



ABOUT US

The Office of Procurement (PRO) is responsible for acquiring goods, services (professional and non-professional) and construction used by Montgomery County Government. To learn more about how to navigate the procurement process, including FAQs and the contract search feature, please visit our website at <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/pro>.

Goods and services used by Montgomery County Public Schools, Montgomery College, Housing Opportunity Commission and Montgomery National Capitol Park and Planning are not acquired by the Office of Procurement¹.



TERMINOLOGY

Words and phrases used in the procurement process may seem unfamiliar or confusing. An online directory of commonly used procurement terminology and definitions can be found at <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/pro/help.html>.

¹ Goods and services used by Montgomery County Public Schools, Montgomery College, Housing Opportunity Commission, and Montgomery National Capitol Park and Planning are not acquired by the Office of Procurement. For information on procurement opportunities with these entities, please visit each entities' website or CVRS at <http://www.mcipcc.net>.



REGISTRATION

The first step to doing business with Montgomery County Government (MCG) is becoming a registered vendor. As a registered vendor, the County can contact your firm when procurement opportunities become available.

MCG, in collaboration with Montgomery College, Montgomery County Public Schools and the Housing Opportunities Commission, uses an inter-agency Central Vendor Registration System (CVRS). This registration system allows companies interested in providing goods and services to any of these four purchasers to receive information about opportunities from each entity. CVRS allows potential vendors the ability to create and maintain a profile. By selecting commodity or service codes, a vendor is able to narrowly tailor the business opportunity notifications received. CVRS registration is free. Please visit the Inter-Agency Central Vendor Registration System to register: <http://www.mcipcc.net>.



OPPORTUNITIES

Contracting opportunities are accessible through several sources:

- As a CVRS registered vendor, you will receive e-notifications of solicitation opportunities;
- Montgomery County opportunities on the County's website at: <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/pro/contract.html>;
- Opportunities with the State of Maryland and in all Maryland Counties at: eMaryland Marketplace: <https://emaryland.buyspeed.com/bsol/>.



COMMONLY USED PROCUREMENT METHODS

- **Request For Proposals (RFP)** – The County may issue an RFP when the estimated value of a contract is \$100,000 or more. An RFP is issued when the using department seeks to evaluate proposals based on the “best value”.
- **Invitation For Bid (IFB)** – The County may issue an IFB when the estimated value of the contract is \$100,000 or more. An IFB is issued when the using department seeks to make an award to the responsive, responsible bidder based on lowest price.
- **Informal Solicitation** – The County may issue an informal solicitation when the estimated value of the contract is between \$10,000 and \$100,000.
- **Direct Threshold** – Using Departments are permitted to make purchases from a vendor when the value of the goods or services acquired is estimated to be \$10,000 or below. These purchases are monitored by the Office of Procurement to assure that the actual value does not exceed the estimated value.
- **Bridge contract** – The County may join a contract for a good or service when the contract is a product of a competitive process undertaken by another governmental entity. Such a contract must offer the county the same goods and pricing as well as meet all of Montgomery County’s legal requirements. When the County joins such a contract, it is said to have “bridged” the contract.

STEPS IN THE RFP PROCESS




A solicitation will contain: the general terms and conditions of the contract between the County and the contractor; the scope of work or specifications; the method of award; the evaluation criteria; contact information for the procurement specialist (within the Office of Procurement); contact information for the contract administrator (within the using Department); the performance period; a statement of any special terms or

conditions, and information specifying the date, time and place for proposal submission.

The vendor should immediately read the solicitation thoroughly. Questions about the solicitation may be raised at any time prior to the closing date. However, it is highly recommended that a vendor with a question, raise the question with the procurement specialist early in the process. The procurement specialist will answer the question and if the question has general applicability to other prospective vendors, the procurement specialist may issue an amendment to the solicitation to answer the question and send the information to all vendors who registered as "bid holders."

The vendor must make a timely submission of a complete proposal to the Office of Procurement to be considered for award. All proposals must be received in the office no later than the due date and time specified in the solicitation.



Upon submission of a proposal, the bidder will receive an email acknowledgement of receipt which will contain a prospective timeline for completion of the process. Once this email notification has been sent, county regulations prohibit the procurement specialist from having any further conversations with the bidder about the proposal until the award has been publicly posted.

The Office of Procurement conducts a general review of the proposals for submission requirements and compliance. If performance of the contract would require subcontracting, the Office of Procurement reviews the vendor's MFD subcontracting plan. If the RFP has been reserved for competition only among Local Small Businesses, the Office of Procurement reviews the vendor's LSBRP certification status.

Following completion of these internal reviews, the Office of Procurement forwards the proposal and supporting documents to the using Department. The Using Department convenes a Qualification and Selection Committee (QSC) to review the proposals. The QSC must review the proposals based on the evaluation criteria set forth in the solicitation. The QSC also reviews offerors for responsibility. A responsibility review may include factors such as an evaluation of whether the vendor is in good standing with the State of Maryland and a review of whether the vendor has been debarred from participating in government procurements by another jurisdiction.

Once the QSC review is concluded, the Using Department will notify the Office of Procurement and seek permission from the Office of Procurement to begin negotiations with a proposed awardee.

At the conclusion of negotiations between the Using Department and the proposed awardee, the Using Department will request approval to publicly post the proposed awardee, prepare a contract, and send all necessary documents to the Office of Procurement.

The Office of Procurement reviews the documents to assure fairness in the process, coordinates a cost/price analysis, assures MFD and Wage Law Requirements compliance (if applicable), and reviews the bonding or insurance approvals (if applicable). Following the completion of these steps, the Office of Procurement reviews and executes the contract.

Once the award has been publicly posted, an unsuccessful offeror may request a debriefing. Please see <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/pro/help.html> for details on requesting a debriefing and tips on how to get the most from the debriefing process.



COMPLIANCE PROGRAMS

The County has several compliance programs to help foster a strong, more vibrant business community. The full listing of compliance programs can be found at: <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/DBRC>. The following two programs are most commonly used:

The Minority, Female & Disabled-Owned Business Program (MFD Program)

The County currently accepts certifications from six agencies. Details on the MFD subcontracting program, participation goals set annually by the county, and accepted certifications can be found at: <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/MFD>.

The Local Small Business Reserve Program (LSBRP)

The County currently has a program that provides local, small vendors an opportunity to compete only with county businesses of similar size and resources for County contracts. More details, including information on certification procedures for businesses that wish to participate in the LSBRP program can be found at: <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/LSBRP>.



INSURANCE AND BONDING

The County's Department of Finance, Division of Risk Management determines insurance requirements and provides guidance to departments on bonding requirements for all County solicitations and contracts. The requirements may vary depending on the scope, complexity, dollar value, risk, and other factors.



LEARN MORE

A detailed procurement manual can be found on the Office of Procurement's website: <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/pro>.

Also, the Office of Procurement provides technical assistance, outreach events and periodic education and certification events. To sign up for our newsletter and learn about these events visit: <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/PRO/DBRC/Events.html>.

