

# STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA/BUNCOMBE COUNTY SCHOOLS REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

RFP #40-12

**PROJECT:** PERSONNEL BACKGROUND CHECKS: SYSTEMWIDE

**PROJECT DESIGNER:** Cindy Shores, Personnel Department

**USING AGENCY:** Buncombe County Schools

**ISSUE DATE:** October 23, 2012

Sealed proposals subject to the conditions made a part hereof will be received until **4:00 p.m., Wednesday, November 14, 2012** for furnishing all labor, materials, equipment, and services incidental and implied, for completion of the project described herein.

SEND ALL PROPOSALS DIRECTLY TO THE ADDRESSES AS SHOWN BELOW:

**Buncombe County Schools, Purchasing Division**

175 Bingham Road  
Asheville, NC 28806

NOTE: Indicate firm name and RFP number on the front of each sealed proposal envelope or package, along with the date for receipt of proposals specified above.

Direct inquiries concerning this RFP to:

Bidding and document questions: Ron Venturella, Purchasing Officer

Phone: 828-255-5891

Specification/technical questions: Cindy Shores, Personnel

Phone: 828-255-5893

## THE PROCUREMENT PROCESS

The following is a general description of the process by which a firm will be selected to provide services.

1. Request for Proposals (RFP) is issued to prospective contractors.
2. A preproposal conference and/or deadline for written questions is five days prior to due date.
3. Proposals in one original will be received from each offeror in a sealed envelope or package. Each original shall be signed and dated by an official authorized to bind the firm. Unsigned proposals will not be considered.
4. All proposals must be received by the issuing agency not later than the date and time specified on the cover sheet of this RFP.
5. At that date and time the proposals from each responding firm will be opened. Interested parties are cautioned that these costs and their components are subject to further evaluation for completeness and correctness and therefore may not be an exact indicator of an offeror's pricing position. Informal proposals (less than \$ 300,000) are confidential until such time that award has been made. Thereafter, the purchasing division will furnish bid tabs upon request.
6. At their option, the evaluators may request oral presentations or discussion with any or all offerors for the purpose of clarification or to amplify the materials presented in any part of the proposal. However, offerors are cautioned that the evaluators are not required to request clarification; therefore, all proposals should be complete and reflect the most favorable terms available from the offeror.
7. Proposals will be evaluated according to completeness, content, experience with similar projects, ability of the offeror and its staff, and cost. Award of a contract to one offeror does not mean that the other proposals lacked merit, but that, all factors considered, the selected proposal was deemed most advantageous to the State.
8. Offerors are cautioned that this is a request for offers, not a request to contract, and the State/Buncombe County Schools reserves the unqualified right to reject any and all offers when such rejection is deemed to be in the best interest of the State.

**PROPOSAL FORM**

**PERSONNEL BACKGROUND CHECKS: SYSTEMWIDE  
RFP#40-12 DUE DATE: 11-14-12**

By submitting this proposal, the potential contractor certifies the following:

- \*\* This proposal is signed by an authorized representative of the firm.
  
- \*\* It can obtain and submit to the Owner insurance certificates as required within 5 calendar days after notice of award.
  
- \*\* The cost and availability of all equipment, materials, and supplies associated with performing the services described herein have been determined and included in the proposed cost.
  
- \*\* All labor costs, direct and indirect, have been determined and included in the proposed cost.
  
- \*\* All taxes have been determined and included in the proposed cost.
  
- \*\* The offeror has attended the conference (*if applicable*) or conducted a site visit and is aware of prevailing conditions associated with performing these services.
  
- \*\* The potential contractor has read and understands the conditions set forth in this RFP and agrees to them with no exceptions.

Therefore, in compliance with this Request for Proposals, and subject to all conditions herein, the undersigned offers and agrees, if this proposal is accepted within 30 days (normally less) from the date of the opening, to furnish the subject services for the following costs:

North Carolina Statewide Checks	\$	per person
Other statewide checks (provide detailed list)	\$	per person
North Carolina county checks	\$	per person
Outside North Carolina county checks	\$	per person
Maiden name/alias checks (provide detailed list)	\$	per person
Rush checks for North Carolina	\$	per person
Rush checks for other state/county checks	\$	per person
Social Security traces	\$	per person

OFFEROR: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY, STATE, ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_ FAX: \_\_\_\_\_

FED ID No: \_\_\_\_\_ Type & License #: \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_ MBE Status: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal Place of Business if different from above (See General Information on Submitting Proposals, Item 18.):  
\_\_\_\_\_

BY: (Signature) \_\_\_\_\_ TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

## GENERAL INFORMATION ON SUBMITTING PROPOSALS

1. **EXCEPTIONS:** All proposals are subject to the terms and conditions outlined herein. All responses shall be controlled by such terms and conditions and the submission of other terms and conditions, price lists, catalogs, and/or other documents as part of an offeror's response will be waived and have no effect either on this Request for Proposals or on any contract that may be awarded resulting from this solicitation. Offeror specifically agrees to the conditions set forth in the above paragraph by signature to the proposal.
2. **CERTIFICATION:** By executing the proposal, the signer certifies that this proposal is submitted competitively and without collusion (G.S. 143-54), that none of our officers, directors, or owners of an unincorporated business entity has been convicted of any violations of Chapter 78A of the General Statutes, the Securities Act of 1933, or the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (G.S. 143-59.2), and that we are not an ineligible vendor as set forth in G.S. 143-59.1. False certification is a Class I felony.
3. **ORAL EXPLANATIONS:** The State/Buncombe County Schools shall not be bound by oral explanations or instructions given at any time during the competitive process or after award.
4. **REFERENCE TO OTHER DATA:** Only information which is received in response to this RFP will be evaluated; reference to information previously submitted shall not be evaluated.
5. **ELABORATE PROPOSALS:** Elaborate proposals in the form of brochures or other presentations beyond that necessary to present a complete and effective proposal are not desired.

In an effort to support the sustainability efforts of the State of North Carolina we solicit your cooperation in this effort. **It is desirable that all responses meet the following requirements:**

- All copies are printed **double sided**.
  - All submittals and copies are printed on **recycled paper with a minimum post-consumer content of 30%** and indicate this information accordingly on the response.
  - Unless absolutely necessary, all proposals and copies should **minimize or eliminate use of non-recyclable or non re-usable materials** such as plastic report covers, plastic dividers, vinyl sleeves, and GBC binding. Three-ringed binders, glued materials, paper clips, and staples are acceptable.
  - Materials should be submitted in a format which allows for **easy removal and recycling** of paper materials.
6. **COST FOR PROPOSAL PREPARATION:** Any costs incurred by offerors in preparing or submitting offers are the offerors' sole responsibility; the State of North Carolina/Buncombe County Schools will not reimburse any offeror for any costs incurred.
  7. **TIME FOR ACCEPTANCE:** Each proposal shall state that it is a firm offer which may be accepted within a period of 45 days. Although the contract is expected to be awarded prior to that time, the 45 day period is requested to allow for unforeseen delays.
  8. **TITLES:** Titles and headings in this RFP and any subsequent contract are for convenience only and shall have no binding force or effect.
  9. **CONFIDENTIALITY OF PROPOSALS:** In submitting its proposal the offeror agrees not to discuss or otherwise reveal the contents of the proposal to any source outside of the using or issuing agency, government or private, until after the award of the contract. Offerors not in compliance with this provision may be disqualified, at the option of the State/Buncombe County Schools, from contract award. Only discussions authorized by the issuing agency are exempt from this provision.
  10. **RIGHT TO SUBMITTED MATERIAL:** All responses, inquiries, or correspondence relating to or in reference to the RFP, and all other reports, charts, displays, schedules, exhibits, and other documentation submitted by the offerors shall become the property of the State/Buncombe County Schools when received.
  11. **OFFEROR'S REPRESENTATIVE:** Each offeror shall submit with its proposal the name, address, and telephone number of the person(s) with authority to bind the firm and answer questions or provide clarification concerning the firm's proposal.
  12. **SUBCONTRACTING:** Offerors may propose to subcontract portions of the work provided that their proposals clearly indicate what work they plan to subcontract and to whom and that all information required about the prime contractor is also included for each proposed subcontractor.

13. **PROPRIETARY INFORMATION:** Trade secrets or similar proprietary data which the offeror does not wish disclosed to other than personnel involved in the evaluation or contract administration will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by NCAC T01:05B.1501 and G.S. 132-1.3 if identified as follows: Each page shall be identified in boldface at the top and bottom as "CONFIDENTIAL". Any section of the proposal which is to remain confidential shall also be so marked in boldface on the title page of that section. Cost information may not be deemed confidential. In spite of what is labeled as confidential, the determination as to whether or not it is shall be determined by North Carolina law.
14. **HISTORICALLY UNDERUTILIZED BUSINESSES:** Pursuant to General Statute 143-48 and Executive Order #150, Buncombe County Schools invites and encourages participation in this procurement process by businesses owned by minorities, women, disabled, disabled business enterprises and non-profit work centers for the blind and severely disabled.
- The Contractor agrees in particular to maintain open hiring and employment practices and to receive applications for employment in compliance with all requirements of applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations issued pursuant thereto relating to nondiscriminatory hiring and employment practices. Each Prime Contractor shall undertake an affirmative action program to ensure that no person shall be excluded from participation in any employment activities because of age, sex, race, religion, color, national origin or handicap.
15. **PROTEST PROCEDURES:** If an offeror wants to protest a contract awarded pursuant to this solicitation, they must submit a written request to the Purchasing Officer, Buncombe County Schools, 175 Bingham Road, or PO Box 16771, Asheville, NC 28806. This request must be received by the Purchasing Division within thirty (30) consecutive calendar days from the date of the contract award, and must contain specific sound reasons and any supporting documentation for the protest. NOTE: Contract award notices are sent only to those actually awarded contracts, and not to every person or firm responding to this solicitation. Contract status and award notices are available through the purchasing division or the project designer with contact information as shown on the first page of this solicitation. Offeror's may call to obtain a verbal status of contract award. All protests will be handled pursuant to the North Carolina Administrative Code, Title 1, Department of Administration, Chapter 5, Purchase and Contract, Section 5B.1519.
16. **TABULATIONS:** Offeror's may call the purchasing division to obtain a verbal status of contract award.
17. **VENDOR REGISTRATION AND SOLICITATION NOTIFICATION SYSTEM:** Vendor Link NC allows vendors to electronically register free with the State to receive electronic notification of current procurement opportunities for goods and services available on the Interactive Purchasing System. Online registration and other purchasing information are available on the Internet web site: <http://www.state.nc.us/pandc/>.
18. **RECIPROCAL PREFERENCE:** G.S. 143-59 establishes a reciprocal preference law to discourage other states from applying in-state preferences against North Carolina's resident offerors. The "Principal Place of Business" is defined as the principal place from which the trade or business of the offeror is directed or managed.

#### **NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL CONTRACT TERMS AND CONDITIONS (Contractual and Consultant Services)**

1. **GOVERNING LAW:** This contract is made under and shall be governed and construed in accordance with the laws of the State of North Carolina.
2. **SITUS:** The place of this contract, its situs and forum, shall be North Carolina, where all matters, whether sounding in contract or tort, relating to its validity, construction, interpretation and enforcement shall be determined
3. **INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR:** The Contractor shall be considered to be an independent contractor and as such shall be wholly responsible for the work to be performed and for the supervision of its employees. The Contractor represents that it has, or will secure at its own expense, all personnel required in performing the services under this agreement. Such employees shall not be employees of, or have any individual contractual relationship with the Agency.
4. **KEY PERSONNEL:** The Contractor shall not substitute key personnel assigned to the performance of this contract without prior written approval by the Agency's Contract Administrator. The individuals designated as key personnel for purposes of this contract are those specified in the Contractor's proposal.

5. **SUBCONTRACTING:** Work proposed to be performed under this contract by the Contractor or its employees shall not be subcontracted without prior written approval of the Agency's Contract Administrator/Project Designer. Acceptance of an offeror's proposal shall include any subcontractor(s) specified therein.
6. **PERFORMANCE AND DEFAULT:** If, through any cause, the Contractor shall fail to fulfill in timely and proper manner the obligations under this agreement, the Agency shall thereupon have the right to terminate this contract by giving written notice to the Contractor and specifying the effective date thereof. In that event, all finished or unfinished deliverable items under this contract prepared by the Contractor shall, at the option of the Agency, become its property, and the Contractor shall be entitled to receive just and equitable compensation for any satisfactory work completed on such materials. Notwithstanding, the Contractor shall not be relieved of liability to the Agency for damages sustained by the Agency by virtue of any breach of this agreement, and the Agency may withhold any payment due the Contractor for the purpose of setoff until such time as the exact amount of damages due the Agency from such breach can be determined.
- In case of default by the Contractor, the State may procure the services from other sources and hold the Contractor responsible for any excess cost occasioned thereby. The State reserves the right to require performance bond or other acceptable alternative guarantees from successful offeror without expense to the State.

Upon the entering of a judgment of bankruptcy of insolvency by or against the Contractor, the Agency may terminate this contract for cause.

Neither party shall be deemed to be in default of its obligations hereunder if and so long as it is prevented from performing such obligations by any act of war, hostile foreign action, nuclear explosion, riot, strikes, civil insurrection, earthquake, hurricane, tornado, or other catastrophic natural event or act of God.

7. **TERMINATION:** The Agency may terminate this agreement at any time by *15 days* notice in writing from the Agency to the Contractor. In that event, all finished or unfinished deliverable items prepared by the Contractor under this contract shall, at the option of the Agency, become its property. If the contract is terminated by the Agency as provided herein, the Contractor shall be paid for services satisfactorily completed, less payment or compensation previously made.
8. **AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS:** Any and all payments to the Contractor are dependent upon and subject to the availability of funds to the Agency for the purpose set forth in this agreement.
9. **CONFIDENTIALITY:** Any information, data, instruments, documents, studies or reports given to or prepared or assembled by the Contractor under this agreement shall be kept as confidential and not divulged or made available to any individual or organization without the prior written approval of the Agency.
10. **CARE OF PROPERTY:** The Contractor agrees that it shall be responsible for the proper custody and care of any property furnished it for use in connection with the performance of this contract or purchased by it for this contract and will reimburse the State for loss of damage of such property.
11. **COPYRIGHT:** No deliverable items produced in whole or in part under this agreement shall be the subject of an application for copyright by or on behalf of the Contractor.
12. **ACCESS TO PERSONS AND RECORDS:** The State Auditor shall have access to persons and records as a result of all contracts or grants entered into by State agencies or political subdivisions in accordance with General Statute 147-64.7.
- The Contractor shall retain all records for a period of three years following completion of the contract.
13. **ASSIGNMENT:** No assignment of the Contractor's obligations nor the Contractor's right to receive payment hereunder shall be permitted. However, upon written request approved by the issuing purchasing authority, the State may:
- a. Forward the contractor's payment check(s) directly to any person or entity designated by the Contractor, or
  - b. Include any person or entity designated by Contractor as a joint payee on the Contractor's payment check(s).
- In no event shall such approval and action obligate the State to anyone other than the Contractor and the Contractor shall remain responsible for fulfillment of all contract obligations.
14. **COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS:** The Contractor shall comply with all laws, ordinances, codes, rules, regulations, and licensing requirements (permits) that are applicable to the conduct of its business, including those of federal, state, and local agencies having jurisdiction and/or authority.

15. **AFFIRMATIVE ACTION:** The Contractor shall take affirmative action in complying with all Federal and State requirements concerning fair employment and employment of people with disabilities, and concerning the treatment of all employees without regard to discrimination by reason of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, or disability.
16. **INSURANCE:** During the term of the contract, the contractor at its sole cost and expense shall provide commercial insurance of such type and with such terms and limits as may be reasonably associated with the contract. As a minimum, the contractor shall provide and maintain the following coverage and limits:
- a. Worker's Compensation - The contractor shall provide and maintain Worker's Compensation Insurance, as required by the laws of North Carolina, as well as employer's liability coverage with minimum limits of \$150,000.00, covering all of Contractor's employees who are engaged in any work under the contract. If any work is subcontracted, the contractor shall require the subcontractor to provide the same coverage for any of its employees engaged in any work under the contract.
  - b. Commercial General Liability - General Liability Coverage on a Comprehensive Broad Form on an occurrence basis in the minimum amount of \$2,000,000.00 Combined Single Limit. (Defense cost shall be in excess of the limit of liability).
  - c. Automobile - Automobile Liability Insurance, to include liability coverage, covering all owned, hired and non-owned vehicles, used in connection with the contract. The minimum combined single limit shall be \$500,000.00 bodily injury and property damage; \$500,000.00 uninsured/under insured motorist; and \$100,000.00 medical payment.

Providing and maintaining adequate insurance coverage is a material obligation of the contractor and is of the essence of this contract. All such insurance shall meet all laws of the State of North Carolina. Such insurance coverage shall be obtained from companies that are authorized to provide such coverage and that are authorized by the Commissioner of Insurance to do business in North Carolina. The contractor shall at all times comply with the terms of such insurance policies, and all requirements of the insurer under any such insurance policies, except as they may conflict with existing North Carolina laws or this contract. The limits of coverage under each insurance policy maintained by the contractor shall not be interpreted as limiting the contractor's liability and obligations under the contract.

The Contractor shall furnish a Certificate of Insurance as proof of the above coverages. Certificate will contain provision that the insurance coverages cannot be canceled, reduced in amount or coverage eliminated without 30 days written notice to the Buncombe County Board of Education. Owner's Protective insurance must list the Buncombe County Board of Education as a "Named Insured" as it's interest may appear. Owner's approval of Certificate of Insurance does not decrease or relieve the contractor's responsibility for maintaining insurance coverage as required in this Request for Proposal.

17. **ADVERTISING:** Contractor agrees not to use the existence of this contract, the name of the agency, or the name of the State of North Carolina as part of any commercial advertising.
18. **ENTIRE AGREEMENT:** This contract and any documents incorporated specifically by reference represent the entire agreement between the parties and supersede all prior oral or written statements or agreements. This Request for Proposals, any addenda thereto, and the offeror's proposal are incorporated herein by reference as though set forth verbatim.
- All promises, requirements, terms, conditions, provisions, representations, guarantees, and warranties contained herein shall survive the contract expiration or termination date unless specifically provided otherwise herein, or unless superseded by applicable Federal or State statutes of limitation.
19. **AMENDMENTS:** This contract may be amended only by written amendments duly executed by the Agency and the Contractor.
20. **TAXES:** G.S. 143-59.1 bars the Secretary of Administration from entering into contracts with vendors if the vendor or its affiliates meet one of the conditions of G. S. 105-164.8(b) and refuse to collect use tax on sales of tangible personal property to purchasers in North Carolina. Conditions under G. S. 105-164.8(b) include: (1) Maintenance of a retail establishment or office, (2) Presence of representatives in the State that solicit sales or transact business on behalf of the vendor and (3) Systematic exploitation of the market by media-assisted, media-facilitated, or media-solicited means. By execution of the bid document the vendor certifies that it and all of its affiliates, (if it has affiliates), collect(s) the appropriate taxes.

21. **YEAR 2000 COMPLIANCE/WARRANTY:** Vendor shall ensure the product(s) and service(s) furnished pursuant to this agreement ("product" shall include, without limitation, any piece of equipment, hardware, firmware, middleware, custom or commercial software, or internal components, subroutines, and interfaces therein) which perform any date and/or time data recognition function, calculation, or sequencing, will support a four digit year format, and will provide accurate date/time data and leap year calculations on and after December 31, 1999, at the same level of functionality for which originally acquired without additional cost to the user. This warranty shall survive termination or expiration of the agreement.
22. **GENERAL INDEMNITY:** The contractor shall hold and save the State/Buncombe County Schools, its officers, agents, and employees, harmless from liability of any kind, including all claims and losses, with the exception of consequential damages, accruing or resulting to any other person, firm, or corporation furnishing or supplying work, services, materials, or supplies in connection with the performance of this contract, and from any and all claims and losses accruing or resulting to any person, firm, or corporation that may be injured or damaged by the contractor in the performance of this contract and that are attributable to the negligence or intentionally tortious acts of the contractor provided that the contractor is notified in writing within 30 days that the State/Buncombe County Schools has knowledge of such claims. The contractor represents and warrants that it shall make no claim of any kind or nature against the State's agents who are involved in the delivery or processing of contractor goods to the State. The representation and warranty in the preceding sentence shall survive the termination or expiration of this contract.

## BACKGROUND CHECKS: SYSTEMWIDE

Please read entire specification package. You will be held accountable for all information. NO payment shall be made if specifications are not followed.

### GENERAL

Work shall consist of furnishing all labor, materials, equipment and services, incidental and implied, for the completion of work as described herein. All items not specifically mentioned in the specifications, but which obviously are required to make the job complete, shall be included automatically.

Questions that are technical in nature shall be directed to Cindy Shores, Personnel, at 828-255-5893.

### INTRODUCTION

In July, 2000, Buncombe County Schools began processing background checks on all new employees. The school system currently has over 4000 employees. In the past year, approximately 1,700 background checks were completed. This count reflects the names checks, and most names had multiple states and/or maiden/alias names checks. As a school system, we expect the utmost confidentiality and accurate and timely service.

### SCOPE OF WORK

- Same or next day returns on North Carolina checks
- Six business days (maximum) on multiple state checks
- Notification of check completion
- Statewide checks, where available
- In states that do not provide statewide checks, county checks must be an option
- Social security traces
- National Sex Offender Registry check
- Periodic and/or random background checks for current employees
- Discount for maiden/alias names
- Internet access throughout process (entering data, checking results, retrieving results)
- Thirty day billing cycle
- Detailed summary (all checks with names) on invoice
- Possibility of background checks for volunteers (approx. 600 per year).

Contract year will be effective from January 1, 2013 (or later) – December 31, 2013 at which time both parties will have the option to renew or discontinue contract for two (2) year (s).

### PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

The response to this RFP shall consist of the following sections:

- Corporate Background and Experience
- Project Staffing and Organization
- Technical Approach
- Cost Proposal

#### 1. Corporate Background and Experience

This section shall include background information on the organization and shall give details of experience with similar projects. A list of references (including contact persons and telephone numbers) for whom similar work has been performed shall be included.



## 2. Project Organization

This section must include the proposed staffing, deployment, and organization of personnel to be assigned to this project.

## 3. Technical Approach

This section shall include, in narrative, outline, and/or graph form, the offeror's approach to accomplishing the tasks outlined in the Scope of Work section of this RFP. A description of each task and the schedule for accomplishing each shall be included.

- Include information you will require to complete background checks (e.g., waivers, fingerprints, etc.)
- Include explanation of information returned on persons with court records
- Include explanation of timelines for search, i.e., how far back are your searches
- Include fee schedule and turnaround time for each state and county

## 4. Cost Proposal

The Cost Proposal shall be submitted in a separate, sealed package. Please use the proposal form on page 2.

By submitting this proposal, the potential contractor certifies the following:

This proposal is signed by an authorized representative of the firm.

It can obtain insurance certificates as required within 10 calendar days after notice of award, if requested.

The cost and availability of all equipment, materials, and supplies associated with performing the services described herein have been determined and included in the proposed cost.

All labor costs, direct and indirect, have been determined and included in the proposed cost.

The offeror can and will provide the specified performance bond or alternate performance guarantee (if applicable).

The potential contractor has read and understands the conditions set forth in this RFP and agrees to them with no exceptions.

***The Buncombe County Board of Education reserves the right to reject any or all bids for any or no reason, and to waive informalities.***