

Social Security Administration

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bids and/or requests for proposals must be excluded from competing for such procurements. Awards must be made to the bidder or offeror whose bid or offer is responsive to the solicitation and is most advantageous to the recipient, price, quality and other factors considered. Solicitations must clearly set forth all requirements that the bidder or offeror must fulfill in order for the bid or offer to be evaluated by the recipient. Any and all bids or offers may be rejected when it is in the recipient's interest to do so.

§ 435.44 Procurement procedures.

(a) All recipients must establish written procurement procedures. These procedures must provide, at a minimum, that paragraphs (a)(1), (2), and (3) of this section apply.

(1) Recipients avoid purchasing unnecessary items.

(2) Where appropriate, an analysis is made of lease and purchase alternatives to determine which would be the most economical and practical procurement for the Federal Government.

(3) Solicitations for goods and services provide for all of the following:

(i) A clear and accurate description of the technical requirements for the material, product or service to be procured. In competitive procurements, such a description may not contain features, which unduly restrict competition.

(ii) Requirements which the bidder/offeror must fulfill and all other factors to be used in evaluating bids or proposals.

(iii) A description, whenever practicable, of technical requirements in terms of functions to be performed or performance required, including the range of acceptable characteristics or minimum acceptable standards.

(iv) The specific features of "brand name or equal" descriptions that bidders are required to meet when such items are included in the solicitation.

(v) The acceptance, to the extent practicable and economically feasible, of products and services dimensioned in the metric system of measurement.

(vi) Preference, to the extent practicable and economically feasible, for products and services that conserve

natural resources and protect the environment and are energy efficient.

(b) Positive efforts must be made by recipients to utilize small businesses, minority-owned firms, and women's business enterprises, whenever possible. Recipients of Federal awards must take all of the following steps to further this goal:

(1) Ensure that small businesses, minority-owned firms, and women's business enterprises are used to the fullest extent practicable.

(2) Make information on forthcoming opportunities available and arrange time frames for purchases and contracts to encourage and facilitate participation by small businesses, minority-owned firms, and women's business enterprises.

(3) Consider in the contract process whether firms competing for larger contracts intend to subcontract with small businesses, minority-owned firms, and women's business enterprises.

(4) Encourage contracting with consortiums of small businesses, minority-owned firms and women's business enterprises when a contract is too large for one of these firms to handle individually.

(5) Use the services and assistance, as appropriate, of such organizations as the Small Business Administration and the Department of Commerce's Minority Business Development Agency in the solicitation and utilization of small businesses, minority-owned firms and women's business enterprises.

(c) The type of procuring instruments used (e.g., fixed price contracts, cost reimbursable contracts, purchase orders, and incentive contracts) may be determined by the recipient but must be appropriate for the particular procurement and for promoting the best interest of the program or project involved. The "cost-plus-a-percentage-of-cost" or "percentage of construction cost" methods of contracting may not be used.

(d) Contracts may be made only with responsible contractors who possess the potential ability to perform successfully under the terms and conditions of the proposed procurement. Consideration must be given to such matters as contractor integrity, record

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of past performance, financial and technical resources or accessibility to other necessary resources. In certain circumstances, contracts with certain parties are restricted by agencies' implementation of Executive Orders 12549 and 12689, "Debarment and Suspension" (3 CFR, 1986 Comp., p. 189 and 3 CFR, 1989 Comp., p. 235).

(e) Recipients must, on request, make available for SSA, pre-award review and procurement documents, such as request for proposals or invitations for bids, independent cost estimates, etc., when any of the following conditions apply:

(1) A recipient's procurement procedures or operation fails to comply with the procurement standards in this part.

(2) The procurement is expected to exceed the simplified acquisition threshold fixed at 41 U.S.C. 403(11) (currently \$100,000) and is to be awarded without competition or only one bid or offer is received in response to a solicitation.

(3) The procurement, which is expected to exceed the simplified acquisition threshold, specifies a "brand name" product.

(4) The proposed award over the simplified acquisition threshold is to be awarded to other than the apparent low bidder under a sealed bid procurement.

(5) A proposed contract modification changes the scope of a contract or increases the contract amount by more than the amount of the simplified acquisition threshold.

§ 435.45 Cost and price analysis.

Some form of cost or price analysis must be made and documented in the procurement files in connection with every procurement action. Price analysis may be accomplished in various ways, including the comparison of price quotations submitted, market prices and similar indicia, together with discounts. Cost analysis is the review and evaluation of each element of cost to determine reasonableness, allocability and allowability.

§ 435.46 Procurement records.

Procurement records and files for purchases in excess of the simplified

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acquisition threshold must include the following at a minimum:

(a) Basis for contractor selection,

(b) Justification for lack of competition when competitive bids or offers are not obtained, and

(c) Basis for award cost or price.

§ 435.47 Contract administration.

A system for contract administration must be maintained to ensure contractor conformance with the terms, conditions and specifications of the contract and to ensure adequate and timely follow up of all purchases. Recipients must evaluate contractor performance and document, as appropriate, whether contractors have met the terms, conditions and specifications of the contract.

§ 435.48 Contract provisions.

The recipient must include, in addition to provisions to define a sound and complete agreement, the following provisions in all contracts. The following provisions must also be applied to subcontracts:

(a) Contracts in excess of the simplified acquisition threshold must contain contractual provisions or conditions that allow for administrative, contractual, or legal remedies in instances in which a contractor violates or breaches the contract terms, and provide for such remedial actions as may be appropriate.

(b) All contracts in excess of the simplified acquisition threshold must contain suitable provisions for termination by the recipient, including the manner by which termination will be effected and the basis for settlement. In addition, such contracts must describe conditions under which the contract may be terminated for default as well as conditions where the contract may be terminated because of circumstances beyond the control of the contractor.

(c) Except as otherwise required by statute, an award that requires the contracting (or subcontracting) for construction or facility improvements must provide for the recipient to follow its own requirements relating to bid guarantees, performance bonds, and payment bonds unless the construction contract or subcontract exceeds