

## **2023 Certified Spanish Court Interpreters and Justice System Interpreters Questions submitted**

1. *“Is the RFP in lieu of the yearly Service Agreement? In other words do I have to submit an RFP or can I just wait to receive the FY24 contract with the new rates as we do each year? This RFP seems to be optional, perhaps it is for those wishing to negotiate further with the AOC? If you could clarify that for me that would be great.”*

**Answer:** This procurement process follows the requirements in the New Mexico Procurement Code (Chapters 13-1-28 through 13-1-199 NMSA 1978 amended). In other words, as a state government entity, we are required to comply with the procurement code and issue Requests for Proposals to ensure that a fair and open process exists for contracting with interpreters. RFP's outline the requirements for the services/special project, and invite potential contractors to submit proposals that describe the contractor's qualifications. RFPs are required to be reissued a minimum of every 4 years. **An RFP is required for all contracts exceeding \$60,000.00 (sixty thousand dollars). Contracts issued *without* a response to this RFP will be under \$60,000.00 (sixty thousand dollars) and will not be amended to increase the contract amount in FY24.**

2. *“I confirmed receipt of the RFP and will not be submitting a proposal. Having said that, will I still qualify for the compensation rate increase starting July 1, 2023?”*

**Answer:** Yes, but your contract amount will be under \$60,000.00 and will not be amended to increase the contract amount in FY24. Given the recent increase in court interpreter rates, contracts are more likely to exceed the required amount.

3. *“Are contractors already working for the AOC required to provide references?”*

**Answer:** Yes, two references are required.

4. *“Background Check’ What is the process and documentation to comply with this?”*

**Answer:** Please fill out, sign, and return the background check release and authorization form with the sample contract included with the RFP. **The RFP, sample contract and all attachments to the sample contract can be found [here](#).**

5. *“Does previous Background Check from previous contract suffice?”*

**Answer:** If we have a waiver authorization form from you on file, we will run the background check and no action is required from you.

6. *“What is the RFP number?”*

**Answer:** Please disregard this requirement

7. *“District Applying for” Is it sufficient to say “All Districts”?”*

**Answer:** Yes.

8. *“Organization’ Is this the AOC or the Contractor?”*

**Answer:** Contractor (If applicable)

9. *“Represented by’ Is this the AOC or the Contractor?”*

**Answer:** Contractor (If applicable)

10. *“Is the letter of transmittal only used if there is a representative other than myself presenting the proposal?”*

**Answer:** No. Please submit the letter of transmittal with your response.

11. *“What type of business registration/license do you require aside from registration for a Tax ID number with the NM Taxation & Revenue Department? I am a resident of Albuquerque, so do you require City of Albuquerque Business Registration or County of Bernalillo Business License or both? Which of these would qualify for successful completion and acceptance of the Application for New Mexico Business Preference Certification?”*

**Answer:** The New Mexico Business Tax ID number and registration obtained from the New Mexico Taxation and Revenue Department will satisfy this requirement. No other registration or licenses are required.

12. *“**Item G.2. Experience/History:** As a returning freelance interpreter for FY 23/24, are letters of recommendation required again or do they remain on file?”*

**Answer:** Yes, two reference letters need to be submitted with the proposal.

13. *“**2. Item G.3. Mandatory Qualifications:** As a returning freelance interpreter, is proof of interpreter certification still required or is that still on file?”*

**Answer:** Yes, proof of interpreter certification is required.

14. *“**Item H.3. New Mexico Business Preference:** What is the purpose of a "Business Preference" certificate if an interpreter operates as a Sole Proprietor? In general, court interpreters operate*

*as freelancers and not established businesses with storefronts, employees, bookkeepers and/or accountants. The State of New Mexico doesn't even have registration for DBAs. After review of the Application for New Mexico Business Preference Certification, it would seem that obtaining preferential scoring would be a futile effort, especially for a newer resident of the State of NM, so please elaborate on purpose.”*

**Answer:** This is a State Procurement Code regulation/rule. Being a resident of NM, the New Mexico Business Tax ID number and registration obtained from the New Mexico Taxation and Revenue Department will satisfy this requirement.

15. **“Section 5 Resident Veteran Business/Contractor:** *What is the definition of the term "Veteran"? Are you referring to a former member of the U.S. Armed Forces or to an individual with a long history of experience in the provision of interpreting services?”*

**Answer:** The term “Veteran” refers to a former member of the U.S. Armed Forces.

16. **“Acknowledgement of Receipt Form:** *What information are you requesting under the headings "Organization" and "Represented by”?”*

**Answer:** This information will be from the contractor if applicable.

17. *“To whom should the letters of recommendation be addressed to and to what address?”*

**Answer:** They can be addressed to Joshua Kahawai or “To whom it may concern” or similar.

18. *“Can I send my Proposal packet by regular mail, not e mail?”*

**Answer:** No, the proposal must be submitted via email to [spanishinterpreters@nmcourts.gov](mailto:spanishinterpreters@nmcourts.gov). Mailed-in/paper proposals will not be accepted.

19. *“Do I need reference letters if I have been continuously contracted with AOC?”*

**Answer:** Yes, two reference letters need to be submitted with the proposal.

20. *“What is the Letter of Transmittal?”*

**Answer:** A letter of transmittal is a short cover letter that accompanies a more complex document to explain its purpose.

21. *“If an RFP is not submitted is the deadline to submit contract for next fy on april 24?”*

**Answer:** AOC will be issuing all FY24 court interpreter contracts by May 1, 2023. Interpreters wishing to contract with AOC and start work on July 1 must return their signed contracts by May 15, 2023.

22. *“Will interpreters who do submit rfps have priority for assignments?”*

**Answer:** No, the submission or nonsubmission of the proposal will not have any bearing on the distribution of assignments.

### **Second Set of Questions**

23. *“Can the recommendations come from New Mexico staff interpreters and/or coordinators?”*

**Answer:** Yes, coordinators and staff interpreters can provide recommendation letters however, they are not required to and it is left to their discretion.

24. *“There is no page titled “Release for Background Check” included in the RFP or sample contract which was sent . Where is it?”*

**Answer:** A sample of the FY24 contract and attachments can be found in the RFP.

25. *“Coordinators are the only persons I can get a recommendation from since I only contract with the AOC, can they be called upon to get these letters of recommendation to me on time to submit to AOC? Will they not be overwhelmed with these requests? Am I at risk to not get these on time because of this situation?”*

**Answer:** Yes, coordinators and staff interpreters can provide recommendation letters however, they are not required to and it is left at their discretion. Judges are also a good source for recommendations.

26. *“Is the letter of transmittal mentioned (Question 10) in your RFP Questions and Answers PDF the same thing as the Letter Proposal or is the letter of transmittal something different?”*

**Answer:** A letter of transmittal is a short cover letter that accompanies a more complex document to explain its purpose. In this case, the letter of transmittal will be in addition to the proposal.

27. *“Section G, number 3b states that interpreter will complete a background check conducted by the AOC.”*

**Answer:** If we have a waiver authorization form from you on file, we will run the background check and no action is required from you.

28. *“I’ve changed my married name to my maiden name. I will be submitting the court order reflecting this along with a new picture and a cashier’s check for a new badge. Will this suffice?”*

**Answer:** Yes.

29. *“I understand that I need to submit a bid in the event that I anticipate earning over \$60,000 through work received by the AOC of New Mexico, is that correct?”*

**Answer:** Yes. An RFP is required for all contracts exceeding \$60,000.00 (sixty thousand dollars). Contracts issued *without* a response to this RFP will be under \$60,000.00 (sixty thousand dollars) and will not be amended to increase the contract amount in FY24.

30. *“What shall I do? How should I submit a bid or report in order to reflect my doubts and uncertainties?”*

**Answer:** An RFP is required for all contracts exceeding \$60,000.00 (sixty thousand dollars). Contracts issued *without* a response to this RFP will be under \$60,000.00 (sixty thousand dollars) and will not be amended to increase the contract amount in FY24.

31. *“Emailed my proposal Tuesday but I failed to email the sample contract and the background check and fingerprint waiver authorization. Can I just email those documents or do I need to email the whole thing again?”*

**Answer:** Kindly resubmit the entire proposal with the missing documents.