



Winnebago County - Purchasing Department

404 Elm Street Room 202

Rockford, Illinois 61101

(815)319-4380 Purchasing@purchasing.wincoil.gov

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS	25Q-2382	ISSUE DATE	12/16/24
RFQ TITLE	ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING OFFICER- RE-ISSUE		
RFQ DUE DATE	12/31/24	DUE TIME (CST)	11:00 AM
		BOND REQUIRED	NONE

The County of Winnebago, Illinois (“the County”) is requesting qualifications from experienced attorneys to serve as an Administrative Hearing Officer pursuant to a professional services agreement with the County. The hearing officer’s services will primarily relate to presiding over proceedings arising from code and ordinance violations of the Winnebago County Code of Ordinances and animal control cases from certain municipalities within the County. Qualified candidates are invited to submit a response to this Request for Qualifications by providing the information described in the Scope of Services.

Proposer’s proposals must be delivered by the date and time listed under Schedule of Events to:

**Winnebago County Purchasing Department
404 Elm Street - Room 202
Rockford, IL 61101**

OVERVIEW OF THE COUNTY OF WINNEBAGO:

The County of Winnebago was established on January 16, 1836. With a population of 285,350 individuals, it is comprised of 11 municipalities, of which one is the 5th largest in the State of Illinois. Winnebago County is governed by a Township form of government with an elected Board Chairman, an appointed County Administrator, and a 20-member County Board. The County Board is the governing body of the county and functions as the policy making and legislative branch of Winnebago County government. There are six (6) Board Committees that meet to assist in the efficient and effective operation of county government, and to recommend appropriate actions to the Board. The Winnebago County Board is re-establishing a legislative committee made up of County Board members.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

This is a Request for Qualifications. Proposals will be opened and evaluated in private and submittal information will be kept confidential until a final selection is made.

SUBMISSION DATE AND TIME

No later than 11:00 a.m. (CST)— **December 31, 2024**. Proposals received after the submittal time will be rejected.

CONTACT PERSON: Hope Edwards, Director of Purchasing – purchasing@purchasing.wincoil.gov

SECTION ONE: SCOPE OF SERVICES

The Administrative Hearing Officer shall attend and preside over all proceedings arising from code and ordinance violations as described in Paragraph (a)(i-vi) of this Section. The hearings are typically held bi-weekly: the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month on the 8th Floor of the Winnebago County Courthouse, 400 W. State Street, Rockford, Illinois 61101.

The Administrative Hearing Officer shall have the duty, authority and jurisdiction to:

- a. Preside over administrative hearings concerning any County code and ordinance violations that pertains to or regulates any of the following:
 - Animal control *{and cited animal code violations from certain municipalities within the County}*;
 - The definition, identification and abatement of public nuisances;
 - the accumulation, disposal, and transportation of garbage, refuse and other forms of solid waste;
 - The construction and maintenance of buildings and structures;
 - Sanitation practices;
 - Zoning; or towing/impoundment.
- b. Postpone or continue an alleged violator's hearing to a later hearing date;
- c. Accept or reject any agreed order, continuance, or other agreed disposition presented by the parties;
- d. Administer oaths and affirmations;
- e. At the request of any party or on the hearing officer's own motion, issue subpoenas directing witnesses to appear and give relevant testimony at the hearing, or directing the production of relevant books, records, or other information, but only if the hearing officer determines the subpoenaed information is necessary to present relevant evidence that relates to a contested issue in the case;
- f. Hear testimony and accept evidence from the code enforcement officer, the respondent, and all interested parties relevant to the existence of a code violation;
- g. Preserve and authenticate the record of the hearing and all exhibits and evidence introduced at the hearing;
- h. Issue and sign written findings and a decision order stating whether a code violation exists;
- i. Impose penalties consistent with applicable code provisions and assess costs reasonably related to instituting the proceedings upon finding the respondent liable for the charged violation; and

- j. Any and all additional duties identified in Chapter 4 of the Winnebago County Code of Ordinances.

I. QUALIFIED CANDIDATES

Qualified candidates shall meet or exceed the following requirements:

- a) Licensed to practice law in the state of Illinois for a minimum of three (3) years;
- b) Law license must be presently in active status and in good standing with the Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission of the Illinois Supreme Court;
- c) Possess a working knowledge of the relevant provisions of the Winnebago County Code of Ordinances that are set forth in Section I (a) of this Request for Qualifications;
- d) Possess a working knowledge of standard courtroom practices and procedures;
- e) Possess excellent oral and written communications skills;
- f) Possess a working knowledge and understanding of administrative hearings and procedures;
- g) Possess the ability to deal tactfully with the general public, attorneys and county staff;
- h) Possess the ability to analyze and interpret laws, rules and policies and logically apply them to cases under review;
- i) Possess the ability to conduct formal hearings and obtain and analyze necessary evidence; and
- j) Additionally, qualified candidates must not have any personal, financial, or business relationships that, in the judgment of the County Administrator, may give rise to an actual or apparent conflict of interest. If none exist, state so in the response.

II. REQUIRED SUBMISSIONS

The response to this Request for Qualifications must include at least the following information and in a sealed envelope (unless sent by electronic mail), clearly marked as ***“RFQ Response– Administrative Hearing Officer”***.

- a) A Cover Letter directed to the County Administrator, identifying why the candidate is interested in the position; why the applicant should be considered as qualified to perform the duties as outlined and also the candidate’s Attorney Registration & Disciplinary Commission identification number, the candidate’s relevant experience and qualifications, and the candidate’s name, address, phone, email and website (where applicable);

- b) A detailed resume or *curriculum vitae*, showing professional experience, previous employment, and educational background, including any prior judicial and/or other adjudicatory experience, if any;
- c) The names of three (3) professional references, including for each reference: name of employer, title, email address, and phone number. Two (2) of the references shall be from attorneys or judges, and one (1) of the references shall be from a non-attorney, non-judicial, professional contact;
- d) A Certificate of Good Standing issued by the Clerk of the Illinois Supreme Court within the preceding forty-five (45) days from submission of qualifications;
- e) A listing of any potential conflicts of interest that could affect the candidate's ability to adjudicate issues for the County;
- f) Copy of current Attorney Registration & Disciplinary Commission card;
- g) The hourly rate proposed for the scope of the work, and any other associated costs (if any); and
- h) Any additional documentation that is relevant to this RFQ.

III. DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF QUALIFICATIONS: December 31, 2024 at 11:00 A.M. (CST)

- a. RFQ responses shall be sent via electronic mail, first class mail or hand delivery to:
Purchasing@purchasing.wincoil.gov OR 404 Elm Street- Room 202, Rockford, Illinois 61101
- b. All submittals must be clearly marked "RFQ – **Administrative Hearing Officer.**" **Qualified submittals will be accepted until the specific date and time above, late delivery will be refused.**
- c. Any questions and/or inquiries concerning this RFQ and hard copies of this document are available by contacting:
Purchasing@purchasing.wincoil.gov

IV. EVALUATION OF RESPONSES AND CANDIDATES

All complete responses will be evaluated by the County Administrator or his designee(s), who will have the sole discretion to determine which, if any, respondents will be interviewed. The evaluation of candidates may include interviews with relevant County staff as well as with the County Administrator and Winnebago County Board Chairman. The County will evaluate and select the firm and/or attorney based on qualifications, experience and performance with similar legal matters, references, ability to provide timely services, and estimated fees and expenses. The evaluation process may also include contacting the references listed by the candidate and/or any current or former employer listed on the candidate's resume/*curriculum vitae*. The final selection of the Administrative Hearing Officer will be subject to approval by the Winnebago County Board.

VII. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Any candidate that submits a response to this RFQ agrees to the following:

- a.) All submitted responses become the property of Winnebago County, Illinois.
- b.) Documents and other information submitted in response to this Request for Qualifications are public records that are subject to any public disclosure requirements under the Illinois Freedom of Information Act (5 ILCS 140/1 *et seq.*) subsequent to the award of the contract, with the exception of any information that is exempt from disclosure under Illinois or federal law.
- c.) The County reserves the right to reject any or all responses to this RFQ, waive technicalities and to accept the candidate deemed by the County to be in its best interest.
- d.) The County may request clarification to any part of any submitted responses to this RFQ, request additional information as needed and may request interviews with any candidate that submits a response.
- e.) The County will not be held responsible for any costs incurred by the candidate including and not limited to: expenses associated with preparing, submitting or handling of any RFQ response, attendance at interview(s) and final contract negotiations.
- f.) The County may correct or alter this RFQ at any time. The County will make reasonable attempts to notify any applicant that has submitted a response to this RFQ or has notified the County in writing of their intent to submit a response of any changes made.
- g.) After Winnebago County Board approval, the County will enter into an agreement or contract with the selected candidate based on that candidate's submitted response and any other information gathered by the County or provided as part of interviews or meetings with the candidate. Any such agreement or contract shall be reviewed by the Civil Bureau of the Winnebago County State's Attorney's Office. The County anticipates awarding an initial minimum contract for one (1) year, after which the County will have the right to renew for additional one (1) year periods of time.
- h.) Any such agreement may be terminated by the County for any reason, or no reason at all, with a written notice of at least (thirty) 30 days in advance of any such termination.
- i.) At the County's sole discretion, the County may conduct a background check of the candidate at the County's sole cost and expense.
- j.) The approved candidate shall not assign or subcontract any portion of the services to be provided without the written approval of the County.
- k.) Applicants are advised to adhere to the requirements of this RFQ. Failure to submit all information requested herein or to follow the above instructions may be sufficient grounds for disqualification.

END OF SECTION TWO: SCOPE OF SERVICES

SECTION THREE: PROPOSAL SIGNATURE FORM

Name of Proposer			
Contact Person			
Address			
City, State, ZIP			
Telephone		FEIN No.	
Email(s)			

TO: Winnebago County Purchasing Department

The undersigned, being duly sworn, certifies they are an:

- OWNER/SOLE PROPRIETOR
 MEMBER OF PARTNERSHIP
 AN OFFICER OF CORPORATION
 MEMBER OF JOINT VENTURE

Further, as the Proposer, declares that the only person or parties interested in this proposal as principals are those named herein; that this proposal is made without collusion with any other person, firm or corporation; that he/she has fully examined the proposed forms of agreement and the scope of services or work specifications for the above designated service, and all other documents referred to or mentioned in the solicitation documents, specifications and attached exhibits, including Addenda.

(Proposer, must list below any and all Addenda on red lines)

No(s): _____ and _____ and _____ issued thereto;

Further, the undersigned certifies and warrants that he/she is duly authorized to execute this certification/affidavit on behalf of the Proposer and in accordance with the Partnership Agreement or By-laws of the Corporation, and the laws of the State of Illinois and that this Certification is binding upon the Proposer and is true and accurate. The Affiant deposes and says that he/she has examined and carefully prepared this proposal and has checked the same in detail before submitting this proposal, and that the statements contained herein are true and correct.

Further, the Proposer certifies that he/she has provided equipment; supplies or services comparable to the items specified in this solicitation to the parties listed in the Business Reference Form and authorizes the County to verify references of business and credit at its option. Finally, the Proposer, if awarded a contract, agrees to do all other things required by the solicitation documents, and that he/she will take in full payment therefore the sums set forth in any resulting contract award.

SIGNATURE OF PROPOSER

SIGNATURE _____

Name and Title of Signer _____

Dated this _____ **day of** _____ **2024**

AUTHORIZED VENDOR NEGOTIATOR

Name and Title _____

Phone and Email _____

END OF SECTION THREE: PROPOSAL SIGNATURE FORM

BUSINESS REFERENCES

The names of three (3) professional references, including for each reference: name of employer, title, email address, and phone number. Two (2) of the references shall be from attorneys or judges, and one (1) of the references shall be from a non-attorney, non-judicial, professional contact;

NAME	
CONTACT PERSON	
TITLE	
CITY, STATE, ZIP	
TELEPHONE	
EMAIL	

NAME	
CONTACT PERSON	
ADDRESS	
CITY, STATE, ZIP	
TELEPHONE	
EMAIL	

NAME	
CONTACT PERSON	
ADDRESS	
CITY, STATE, ZIP	
TELEPHONE	
EMAIL	

NUMBER OF YEARS IN BUSINESS	
NUMBER of PERSONNEL ON STAFF	