



**DATE:** May 30, 2024  
**SUBJECT:** Letter of Clarification  
**RE:** Security Services RFP  
**TO:** All Prospective Proposers

Houston First Corporation (“HFC”) issues this Letter of Clarification regarding the referenced Security Services Request for Proposals to make the following clarifications and answer questions timely received in the manner set forth below:

### CLARIFICATIONS

**Pricing Form.** To assist all Proposers in providing their best pricing for security services in a clear and more readily-comparable manner, HFC has prepared a Pricing Form that is available online at <https://www.houstonfirst.com/do-business>. Proposers are directed and required to submit their pricing by completing the form.

**Due Date Extension.** Due to the high-volume of questions received, HFC has elected to extend the due date for submission of proposals for security services. Accordingly, the relevant provision of the RFP is hereby amended and restated as follows:

**2:00 P.M. on June 10, 2024** (“Submission Deadline”)

### QUESTIONS

**Question 1:** What is the average number of days required for an officer to complete shadow training prior to working?

Answer: This is post-dependent; the garages usually take two days, and the operations center can take up to a week, depending on prior experience. Proposers may also wish to review Section 2.12 of the Security Services Agreement, as a substantially-similar provision was included in the expiring service contract.

**Question 2:** What is the expectation for number of days paid time off/holidays/vacations?

Answer: Conditions of employment and related policies must be determined by the employer.

**Question 3:** Can you confirm the total number of golf carts is to be established at ten?

Answer: Ten golf carts are used for rovers and garage positions. Proposers may wish to maintain more for managers, and perhaps a few additional golf carts as back up.

**Question 4:** Are all of the golf carts electric?

Answer: Most all are electric; HFC understands that the current contractor uses several gas-powered utility terrain vehicles.

**Question 5:** Are any other types of vehicles required to provide the services?

Answer: No, although HFC understand that the current contractor provides a vehicle for its Assistant Project Manager for the parking garages.

**Question 6:** What is the current number of cell phones deployed at posts?

Answer: Approximately 30.

**Question 7:** What is the current technology utilized for reporting and rounds checkpoints?

Answer: TrakTik is used currently.

**Question 8:** Is parking provided for the officers or does the vendor need to purchase parking?

Answer: Parking is provided for Contractor staff, subject to availability, in designated areas near the convention center, as well as the theater district.

**Question 9:** Who is the current contractor?

Answer: Andy Frain Services.

**Question 10:** Is a copy of the expiring contract available?

Answer: The Security Services Agreement provided in the RFP is substantially similar to the terms of the expiring agreement. The prior RFP, including the old agreement, is available online at <https://www.houstonfirst.com/do-business>.

**Question 11:** What does “current” references mean, and can the City of Houston be used as a referenced for past performance?

Answer: References should be provided in connection with existing, active contracts for comparable security services. No one with the City of Houston or HFC should be offered as a professional reference.

**Question 12:** What would you like to change regarding communication methods for security?

Answer: Assuming minimum requirements provided in the Security Services Agreement are met, HFC is open to Proposer suggestions for alternative or improved communication methods.

**Question 13:** How many laptops are needed?

Answer: Approximately nine in total. One laptop per manager will be required; Supervisors can share.

**Question 14:** Should Value-Added Services, such as mobile surveillance units, be presented as a spreadsheet or in an addendum?

Answer: HFC would prefer that Value-Added Services be detailed in writing.

**Question 15:** What is the current security spend/rates for the contract?

Answer: Costs to HFC are based on hours worked, which fluctuate based on events and activities in the facilities, and seasonally. HFC expects all Proposers to provide their best pricing based on the requirements of the RFP.

**Question 16:** Is HFC amenable to alternative proposal to reduce costs?

Answer: Proposers should follow the requirements of the RFP. Cost-saving measures, whether technology or staff-related, should be suggested as Value-Added Services portion of the proposal.

**Question 17:** Are the security officers required to have CPR/AED/First Aid Certifications?

Answer: Yes.

**Question 18:** Are there any current service issues or items you would like to improve upon?

Answer: HFC looks forward to receiving forward-thinking proposals, including Value-Added Services, and is always interested in technological advances.

**Question 19:** Are all the Supervisors considered full-time?

Answer: HFC understands that the current contractor employs salaried supervisors on a full-time basis.

**Question 20:** What is the current method used for communication between guards and supervisors?

Answer: Radios and phones

**Question 21:** Who is responsible for providing communications equipment?

Answer: Please refer to the Equipment Requirements section of the Security Services Agreement. Only radios are provided by HFC, though be advised that the cost of lost or damaged radios will be billed back to the contractor.

**Question 22:** Who is responsible for the cost of transportation?

Answer: The contractor.

**Question 23:** Do supervisors wear a different uniform or look?

Answer: Yes, supervisors must wear a different uniform.

**Question 24:** How many hours of on-the-job training are required?

Answer: Post dependent, garages can be done in two shifts, while security officers working in the security operations center may take five shifts.

**Question 25:** Is on the job training billable to HFC?

Answer: No.

**Question 26:** Aside from golf carts, are any vehicles or other means of transportation, such as Segways, required?

Answer: No, although HFC understands that the current contractor provides a company vehicle to one of its on-site managers.

**Question 27:** Does HFC require a soft look or military-style uniforms for security?

Answer: Security staff in buildings wear collared shirts; those working in the parking facilities may wear polos.

**Question 28:** Will HFC agree to modify its indemnification, defense obligation and release in the Security Services Agreement?

Answer: No.

**Question 29:** Are bonds required?

Answer: No.

**Question 30:** How many of the positions are commissioned and how many are non-commissioned?

Answer: Approximately 11 commissioned and 29 non-commissioned.

**Question 31:** How many facilities are in the convention center?

Answer: Please refer to the definition of "Facilities" in the Security Services Agreement.

**Question 32:** Do you want holidays included in the regular rate or invoiced at a premium rate for the holidays?

Answer: HFC does not expect to pay a premium rate for holidays.

**Question 33:** With regard to the security officer requirement, are 100 guards required weekly or annually?

Answer: The good-faith estimate provided in the RFP refers to the total expected annual hours for hourly security officers working a 40-hour week. This does not include salaried supervisors or salaried managers.

**Question 34:** Are random drug tests required and, if so, will you provide any related policy/requirements?

Answer: Requirements are as stated in the Drug Testing section of the Security Services Agreement. Additional guidance can be provided, if necessary, to the contractor selected.

**Question 35:** Will HFC provide historical information related to fines or penalties that Contractor has had to pay/reimburse over the last two years for environmental compliance?

Answer: To the best of its knowledge and belief, HFC is not aware of any environmental compliance fines/penalties incurred by the current service contractor at HFC facilities.

**Question 36:** How many environmental compliance fines or penalties have been issued and what is the amount per fine?

Answer: Please refer to the immediately-preceding question and answer. HFC does not determine and cannot estimate potential fines/penalties for violations of environmental laws.

**Question 37:** Can you describe environmental non-compliance activities?

Answer: Please refer to the Environmental Compliance section of the Security Services Agreement. HFC cannot provide legal guidance on violations of environmental law.

**Question 38:** Will HFC provide a schedule including positions by site and hours per week with a breakdown of staffing levels, post facilities, buildings, parking lots/garages, other scope of work locations?

Answer: Such a detailed schedule is not available. The best estimates available are as provided in the RFP.

**Question 39:** Can HFC provide a breakdown of regular hours vs. special event coverage to help us understand how many hours per week of coverage are regular/permanent post hours and how much emergency or temporary services are requested?

Answer: The best estimates available are provided in the RFP. Please keep in mind that facility licensees are obliged to provide their own event security, though facility security levels will vary due to events and activities in the facilities, and seasonally.

**Question 40:** Over the past year, how many hours of temporary coverage have been requested beyond the permanent schedule each month?

Answer: There is no permanent/temporary schedule.

**Question 41:** What are the required topics and/or hours for on-the-job training?

Answer: Please refer to the Security Services Agreement.

**Question 42:** Does HFC require annual training and, if so, how many hours?

Answer: Yes. Please refer to the Security Services Agreement.

**Question 43:** Does HFC have any of its own training requirements (e.g., orientation) and, if so, what are the programs, how many hours is the training, who administers the training, and by when is it required to be completed?

Answer: On-the-job technology training will be required (e.g., vendor management system, access control, etc.). Security officer ability to work a post independently with the necessary industry-standard skills is also required.

**Question 44:** Is an onsite training room available to vendor and, if so, can you provide the training room location, size, availability of vendors, capacity limits, included equipment, and any associated costs?

Answer: Ample space is available at the George R. Brown Convention Center. Small meetings may be held within the contractor's offices; large events may require a license agreement. In-house contractors provide food-and-beverage, audio-visual, electrical, and telecommunication services.

**Question 45:** Is HFC interested in retaining incumbent personnel and, if so, approximately what percent?

Answer: HFC is aware that new contractors see some benefit in retaining incumbent personnel based on their experience and to ensure minimal disruption to services, however, such matters must be determined by the prospective employer.

**Question 46:** Do incumbent personnel meet the statement of work qualification standards (e.g. education, experience, training, etc.)?

Answer: HFC cannot make representations with regard to any contractor employees. Qualifications and suitability must be determined by the actual/prospective employer.

**Question 47:** What equipment is required by site/post and in what quantities (e.g. PPE, radios, cell phones, flashlights, handheld metal detection wands, lethal/less lethal weapons, wood stick and bins, laptops for Account Manager, etc.)?

Answer: Please refer to the Equipment Requirements section of the Security Services Agreement.

**Question 48:** Do you have a brand preference or other specifications for any equipment required?

Answer: No.

**Question 49:** For armed officers, will you identify all required equipment/type of weapon/brand preference, if any?

Answer: No, though such equipment should meet Texas Department of Public Safety standards.

**Question 50:** Is HFC amenable to other use of force tools to support de-escalation efforts (e.g., Taser, chemical agents, batons, and other less-lethal options)?

Answer: Yes. Suggestions of the kind should be included in the Value-Added Services portion of the proposal.

**Question 51:** In order to receive proposed pricing in format that allows for an apples-to-apples comparison, will HFC consider issuing a pricing form for contractors to follow in submitting cost proposals?

Answer: Yes. The suggestion is appreciated. HFC has prepared a Pricing Form that is available online at <https://www.houstonfirst.com/do-business>.

**Question 52:** Will contractor personnel be responsible for deploying HFC-controlled flood gates in the event of heavy rains or flooding?

Answer: Assistance may be required. Please refer to the Essential Services section of the Security Services Agreement.

**Question 53:** What additional background checks will be required for special events?

Answer: Though quite rare, certain federal government agencies may require event-specific background checks for HFC and contractor staff who are expected to be present within restricted areas.

**Question 54:** How many office locations vendor will be required to furnish and supply?

Answer: Provision of office space for personnel is offered as a matter of convenience, rather than as a means of imposing additional expenses on the contractor. As noted herein, each Assistant Project Manager is provided a workspace, a workspace assignment for the Project Manager is pending, and office sizes vary. There are no minimum office décor requirements.

**Question 55:** What are the exclusive services at the facilities and can you provide cost information and examples of what the contractor may require?

Answer: In-house contractors at the George R. Brown Convention Center provide food-and-beverage, audio-visual, electrical, and telecommunication services.

**Question 56:** There is a reference in the RFP that one officer is required to carry a firearm...is that one per shift or one per facility?

Answer: Typically, the managers, most supervisors and a rover all carry.

**Question 57:** Is HFC exempt from Sales and Use Tax?

Answer: Yes. Please review Section 3.6 of the Security Services Agreement.

**Question 58:** What is the date of the contract award?

Answer: HFC anticipates a decision will be made in late June 2024. As provided in the Security Services Agreement, the term will begin August 1, 2024.

**Question 59:** Is the cost to contractor for golf carts a reimbursable expense?

Answer: No.

**Question 60:** Can you confirm if the breaker force to provide relief personnel to monitor posts during authorized break periods is part of the billable positions provided by HFC? If not, may Supervisors be utilized as relief force to cover officers when they take their rest and meal breaks?

Answer: To be clear, relief is not a separate position. A combination of breakers and supervisor coverage is utilized currently and recommended generally.

**Question 61:** Can you clarify if you need five original copies of the proposal or one original and four copies?

Answer: As stated in the RFP, five paper copies and one electronic copy (on a flash drive) are required. Original signatures are not necessary.

**Question 62:** Can we get a breakdown of hours per week at each location?

Answer: The best estimates available are provided in the RFP. Please keep in mind that security needs fluctuate based on events and activities in the facilities, and seasonally.

**Question 63:** Can you share the pay structure for the current Project Manager, Assistant Project Managers and officers to be retained?

Answer: To be clear, security personnel are not employees of HFC. Under the terms of both the expiring contract and the new Security Services Contract, HFC pays an all-inclusive fee for both salaried and hourly positions. Though both agreements include a minimum payment amount, the terms of employment terms and conditions are determined by the contractor.

**Question 64:** How long has the incumbent been supporting the requirements of the security program?

Answer: The expiring contract was awarded to the incumbent contractor in 2019.

**Question 65:** What is the size of the contractor's office?

Answer: Each Assistant Project Manager is provided a workspace; sizes vary. A workspace for the Project Manager is pending identification.

**Question 66:** Is the incumbent contractor fully-staffed?

Answer: To the best of its knowledge and belief, HFC is not aware of any material staffing omissions.

**Question 67:** Will the incumbent Security Personnel be grandfathered for background investigation and screening requirements or are they required to be rescreened?

Answer: HFC would expect Proposers would use best industry practices in hiring, including background checks and standard onboarding procedures for new employees.



**Question 68:** Over the past year, how many hours of temporary coverage have been requested beyond the usual schedule?

Answer: While hours fluctuate based on events and activities in the facilities, and seasonally. HFC estimates in good faith that less than 100 hours of unanticipated service hours were necessary over the last 12-month period.

**Question 69:** May security officers can use their own cell phones as substitute for contractor-provided phones?

Answer: HFC advises against allowing use of personal phones in such a manner.

**Question 70:** Do you want us to put a daily, or weekly or monthly fee (in form salary) as flat rates for the positions of the Project Manager and Assistant Project Managers?

Answer: Proposers are directed to use the official Pricing Form that is available online at <https://www.houstonfirst.com/do-business>.

As provided in the RFP, this Letter of Letters of Clarification is part of this solicitation upon issuance and automatically supersedes any previous specifications or provisions in conflict therewith. By submitting their Proposal, Proposers shall be deemed to have reviewed this Letter of Clarification, considered all responses, as well as any revisions, and incorporated them into their Proposal.