

**PALM BEACH COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**  
**Purchasing Department**



**VENDOR'S GUIDE TO DOING BUSINESS**  
**WITH PALM BEACH COUNTY**

<http://discover.pbcgov.org/purchasing/Pages/Vendor-Registration.aspx>

**INTRODUCTION**

The principle objective of the Purchasing Department is to utilize a fair and competitive process to procure quality and cost effective goods and services from responsive and responsible vendors. We are constantly looking for new resources, and we encourage vendors to register with the Purchasing Department and to respond to our solicitations.

This guide is designed to provide general information to vendors interested in doing business with Palm Beach County; and, as such, is not binding in either a legal or regulatory sense. The Purchasing Department conducts its procurement activity in accordance with the Palm Beach County Code and with applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, regulations, policies and procedures.

**VENDOR REGISTRATION**

In order to correctly and timely process payments, all vendors providing goods or services to Palm Beach County must be registered through Vendor Self Service ("VSS"). VSS requires basic vendor information including, but not limited to, payment and remittance addresses, a valid email address, telephone and fax numbers, and a Federal Identification Number (FEIN). A VSS tutorial and User Guide is available at: <https://pbcvssp.co.palm-beach.fl.us/webapp/vssp/AltSelfService>. Should you have questions or need further assistance relating to VSS, please contact us at [PBCVendor@pbcgov.org](mailto:PBCVendor@pbcgov.org)

**Register as a new vendor:**

If you are a new vendor with Palm Beach County you must register as a *new vendor* through VSS.

In complying with the State of Florida's records retention schedule, all vendor files that are "inactive" for a period of three (3) consecutive years will be purged. "Inactive" means that the vendor has not provided goods or services to Palm Beach County within a period of three (3) consecutive years. If you are an "inactive" vendor please send an email to our office at [PBCVendor@pbcgov.org](mailto:PBCVendor@pbcgov.org) to receive the steps to "reactivate" your account.

Once VSS registration is complete, you must submit your Vendor Registration Summary *and* your W-9 and/or W-8 Form to [PBCVendor@pbcgov.org](mailto:PBCVendor@pbcgov.org) (email) or to (561) 242-6744 (fax).

**Activate your existing vendor account:**

If you have an existing vendor account with Palm Beach County, you must activate your account through VSS.

Once you have activated your account, please review current information and add any commodities your company provides as a Palm Beach County vendor.

### **Changes to an existing Vendor Account:**

All changes to current vendor information including, but not limited to, address, contact, phone, fax, email, Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN)/Federal Identification Number (FEIN)/Social Security Number, legal name information, must be completed through VSS.

A legal name change requires submission of legal documentation specifying the name change to [PBCVendor@pbcgov.org](mailto:PBCVendor@pbcgov.org).

A change to a Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN), Federal Identification Number (FEIN), or a Social Security Number requires submission of a new W-9 and/or W-8 to [PBCVendor@pbcgov.org](mailto:PBCVendor@pbcgov.org).

**All changes to a vendor account must be made through VSS. Responses to solicitations that include a *different* address than the one listed in VSS will not be considered an official change to a vendor account.**

In complying with the State of Florida's records retention schedule, all vendor files that are "inactive" for a period of three (3) consecutive years will be purged. "Inactive" means that the vendor has not provided goods or services to Palm Beach County within a period of three (3) consecutive years. If you are an "inactive" vendor please send an email to our office at [PBCVendor@pbcgov.org](mailto:PBCVendor@pbcgov.org) to receive the steps to "reactivate" your account.

### **VENDOR SELF SERVICE VENDOR REGISTRATION**

It is the vendor's responsibility to activate or modify all vendor registration information on-line at the Purchasing Department's VSS Website: <https://pbcvssp.co.palm-beach.fl.us/webapp/vssp/AltSelfService> Information regarding the VSS module can be viewed at [http://www.pbcgov.com/purchasing/vendor\\_resources/registration.htm](http://www.pbcgov.com/purchasing/vendor_resources/registration.htm)

### **SMALL BUSINESS ENTERPRISES**

The Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners encourages all small business enterprises (SBEs) to participate in business opportunities with Palm Beach County. In accordance with the SBE Ordinance, a preference is given to vendors that are certified SBEs. The Office of Small Business Assistance is committed to assisting SBEs, and to improving business opportunities for SBEs within the County. SBEs are encouraged to call (561) 616-6840 for information or assistance in becoming a certified SBE. Vendors must be registered with the Purchasing Department as a registered vendor in order to be eligible for SBE certification.

### **LOCAL PREFERENCE/BUSINESS LOCATION**

The Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners adopted the Local Preference Code that provides a preference to vendors having a permanent place of business in Palm Beach County prior to the County's issuance of a solicitation for the purchase of goods and/or services valued at five thousand dollars (\$5,000) or higher. For RFQ's and IFB's, vendors are required to include a completed "Certification of Business Location", which is included in the solicitation document, along with a valid Business Tax Receipt, when submitting their quote or bid to the County. For RFS's and RFP's, local preference (or Business Location) is addressed in the evaluation criteria, unless prohibited by federal, state or local law or where prohibited under the conditions of any grant.

## **GLADES LOCAL PREFERENCE/BUSINESS LOCATION**

The Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners amended the Local Preference Ordinance to include a Glades Local Preference that provides a preference to vendors having a permanent place of business in the Glades prior to the County's issuance of a solicitation for the purchase of goods and/or services valued at five thousand dollars (\$5,000) or higher. To receive a Glades local preference, Glades businesses must be able to provide the goods and/or services solicited by the County, which will be utilized in the Glades. For RFQ's and IFB's, vendors are required to include a completed "Certification of Business Location", which is included in the solicitation document, along with a valid Business Tax Receipt, when submitting their quote or bid to the County. For RFS's and RFP's, Glades local preference (or Business Location) is addressed in the evaluation criteria, unless prohibited by federal, state or local law or where prohibited under the conditions of any grant.

## **PALM BEACH COUNTY INSPECTOR GENERAL**

Pursuant to Palm Beach County Code, Section 2-421-2-440, the Palm Beach County's Office of the Inspector General has the power to audit, investigate, monitor, and review the procurement process, including but not limited to, establishment of specifications, solicitation responses, activities of the contractor, its officers, agents and employees, lobbyists, County staff, and officials, in order to ensure compliance with contract specifications and to detect corruption and fraud.

**An Inspector General Fee will not be imposed on vendors/contractors in order to defray the cost of the Office of the Inspector General.**

For more information, please visit [www.pbcgov.org/ethics](http://www.pbcgov.org/ethics) and click on the "Inspector General" tab.

## **WHERE TO FIND SOLICITATION INFORMATION**

All County solicitations are advertised on our website at <https://pbcvssp.co.palm-beach.fl.us/webapp/vssp/AltSelfService>. All new Requests for Quotation, Requests for Submittal, Invitations for Bid, Requests for Proposal and Requests for Pre-Qualification are updated daily. Award recommendations are updated daily. Amendments to all existing solicitations are posted on our web site as they are issued by the Purchasing Department. Vendors can also learn of County solicitations by viewing the postings at the Purchasing Department and on Channel 20.

County solicitations are available to vendors on our website at <https://pbcvssp.co.palm-beach.fl.us/webapp/vssp/AltSelfService>; by written request; or by visiting the Palm Beach County Purchasing Department. To request a solicitation in person or via mail, you will need to provide the Purchasing Department with the Solicitation Number, Title, and Due Date as specified in the advertisement, along with a non-refundable service charge in the form of a check or money order made payable to the Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners. No cash will be accepted. Please forward all mail requests to:

Palm Beach County Purchasing Department  
Attn: Copy/Mail Room  
50 South Military Trail, Suite 110  
West Palm Beach, FL 33415-3199

## **CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTS**

Construction-related solicitations are issued through the Engineering & Public Works Department, the Water Utilities Department, the Department of Airports, the Facilities Development & Operations Department, and the Environmental Resources and Management Department. Interested vendors are encouraged to contact those County Departments at the following phone numbers:

Facilities Development & Operations: (561) 233-0200  
Engineering & Public Works: (561) 684-4000  
Water Utilities: (561) 493-6000  
Environmental Resources Management (561) 233-2400  
Airports (561) 471-7462

## **PROCUREMENT METHODS**

**Request for Quotation (RFQ)** is normally used for purchases valued below \$100,000. This is an informal procurement method where price is the determining factor when selecting a vendor.

**Invitation for Bid (IFB)** is used for purchases valued at \$100,000 or higher. This is a formal procurement method and is used when price is the determining factor when selecting a vendor.

**Request for Submittal (RFS)** is normally used for purchases valued below \$100,000. This is an informal procurement method where established criteria, in addition to price, are considered when selecting a vendor.

**Request for Proposal (RFP)** is used for purchases valued at \$100,000 or higher. This is a formal procurement method and is used when established criteria, in addition to price, are considered when selecting a vendor. Awards are based on the evaluation of a Selection Committee that evaluates each proposal in accordance with established selection criteria.

## **CONTRACTING METHODS**

A **one-time purchase** is a contract for a specific quantity of goods or services at a firm or fixed price. According to the terms of the purchase order, delivery may be made in one or several shipments.

A **Term Contract** is a contract that establishes pricing or other criteria for a fixed period of time. This contract requires the vendor to provide the estimated goods or services upon request during the term of the contract.

## **COMPETITIVE PROCESS**

### **Specifications/Scopes of Work**

Each RFQ, IFB, RFS and RFP contains specifications or a Scope of Work for the goods or services being solicited. Manufacturer names, trade names, brand information and/or catalog numbers may be listed in order to establish a desired quality level. Specifications and Scopes of Work are not intended to limit competition. Unless otherwise stated in the solicitation, any brand that meets or exceeds the requirement, as set forth in the specification or Scope of Work, may be offered as long as the manufacturer's name, make/model/catalog number, etc., is stated in the vendor's response to the solicitation and submitted along with sufficient descriptive literature to prove the equivalency.

## **Amendments to Solicitations**

As they are issued, all amendments to solicitations will be posted under the applicable solicitation on our website at <https://pbcvssp.co.palm-beach.fl.us/webapp/vssp/AltSelfService>. It is the vendor's responsibility to routinely check this website for any amendments that may have been issued. These amendments contain important information that may directly impact your bid/proposal/quote/submittal. When required, failure to account for an amendment shall result in the rejection of a vendor's response to the solicitation as non-responsive.

## **Special Requirements**

***Pre-Bid or Pre-Proposal Conference*** may be designated in the solicitation in order to provide useful information to the vendor and address any questions of the vendor.

***Site Inspection*** may be designated in the solicitation in order to provide the vendor with the opportunity to visually inspect the actual work site or project that is the subject of the solicitation.

***Deposit/Bid Bond*** may be required in the solicitation in order to assure that a bid response or proposal is submitted in good faith. A bid response or proposal may not be unilaterally withdrawn. If a deposit or bond is required, the bid response or proposal will not be acceptable without it.

***Performance Bond*** may be required of the successful bidder or proposer in order to assure that the contract will be faithfully performed. If a performance bond is required, the specific conditions contained in the solicitation will designate the type and amount required.

***Proof of Insurance*** must be provided as required in the solicitation.

***Samples and Testing*** of goods being bid or proposed may be requested by the Purchasing Department. If such a request is made, all samples must be furnished free of charge and will be returned at the vendor's request/expense if not destroyed in testing.

## **Submitting Your Bid or Proposal**

All responses to solicitations must be signed in ink and submitted in accordance with the direction set forth in the solicitation on or before the date and time specified therein. The solicitation number must be clearly designated on the exterior of the vendor's response package or envelope. **No responses to any solicitations will be accepted after the specified date and time.**

## **Acceptable Solicitation Responses**

Solicitation responses are evaluated in order to determine the responsiveness and the responsibility of the vendor's response. To be responsive, a vendor must have completed and submitted all required information as instructed in the solicitation. To be responsible, a vendor must demonstrate the capability to fully perform the contract requirements and must demonstrate integrity and reliability which give reasonable assurance of good faith and performance.

In addition, all goods or services must meet the minimum acceptance quality level as stated in the requirements of the specification or Scope of Work. Failure to meet the requirements as set forth in the specification or Scope of Work will result in disqualification of your quote/submittal/bid/proposal.

## **Awards**

Awards shall be made to responsive, responsible vendors and are effective upon issuance of a purchase order contract, issuance of a term contract, or upon execution of a formal contract. Awards in excess of \$199,999 shall be effective upon approval by the Board of County Commissioners.

## **VENDOR RESPONSIBILITIES AFTER AWARD**

### **Contract Performance**

Delivery and service by the vendor is conditional upon inspection by the appropriate County agency and their certification that the vendor has fully complied with the terms and conditions of the contract. This includes, but is not limited to, on-time delivery of the exact goods/services as described in the solicitation or contract.

### **Non-Performing Vendors**

In order to guarantee the contract price and to ensure delivery of needed goods and services, Palm Beach County reserves the right to cancel a contract with non-performing vendors. Non-performing vendors may be suspended from doing business with the County for up to a two (2) year period.

### **Invoicing and Payment**

To ensure prompt payment, all invoices containing the proper information must be submitted to the "Bill To" address indicated on the purchase order or contract. All invoices must contain the purchase order, delivery order, or contract number if applicable, proper quantities, and unit and total prices. No payment will be issued prior to receipt and acceptance of the goods and services by an authorized County representative. The "Remit To/Payment Address" information provided on the vendor's invoice must match the information provided by the vendor originally. If there is any discrepancy, the vendor is responsible for updating their information via the VSS System that formally notifies the County of the changed information.

## **PUBLIC ENTITY CRIMES**

In accordance with the provisions of Section 287.133(2)(a) F.S, persons and affiliates who have been placed on the convicted vendor list may not submit bids, proposals, contract with, or perform work (as a contractor, supplier, subcontractor or consultant) with any public entity (i.e. Palm Beach County) in excess of the amount established by the Florida Division of Purchasing in accordance with Section 287.017 F.S. for a period of thirty-six (36) months from the date of being placed on the convicted vendor list.

By entering into a contract or performing any work for Palm Beach County, the contractor certifies that it, its affiliates, suppliers, subcontractors and consultants who will perform under the contract, have not been placed on the convicted vendor list maintained by the State of Florida Department of Management Services within the thirty-six (36) months immediately preceding the contract date.

## **CODE OF ETHICS**

County employees shall abide by the Palm Beach County Ethics Code as well as any Executive Order applicable to the ethical behavior of County Employees.

### **HELPFUL TIPS ON DOING BUSINESS WITH PALM BEACH COUNTY**

1. Download a copy of our solicitation from the Purchasing Department's website.
2. Carefully follow instructions and submit all technical and other documentation that is required in the solicitation.
3. Make sure to sign the solicitation response.
4. Make sure to sign all amendments to the solicitation and return them with your solicitation response.
5. Submit your response to the solicitation on time.
6. Include the deposit or bid bond with the solicitation response, if required.
7. Comply with all insurance requirements as set forth in the solicitation.
8. Include supporting literature or documentation with your solicitation response, if required.
9. If receiving an award, register as a vendor with Palm Beach County to ensure proper payment is made and received.
10. Deliver goods or services as contracted.

**REVISED: 12/07/2017**