



**TENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF FLORIDA
COURT REPORTER SERVICES
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)
RFP # 10-07-001**

**Request for Proposals (RFP)
Provision of Court Reporting Services
Tenth Judicial Circuit Court of Florida**

**Submission deadline: June 18, 2007 @ 5:00 pm
Pre-proposal conference: June 6 5, 2007 @ 11:00 am
255 North Broadway, Bartow, Florida**

**PROVIDE COURT REPORTING SERVICES FOR
THE TENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COURT OF FLORIDA**

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS # 10-07-001

SPECIFICATIONS

1. BACKGROUND

The Tenth Judicial Circuit adopted Administrative Order 1-22.3 entitled “In Re: Administrative Plan for the Provision of Court Reporting Services Involving Public Expense,” entered in December of 2005, updating the circuit’s plan for the provision of court reporting services. The circuit utilizes both electronic and stenographic court reporting methods by contracting with individual vendors and by hiring employees. The subject of Court Reporting is generally covered by Rule 2.535, Florida Rules of Judicial Administration. Specifically, Rule 2.535(g) requires the Chief Judge of each judicial circuit to develop an administrative plan for the provision of courts reporting services provided at public expense. That plan must provide a means to ensure that the record of court proceedings is properly taken and preserved. The Tenth Judicial Circuit anticipates the need for contract stenographic court reporter services for fiscal year 2007-08. Accordingly, the Tenth Judicial Circuit is soliciting for court reporting services in Hardee, Highlands and Polk Counties for the period July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2008.

DEFINITIONS

The term “CAO” as used in this Request for Proposal (RFP) means the Court Administrator’s Office.

~~The term “court reporter” as used in this RFP means a court reporter who holds a current certification as a Registered reporter or other higher level certification from the National Court Reporter’s Association and who has provided documentation of the certification to the CAO, or who has otherwise been approved by the CAO to provide court reporting services in the Tenth Judicial Circuit.~~

The term “Hardee County” means the Hardee County Courthouse in Wauchula, Florida. The term “Highlands County” means the Highlands County Courthouse in Sebring, Florida. The term “Polk County” means the Polk County Courthouse in Bartow, Florida.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Request for Proposals (RFP) is to solicit proposals in accordance with established purchasing procedures in a competitive process for the acquisition of court reporting services funded at public expense for court

proceedings in the Tenth Judicial Circuit of Florida beginning July 1, 2007. The Tenth Judicial Circuit is comprised of Hardee, Highlands and Polk counties. It is the Tenth Judicial Circuit Court's intent to utilize employees to provide the majority of court reporting services and to establish a contractual relationship with a court reporting firm, or firms, to provide services in certain specific areas. Proposers may submit proposals for the provision of stenographic reporters, as outlined in Section 7, in Circuit Court in Hardee, Highlands or Polk Counties, or any part or combination thereof. This RFP is for the provision of contractual services mentioned herein.

5. INQUIRIES/SCHEDULE

- a. Any questions or requests for additional information regarding this RFP shall be in writing, directed to the person designated and received no later than six (6) days prior to the pre-proposal conference.

Susan J. Best	Telephone (863) 534-7751
Court Operations Manager	FAX (863) 534-4699
Tenth Judicial Circuit	e-mail: sbest@jud10.flcourts.org
Post Office Box 9000, Drawer J102	
Bartow, FL 33831-9000	
Re: Court Reporting Services	

- b. Any clarification or additional information that may substantially affect the outcome of this RFP will be provided in the form of a written addendum and placed on the Court's website at www.jud10.org. If necessary, clarifications or additional information shall be issued by the CAO. Unless issued in writing by the CAO, nothing shall be binding upon this RFP.

Schedule of Events

Listed below are the dates and times by which stated actions must be taken or completed. If the CAO determines, in its sole discretion, that it is necessary to change any of these dates and times, it will issue an Addendum to this Proposal. All listed times are Eastern Daylight Savings Time.

Advertisement of RFP	May 19, 2007
Deadline for Questions	May 30, 2007
Pre-proposal Conference	June 6 5, 2007 @ 11:00 a.m.
RFP Submission Deadline	June 18, 2007 @ 5:00 p.m.
Complete Review of Proposals	June 19 – 22, 2007
Notice of Intent to Award Contracts	June 25, 2007

6. PRE-PROPOSAL CONFERENCE

A pre-proposal conference shall be held at 11:00 am, ~~Wednesday~~ Tuesday, June 6 5, 2007, at the Polk County Courthouse, 255 N. Broadway, Courtroom 9C Conference Room, Bartow, Florida. All individuals and/or firms interested in the project are encouraged to review the requirements of the RFP, to attend this pre-proposal conference and to ask questions.

7. SCOPE OF WORK

- a. The awarded contractor(s) shall provide court reporting services pursuant to Rule 2.535, Florida Rules of Judicial Administration, Administrative Order 1-22.3 and any administrative order which updates that order.
- b. The awarded contractor(s) shall provide court reporting services in the following court proceedings in the Tenth Judicial Circuit:
 - Circuit Court – Criminal (specifically all Felony Jury Trials and all matters relating to capital cases where the death penalty is being sought);
 - Circuit Court – Juvenile (specifically all Termination of Parental Rights trials);
 - Any proceedings requiring CART that are required to be translated by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
 - Other proceedings as directed by the Judiciary.

The proposals may provide for services in the above-referenced areas in whole, in part, or any combination thereof.

- c. The awarded contractor(s) shall further provide the following:
 - Transcripts that comply with all Florida Rules of Court and administrative orders;
 - Retention of notes, records, and transcripts in accordance with requirements of Rule 2.430, Florida Rules of Judicial Administration;
 - A verbatim record of legal proceedings and accurate translations and/or transcripts in a format acceptable to the Tenth Judicial Circuit Court and the Florida Supreme Court;
 - Timely distribution of requested transcripts;
 - Careful maintenance of files and records;
 - Any and all other requirements of the RFP and specifications.
- d. The contractor(s) shall be responsible for ensuring compliance with the State of Florida records laws. The Court shall be the owner of all the records produced for the Court by the contractor(s).

- e. Proceedings will take place in court facilities located in Bartow, Sebring and Wauchula and any other place within the circuit where judicial proceedings may take place.
- f. The court reporter services Agreement or any portion thereof shall not be assigned, subcontracted, or transferred except as allowed in the RFP specifications, response thereto, and the awarded Agreement without the prior express written consent of the Court.
- g. The Court in no way implies or guarantees any minimum expenditure as part of the resultant contract.

8. MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

- a. Proposers shall meet the following minimum qualifications:
 - 1. Proposers shall have engaged in the provision of court reporting services in the Tenth Judicial Circuit for a minimum of the last three years.
 - 2. Proposers shall currently employ or contract with, or demonstrate the ability to employ or contract with, enough stenographic reporters to adequately service the needs of the Court.
 - 3. Proposers shall currently employ, or demonstrate the ability to employ, at least one experienced real-time stenographic court reporter with related hardware and software to sufficiently meet the requirements of the ADA.
 - 4. Proposers shall have the ability to provide transcripts on disks and condensed transcripts.
- b. Reporters of proposers shall meet the following minimum qualifications:
 - 1. Reporters shall be Notaries Public.
 - ~~2. Reporters shall have a minimum of one year of court reporting experience and hold either an RPR or CM certificate or equivalent.~~
 - 3. Reporters shall be governed by certification requirements as may be adopted by the Florida Supreme Court.
 - 4. Reporters shall be capable of translating, editing and producing typed transcripts as needed having full responsibility for technical accuracy.
 - 5. Reporters shall be capable of producing accurate transcripts consistent with established standards of accuracy.

6. Reporters shall have an extensive knowledge of court practices and procedures.
7. Reporters shall be skilled, knowledgeable, and dedicated to achieving and maintaining a high level of professionalism.
8. Reporters shall be proficient in the English language, legal terminology, court practices and procedures, transcript preparation, and professional responsibility.
9. Stenographic reporters shall use steno-machines, provided by the reporters and/or proposers, capable of accommodating computer-aided transcription (CAT).
10. Reporters shall maintain required certifications.

9. COURT/CONTRACTOR CONTRACTUAL RELATIONSHIP

- a. ~~The Tenth Judicial Circuit Court reserves the right to award one or more contracts to provide the required services as deemed to be in its best interest. Any awarded contractor(s) shall provide the services required herein strictly under a contractual relationship and is not, nor shall be, construed to be an employee of the Court. As an independent contractor, the awarded contractor(s) shall pay any and all applicable taxes required by law; shall comply with all pertinent Federal, State, and local laws including the Fair Labor Standards Act, The Americans with Disabilities Act, the Federal Civil Rights Act, and any and all relevant employment laws. The contractor(s) shall be responsible for all income taxes, FICA, and any other withholdings from its employees, or subcontractor's wages or salaries. Fringe benefits shall be the responsibility of the contractor(s) including, but not limited to, health and life insurance, mandatory social security, retirement, liability/risk management coverage, and workers and unemployment compensation. Fringe benefits, if applicable, shall be the responsibility of the contractors.~~
- b. As an independent contractor, the awarded contractor(s) shall hire, compensate, supervise, and terminate members of its work force. It shall direct and control the manner in which work is performed including conditions under which individual court reporters will report; when, where, and the manner in which court reporters will report; and the job assignments of individual court reporters. It shall set the hours of work for members of its work force.
- c. Office space for purposes of managing contract services or otherwise fulfilling duties pursuant to the scope of work will not be provided. Office furnishings, supplies, or other equipment will not be provided. Neither will the Court pay

for any ~~business travel~~, training, or continuing education expenses on behalf of the contractor(s).

- d. Prior to commencing work the successful proposer(s) will be required to sign a written contract incorporating the specifications and terms of this Request for Proposals and the response thereto. **Any contract awarded as a result of the RFP shall begin on or about July 1, 2007, for a period of one (1) year through June 30, 2008.** Two contract renewals for two additional one-year periods shall be allowed upon the mutual consent of the contractor(s) and the Court. The renewal option shall be exercised only if all original contract terms, conditions, and prices remain the same.
- e. The contractor(s) shall not be exclusively bound to the Court and may provide court reporting services to other private and public entities.
- f. Appendix A to this RFP, the Florida State Court System Instructions to Respondents, is incorporated in this RFP. Accordingly, each proposer shall certify that he or she has read and understood the provisions of Appendix A and that his or her proposal has been prepared and submitted consistent with the requirements in that document. This RFP prevails over any conflict that may be interpreted between this RFP and Appendix A.

10. CANCELLATION/TERMINATION

- a. Either the contractor(s) or the Court may cancel the contract, and all extension or renewals thereof, without cause by giving thirty (30) days written notice to the contractor(s) of the intention to cancel. The contract, and all extensions or renewals thereof, may be canceled for cause at any time if the contractor(s) or the Court fails to fulfill or abide by any contract term or condition. Failure of the contractor(s) or the Court to comply with any of the provisions of the contract shall be considered a material breach of contract and shall be cause for immediate termination of the contract.
- b. In addition to all other legal remedies available, the Court reserves the right to obtain from another source, without competition, any items which have not been delivered pursuant to the terms of the contract. The Court further reserves the right to impose sanctions as provided by law or within the inherent power of the Court.
- c. Payment for contract services will be made from public funds appropriated for this purpose and shall concur with the fee schedule agreed to by the parties. No additional fees will be paid. The contract may be terminated at any time, by either the contractor(s) or the Court if appropriated funds are no longer available. The contractor(s) shall submit ~~monthly~~ invoices and required statistical reports by the 10th of each month for services provided

during the preceding month. All invoices and statistical reports shall be accompanied by supporting documentation.

11. SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

- a. Proposals shall be typed on white letter-size paper and each element of the RFP shall be addressed in a clear, concise manner. Each element shall be labeled and indexed. Proposals shall be individually bound.
- b. One (1) original, marked “ORIGINAL”, and four (4) copies, each marked “COPY”, are required of each proposal. Proposals shall be submitted as designated herein by the advertised deadline in a sealed package clearly marked on the outside of the package:

“RFP 10-07-001, COURT REPORTING SERVICES”

DUE: 5:00 p.m., Monday, June 18, 2007

- c. Any proposal received after the advertised deadline will not be considered for award.

12. PROPOSAL CONTENT

Proposals shall not exceed 20 pages in length, exclusive of required forms or attachments, and contain, at a minimum, the following information:

- a. Proposer Information:
 1. Proposer’s official business name, address (both physical and mailing), telephone and fax numbers; e-mail address; type of business such as sole proprietorship, partnership, or corporation, including the State of incorporation;
 2. Name of owner;
 3. FID# or Social Security #;
 4. Length of time in business;
 5. Location(s) of business operations;
 6. Firm’s qualifications;
 7. Qualifications and experience of corporate officer(s) and/or key personnel;
 8. Number and qualifications of court reporter staff;
 9. Description of support staff;
 10. Evidence of meeting qualification requirements set forth herein;
 11. Current financial statement.
- b. Statements – Include a statement indicating an understanding of the project and the requirements thereof. Also include a statement that you have read

Appendix A to this RFP and that this purpose has been prepared and submitted consistent with the requirements in that document.

- c. Technology Plan – Include a description of CAT and other computer equipment used in the performance of duties, including hardware, software, and backup and support services.
- d. Grievance Plan – Include a description of how complaints concerning fees, errors, tardiness, etc. against individual reporters or the firm are handled by the firm.
- e. Quality Assurance – Include the firm’s statement of commitment to quality assurance; the firm’s capability and plan to guarantee the appearance of court reporters for proceedings; plan(s) for hiring, training, continuing education, and performance evaluation of employees.
- f. References - Include the name, address, and telephone number of at least three (3) clients for whom similar services are performed.
- g. Fee Structure – Include proposed fees for the following:
 - 1. Appearance fees for Stenographic Reporters in Circuit Court
 - a. Hourly rate (for in-court appearance from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.)
 - b. Hourly rate (for in-court appearance before 8:30 a.m. or after 5:00 p.m.)
 - c. Minimum appearance fee
 - 2. Appearance fees for Juvenile Dependency TPR Trials
 - a. Hourly rate (for in-court appearance from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.)
 - b. Hourly rate (for in-court appearance before 8:30 a.m. or after 5:00 p.m.)
 - c. Minimum appearance fee
 - 3. Appearance fees for Stenographic Reporters in Other Proceedings
 - a. Hourly rate (for in-court appearance from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.)
 - b. Hourly rate (for in-court appearance before 8:30 a.m. or after 5:00 p.m.)
 - c. Minimum appearance fee
 - 4. Appearance fees for Real-Time Stenographic Reporters (this automatically includes a final transcript of proceeding at an additional charge)
 - a. Hourly rate (for in-court appearance from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.)
 - b. Hourly rate (for in-court appearance before 8:30 a.m. or after 5:00 p.m.)
 - c. Minimum appearance fee

5. Appearance fees for CART (Communication Access Realtime Translation)
 - a. Hourly rate (for in-court appearance from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.)
 - b. Hourly rate (for in-court appearance before 8:30 a.m. or after 5:00 p.m.)
 - c. Minimum appearance fee
6. Cancellation/No Show Fees
7. Transcript Fees:
 - a. Standard Stenographic
 - i. Original, per page
 - ii. Additional copies, per page
 - b. Expedited Stenographic (within 96 hours)
 - i. Original, per page
 - ii. Additional copies, per page
 - c. Daily Stenographic (within 72 hours)
 - i. Original, per page
 - ii. Additional copies, per page
 - d. Expedited Stenographic (within 48 hours)
 - i. Original, per page
 - ii. Additional copies, per page
 - e. Expedited Stenographic (within 24 hours)
 - i. Original, per page
 - ii. Additional copies, per page
 - f. Daily Stenographic (Overnight)
 - i. Original, per page
 - ii. Additional copies, per page
 - g. Certified Transcript on computer disk
8. Electronic transcript (in addition to per page rate) delivered on electronic media; i.e. floppies, e-mail, DVD, CD, VHS, or any electronic media
9. Video teleconference costs
10. Word indexes
11. Postage
12. Video editing
13. Video media (VHS, DVD)
14. Synchronized video transcripts

15. Hourly rate for travel outside contract county, e.g., if contract is signed for services in Polk County and an assignment is accepted in Hardee or Highlands County

16. Other Fees/Charges

13. EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

- a. A Review Committee, consisting of Judges and Court Administration staff, will evaluate all proposals. The Review Committee reserves the right to request interviews of any or all respondents as may be necessary toward a fair and equitable proposal evaluation. The Review Committee will make a recommendation for award or awards to the Chief Judge. In the event that there is no one proposer that appears able to provide the required services, the Chief Judge may award contracts to more than one proposer, re-solicit for proposals, or take other action as seemed appropriate in his discretion to meet the needs of the Court.
- b. **Evaluation criteria will include**, but will not be exclusive of, the following:
- Proposed costs (30 points)
 - Availability of a sufficient number of qualified personnel (25 points)
 - Qualifications of personnel (principals, reporters, support) (20 points)
 - Technological capabilities and support (10 points)
 - Financial viability (10 points)
 - References (5 points)