

EXHIBIT A ADMINISTRATIVE RULES GOVERNING RFPS

1. Communications With Court Regarding The RFP

Except as specifically addressed elsewhere in the RFP, Proposers must send any communications regarding the RFP to Julia.hill@santacruzcourt.org. Proposers must include the RFP Title in the subject line of any communication. All correspondence from the Court will be posted on the Court's website: <https://www.santacruzcourt.org/info/vendors>.

2. Questions Regarding The RFP

Proposers interested in responding to the RFP may submit questions via email on procedural matters related to the RFP or requests for clarification or modification of the RFP no later than the deadline for questions listed in the timeline of the RFP. Once submitted, questions become part of the procurement file and are subject to disclosure; Proposers are accordingly cautioned not to include any proprietary or confidential information in questions. If the Proposer is requesting a change, the request must set forth the recommended change and the Proposer's reasons for proposing the change. Questions or requests submitted after the deadline for questions will not be answered. Without disclosing the source of the question or request, a copy of the questions and the Court's responses will be made available prior to the proposal due date and time.

3. Knowledge Of Requirements

The vendor shall carefully review all documents referenced and made a part of the solicitation document to ensure that all information required to properly respond has been submitted or made available and all requirements are priced in the proposal. Failure to examine any document, drawing, specification, or instruction will be at the vendor's sole risk.

Vendors shall be responsible for knowledge of all items and conditions contained in their proposals and in this RFP, including any Court issued clarifications, modifications, amendments, or addenda. The Court will provide notice to perspective vendors by posting addenda and clarifications on the Court website; however, it is the vendor's responsibility to ascertain that the proposal includes all addenda issued prior to the Proposal Due Date.

4. Errors In The RFP

- A. If, before the proposal due date and time listed in the timeline of the RFP, a Proposer discovers any ambiguity, conflict, discrepancy, omission, or error in the RFP, the Proposer must immediately notify the Court via email and request modification or clarification of the RFP. Without disclosing the source of the

request, the Court may modify the RFP before the proposal due date and time by releasing an addendum to the solicitation.

- B. If a Proposer fails to notify the Court of an error in the RFP known to the Proposer, or an error that reasonably should have been known to the Proposer, before the proposal due date and time listed in the timeline of the RFP, the Proposer shall propose at its own risk. Furthermore, if the Proposer is awarded the agreement, the Proposer shall not be entitled to additional compensation or time by reason of the error or its later correction.

5. Addenda

- A. The Court may modify the RFP before the proposal due date and time listed in the timeline of the RFP by issuing an addendum and posting it on the Court's website at <https://www.santacruzcourt.org/info/vendors>. It is each Proposer's responsibility to inform itself of any addendum.
- B. If any Proposer determines that an addendum unnecessarily restricts its ability to propose, the Proposer shall immediately notify the Court via email no later than one day following issuance of the addendum.

6. Withdrawal And Resubmission/Modification Of Proposals

A Proposer may withdraw its proposal at any time before the deadline for submitting proposals by notifying the Court in writing of its withdrawal. The notice must be signed by the Proposer. The Proposer may thereafter submit a new or modified proposal, provided that it is received at the Court no later than the proposal due date and time listed in the timeline of the RFP. Modifications offered in any other manner, oral or written, will not be considered. Proposals cannot be changed or withdrawn after the proposal due date and time listed in the timeline of the RFP.

7. Errors In The Proposal

If errors are found in a proposal, the Court may reject the proposal; however, the Court may, at its sole option, correct arithmetic or transposition errors or both on the basis that the lowest level of detail will prevail in any discrepancy. If these corrections result in significant changes in the amount of money to be paid to the Proposer (if selected for the award of the agreement), the Proposer will be informed of the errors and corrections thereof and will be given the option to abide by the corrected amount or withdraw the proposal.

8. Right To Reject Proposals

- A. Before the proposal due date and time listed in the timeline of the RFP, the Court may cancel the RFP for any or no reason. After the proposal due date and time listed in the timeline of the RFP, the Court may reject all proposals and cancel the RFP if the Court determines that: (i) the proposals received do not reflect effective competition; (ii) the cost is not reasonable; (iii) the cost exceeds the amount expected; or (iv) awarding the contract is not in the best interest of the Court.

- B. The Court may or may not waive an immaterial deviation or defect in a proposal. The Court's waiver of an immaterial deviation or defect shall in no way modify the RFP or excuse a Proposer from full compliance with RFP specifications. Until a contract resulting from this RFP is signed, the Court reserves the right to accept or reject any or all of the items in the proposal, to award the contract in whole or in part and/or negotiate any or all items with individual Proposers if it is deemed in the Court's best interest. A notice of intent to award does not constitute a contract and confers no right of contract on any Proposer.
- C. The Court reserves the right to issue similar RFPs in the future. The RFP is in no way an agreement, obligation, or contract and in no way is the Court responsible for the cost of preparing the proposal.
- D. Proposers are specifically directed **NOT** to contact any Court personnel or consultants for meetings, conferences, or discussions that are related to the RFP at any time between release of the RFP and any award and execution of a contract. Unauthorized contact with any Court personnel or consultants may be cause for rejection of the Proposer's proposal.

9. Evaluation Process

- A. An evaluation team will review all proposals that are received by the appropriate deadline to determine the extent to which they comply with RFP requirements.
- B. Proposals that contain false or misleading statements may be rejected if in the Court's opinion the information was intended to mislead the evaluation team regarding a requirement of the RFP.
- C. During the evaluation process, the Court may require a Proposer's representative to answer questions with regard to the Proposer's proposal. Failure of a Proposer to demonstrate that the claims made in its proposal are in fact true may be sufficient cause for deeming a proposal non-responsive.
- D. In the event of a tie, the contract will be awarded to the winner of a single coin toss. The coin toss will be witnessed by two Court employees. The Court will provide notice of the date and time of the coin toss to the affected Proposers, who may attend the coin toss at their own expense.

10. Disposition Of Materials

All materials submitted in response to the RFP will become the property of the Court and will be returned only at the Court's option and at the expense of the Proposer submitting the proposal.

11. Payment

- A. Payment terms will be specified in any agreement issuing from the RFP.
- B. **The Court does not make advance payment for services.** Payment is normally made based upon completion of tasks as provided in the agreement between the Court and the selected Proposer. The Court may withhold ten

percent of each invoice until receipt and acceptance of the final deliverable. The amount of the withhold may depend upon the length of the project and the payment schedule provided in the agreement between the Court and the selected Proposer.

12. Award And Execution Of Agreement

- A. Award of contract, if made, will be in accordance with the RFP to a responsible Proposer submitting a proposal compliant with all the requirements of the RFP and any addenda thereto (including any administrative or technical requirements), except for such immaterial defects as may be waived by the Court.
- B. A Proposer submitting a proposal must be prepared to use a standard Court contract form rather than its own contract form.
- C. The Court will make a reasonable effort to execute any contract based on the RFP within forty-five (45) days of selecting a proposal that best meets its requirements. However, exceptions taken by a Proposer may delay execution of a contract.
- D. Upon award of the agreement, the Court will electronically send the agreement to the Proposer for signature. The Proposer will sign in **blue ink** and scan in **color** the agreement to be returned to the Court. The Court will then finally execute the agreement and return a colored scan of the agreement to the Proposer which will be considered an original. Agreements are not effective until executed by both parties. Any work performed before receipt of a fully-executed agreement shall be at Proposer's own risk.

13. Failure To Execute The Agreement

The period for execution set forth in Section 12 ("Award and Execution of Agreement") may only be changed by mutual agreement of the parties. Failure to execute the agreement within the time frame identified above constitutes sufficient cause for voiding the award. Failure to comply with other requirements within the set time constitutes failure to execute the agreement. If the successful Proposer refuses or fails to execute the agreement, the Court may award the agreement to the next qualified Proposer.

14. News Releases

News releases or other publicity pertaining to the award of a contract may not be issued without prior written approval of the Court Public Services and Media Coordinator.

15. Anti-Trust Claims

- A. In submitting a proposal to the Court, the Proposer offers and agrees that if the proposal is accepted, Proposer will assign to the Court all rights, title, and interest in and to all causes of action it may have under Section 4 of the Clayton Act (15 U.S.C. § 15) or under the Cartwright Act Chapter 2, commencing with

§ 16700, of Part 2 of Division 7 of the Business and Professions Code), arising from purchases of goods, materials, or services by the Proposer for sale to the Court pursuant to the proposal. Such assignment shall be made and become effective at the time the Court tenders final payment to the Proposer. (See Government Code § 4552.)

- B. If the Court receives, either through judgment or settlement, a monetary recovery for a cause of action assigned under this section, the Proposer shall be entitled to receive reimbursement for actual legal costs incurred and may, upon demand, recover from the Court any portion of the recovery, including treble damages, attributable to overcharges that were paid.
- C. Upon demand in writing by the Proposer, the Court shall, within one year from such demand, reassign the cause of action assigned under this section if the Proposer has been or may have been injured by the violation of law for which the cause of action arose and (a) the Court has not been injured thereby, or (b) the Court declines to file a court action for the cause of action. (See Government Code § 4554.)

16. Americans With Disabilities Act

The Court complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and similar California statutes. Requests for accommodation of disabilities by Proposers should be directed to Julia.hill@santacruzcourt.org with "RFP Accommodation Request" in the subject line of the email.

[END OF EXHIBIT A]