

TOWN OF VERNON
HOUSING AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

LEGAL SERVICES

SEPTEMBER 28, 2015



Housing Authority of the
Town of Vernon
Jeffrey Arn, Executive Director
21 Court Street – Vernon, CT 06066

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LEGAL SERVICES**

VERNON HOUSING AUTHORITY

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LEGAL NOTICE
VERNON HOUSING AUTHORITY
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
Legal Services

The Housing Authority of the Town of Vernon (VHA) is requesting competitive proposals from qualified, licensed and reputable entities to provide legal services to the Authority on various matters related to the general business of the Authority and to the management of its different programs.

Interested parties must demonstrate a minimum of 10 years of experience as a housing authority legal counsel in the State of Connecticut and exhibit a broad range of representation in affordable housing related issues.

Request for Proposal (RFP) documents are available in the Administrative Office of the Vernon Housing Authority, 21 Court Street, Vernon, CT 06066. Office hours are Monday – Friday, 8:30 AM – 4:00 PM or by contacting Susan Plefka at (860) 871-0886 ext. 110. The RFP is also available on the VHA website at www.vernonhousing.org and can be faxed or emailed upon request.

Sealed proposals can be mailed or delivered, in accordance to the instructions contained in the RFP, to the Vernon Housing Authority, 21 Court Street, Vernon, CT 06066, Attention: Jeffrey Arn, Executive Director, by no later than 3:00 PM. EDST on Thursday, October 29, 2015.

A public bid opening will take place immediately after the deadline at the Administrative Office. VHA reserves the right to award in part, to reject any and all proposals in whole or in part, or to waive any technical defects, irregularities and omissions if, in its judgment, the best interests of the housing authority will be served.

VHA IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER.

VERNON HOUSING AUTHORITY AGENCY PROFILE

Mission Statement: It is the mission of the Vernon Housing Authority to build better neighborhoods by providing comprehensive housing opportunities for qualified families through creative and professional service or partnership with the greater community. In addition, the Housing Authority will continue to provide sanitary and affordable housing for qualified, low income individuals and families.

The Vernon Housing Authority is a municipal housing authority organized under the laws of Chapter 128 of the Connecticut General Statutes. VHA has been serving the needs of the Vernon-Rockville community in Connecticut for over 50 years, is governed by its five-member Board of Commissioners, and managed by an Executive Director. The primary function of the housing authority is to administer various Federal and State housing programs, and to provide decent, safe and sanitary public housing for the benefit of low income families, elderly and disabled individuals. For many years, VHA has been designated as a “High Performer” by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

VHA owns and/or operates a variety of public housing developments and programs consisting of the following:

- 290 Federal Section 8 Vouchers, including port-ins
- 650 Federal Section 8 Vouchers through the CT Department of Housing (DOH)
- 412 Rental Assistance Program (RAP) certificates through DOH
- 216 Federal Public Housing elderly/disabled units
- 9 Federal family units
- 54 State elderly/disabled units
- 43 State Congregate units for “frail elderly”

SCOPE OF SERVICES

The scope of services for which VHA is soliciting proposals is generally to provide comprehensive legal services as Legal Counsel to the Vernon Housing Authority. The scope of services shall include, but is not limited to the following:

1. To act as Attorney for the authority in all matters for which the authority may request legal counsel.
2. To represent the authority in all general litigation matters, both as plaintiff’s counsel and defendant’s counsel.
3. To represent the authority in all personnel and labor relations matters, including but not limited to employment contract matters and employee discipline matters.

4. Be available to attend regular and special meetings of VHA, if requested by the Executive Director or the Board of Commissioners, where legal advice is likely to be needed.
5. To be available for consultation, upon reasonable notice, with the Executive Director, Staff, and the Commissioners.
6. To inform the Executive Director, Staff, and the Commissioners, on a continuing basis, of their rights and duties regarding current statutes and court decisions.
7. To inform the Executive Director, Staff, and the Commissioners, on a continuing basis, of their rights and duties regarding rules and regulations by the CT Department of Housing (DOH), CT Housing Finance Authority (CHFA), and US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).
8. To review contracts and bidding documents requisite to the construction or rehabilitation of new or existing housing developments.
9. To review the legality of all contracts to which the Authority is a party, and advise the Authority on request regarding disputes arising under such contracts.
10. To prepare legal and other documents required in the course of Authority business.
11. To represent and advise members of the Authority Board of Commissioners; and Authority staff, acting in their official capacity.
12. To attend conferences and/or hearings regarding Authority business with DOH, CHFA and HUD, or its representatives upon invitation, or with other private or public agencies.
13. To maintain liaison with recognized tenant groups or their legal representatives or agents when directed to do so by the Authority.
14. To give advice regarding, and represent the Authority in actions by or against the Authority before a Court, DOH, CHFA, HUD and other agencies.
15. To give advice regarding, and represent the Authority in actions by or against the Authority before CT Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CCHRO).
16. Represent the Authority in summary process actions for non-payment of rent.
17. Represent the Authority in summary process actions for nuisance.
18. Assist in the enforcement of Authority's leases, rules and regulations, if any, with letters, calls, or other appropriate action at the request of the VHA.
19. Perform legal services in connection with land acquisition for new developments or project improvements, including title searches and preparing deeds, securing exceptions and/or variances from zoning and building ordinances, applying for zoning alternatives, and carrying out eminent domain proceedings where necessary.
20. To assist in the establishment of and to provide Legal Services for non-profit corporations at the request of the Executive Director.
21. To render other legal services normally required in the conduct of Authority business.

Cost of Services

Proposals must indicate the cost of professional services on an hourly basis and also indicate any cost differential between partner time, associate time, and paralegal time. Also indicate hourly cost differential for general litigation/legal services, appellate work, summary process litigation, etc. Also provide any flat costs for certain legal services (e.g. Notice to Quit, Writ, Summons and Complaint, courier services, etc.)

Submission Requirements

Submission Contents:

1. One (1) original and five (5) copies of the proposal must be submitted in a sealed envelope and labeled ***Sealed Proposal – RFP – Legal Services***.
2. Cover Sheet: List the name of the consultant(s) with names and phone numbers of persons who may be contacted to answer questions.
3. Statement of Qualifications: Interested parties must demonstrate the minimum qualifications set forth in the Legal Notice. The information shall include a professional resume(s) stating qualifications to provide the services described herein. Include the number of years in business, number of employees/professional associates, location of office of offices, names of principals or employees who will provide the services, and type of entity (corporation, partnership, etc.) Proposer must provide self-certification of license to practice law in the State of Connecticut and the Connecticut court system.
4. Statement of Experience: The information shall include a description of the proposer's understanding and experience in the area of public housing representation and related topics set forth in the Scope of Services. Submit written samples that include, but are not limited to the to the following: (1) legal services and general counsel to Connecticut Public Housing Authorities and/or other entities, including a list of clients and the role you fulfilled for each; (2) representation in dealing with DOH, CHFA and HUD and their respective laws, rules and regulations; (3) representation in State of Connecticut residential eviction proceedings and related issues.
5. State of Good Standing: Include certification that the proposer is not currently under professional investigation and has not been disbarred, suspended or otherwise prohibited from professional practice by any federal, state or municipal procurement or non-procurement program.
6. Client References: Provide a minimum of three (3) professional references of customers, clients or owners for whom you have delivered similar consulting/contracting services. Please provide addresses, phone numbers and individual contacts for each reference.

7. Fees and Costs: provide a schedule of fees and costs described in the Cost of Services. Fees should be fixed, where possible. Cost plus a percentage of cost is not allowed. Indicate how and when those costs will be billed to VHA.
8. Include a completed non-collusive affidavit and HUD-5369-A Representations, Certifications, and Other Statements of Bidders

Manner of Submission and Deadline:

Proposals can be hand-delivered, mailed or delivered via courier service, and must be received and date stamped by no later than 3:00 PM EDST on Thursday, October 29, 2015, at the Vernon Housing Authority Administrative Office, Attention: Jeffrey Arn, Executive Director, 21 Court Street, Vernon, CT 06066. Email and facsimile submissions are not accepted. Proposals received after the stated deadline will not be considered.

Evaluation and Selection Criteria

After a preliminary review of the proposals, the Authority may request any or all interested parties to make oral presentations. These will be scheduled by the Authority on an individual basis.

The lowest responsible bidder will be selected on the basis of greatest benefit to the Authority, not necessarily on the basis of lowest cost proposal submitted.

VHA will consider all responsive proposals and evaluate the same. The following are factors for award to be used in the evaluation of proposals:

1. Proposer's professional qualifications, education, and training experience in areas specified in the Scope of Services.
2. Proposer's demonstrated experience in areas specified in the Scope of Services, including appearances in Federal, State and municipal courts.
3. Proposer's demonstrated capacity to provide services and accomplish tasks in a timely manner in compliance with schedules.
4. Proposer's Fees and Costs Schedule.
5. Professional Liability Insurance.

General Conditions

Questions regarding this RFP should be directed to Jeffrey Arn, Executive Director, by Email (jeffa@vernonhousing.org), Fax (860-875-9811) or in writing to the Vernon Housing Authority, 21 Court Street, Vernon, CT 06066.

No proposal shall be withdrawn for a period of sixty (60) days after the due date without the written consent of the VHA Executive Director.

VHA reserves the right to make its final decision based solely on the proposals and/or to negotiate further with one or more firm/party.

VHA reserves the right to award in part, to reject any and all proposals in whole or in part, or to waive any technical defects, irregularities and omissions if, in its judgment, the best interests of the housing authority will be served.

VHA reserves the right to not award a contract pursuant to this RFP.

VHA reserves the right to terminate any contract awarded pursuant to this RFP, at any time for its convenience upon fifteen (15) days written notice to the successful proposer(s).

VHA shall have no obligation to compensate any proposer for any costs incurred in responding to this RFP.

Any person or agency subject to the HUD Debarment or US Attorney General's list of ineligible contractors will be not be considered.

Any solicitation or lobbying to any Authority staff or Board of Commissioners concerning the outcome of this proposal is strictly prohibited and is grounds for disqualification from the proposal process.

The proposer awarded a contract is required to comply with all State and Federal requirements related to the contract, including the execution of all required State and Federal contract forms, documentation of adequate general liability, worker's compensation and any other required insurance with the Authority listed as an individual insured. Proposer will also be required to comply with the Privacy Act of 1974 and all the rules and regulations issued under the Act that are applicable to the contract.

VHA, at its sole discretion, may award this contract for a term of one year, or more than one year, but not longer than five years. In the event a term of longer than one year is awarded, the contract shall be approved based on agreed upon pricing for either the entire term or the renewal shall be based upon agreed pricing for each renewal term. If pricing cannot be agreed upon, the contract becomes null and void.

Submissions shall be considered public information unless advised otherwise by the proposer. The proposer shall include a separate letter stating which parts of the submission are deemed confidential and/or proprietary information not to be released.

The proposer's submission will become part of any contract awarded.

Copies of this Request for Proposal may be obtained at:

**Vernon Housing Authority
Administrative Office
21 Court Street
Vernon, CT 06066
www.vernonhousing.org**

**Request for copies by fax or email can be directed to Ms. Susan Plefka,
(860) 871-0886 Ext. 110**