



PROCUREMENT DEPARTMENT

Teria G. Sheffield
Procurement Director

SOLICITATION TYPE: Request for Proposals

DATE: 5/29/2025

ID Number: 2999

Title: Consulting Services for Comprehensive Water and Sewer Rate Study

Due Date/Time: June 25, 2025 at 11:00 a.m.

LATE SUBMITTALS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED

Opening Location:

Government Center Building
Room 3401
6 S. Congress St., York, SC 29745

Point of Contact: Bryant Cook, Procurement Manager

Questions Deadline: No later than June 18, 2025 at 4:00 p.m.

Tentative Date of Council Approval: August 18, 2025

SECTION 1 SCOPE OF WORK AND SPECIFICATIONS

1.1 Description

The objective of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to solicit interest and credentials from qualified professional consultants to conduct a comprehensive water and sewer rate study for York County Public Works, Water & Sewer Department. The broad objective of the study is to assess and evaluate York County's existing water and sewer rates as well as all fees and provide recommendations. The recommendations should fully fund all water and sewer utility operations, capital costs and bonded debt while minimizing rates to the greatest degree possible. Firms interested in responding should have experience and qualifications in the evaluation and development of water and sewer rate studies, preferably in local government settings. This RFP describes the project, the required scope of services, the qualifications the county is seeking in a consultant, the minimum information that must be included in a proposal response and the consultant selection process.

Responses to this RFP will be used to determine the relative qualifications of various firms to perform the scope of work and tasks specified. It is anticipated that an agreement for professional services will be negotiated and executed between York County and the firm determined to best meet the needs of the county for this project.

1.2 History and Background Information

York County is located in the north central portion of South Carolina, about 75 miles north of Columbia and just southwest of Charlotte, North Carolina. Due to a number of factors, the county has experienced significant growth and development. In the year 2020, the county's population was 282,090. By 2030, that population is predicted to expand to approximately 307,000.

The York County Water and Sewer Department currently provides water and sewer service to approximately 21,500 customers. The Department consists of two separate licensed systems within the unincorporated areas of York County. The Department's water operations are limited to the distribution of water purchased wholesale from the City of Rock Hill, SC. Similarly, the sewer operation is one of collection and conveyance with treatment also presently provided by the City of Rock Hill.

The York County Council originally adopted a Water/Sewer Ordinance establishing rates and fees in 1995. This ordinance also set additional fee increases to take effect on April 1, 1996, and April 1, 1997. The County raised rates on December 1, 2002 and established impact/capacity fees on December 18, 2006. The most recent rate ordinance adopted was in December, 2019.

1.3 Scope of Work

A. Objective

- Provide a comparison of current water and sewer system costs (operations, capital improvements, bonded debt) against appropriate industry benchmarks.
- Recommend baseline rate structure required to fund water and sewer system costs, as well as adjustments to rates needed to fund capital improvements and other costs.

- Recommend ways of communicating utility system costs including recommendations for restructuring utility bill format.

B. Requirements

- The study is to be performed in conformance with the following policy directions:
- The consultant will meet with a staff committee at project initiation to discuss ideas and develop parameters for the project. The staff committee will guide and oversee the project.
- The recommended rate structure as well as adjustments to the impact/capacity fees shall be based on cost of service and shall be sufficient to meet short and long-term revenue requirements of York County's water and sewer utility funds.
- The study shall recommend rate structures that consider and make provisions for the following factors:
 - Current and future cost of providing water and sewer services in accordance with established and anticipated standards and regulations.
 - Age and condition of the system and the need to fully fund long-term capital improvements/replacements for the supply, distribution, and collection infrastructure.
 - Funding requirements for all current and future long-term liabilities and debt obligations.
 - Impact of current and future water and sewer regulations.
 - Other impacts as identified.
- The recommended rate structures shall provide direct identification of revenues appropriated to major funded activities and infrastructure.
- The recommended rate structures shall be consistent with industry practices for utility rate making in South Carolina.
- The study shall provide at least two recommended rate alternatives based upon standard rate practice (increasing block rates, decreasing block rates, etc.) that meet the criteria above. The consultant will make a recommendation as to which one best meets the criteria. All alternatives shall assume a base plus consumption rates.
- The recommended rate structure shall be easy to administer and understand.
- The York County water and sewer department's automated billing system (CSI SmartFusion) should be able to handle any proposed rate structure.
- The recommended rate structure shall be planned and developed for a ten year period.

C. Elements

- In making its rate structure recommendations, the final report shall explicitly include the following elements:
- Current rate structure: Assess the current rate's structure performance as a baseline for comparing recommended changes.
- Develop a cost allocation assessment: Demonstrate the equity of the proposed water and sewer rates and discuss the need for each rate class.
- Other service charges: Assess existing customer service fee structure including, but not limited to, impact/capacity fees, tap fees, late fees, etc. and identify other potential areas for service and system charges and recommend changes.
- Annual operating fund balance targets.
- Annual target contingency fund balances and level of liquidity.
- Budgeting horizon and cycle: Assess appropriate budgeting horizon and cycle needed to support recommended rate structures.
- Develop a comprehensive rate model: Assess performance of each recommended rate structure against current rate structure performance as baseline and provide recommendation on preferred rate structure.
- Supporting data: Provide data supporting conclusions and observations made for each of the areas above and site within study.

D. Services to be provided by Consultant

- Conduct a detailed review of the existing water and sewer rates and status of the utility funds. Develop a general familiarity with the York County water and sewer billing system.
- Review the current York County Water & Sewer Capital Improvements Plan.
- Interview or confer with staff as needed to assess infrastructure needs, costs, time schedules and any other pertinent information.
- Conduct a review and provide current impact/capacity fees and rates for all comparable neighboring providers.
- Conduct analysis as required to address the scope of work.

E. Preliminary Report:

- Prepare a preliminary study report and tentative rate structure.
- Submit 7 copies.

- Present preliminary report and tentative rate structures to York County staff and/or committee for comments.

F. Final Report:

- Incorporate changes pursuant to comments received at the first presentation.
- Submit 12 copies, plus one reproducible copy.
- Provide a digital report in Word format, with spreadsheets in Excel format, that can be readily adjusted by staff to take into account alternative scenarios or existing conditions post study.
- Present the final report and recommended rate structures to York County staff committee and County Council.
- Supply a time schedule for developing the preliminary and final reports.

SECTION 2 OTHER REQUIREMENTS

2.1 License

Offeror must be licensed to do business in the State of South Carolina. The Offeror must comply with the laws of South Carolina including obtaining proper licensure with this State if required to perform the specifications described in this request.

SECTION 3 INSTRUCTIONS TO OFFERORS

3.1 Submission Format

The Proposal should include the following information with tabs to identify each section. Failure to submit this information will render your Proposal as non-responsive.

TAB 1: PROJECT APPROACH (25%): Offeror to demonstrate their qualifications, competence, project approach and methodology, and capacity to provide services based on the Scope of Work as presented in this RFP. Describe what sets your company apart in terms of your project approach. Also provide a preliminary project timeline, including itemized deliverables and milestones.

TAB 2: QUALIFICATIONS OF FIRM (35%): Provide a description and history of the firm along with information related to previous experience of providing services similar in nature, size and scope to those outlined in the Scope of Work as presented in this RFP. Provide at least three (3) references company has performed services within the past five years that are similar to the requirements described in the Scope of Work.

Include a summary of the project scope, price, contact name and information. Respondent shall provide a narrative clearly addressing their qualifications for the project, and acknowledgment of project scope and compliance of the timeline. The respondent will provide background information including any contact information required to confirm respondent's stated qualifications and experience.

TAB 3: PROJECT TEAM (25%): Provide an organization chart, resumes, and summary of team qualifications; along with key project staff pertaining to the contract. Key staff's experience demonstrating current capacity and current expertise in the Scope of Work outlined in this document. Provide education, certifications, or special training of key staff members who would be assigned to the contract. Please identify which staff person will be the designated project manager for the project.

COST PROPOSAL (Submitted separately from the proposal) (15%): A separate Cost Proposal PDF must be uploaded under submit response in the GetAll portal. Respondent shall include the total cost for a turnkey project as specified in this RFP with itemized detail included herein as COST PROPOSAL FORM. Include project timeline and number of work days. Describe invoicing based on project milestones.

3.2 Preparation of Proposal

All proposals should be complete and carefully worded and must convey all information requested by York County. If errors are found in the proposal, or if the proposal fails to conform to the requirements of the RFP, the evaluating committee will be the sole judge as to whether that variance is significant enough to reject the proposal.

Proposals should be prepared simply and economically. All data, materials and documentation shall be available in a clear, concise form. If additional information is required, Offeror shall supply additional materials as needed for the evaluating committee's internal use. York County reserves the right to reproduce proposals for internal use in the evaluation process.

All proposals shall provide a straight-forward, concise description of Offeror's ability to satisfy the requirements of the RFP.

All documentation submitted with the proposal should be in a single volume excluding the cost proposal, which must be submitted separately in a different PDF under Cost Proposal in the GetAll portal as to be evaluated after all other sections have been evaluated and scored.

If a proposal includes any documents or comment(s) over and above the specific information requested in this RFP, such material must be uploaded under other files in the GetAll portal.

Proposals must be made in the official name of the individual, firm, or corporation under which the business is conducted (showing official business address) and must be signed in ink by a person duly authorized to legally bind the business entity submitting the proposal.

3.3 Submitting Redacted Copy

Proposals received by York County are considered public documents under the provisions of the South Carolina Code of Laws, Section 30-4-40, Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). If proposal includes information marked as Confidential, "Trade Secret," or "Protected", Offeror must also submit one complete digital copy in PDF format, of the proposal from which Offeror has removed or

concealed such information (redacted copy). The redacted copies should (1) reflect the same pagination as the original, (2) show the empty space from which information was redacted. Except for the information removed or concealed, the redacted copies must be identical to the original proposal, and the Procurement Officer must be able to view, search, copy, and print the redacted digital copy without a password. Marking the entire proposal as Confidential/Proprietary is not in conformance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act absent explanation providing an exemption under Section 30-4-40

3.4 Submittal

Online submittal: Electronic submittals shall be uploaded in PDF format via the Getall portal which can be accessed at <https://www.yorkcountygov.com/217/Procurement> under Active Bids. To ensure that an electronic submittal is received by the due date and time, it is recommended that submittals are uploaded allowing sufficient time prior to deadline. An email confirmation of submittal will be received after clicking on the Confirm Bid button in the GetAll system. If confirmation email is not received, contact GetAll support at support@getall.com to confirm submittal was successful. The Offeror shall be responsible for confirming that submittal is received by the deadline. Any submittal received after the closing date and time deadline will not be considered.

For step by step instructions on how to submit a response select Help and then Quick Reference in the GetAll portal:

In Person/Courier Delivered Submittals: If Offeror elects to submit proposal in person or by mail instead of electronic submission, proposals must be received at the location given below no later than the deadline on page 1 of this document. Information must be received at the York County Procurement Department, Room 3501, located at 6 S. Congress St., York, S.C. 29745 and must include one (1) original, clearly marked as such. Faxed information is not acceptable. Bids received after specified time and date will be rejected as non-responsive.

If County offices are closed due to inclement weather, the bids shall be opened at the same scheduled hour on the 3rd working day (excluding County observed holidays) after the scheduled bid opening date. In the event that an act of nature occurs preventing a firm to attend a mandatory meeting or submitting a bid on time, the County reserves the right to accept or excuse the firm's tardiness.

3.5 Intent

It is the intent and purpose of York County that this Request permits competition. It must be the Offeror's responsibility to advise York County if any language, requirements, etc., or any combinations thereof, inadvertently limits the requirements stated in this request to a single source.

It is also the intent of this Request to give equal consideration to all Offerors. While evaluating each Proposal; price and service will be factors in making a purchasing decision.

3.6 Additional Information

York County reserves the right to reject any or all responses, waive any technicalities and select the Offeror who is determined to best meet the needs of the County for this Request.

To assure clarity, all Offerors may contact the appropriate county officials as listed in the Inquiries section of this solicitation, via email and ask pertinent questions regarding the requirements/specifications of this Request. Any inquiry or request for interpretation received five (5) or more days prior to the date fixed for opening of Proposals will be given consideration unless otherwise specified on cover page. All such changes or interpretations will be made in writing in the form of an addendum and, if issued, posted on the County's website www.yorkcountygov.com. Each Offeror must acknowledge receipt of such addenda in the space provided in the Proposal document. In case any Offeror fails to acknowledge receipt of such addenda or addendum, the Proposal will nevertheless be construed as though it had been received and acknowledged and the submission of the Proposal will constitute acknowledgement of the receipt of same. It is the responsibility of each Offeror to verify that he/she has received all addenda issued before Proposals are opened. Only questions answered by formal written Addenda will be binding. Oral and other interpretations or clarifications will be without legal effect.

3.7 Inquiries

General questions about this solicitation should be submitted through the [Getall](#) portal, by selecting the questions icon in the corresponding Q&A column.

SECTION 4 EVALUATION, AWARD, AND CONTRACT

4.1 Evaluation of Proposals

The Offerors' proposals will be evaluated by a committee comprised of county officials and key personnel with experience and knowledge of services and contracts of this scope and nature. The Offerors' project approach, qualifications, and project team as outlined in Section 3 of this document, in addition to the merits of the Proposal and costs are the general Evaluation Criteria. Each committee member will independently evaluate these criteria excluding the cost. Once the committee has evaluated each proposal, the score will be tallied. Lastly, the Cost Proposal will be opened and factored into the final scores.

York County reserves the right to reject any and all Proposals at any time prior to award; and to waive informalities and minor irregularities, and request additional information or clarifications in the evaluation of responses received. York County shall select the offer that best serves the interest of York County; Offerors are advised to provide all pertinent information required by the Proposal in their written response.

4.2 Presentations

York County may require oral and visual presentation from those firms that are ranked or short-listed. This shall be done at York County's sole discretion when it feels presentations are essential as part of the evaluation process. It is the intention of York County to short list three (3) firms and rank each of them according to the most qualified firm with a Proposal and presentation that best suit the needs of York County.

4.3 Award

The County shall award this contract to the highest scoring Offeror who best meets the terms and conditions of the Proposal. The award will be made on basis of evaluation of Proposals, cost and presentations when applicable.

Upon review of Proposals for responsiveness, and satisfaction that the Offeror is responsible, then upon approval of the York County Council, a Purchase Order will be issued to that best suited Offeror.

4.4 Terms of Contract

The contract term shall be from issuance of purchase order until completion and final payment.

The Contract must be valid from the date of the initial Purchase Order and must remain valid for the duration of term mentioned above.

Breach or non-performance of any Contract term must constitute cause upon which the County may immediately terminate the Contract by written notice. A waiver by the County of any breach or non-performance of any term of this agreement must not operate as a waiver of any subsequent breach or non-performance.

4.5 Termination of Contract

a. Should a dispute arise, and if, after a good faith effort at resolution, the dispute is not resolved, either party may terminate the contract by providing thirty (30) days written notice to the other party.

b. Convenience: In the event that this contract is terminated or canceled upon request and for the convenience of York County without the required (30) days advance written notice, then York County must negotiate reasonable termination costs, if applicable.

c. Cause: Termination by York County for cause, default or negligence on the part of the Offeror must be excluded from the foregoing provisions; termination costs, if any must not apply. The thirty (30) days advance notice requirement is waived and the default provision listed herein must apply.

d. Default: In case of default of Offeror, York County reserves the right to purchase/lease any or all items or all items/services in default open market, charging Offeror with any excessive costs.

4.6 Non-Appropriation Clause

Notwithstanding any other provision of this request/agreement, all obligations of the County under this solicitation which require the expenditure of funds are conditioned on the availability of funds appropriated for that purpose.

4.7 Protest

This option is available to any actual Offeror, contractor or subcontractor aggrieved in connection with the intended award or award of a contract via protest to the appropriate procurement officer within

seven days, but not thereafter, of the date notification of award is posted. The first step in this process must be formally addressed to the Procurement Director after the award decision, and subsequently progress to the County Council in the event that a mutual agreement cannot be obtained in the remedy of the award decision.

SECTION 5 TERMS AND CONDITIONS

5.1 Acceptance and Deviations

Each Offeror must meet all of the specifications and proposal terms and conditions. By virtue of the proposal submission, the Offeror acknowledges agreement with and acceptance of all provisions of the specifications except as expressly qualified in the Proposal. Non-substantial deviations may be considered provided that the Offeror submits a full description and explanation of and justification for the proposed deviations titled Exceptions. Whether any proposed deviation is non-substantial will be determined by York County in its sole discretion.

5.2 General Requirements

All Offerors including the employees of the Offeror must comply with all applicable Federal, State, and County laws pertaining to contracts entered into by governmental agencies, including non-discrimination employment. Contracts entered into on the basis of submitted proposal responses are revocable if contrary to law. Contracts for work resulting from this request will obligate the Offeror to not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, handicap, or national origin in their employment practices.

5.3 Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

Offerors shall comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. York County strongly encourages the use of and involvement of Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE).

5.4 Conflict of Interest

The successful firm shall not knowingly employ, during the period of a contract, or any extensions to it, any professional personnel who are also in the employ of York County and who are providing services involving this request or services similar in nature to the scope of this request to the County. Furthermore, the firm shall not knowingly employ, during the period of a contract or any extensions to it, any York County employee who has participated in the making of a contract until at least two years after his/her termination of employment with York County.

5.5 Indemnification and Hold Harmless

The successful firm shall agree to protect, defend, indemnify, and forever hold harmless, the County, its agents, officers, and employees, from and against any and all claims, liabilities, damages, costs, actions, proceedings, of any nature whatsoever, however alleged or termed, or in any lawsuits, arising in any manner out of any action or failure to act, by the firm, its officers, agents, and employees, or relating to or arising out of the performance or failure to perform, by the firm, its officers, agents, and employees, any obligations arising under its agreement with the County, or any other type claim/lawsuit whatsoever, however alleged or termed, which may arise at any time as a result of or related to the provision of service(s) for the County by the successful firm, without

regard to the source, nature, or validity of the claim/lawsuit. Losses, liabilities, expenses and claims for damages shall include, but not be limited to, civil and criminal fines and penalties, loss of use and/or services, claims for injury, damage, disability, property damage, or death, injury to real or personal property, and attorneys' fees, costs, and expenses incurred by the County or any of its agents, officers, and employees. The County shall not be precluded from receiving the benefits of any insurance the firm may carry which provides for indemnification for any loss or damage to property in the firm's custody and control, where such loss or destruction is to County property. The firm shall do nothing to prejudice the County's right to recover against third parties for any loss, destruction or damage to County property.

5.6 Drug-Free Workplace

During the performance of this request, the firm agrees to provide a drug-free workplace for his employees; post in conspicuous places, available to employees and applicants for employment, a statement notifying employees that the unlawful manufacture, sale, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of a controlled substance or marijuana is prohibited in the workplace and specify the actions that will be taken against employees for violations of such prohibition; and state in all solicitations or advertisements for employees placed by or on behalf of the firm that the firm maintains a drug-free workplace. For the purposes of this section, "drug-free workplace" means a site for the performance of work done in connection with a specific contract awarded to a contractor/firm in accordance with this chapter, the employees of whom are prohibited from engaging in the unlawful manufacture, sale, distribution, dispensation, possession or use of any controlled substance or marijuana during the performance of the request.

5.7 Applicability/Jurisdiction of South Carolina Law and Courts

Upon award of a contract under this request the person, partnership, association or corporation to whom the award is made must comply with the laws of South Carolina which require such person or entity to be authorized and/or licensed to do business with this State. Notwithstanding the fact that applicable statutes may exempt or exclude the successful firm from requirements that it be authorized and/or licensed to do business in this State, by submission of this signed proposal, the firm agrees to subject itself to the jurisdiction and process of the courts of the State of South Carolina as to all matters and disputes arising or to arise under the contract and the performance thereof, including any questions as to the liability for taxes, licenses, or fees levied by the State.

5.8 Certificate of Insurance

Once selected, the successful firm will be required to provide proof of insurance to include workers compensation, employer's liability and general liability prior to commencing work.

5.9 Assignment

No contract or its provisions may be assigned, sublet, or transferred without the written consent of the County.

5.10 Ownership of Material

All proposals and supporting materials (including all data, material, and documentation) originated and prepared for York County pursuant to this solicitation and including correspondences relating to this solicitation shall, belong exclusively to York County.

5.11 Prime Responsibilities

The successful firm will be required to assume sole responsibility for the complete effort as required by this solicitation. York County will consider the successful firm to be the sole point of contact with regard to contractual matters.

5.12 Subcontracting

If any part of the work covered by this solicitation is to be subcontracted, the successful firm shall identify the subcontracting organization and the contractual arrangements made there with. All subcontractors must be approved by York County. The successful firm will also furnish the corporate or company name.

5.13 Records Retention and Right to Audit

The County shall have the right to audit books and records of the successful firm as they pertain to this contract. Such books and records shall be maintained for a period of three (3) years from the date of final payment under the contract. The County may conduct, or have conducted, performance audits of the successful firm. The County may conduct, or have conducted, audits of specific requirements of this solicitation as determined necessary by the County. Pertaining to all audits, successful firm shall make available to the County access to its computer files containing the history of contract performance and all other documents related to the audit. Additionally, any software used by the successful firm shall be made available for auditing purposes at no cost to the County.

5.14 Public Access to Procurement Information

Subject to the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act, commercial or financial information obtained in response to this SOLICITATION which is deemed privileged and confidential by the Offeror, will not be disclosed. Such privileged and confidential information should be clearly marked as such and includes information which if disclosed, might cause harm to the competitive position of the Offeror supplying the information. All Offerors, therefore, must visibly mark as "CONFIDENTIAL" each specific part of their proposal which such Offerors consider to contain proprietary or other privileged information. Additionally, all Offerors shall be solely responsible for identifying as exempt from the Freedom of Information Act and for visibly marking as "EXEMPT FROM FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT" each specific part of their proposal which Offerors deem to be so exempt and shall further be solely responsible for any consequences that might arise from the nondisclosure of any information that is subsequently determined not to have such an exemption. York County hereby disclaims any responsibility for not disclosing information identified by any Offeror as exempt from the Freedom of Information Act and further hereby disclaims any responsibility for any information which is disclosed as a result of Offeror's failure to visibly mark it as "CONFIDENTIAL" or to improperly mark it as "confidential". Offeror must identify specific parts of the proposal package as confidential. Failure to do so or to mark the entire proposal package as confidential may result in disclosure of that information.

NOTE: A redacted copy if applicable, must be uploaded under submit response in the GetAll portal.

5.15 Non-Collusion Proposal Certification and Disqualification

By submission of a proposal, each Offeror and each person signing on behalf of any Offeror certifies, and in the case of a joint proposal each party certifies as to its own organization, under penalty of perjury, that to the best of its knowledge and belief.

The prices in this proposal have been arrived at independently without collusion, consultation, communication, or agreement, for the purpose of restricting competition, as to any matter relating to such prices with any other proposer or with any competitor.

Unless otherwise required by law, the prices which have been quoted in this proposal have not knowingly been disclosed by the Offeror and will not knowingly be disclosed prior to the proposal opening, directly or indirectly, to any other Offeror or to any competitor.

No attempt has been or will be made by the Offeror to induce any other person, partnership or corporation to submit or not to submit a proposal for the purpose of restricting competition

One Proposal: Only one Proposal from an individual firm, partnership, company, or corporation under the same or under different names will be considered. If OWNER believes that an Offeror submitted more than one Proposal for the work involved, all Proposals submitted by that Offeror will be rejected.

5.16 Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility, and Voluntary Exclusion

The Offeror certifies, by submission of this document or acceptance of a contract, that neither it nor its principals is presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by any State, Federal department, or agency. It further agrees by submitting this qualification statement (if applicable) that it will include this clause without modification in all lower tier transactions, solicitations, proposals, contracts, and subcontracts. Where the Offeror or any lower tier participant is unable to certify to this statement, it must attach an explanation to this solicitation/proposal.

5.17 Certification Regarding Immigration Reform and Control

The Offeror certifies, by submission of this document or acceptance of a contract, that all Contractors are expected to comply with the Immigration and Reform Control Act of 1986 (IRCA), as may be amended from time to time. This Act, with certain limitations, requires the verification of the employment status of all individuals who were hired on or after November 6, 1986, by the Contractor as well as any subcontractor or sub-subcontractor. The usual method of verification is through the Employment Verification (I-9) Form. With the submission of this proposal, the Contractor hereby certifies without exception that Contractor has complied with all federal and state laws relating to immigration and reform. Any misrepresentation in this regard or any employment of persons not authorized to work in the United States constitutes a material breach and, at the State's option, may subject the contract to termination and any applicable damages. The Contractor certifies that, should it be awarded a contract by the County, the Contractor will comply with all applicable federal and state laws, standards, orders and regulations affecting a person's participation and eligibility in any program or activity undertaken by the Contractor pursuant to this contract. The Contractor further certifies that it will remain in compliance throughout the term of the contract. At the County's request, the Contractor is expected to produce to the County any documentation or other such evidence to verify the Contractor's compliance with any provision, duty, certification, or the like under the contract. The Contractor agrees to include this Certification in contracts between itself and any subcontractors in connection with the services performed under this contract.

5.18 Chain of Communication

To ensure the integrity of the competitive process, a strict chain of communication shall apply to each Invitation for Bids, Request for Proposals, Request for Qualifications, or any other competitive solicitation during the period between publication of the solicitation and final award. Offerors or its agents may not communicate by any means, directly or indirectly, with York County public officials, employees, its agents, or representatives or any person not otherwise listed on this document, regarding any aspect of this procurement activity. All communications must be solely with the Procurement Officer. In the sole determination of the Procurement Officer and/or York County, violation of these restrictions may result in disqualification of your offer, suspension or debarment, and may constitute a violation of law.

5.19 Prohibition of Donations and Gratuities

Offerors are restricted from making donations to any York County governmental entity with whom they have or seek to have a contract. The Offeror represents that his/her offer discloses any gifts made, directly or through an intermediary, by the Offeror or the Offeror's named subcontractors or subconsultants to or for the benefit of York County, its agents, or representatives during the period beginning eighteen months prior to the Opening Date. No Offeror, or any person, firm, or corporation employed by the Offeror in the performance of this request, may offer or give any gift, money or anything of value or any promise for future reward or compensation to any York County employee.

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