



JEFFERSON COUNTY, TEXAS PURCHASING DEPARTMENT

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Beaumont, Texas 77701
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ADDENDUM TO RFP

RFP Number: RFP 20-054/JW
RFP Title: Wage and Compensation Study for Jefferson County
RFP Due: 11:00 am CT, Wednesday, January 13, 2021
Addendum No.: 1
Issued (Date): January 7, 2021

TO OFFEROR: This Addendum is an integral part of the RFP package under consideration by you as an Offeror in connection with the subject matter herein identified. Jefferson County deems all sealed proposals to have been proffered in recognition and consideration of the entire RFP package – **including all addenda**. For purposes of clarification, **receipt of this present Addendum by an Offeror should be evidenced by returning it (signed) as part of the Offeror's sealed proposal**. If the Proposal has already been received by the Jefferson County Purchasing Department, Offeror should return this addendum in a separate sealed envelope, clearly marked with the RFP Title, RFP Number, and Opening Date and Time, as stated above.

Reason for Issuance of this addendum: Clarifications

The information included herein is hereby incorporated into the documents of this present Bid matter and supersedes any conflicting documents or portion thereof previously issued.

Receipt of this Addendum is hereby acknowledged by the undersigned Offeror:

ATTEST:

Witness

Witness

Approved by _____ Date: _____

Authorized Signature (Offeror)

Title of Person Signing Above

Typed Name of Business or Individual

Address

Addendum No. 1
(RFP 20-054/JW) Wage and Compensation Study for Jefferson County

CLARIFICATIONS

Question: Given the current COVID-19 environment, is the County willing to waive the printed submission requirement and accept electronic submissions?

Answer: The Jefferson County Purchasing Department does not accept emailed or electronic response submissions. Submissions (in hard copy form) may be delivered to our department by hand or via courier/delivery service. It is the respondent's responsibility to ensure that the proper courier /delivery service options are arranged to ensure submission receipt prior to the due date/time.

Question: Will you accept scanned signatures in lieu of original ink?

Answer: As per the RFP specifications, there must be one full original copy of the response – to include original signatures.

However, we do allow separate submission(s) if necessary (within means).

Example: If you have non-original copies to package up in one box/envelope, the original signed document copies can be submitted via a separate shipment.

Please be sure to **MARK CLEARLY** on your submissions that you are sending multiple shipments, as well as notate on non-original signature pages that the original signed pages are being submitted separately.

Question: Regarding notarized forms, we have the ability to notarize the forms, but due to employees working remotely, all forms will be scanned. Is that acceptable?

Answer: Same as above. Originals must be submitted, but can be done via a separate submission.

Please Note: Any separate submission(s) of originals must be clearly marked and received by the due date/time specified for the RFP.

Question: Will documents previously filled out, signed, and/or notarized (from March 2020 response submission) be accepted? No information changed on some of these documents, but just wanted to be sure documents that were signed and dated with March dates would be accepted.

Answer: New documents with new dates are to be submitted/accepted. Please do not send any documents from last year's RFP specifications /with last year's dates.

Question: How many references are required for this solicitation (the reference form allows for 3, but on page 31, there is a request for 5)?

Answer: Please complete the reference form provided, as well as provide a listing of (5) references. You may duplicate the references included on the form in the listing.

Question: Is the agency willing to consider all work being conducted virtually (through web and teleconference and sharing of electronic files)?

Answer: Given the current circumstances we agree that the vast majority of the work be conducted virtually. However, if a face-to-face meeting is required at some point in the process, we would not oppose.

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CLARIFICATIONS - Continued

Question: In the proposal, there is mention of 565 classifications to be surveyed. Is that the number of benchmark classifications to be surveyed or the total number of classifications affected by the study?

Answer: No. 565 is the number of positions that will be affected by the study.

Question: Have the benchmark classifications already been selected or would the agency like the consultant to provide recommendations?

Answer: It is our expectation that the consulting company would make recommendations on the benchmark classifications.

Question: How many labor market agencies does the County wish to utilize in this study? Is private sector data also desired?

Answer: We do not have a specific number in mind. We expect to look at several similarly situated counties and local cities. We would also like to include the private sector, including refineries, given that they are the largest competitor regarding employees.

Question: How many individual employees are covered under the scope of this study?

Answer: Approximately 1,100 employees however, approximately 378 employees would not be included because they are covered by collective bargaining agreements.

Question: Are the existing job descriptions for all titles current and accurate?

Answer: Job descriptions are mostly current and accurate. Job descriptions are updated as positions are posted.

Question: To which license is being referred that is needed to perform these services in Texas?

Answer: This refers to any special licenses or certifications that your firm/staff members (that are to be assigned to the project) have obtained to provide these consultation services. If none are required, please note this within your response.

Question: Under Background on page 28, the RFP says that 565 positions will need to be surveyed. How many job titles do these positions currently fall within, and is it the County's intent to survey all job titles or only benchmark titles for purposes of updating the existing compensation plan?

Answer: This would need to be discussed with the chosen consultant to determine how many job titles would need to be surveyed.

Question: Under Scope/General Requirements (page 28), the RFP alludes to both internal equity and market competitiveness. Under Purpose and Objective on page 27, however, the study is limited to a market survey that results in an update of the existing plan rather than realignment of jobs, separation/consolidation of titles, etc. Can you please clarify? Is the study to be limited to a market survey and recommendations for updates to the compensation plan or does the County actually anticipate an internal equity analysis?

Answer: Both.

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CLARIFICATIONS - Continued

Question: Are all services to be provided remotely, or does the County anticipate onsite visits? If onsite visits are included, how many?

Answer: We do not have a specific number of anticipated onsite visits. Given the current circumstances, work may be conducted remotely, however we will accept onsite visits when necessary.

Question: The County conducted a similar procurement in February/March 2020. Ultimately the County decided not to move forward with the project. However, prior to cancelling the procurement, the County had begun negotiations with the highest-ranked firm. Can you please identify who that particular firm was?

Answer: As there was no award or contract executed for the similar RFP that was released last year, we are unable to release information regarding the evaluation or negotiations process that occurred.

Question: The RFP states that comparative agencies shall be similar counties in Texas (Bell, Brazoria, Brazos, Galveston, Lubbock, McLennan, Neufus, Smith and Webb).

The County also wants to be competitive with private employers. We use published surveys to compare to the private sector since individual private employers will not share their compensation information. Is this approach acceptable to the County and does the County itself subscribe to any published surveys it prefers that the consultant uses?

Answer: The County does not subscribe to any published surveys. We would like to at least attempt to obtain private sector data from local businesses.

Question: The RFP states that approximately 565 positions will need to be surveyed. There are approximately 49 grades enveloping these 565 positions. Question: we typically use a benchmarking approach where we select approximately 50%-60% of all classifications as benchmarks and internally align the remaining classifications with the benchmark for salary/grade setting purposes. Is this approach acceptable to the County or do you wish the consultant to survey (i.e., benchmark) all 565 classifications?

Answer: This approach would be acceptable to the County provided we could agree on the benchmarked position and how this approach would work.

Question: The RFP states: The selected firm would make recommendations to the County to ensure positions performing similar work with essentially the same level of complexity, responsibility, knowledge, skills, and abilities are classified together and paid appropriately. Does this mean the County wants the consultant to perform a classification study, including employees completing questionnaires, interviewing a representative sample of employees in each classification, and then recommending employee/position allocations to classifications, consolidating classes, if necessary, etc. Or will the consultant be expected to merely work with the County's current classifications and class descriptions and focus only on compensation, not as much on classification? If a classification study is desired, can you please provide a report that shows the number of employees in each classification to be studied?

Answer: We are not expecting the consultant to conduct a classification study. Our focus is on compensation for the current classifications.

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CLARIFICATIONS - Continued

Question: The RFP refers to “all civilian positions.” Does this mean that public safety, such as sheriff and fire, will not be included? Please provide the exact number of classifications to be studied if it is not all 565.

Answer: Only the non-union (command staff) positions in the Sheriff's department will be included in this compensation study. We do not have a fire department. The exact number of classifications has not been determined as we would like to work with the consultant on benchmark positions.

Question: We did not notice any specific HUB requirements within the text of the RFP; however, the Good Faith Effort (GFE) Determination Checklist indicates it must be submitted with the proposal. Are there any specific HUB requirements for this RFP?

Answer: The County does encourage HUB participation, but does not have any specific HUB requirements. Please indicate “Not Applicable” if you do not have any HUB information to share on the HUB documents included in the RFP specifications.

Question: Does the County have a Compensation Philosophy/Strategy available for review?

Answer: The County has a Classification-Compensation policy attached for your review (ATTACHMENT A), however the policy is outdated. The County would welcome suggestions/recommendations from the consultant regarding updates and or revisions to this policy as a part of this review.

Question: How does the County currently evaluate jobs for internal equity? Is there a formal job evaluation methodology? If not, does the County want to include this as part of the study?

Answer: There is no formal strategy for evaluating jobs for internal equity. We are certainly interested in ensuring internal equity and the County would consider this to be a part of the study depending on the cost.

Question: How does the County currently evaluate jobs for market/external competitiveness, set salaries and provide increases?

Answer: Currently, if questions arise regarding external competitiveness, the County conducts informal salary surveys with similarly situated governmental entities and private sector entities as available. Salaries are set in accordance with the attached policy.

Question: Is the County interested in utilizing published survey data to supplement custom survey data?

Answer: Yes.

Question: We understand the last similar type of study occurred in 1997. We also understand that benefits and updated of job descriptions are not to be included as components of this study. As a best practice for determining internal equity, review of job duties and responsibilities should occur via analysis of current job descriptions, a position description questionnaire process with interviews, or both. Was the 1997 study that the last time the job descriptions were updated? If not, when were the job descriptions updated?

Answer: As far as a formal updating process for all positions within the county, 1997 was the last time a formal classification compensation study was conducted. Since then, job descriptions are updated whenever positions are vacated and need to be filled. It is estimated that most job descriptions have been updated since 1997 due to attrition.

Addendum No. 1 (RFP 20-054/JW)
CLARIFICATIONS - Continued

Question: While the County does not wish to update job descriptions at this time, is the County interested in utilizing Position Description Questionnaires (PDQs) to gather and document information regarding incumbents' job responsibilities and aid in the internal equity analysis process?

Answer: If in conjunction with the consultant the County feels it is necessary to utilize Position Description Questionnaires for some positions, then we would definitely agree to do so.

Question: As a point of clarity, please confirm that the 565 positions (49 grades) covered by the study are all non-union.

Answer: Yes, we are not looking at union positions.

Question: The total # of positions listed in Appendix A is 620. Is that the total employee count; however, 565 employees/positions will be covered by the study?

Answer: Yes, the 620 represents the total employee count in positions affected by this survey. The 620 is a more accurate representation of the number of employees/positions that will be covered by the study. Ultimately there are approximately 250 individual classifications within the Jefferson County Compensation system. We would like to look at as many of those individually as possible with a focus on trying to establish benchmark positions from which other compensation decisions can be made. The 620 under Appendix A includes repetitions of the same classifications.

Question: Assuming the 49 grades refer to the number of pay grades within the County's step and grade system, how many distinct job classifications, will be covered by the study?

Answer: Approximately 250.

SECTION 10.4
CLASSIFICATION/COMPENSATORY

A. Policy

It is the policy of Jefferson County to ensure that all employees are paid within the salary range established for his/her position.

B. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a reasonable and systematic classification/compensation plan through which to pay employees fair wages for work performed satisfactorily.

This classification/compensation policy applies to all regular County employees excluding Elected Officials and their departments, those employees covered under union contracts, grant funded positions, unclassified positions, Assistant District Attorneys, and Investigators.

Elected Officials are encouraged to comply with these guidelines; however their participation is voluntary within the limits of the official budget.

C. Hiring Procedures

1. The minimum rate for each grade is based upon the assumption that an employee meets the minimum qualifications as stated in the job description.
 - a. If the applicant to be hired as a regular full-time employee exceeds the minimum qualifications, their starting salary may, with the approval of the Department Head/Elected Official, exceed the minimum rate of pay depending upon the availability of funds for the budgeted position.
 - b. A Department Head may, after obtaining the approval of Human Resources, fill an open position at up to 100% of the salary range, but not in an amount which would exceed the budgeted amount for the position. It shall be the duty of the Human Resources department, prior to granting such approval, to determine that the experience and qualifications of the applicant warrant filling the position at 100% of the salary range. Any requests to fill a position at more than 100% of the range must be approved by Commissioners' Court.
 - c. Department Heads/Elected Officials should always take into account the total compensation package prospective employees are being offered. This package consists of a competitive salary, excellent benefits, challenging work environment, opportunities to serve the public and the security of a stable organization.
2. Regular part-time applicants should be hired at a salary rate that is at least 75% of a similarly-situation position. Department Heads/Elected Officials may determine if,

and when, a long-term regular part-time employee receives a salary increase dependent on availability of funds for the budgeted position.

D. Promotions

1. A promotion occurs when an employee moves into a position whose class has a salary grade higher than the class of the employee's current position.
 - a. Promotional increases will be determined by the Department Head/Elected Official depending upon the availability of funds for the budgeted position. The increase should, at least, bring the employee to the minimum of the new range.
 - b. Substantial increases above the minimum of the range should be considered for promotions with very significant increases in responsibility, such as non-supervisory to supervisory, or non-technical to technical.
 - c. A Department Head may grant a promotional increase up to 100% of the range; if the recommended increase exceeds this amount it must be approved by Commissioners' Court.
 - d. In no instances should a promoted employee's pay exceed the budgeted amount for the position or the maximum of the range.
2. When a position changes substantially in one or more of the compensable areas (knowledge/skill, responsibility, decision-making etc.), the Department Head or Elected Official may request a new job content evaluation. The request should be forwarded to Commissioners' Court. After reviewing the request, the Court will then forward those requests to the Human Resources Staff for analysis and evaluation. If the job analysis and evaluation so indicate, the job can be recommended for a higher grade and/or classification. This would be deemed a "job growth promotion." The salary and new grade level would be addressed during budget hearings and if approved would become effective with the beginning of the new fiscal year.

E. Transfers

1. A transfer involves the movement of an employee to a position whose salary grade is the same as that of the employee's current position. A transfer may occur within a department or between one department and another.
2. Transfer requests may be made by the employee to the Department Head/Elected Official involved through the job posting process, or a transfer may be made by the Department Heads/Elected Official to meet the administrative or business needs of the County. However, the employee must be qualified to perform the duties of the position to which the transfer is contemplated.
3. In the event of a transfer of an employee, the Department Head/Elected Official shall determine if the employee receives a salary increase depending upon availability of funds for the budgeted position.
4. An employee who desires a transfer or promotion should complete the "Application for Promotion or Transfer" form. This form (available in the Human Resources Department) should be received by 4:30 p.m. in the Human Resources Department on the closing date for that job posting.

5. Under extenuating circumstances, Commissioners' Court or an Elected Official may appoint an employee to a vacant position for the benefit of the County.

F. Preparation, Maintenance, and Appeals to Salary Grade Classification

1. The Human Resources staff is responsible for collecting all necessary information required to prepare and maintain a viable grade/classification plan.
2. Requests for newly created positions and reclassifications by Department Heads/Elected Officials are to be submitted to Commissioners' Court. The Court will then refer those positions to be evaluated to the Human Resources Department. The Human Resources Staff is then responsible for reviewing these positions and recommending any changes in grade or classification, and completing a job analysis each time there is a new position established or there is a major change in duties for an employee. After review, the Human Resources Staff will submit a recommendation to Commissioners' Court for final approval during the budget process.

G. Reclassification of Pay Grade

1. The reclassification of a position to a higher grade shall result in a salary increase to at least the minimum of the new pay grade, or as determined by the Department Head/Elected Official, depending upon the availability of funds for that position.
2. When an employee's position is reclassified to a lower pay grade and the employee's salary is above the maximum set for the lower grade, the employee shall be permitted to continue at his present rate of pay.
3. A reclassified employee whose salary remains above the maximum of the lower grade shall not be entitled to a salary increase until such time that the employee's salary falls below the maximum rate of the grade.
4. Reclassifications/Consolidation of position
 - a. Normally, all requests for reclassifications should be considered during the budget process. In unusual circumstances, request for reclassifications will be considered outside of the budget process as described below:
 - b. In order for a reclassification to be considered, the proposed reclassification or consolidation of positions must result in: 1). An increase in level of responsibility or a increase in the scope of the position; 2). A permanent reduction in headcount and 3). A significant budgetary savings. The savings should be a minimum of at least 75% of the salary and benefits for the position eliminated. In no instance should a reclassified employee's rate of pay exceed the maximum of the newly assigned range.
 - c. Newly created positions should be classified or a market analysis done to determine the appropriate salary range. The final salary assigned to an employee who is reclassified will be determined by the Human Resources Department and subject to the approval of Commissioners' Court.

H. Demotions

1. An employee may be voluntarily demoted at his/her request when such action would be to the advantage of the employee and/or the County. Voluntary demotion shall not be considered disciplinary action or disqualify the employee for consideration for later advancement. The new rate of pay after the demotion shall be within the lower pay range.
2. When an employee receives a demotion, the salary may not exceed amount budgeted for the new position in the current fiscal year.

I. Progression Through Salary Range

Progression through the salary ranges shall be determined annually and will be dependent upon the availability of funds. The percentage increase may vary from year to year based on the projected budget for the next fiscal year. Commissioners' Court may grant additional cost of living increases/lump sum awards when warranted and as the budget permits.

1. After reaching 100% of the salary range (Market Rate), the Department Head may award, on an annual basis, up to a 2.5% increase to classified employees provided that budgeted funds are available for the position slot.
2. The Department Head may award additional increases with the approval of their Commissioner's Court liaison, County Auditor, and Human Resources Director, provided budgeted funds are available for the position slot.
3. Employees at or above the maximum of their assigned range are not eligible to receive an increase in base salary until his/her salary rate once again falls within their assigned pay range. Such employees may be eligible for a lump sum award which might be granted on October 1, payable on the first pay period in November, if approved by Commissioner's Court.

Sample Salary Progression Chart

This chart is included as an example of how an employee might progress through the position. Nothing herein mandates or limits such progression other than budgetary constraints and previously discussed policy.

<i>Entry Level Hire- Minimal Experience</i>	<i>80%</i>
<i>Completion of 90-day Orientation</i>	<i>85%</i>
<i>1 Year</i>	<i>90%</i>
<i>18 Months</i>	<i>95%</i>
<i>2 Years</i>	<i>100%</i>