportunity Statement*

Does the PROPOSER comply with the [#Mandatory Equal Employment Opportunity Statement?](#)

Yes

No

*Response required

Americans with Disabilities Act Provisions*

Does the PROPOSER comply with the [#Americans with Disabilities Act Provisions?](#)

Yes

No

*Response required

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION ACKNOWLEDGMENT*

The County of Ocean is accepting only electronic proposals for this Competitive Contract. Submitting your proposal manually is cause for rejection. You may only submit one (1) proposal. DO NOT submit a hard copy of your proposal. Please confirm that you understand that the method of submission is electronic ONLY and that submitting a proposal manually is automatic cause for rejection.

Please confirm

*Response required

SUBMISSION OF PROPOSAL FORMS*

Proposers shall complete all documents and acknowledge all terms included with this package. All documents should be from this proposal package as forms change frequently and the most updated forms are provided in this specification. The forms must not be dated or executed prior to the date of advertising. Failure to follow these instructions is cause for rejection.

Please confirm

*Response required

CONTRACT INFORMATION*

Should your company be awarded a contract with Ocean County, please provide the contact name and address where the contract documents should be mailed.

*Response required



Barbara Jo Crea, Director
Gary Quinn, Deputy Director
Virginia E. Haines, Commissioner
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**COUNTY OF OCEAN
ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
101 HOOPER AVENUE
TOMS RIVER, NEW JERSEY 08753**

COMPETITIVE CONTRACT

PROPOSAL

FOR

SHORT-TERM BASIC SKILLS SERVICES

NOTICE OF COMPETITIVE CONTRACTING PROPOSAL **SHORT-TERM BASIC SKILLS SERVICES**

The Ocean County Department of Human Services is seeking sealed proposals for Short-Term Basic Skills Services to be funded through allocations received by the Ocean County Local Workforce Development area.

The successful proposer will provide short-term basic skill services to eligible residents of Ocean County under the provisions of the Adult Literacy Innovations Initiative grant program for the period of February 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026.

Introduction

Research by Organization for Economic CO-operation and Development (OECD) states that in the “world of work where skill requirements are rising, particularly because of the digital transition and adoption of AI, adults with low literacy skills do not fare well. The foundation skills are crucial to navigate new opportunities at work and understand societal changes. Closing the literacy gap requires adult learning programs focused on foundational skills and an active outreach to those who need them the most.”

English language learners, individuals who are economically disadvantaged, and individuals with disabilities in particular struggle with literacy. According to the U.S Census, in Ocean County, 7.8% of residents are foreign born and 12.1% speak a language other than English. There are areas within the County with a larger concentration of English language learners: in Lakewood public schools, 40.9% of students are multilanguage learners as are 9.6% of students in Seaside Heights. 11.8% of the population of Ocean lives below the poverty line. More than 90% of students in Lakewood and Seaside Heights are economically disadvantaged, qualifying for free or reduced-price lunch. Among residents under the age of 65, 7.1% report living with a disability. One in five public school students receive special education services.

Not only does a lack of high diploma cause employment challenges, but many individuals are also not equipped with work skills such as simple communication or how to act or dress in a work environment. 11.9% of 18 to 24-year-olds and 6.7% of adults over the age of 25 in Ocean County have less than a high school education. According to a 2024 Q3 Lightcast report, the most common skill required in job postings is communication with customer service as the second most common required skill.

Scope of Work

The Ocean County Department of Human Services, Workforce Development Board is seeking proposals from interested organizations to provide short-term basic skills for a period of three to six months to eligible residents of Ocean County to gain literacy and skills needed to be successful in their desired industry-valued training and ultimately obtain and retain sustainable employment in in-demand occupations through career pathways.

The Ocean County Career Center offers job seekers services by providing career pathway employment plans through a combination of Federal, State, and local funding for workforce development. For many job seekers this may simply mean access to job listings, while others may require skill and aptitude evaluation, job search assistance, adult education, job training, post-secondary education or registered apprenticeship. Some may require temporary financial assistance, needs based payments, or supportive services. This solicitation seeks providers of high school equivalency preparation and testing, tutoring to increase educational functioning level, as well as work readiness supports and a more intensive remedial life basics course to work in coordination with the County Social Services Agency and the Ocean County Career Center Administrative Entity.

Services must be delivered in accordance with the priorities and strategies identified in the Ocean County Workforce Development Board’s Local Area Plan and all corresponding rules, regulations, directives, policies, and procedures.

Activities shall include, based on the Individual Employment Plan of each participant, but are not limited to:

Basic Skills- Services that allow participants to obtain a High School Diploma, High School Equivalence (HSE) or improved educational functioning level through the enhancement of their basic and English language skills. Services seek to help residents enter training or to improve their overall employability. Participants must be tested prior to beginning services and tested again at completion to demonstrate measurable skills gains.

Work Readiness- Services that provide participants with soft skills training directly related to employment. Programming may include professionalism, interpersonal skills, organization and time management, and effective communication, digital literacy, transferrable skills, personal career portfolio development, and other skills necessary for the individual to obtain employment. Training may also include basic certificates or credentials targeted to a particular industry.

Life Skills- Services that provide coping skills, decision making, critical thinking, self-awareness, empathy, creativity, and adaptability skills that will enable individuals to obtain and retain employment to become self-sufficient.

All elements of programming may also include work experience opportunities and community service/service-learning projects to aid in real life implementation of learned skills. To aid in the obtainment of employment, participants will complete various assessments to determine strengths and weaknesses, receive interviewing skills, cover letter and resume assistance, and receive aid in navigating the various digital platforms used to search for employment. All participants will be coached through programming through mentorship and/or job coaching.

Roles & Deliverables

- Upon referral, engage and attempt to enroll all participants referred to the Short-Term Basic Skills Program
- Prior to being enrolled in the Short-Term Basic Skills Program, ensure participants receive an orientation from the Ocean County Career Center, WIOA/WFNJ eligibility determination if applicable is made and an Individual Employment Plan is created.
- Conduct the Short-Term Basic Skills Program according to applicable rules and regulations and the scope of work in this Request for Competitive Contracting
- Maintain appropriate accreditation for any curriculum-based training activities
- Provide any and all data and reports required by County, State and One Stop Career Center Administrative Entity, and maintain files and reports until audit
- Comply with County, Regional, State, and Federal program and financial monitoring
- Participate in One Stop Collaborative meetings and provide utilization and performance data as requested
- Participate in local and regional workforce planning efforts of the Ocean County local area as invited
- Collect, analyze, and report performance data
- Maintain effective working relationships with One Stop partners, including but not limited to the One Stop Career Center Administrative Entity
- Report to the Ocean County Workforce Development Board

Location

The successful proposer(s) will be required to maintain a local office and provide services within the Local Workforce Development Area. Virtual service delivery mechanisms may be used on an **as needed** basis.

Eligible Applicants

Pursuant to the NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD), eligible entities include:

- an institution of higher education or local education agency;
- a community-based organization, nonprofit organization, or faith based organization;
- a private for-profit entity;
- a government agency; and
- Another interested organization or entity, which may include a local chamber of commerce or other business organization, or a labor organization.

If a bidder is, or should be, aware of any potential conflict of interest, disclosure must be a part of the Certifications attached to this proposal. A conflict of interest would occur if members of the proposing organization whether as an employee, officer or director receives compensation or business for services rendered to the Ocean County Workforce Development Board or have direct or consulting agreement, including those through family or business ties.

Bidders are prohibited from contacting or discussing this solicitation with board members of the Ocean County Workforce Development Board. Such contact and any attempts to sway decision making of the Board will result in disqualification of the bid.

Entities serving or seeking to serve multiple roles in the Ocean County Workforce Development area must adhere to WIOA Title 1, Subtitle E (Administration) and 679.430 to ensure appropriate firewalls within a single entity performing multiple functions to limit conflicts of interest and minimize fiscal risk. It is the responsibility of the bidder to recognize real or perceived conflicts of interest and plan to address them with appropriate firewalls. Such firewalls must be clearly articulated in the program narrative.

Funding Availability

The services highlighted in this competitive contracting solicitation are supported with funds from the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development, totaling \$260,880.00. At least 92% or \$240,000.00 must be allocated to Participant Training, 4% or \$10,000.00 may be allocated to Participant Support Services, and 4% or \$10,880.00 to Outreach and Recruitment activities.

Level of Service

The projected level of service for Short Term Basic Skills Services is a minimum of 200 unduplicated individuals, as follows:

- 150 participants in services to raise Educational Functioning Level (EFL) scores
- 50 participants in services for High School Equivalency Assessment (HSEA) preparation
- 150 participants in work readiness training
- 75 participants in life basics training

Term

The Ocean County Department of Human Services is seeking proposals for a 17-month contract period (February 1, 2025- June 30, 2026).

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Responses to this Request for Competitive Contract Proposals must be received prior to 4:00pm prevailing time on January 9, 2025. **DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE.** The County's electronic submission system will not allow proposals to be submitted once the deadline has passed.

The County of Ocean is accepting **only electronic responses** to this Request for Competitive Contract Proposals. Submitting your proposal manually is cause for rejection.

You may only provide one (1) final submission which shall consist of one (1) complete Competitive Contract proposal.

DO NOT submit a hard copy of your electronic submission.

Proposers shall complete all documents and acknowledge all terms included with this proposal package. All documents should be from this proposal package and must not be dated or executed prior to the date of advertising. Failure to follow these instructions is cause for rejection.

To ensure an open and transparent process, the Department of Human Services staff cannot respond to questions about this solicitation via phone or email while it is open or in review. Questions about this solicitation must be submitted using the Ocean County Procurement Portal website, no later than 12:00 PM on December 26, 2024. Any inquiries received beyond that date and outside of the Portal cannot be addressed.

All proposals should include the following documents:

1. Documents to be executed:
 - a. Signature Page*
 - b. Non-Collusion Certification*
 - c. Affirmative Action Regulations N.J.S.A. 10:5-31 et seq. and P.L. 1975 C. 127 (N.J.A.C. 17:27-1 et seq.) Compliance Statement*
 - d. Statement of Ownership in compliance with N.J.S.A. 52:25-24.2. **(Mandatory Document)***
 - e. Prohibited Russia-Belarus Activities & Iran Investment Activities*
2. Competitive Contract proposal
 - a. Program Narrative
 - b. Computed Budget Proposal and Narrative
3. Valid, unexpired Certificate of Insurance
4. Current List of Board of Directors
5. Organizational Chart
6. Certified Audit or Financial Statement
7. Copy of New Jersey Business Registration Certificate in compliance with N.J.S.A. 52:32-44 OR Copy of IRS letter granting tax exempt status under Sec. 501(c)3
8. NJ Certificate of Employee Information Report Approval issued by the NJ Department of Treasury or AA-302 Initial Employee Information Report
9. Mandatory Equal Employment Opportunity Compliance Statement
10. Americans with Disabilities Act Provisions Compliance Statement
11. Proposal Submission Acknowledgement

** Note: Failure to properly submit any of the documents listed in #1 may be cause for rejection of your proposal as stated on the Ocean County Procurement Portal website. The forms should be from this proposal package as forms change frequently and the most updated forms are provided in this specification. The forms must not be dated or executed prior to the date of advertising. DocuSign is the preferred method of form submission for the*

County of Ocean.

**** ATTENTION**** Responses received pursuant to this solicitation are subject to complete disclosure pursuant to the Open Public Records Act. Please note that disclosure includes any and all attachments and addenda supplementing the solicitation response. Accordingly, please do not include personal identifying information in any supplementary documents submitted with the solicitation response.

Statement of Ownership - The provisions of N.J.S.A. 52:25-24.2 applies to all forms of corporations and partnerships, including, but not limited to, limited partnerships, limited liability corporations, limited liability partnerships, and Subchapter S corporations.

Certification of Disclosure of Investment Activities in Iran

Pursuant to Public Law 2012, c. 25, any person or entity that is a successful bidder or proposer, or otherwise proposes to enter into or renew a contract, must complete the certification below to attest, under penalty of perjury, that neither the person or entity, nor any parent entity, subsidiary, or affiliate is identified on the State Department of Treasury's Chapter 25 list as a person or entity engaging in investment activities in Iran. The list is found on Treasury's website at www.state.nj.us/treasury/purchase/pdf/Chapter25List.pdf.

The Chapter 25 list must be reviewed prior to completing the certification. If a vendor or contractor is found to be in violation of law, action may be taken as appropriate and as may provided by law, rule or contract, including but not limited to imposing sanctions, seeking compliance, recovering damages, declaring the party in default and seeking debarment or suspension of the party. Prior to contract award or authorization, the contractor shall provide the Contracting Agency with a completed Certification on Disclosure of Investment Activities in Iran.

Certification of Non-Involvement in Prohibited Activities in Russia or Belarus

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 52:32-60.1, et seq. (L. 2022, c. 3) any person or entity (hereinafter "Vendor") that seeks to enter into or renew a contract with a State agency for the provision of goods or services, or the purchase of bonds or other obligations, must complete the certification below indicating whether or not the Vendor is identified on the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons list, available here: <https://sanctionssearch.ofac.treas.gov/>. If the Department of the Treasury finds that a Vendor has made a certification in violation of the law, it shall take any action as may be appropriate and provided by law, rule or contract, including but not limited to, imposing sanctions, seeking compliance, recovering damages, declaring the party in default and seeking debarment or suspension of the party. Certification form must be completed prior to contract award and is provided in the specification documents (DocuSign).

Competitive Contract Proposal

Program Narrative Format

Please provide detail to the following items and questions.

Basic Agency Information

1. Include agency name, CEO or Executive Director's name, mailing and physical addresses, and main phone number, as well as the name, phone, and email address of the contact person for this proposal.
2. Provide the corporation type and, if applicable, documentation of Section 501(c) 3 tax exempt status.
3. Overview of the organization's qualifications and alignment with the services sought by the RFCC.
4. The organization's philosophy and approach to workforce development programs and services.
5. Synopsis of the proposed program approach.

Agency Background Information

1. A basic organizational description, including but not limited to year established, governance structure, principal programs and services, executive leadership, annual budget, and number of full-time staff. Include a table of organization.
2. Give the agency's mission statement.

3. Please describe how you have operated a workforce development program of similar size and scope to the one proposed and/or past experience in managing quality workforce development programs, including but not limited to individuals served, services and activities delivered, contract values, and related performance outcomes achieved.
 - 3a. If the proposer operated a Basic Skills program, please give the performance measures outcomes achieved for the two most recent years.
4. Describe past success in developing effective working relationships with partner organizations.
5. Address, with specificity, if your agency has had any public or private grants rescinded for noncompliance or inability to administer the grant.

Description of Program

1. Describe your proposed model for effectively delivering the required services to participants.
2. Describe the behavior, knowledge, and skills that are expected to occur or be gained through the individual's participation in the program. Objectives must be measurable, attributable to the program, and related to the goals of the funding source.
3. How would participants be served in the program period in each service element? Also indicate daily program capacity and student/staff ratio if applicable.
4. Indicate type of enrollment cycle (closed cycle, rolling admission, etc.), times and days that the program will operate per week, and any organization closings (e.g. holidays) on which services will not be conducted.
5. Describe the procedure for responding to referrals, including outreach to the participant and to the referral source.
6. Describe the procedure for re-engaging the customer who is not participating appropriately.
7. Describe policies regarding participant sickness, tardiness, and/or other absences. Describe procedure for communicating with the One Stop Career Center Administrative Entity regarding customer absence. Include timeframe for outreach to the participant and for counselor alerts.
8. Describe policies regarding causes for termination, including but not limited to attendance and participation.
9. Describe in detail the activities that participants will be involved in during any component of their participation, how these activities will be monitored, and expected outcomes.
10. Describe your organization's ability to meet the specific needs of other special populations if applicable ((i.e. individuals with language barriers, who have experienced homelessness, with mental health and/or substance use conditions).
11. Indicate specific testing instrument(s) to be used to measure progress or levels mastered in the specific service(s) provided.
12. How will you measure participant performance and what performance benchmarks would be set for the program? Submit any forms used for tracking participant progress and reporting purposes. How and why will the service achieve the results stated?
13. Describe the methods that will be used to ensure participants meet planned goals within the target time frame. If the participant does not make satisfactory progress, what steps/ procedures will be in place to ensure achievement of satisfactory progress?
14. Describe the methods that will be used to assist participants in obtaining and retaining employment.
15. Describe any special strength or features that make your service different from similar offerings available, including any innovative approaches and best practices that will be utilized in providing these services.
16. Describe your knowledge of the most significant workforce development challenges and opportunities that the Ocean County local Workforce Development Area will likely face in the next two years.
17. Describe how your organization envisions its role and relationship with the One Stop Administrative Entity and the Ocean County Workforce Development Board.

Program Management

1. Provide job descriptions of all staff and positions relevant to this program. Describe their management authority and responsibilities. Be clear as to currently employed staff to be assigned to this program and new positions to be hired for assignment to this program.

2. Describe the hiring or selection process for employees and volunteers that would be assigned to the program. All individuals working with youth must be subject to a criminal background check.
3. If applicable, tell us about other members of the team that will support the Basic Skills program, i.e. business partners, other educational partners from institutions of advanced learning, work experience and internship sites. How and why will these capabilities help achieve the results you are committed to achieving?
4. Provide a Table of Organization that illustrates the structure of the staff to be used in support of the Basic Skills program within the larger agency structure. The organizational chart should list the percentage of dedicated time for all staff positions that are anticipated to work in support of the Basic Skills program, the employee's date of hire, and the employee's annual salary.
5. If applicable, clearly describe and attach any cooperative agreements (i.e. Memorandums of Understanding, Articulation Agreements) with any other entity that will be delivering services described in the proposal.
6. Describe the organization's internal controls that will be used for maintaining all records and documents (including participants). Identify how participant records will be kept and what will be included in those records.
7. Describe the systems that will be used to report programmatic and fiscal activities and how they will be used to exercise management control of the services and activities.
8. Explain how the appropriate customer data will be shared for entry into the America's One Stop Operating System (AOSOS) and general reporting procedures to the One Stop Career Center Administrative Entity and Ocean County Workforce Development Board.
9. Describe how the proposed program will be internally monitored by the organization and the organization's process for continuous quality improvement. Attach questionnaires, staff surveys, or other forms that will be used.
10. Describe the methods that will be used to evaluate participant satisfaction. How will this information be used? Attach questionnaires, client satisfaction surveys, or other forms that will be employed.
11. Describe your plan for new employee orientation and ongoing staff development to ensure that your staff are well-trained in the applicable rules, regulations, and best practices.
12. Any organization that has been selected or seeks to be designated to perform more than one function in the local Workforce Development area must clarify how the organization will carry out its responsibilities while demonstrating compliance with WIOA and corresponding regulations, relevant Office of Management and Budget circulars, and the State's conflict of interest policy. If applicable, describe in detail the firewalls that your organization will create between roles it seeks to play in the Ocean County Workforce Development area. Describe why the firewalls are deemed appropriate and how they will be enforced.
13. What evidence suggests that your organization has the capability and commitment to achieve the results stated above?
14. A Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) documents how your organization will perform essential operations during an emergency situation or long-term disruption, which might last from 2 days to several weeks. The plan will identify functions, departmental communication methods, and alternate personnel, systems and locations. Explain how your organization will plan to continue operations with or without delay under all conditions.

Computed Cost Proposal and Narrative Format

Prepare an operating budget using a schedule of fees and expected units of services to be provided within the contract period. *Proposers are highly encouraged to propose a performance-based fee schedule.* Successful proposer(s) will be paid on a fee-for-service basis or performance-based fee schedule.

Cost proposals will be expected to adhere to the following funding parameters:

- At least 92% or \$240,000.00 must be allocated for Participant Training
- Approximately 4% or up to \$10,000.00 may be allocated for Participant Support Services
- Approximately 4% or no more than \$10,880.00 may be allocated for Outreach and Recruitment Activities
- No indirect or general and administrative costs are permitted.

Include a budget narrative to clarify and annotate the budget. Explain any in-kind contributions or match funds to be utilized. In-kind or matching funds are not required but will be considered favorably to maximize available resources.

Insurance Requirements

The contractor shall maintain primary insurance to protect against all claims under Worker's Compensation, Comprehensive General Liability and Automobile. Except for Worker's Compensation, all coverage shall apply as primary coverage with respect to any other insurance or self-insurance program afforded to the County. There shall be no endorsement or modification of this coverage to make it excess over other available insurance/coverage; alternatively, if the CGL and umbrella, excess of reinsurance states that it is pro rata, it shall be endorsed to be primary with respect to the County. Primary coverage shall be subject to approval for adequacy of protection as per the following limits:

Worker's Compensation

1. Limits according to Worker's compensation Laws of the State of New Jersey.
2. Contractor's Liability not less than \$100,000.

Comprehensive General Liability

1. Bodily Injury - \$500,000 per person; \$1,000,000 per occurrence.
2. Property Damage - \$1,000,000 per occurrence.

Comprehensive General Liability shall include the following:

1. Coverage for explosion, collapse or underground hazards.
2. Occurrence basis coverage.
3. Broad form property damage coverage.
4. Coverage for personal injury sustained by any person as a result of an offense directly or indirectly related to the employment of such person by the insured.

Comprehensive Automobile Liability, if applicable, shall include the following:

Business auto liability insurance or its equivalent with a minimum limit of \$1,000,000 per accident and including coverage for all of the following:

- a. Liability arising out of the ownership, maintenance or use of any auto;
- b. Auto non-ownership and hired car coverage.
- c. Contractor's Worker's Compensation, Comprehensive General Liability and Comprehensive Automobile Liability arising out of subcontractor's operations shall be identical as that listed above.

Copies of each insurance certificate shall be furnished to the County with Proposal (when requested).

Certified Audit or Financial Statement

Pursuant to N.J. P.L. 2021 c. 381, an annual charities registration for a charitable organization with revenue, gains, and other support, but excluding non-monetary in-kind donations, of \$1 million or more must be accompanied by an independent audit. For those nonprofit organizations with gross revenue between \$25,000 and less than \$1 million, the financial statements must be certified by the organization's president or other authorized officer. In accordance with the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Uniform Guidance and the State of New Jersey OMB Circular 15-08, entities receiving and expending federal and/or state grant funds must comply with audit requirements. An entity that expends \$750,000 or more in federal or state financial assistance during its fiscal year must have a single or program-specific audit conducted for that year. An entity that expends less than \$750,000 but more than \$100,000 (combined amount) during its fiscal year, must have either a financial statement audit or a program-specific audit conducted for that year.

Business Registration Certificate –

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 52:32-44, Ocean County (“Contracting Agency”) is prohibited from entering into a contract with an entity unless the bidder/proposer/contractor, and each subcontractor that is required by law to be named in a bid/proposal/contract has a valid Business Registration Certificate on file with the Division of Revenue and Enterprise Services within the Department of the Treasury.

Prior to contract award or authorization, the contractor shall provide the Contracting Agency with its proof of business registration and that of any named subcontractor(s).

Subcontractors named in a bid or other proposal shall provide proof of business registration to the bidder, who in turn, shall provide it to the Contracting Agency prior to the time a contract, purchase order, or other contracting document is awarded or authorized.

During the course of contract performance:

- (1) the contractor shall not enter into a contract with a subcontractor unless the subcontractor first provides the contractor with a valid proof of business registration.
- (2) the contractor shall maintain and submit to the Contracting Agency a list of subcontractors and their addresses that may be updated from time to time.
- (3) the contractor and any subcontractor providing goods or performing services under the contract, and each of their affiliates, shall collect and remit to the Director of the Division of Taxation in the Department of the Treasury, the use tax due pursuant to the Sales and Use Tax Act, (N.J.S.A. 54:32B-1 et seq.) on all sales of tangible personal property delivered into the State. Any questions in this regard can be directed to the Division of Taxation at (609)292-6400. Form NJ-REG can be filed online at <http://www.state.nj.us/treasury/revenue/busregcert.shtml>.

Before final payment is made under the contract, the contractor shall submit to the Contracting Agency a complete and accurate list of all subcontractors used and their addresses.

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 54:49-4.1, a business organization that fails to provide a copy of a business registration as required, or that provides false business registration information, shall be liable for a penalty of \$25 for each day of violation, not to exceed \$50,000, for each proof of business registration not properly provided under a contract with a contracting agency.

EVALUATION AND AWARD

Ranking - All proposals will be reviewed for completeness and qualifications. The County of Ocean shall award a contract to the vendor or vendors that best meet the needs and interest of Ocean County. The County reserves the right to negotiate the terms and conditions of a contract with the successful vendor or vendors to obtain the most cost advantageous services for the County.

Evaluation Criteria

The following selection criteria will be used in award of a contract for the services described herein. Proposals must receive an average score of at least 75% to be considered for funding.

- 40 % - Technical Criteria**
- 40 % - Management Criteria**
- 20 % - Cost Criteria**

1. Technical Criteria:

- a. Does the proposal demonstrate a clear understanding of the scope of work and related objectives?
- b. Is the proposal complete and responsive to the specific requirements?
- c. Is there evidence to support the efficacy of the proposed methodology?
- d. Plan of Service – design and approach includes mandated services and measurable skills attainment goals, method of service delivery will enhance participants’ job prospects and career opportunities, ability to use skills attainment formats in activities, innovative strategies, coordination with employer community.
- e. Partnerships and Coordination - Understanding of and commitment to an integrated service delivery model in the One Stop Career Center system and effective working relationships with the Board, partner organizations, businesses, and the community. Ability to leverage resources with other partners resulting in innovative service approaches will be considered. Consortium applications preferred.

2. Management Criteria:

- a. Organizational Stability, Background, Qualifications, Performance History – whether proposer adequately addressed all the response items and appears to be a solid organization and extent to which proposer demonstrated evidence of ability to perform the functions described in its project plan.
- b. Staffing Plan and Organizational Chart– completeness of response to the items in the instructions, quality of response, strength of experience, and demonstrated achievements/results.

3. Cost Criteria:

- a. How does the cost compare to other similarly scored proposals?
- b. Is the price and its component charges, fees, etc. adequately explained or documented?
- c. Reasonableness of pricing consistent with the plan of service proposed and the qualifications of proposer.

Awards - The County of Ocean shall award a contract to the vendor or vendors that best meet the needs and interest of Ocean County. Proposals may be awarded funding in whole or in part. The County reserves the right to negotiate the terms and conditions of a contract with the successful vendor or vendors to obtain the most cost advantageous services for the County. Final award decisions are made by the Ocean County Board of Commissioners.

Appeals - Applicants have the right to appeal actions or decisions related to this Competitive Contract RFP pertaining to procedural, statutory, or regulatory violations. Appeals that challenge the evaluation of proposals will not be entertained. Appeals must be sent in writing to Cheryl Meyer cmeyer@co.ocean.nj.us within three (3)

business days of notification of award recommendation by the WDB. Appeals will be reviewed and investigated within three (3) business days of receipt of appeal by an ad hoc Appeals Committee of the WDB. The WDB may also choose to hear the appeal as a “committee of the whole.” Agencies involved in the appeal or potentially affected by the appeal will be notified. The Appeals committee will then provide its recommendation to the WDB and, in turn, the Board of Commissioners.

OTHER TERMS

Indemnity Clause - The proposer, if awarded a contract, agrees to protect, defend and save harmless the County against any damage for payment for the use of any patented material process, article or device that may enter into the manufacture, construction or form a part of the work covered by either order or contract, and he further agrees to indemnify and save harmless the County from suits or actions of every nature and description brought against it, for, or on account of injuries or damages received or sustained by any party or parties by, or from any of the negligent acts of the contractor, his servants or agents.

Pay to Play Requirements - Starting in January 2007, all business entities are advised of their responsibility to file an annual disclosure statement of political contributions with the New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission (ELEC) pursuant to N.J.S.A. 19:44A-20.27 if they receive contracts in excess of \$50,000 from public entities in a calendar year. Business entities are responsible for determining if filing is necessary. Additional information on this requirement is available from ELEC at 888-313-3532 or at www.elec.state.nj.us.

Transitional Period - In the event services are terminated by contract expiration or by voluntary termination by either the Contractor or the County of Ocean, the Contractor shall continue all terms and conditions of said contract for a period not to exceed one (1) month at the County’s request.