



[Products & Services](#) [Facilities](#) [Solicitations](#) [Supplier Diversity](#) [About Us](#)

[News & Events](#) [Sign Up](#)

RFP 14-17 Questions and Answers

1. We are a software vendor of email and archiving services. Are we able to submit under this RFP for that limited service only?

No. Please refer to pages 27-34 of the RFP.

2. We are a printing company that specializes in Admission Tickets and Parking Hangtags & Decals. Are we able to submit under RFP 14-16 School Supplies or RFP14-17 Office Supplies...

No. Please refer to pages 27-34 of the RFP.

3. Can you tell me when the pre-bid is scheduled for Office Supplies. We have travel arrangement to make.

A pre-bid conference has not been scheduled for this RFP.

4. Do all 1,250 items on the bid request have to be priced. The reason asked is every quarter many of those items will incur price increases. How will that be handled.

Vendors do not have to offer all 1,250 items on the Market Basket Survey in order to be considered. However, any products offered MUST be submitted with auditable pricing in order to be considered for award (See Appendix C). Please refer to Article 9 of the General Terms and Conditions for price increase information.

5. Regarding above named bid, if you can please tell me the gauge, size, color & case amount for the following item numbers 192 (GJO70418), 293 (DP00504), 839 (DP00704), 1070 (DP08488) 1076 (GJO01532), I'd really appreciate it.

Vendors should be able to obtain any additional information required on the products requested and/or equivalent products by using the Manufacturer Number and Item Description provided in Attachment A.

6. Our Company is very strong in "Paper, Toner, IT Peripherals, and Office Equipment" with a very large selection at great prices however we are not great in Office Consumables. Is it worth our effort to submit a proposal?

It is the responsibility of vendors to determine whether or not to submit an offering for any RFP.

7. As a follow-up to the question that has been posted by another vendor, is it expected/anticipated that a pre-bid meeting will be held for the Office (14-17) and/or the School (14-16) Solicitations?

No. If a pre-bid conference is scheduled, vendors who have requested the affected RFP will be notified immediately.

8. In reference to the published TCPN RFP, I would like to request that TCPN add [our company] as an approved HP Big Deal Pricing vendor for TCPN. If TCPN does not have an HP Big Deal Pricing program, please let me know and I apologize for asking. If TCPN does have HP Big Deal Pricing concerning their HP OEM toner purchases, then please have HP add [our company] to the approved vendor list for your HP Big Deal program so that we can participate competitively concerning HP toner pricing as part of the RFP we will be submitting.

Please refer to Appendix C of the RFP for instructions regarding offering HP products as a part of your proposal. It is Region 4 ESC's understanding that HP intends to offer Big Deal Pricing through any awarded vendors who are HP authorized after Region 4 ESC has awarded the contract(s). Consequently, no vendor, incumbent or otherwise, will be able to offer Big Deal Pricing in their response to this RFP. Additionally, it should be noted that neither Region 4 ESC nor TCPN have any control over whether or not any vendor can offer Big Deal Pricing; that is solely HP's decision.

9. We can provide some of the items on the core list but not all. We mainly have computer-related items such as the toner cartridges and the IT peripherals. I am confused as to whether these items are included on this RFP which are listed on the Product/Service Specifications in Appendix B. Should I just wait until the technology bid is released?

The market basket survey (Appendix A) is not necessarily the core list requested in Attachment B; items on the core list may correspond to items shown in the market basket survey, but it is up to vendors to define the core list they wish to offer. The product categories requested in this RFP are requested and defined in Appendix B. As stated above, it is the responsibility of vendors to determine whether or not to submit an offering for any RFP.

10. Will we be thrown out if we can't provide all products to all 50 States? There a few states we have tax issues in and we are not able to do business with those states at this time.

No.

11. As far as the vendor orientation goes, I assume we would have to physically attend, correct? There is not an option for a webinar or conference call, correct?

Respondents should plan to physically attend a vendor orientation. It is understood that complications may arise and orientation dates and times may need to be adjusted after contract award.

12. An electronic catalog is being requested which is something totally new this year. Would allowing you and your organization access to an online account with correct pricing be sufficient for the proposal? Or would you be willing to accept online access to the items we are awarded afterward? My concern is being able to create something like an electronic catalog with 65,000 items and having accurate pricing within the timeframe we are in.

No. Region 4 must have a verifiable record of the prices and discounts that are being offered in a company's proposal. Vendors may offer category discounts, but we will still need a static pricelist in order to compare pricing and discounts offered by competing vendors.

13. I see that there is no pre-bid conference scheduled. We have yet to receive any communication regarding a pre-bid call from TCPN. Will there be anything scheduled?

Please refer to Question 7 above.

14. Under the current calendar of events, final questions are due to TCPN by Wednesday, October 1, 2014. Final responses are due five business days after the final due date of questions. Our concern is that we may not have enough time to properly respond once answers to final questions are posted at some point within that five day period. For solicitations of the size of these, we request that the Deadline for the Receipt of Questions be moved up to an earlier date, possibly September 24, 2014. This would allow all Offerors an appropriate amount of time to respond to the final answers that may be presented.

The calendar of events will remain as is for the time being. If any questions or answers are posted that may materially affect either the solicitation or vendors' responses to it, Region 4 will consider moving the bid opening date back to allow appropriate time for making changes.

15. Clarification on Appendix C Pricing in Conjunction with Attachment B - Core/Non-Core List Price Template is requested. Appendix C of both solicitations reads: "Respondents must submit a response to the market basket survey contained in Attachment A as well as a complete core list of items listed in Attachment B. A list of discounts off list price for non-core items is also required." While Attachment B reads: "Offerors may indicate discounts for broad categories of Non-core items if they wish, however those discounts should still be applied to individual items on this list. If there is a discrepancy, this list shall govern."

- a. Is it required that pricing for Non-Core items be based solely on discounts from list price by categories?
- b. If yes, is there any limitation to the number of categories that can be specified?
- c. If Non-Core items are priced by discounts, can the Vendor make the final determination of the categories that products fall within?
- d. As an alternative, can Offeror choose to provide net-pricing for non-core items as a pricing methodology, instead of discounts from list price by categories?
- e. If net-pricing is allowed for Non-Core items is it then acceptable to list the discount percentage that results from this methodology, however, any discounts indicated are merely for notation purposes since that is not the methodology that Offeror used to create their non-core pricing?
- f. If net-pricing is allowed for Non-Core items is it acceptable to insert "net price" in the "TCPN Discount" column of the worksheet?
- g. On Attachment B, is it expected that the Offeror's List Price would be inserted in the column that says "Unit Net Price"?

- a) Vendors may offer alternative pricing methods for their non-core list as long as the proposed pricing method is auditable and not based on a Cost-Plus model.
- b) If a vendor chooses to respond with a discount off list price based on category, they are free to define categories. However, it must be made clear by the vendor in their proposal what category any given item would fall under.
- c) Determination of what category items fall within will be dictated by what vendors put forth in their proposal.
- d) Yes.

e) Yes.

f) Yes.

g) Yes.

16. Article 2- Anticipated Term of Agreement Sections 2.1 and 2.2- Section 2.1 seems to indicate that the initial term will be for 3 years with a potential for 1 two year extension. Please explain with specificity what the last sentence of Section 2.2 means when it states that “Region 4 ESC reserves the right to exercise each two-year extension annually”. Does this contract have an initial term of three years with the potential for one two year extension for a potential total of 5 years, or, does this section provide for something other than this?

Any contracts resulting from this solicitation will have an initial term of three (3) years with the potential for two one (1) year renewals, for a possible final term of five (5) years.

17. Please verify the definition of the following: Market Basket, Core Item, Non-Core Item

The Market Basket Survey represents usage on the current contract. As stated in Attachment A, vendors do not need to respond to every item in order to be considered for award, and may substitute equivalent items. A core item is an item on a vendor's core list of products for which a vendor will offer the steepest discounts. A non-core item is an item on a vendor's non-core list for which a vendor will offer a certain discount. The core and non-core lists should represent a vendor's entire offering. The market basket survey will be used to show how a vendor's offering (the core and non-core lists) will benefit Region 4 and the membership in actual practice.

18. Reporting (page 20 TCPN is requesting gross sales on the monthly reports and the administrative fee based on gross sales. Is the admin fee based off of net sales?

Administrative Fee is based off of the Gross Sales at TCPN prices.

19. Admin Fees (page 22) Are they monthly along with the reporting? Is this based off of Volume or Incremental?

Administrative fees are due monthly and are based off of volume.

20. Service Level Reports (page 20) Please clarify what is required. We may not have the ability to provide these reports monthly.

The requirements for monthly Service Level Reports are stated in Section 8.5, and include reporting for on-time delivery rates, order fill rates, order accuracy rates, total number of orders placed, total dollar value of orders placed, and average value of orders placed by customer.

21. Is it possible to obtain a manufacturer item number or vendor item number for each item listed on the market basket? The “Supplier Number” provided does not give enough information to match these items.

The “supplier number” provided is the manufacturer number given to Region 4 ESC on usage reports for the TCPN membership. After spot-testing many items on the market basket survey using a google search of the number provided and the item description, Region 4 ESC has determined that vendors should be able to find any additional information required with the specifications and numbers given. If there are particular items that you are having trouble with, please submit them and Region 4 will provide additional information as necessary.

22. Is it possible to request an extension to this bid response? Since questions are not due until, October 1st, and we are sure TCPN will require some time to consolidate and answer any RFP questions, October 8th seems like a very tight timeline to respond.

Please see the answer to Question #14 above.

23. In reviewing the Question as written in Appendix B, Section B, Question 2, we are unsure of the intent of the question and need further clarification in order to complete our response.

2. Vendor will provide E-Commerce for print orders with the ability to send the orders electronically and either pick them up or have them delivered.

Is the intent of the question to determine is the vendor can print the order to allow the customer to pick up their order and/or have it delivered by the vendor?

Or is the intent of the question to determine if the vendor providing the service of picking up the order from the customer if they are not able to submit their order electronically?

24. Is the RFP Document available in a format other than PDF, such as MS Word? Please advise.

No.

25. Do the core items discounts need to match the discounts of the like items in the Market Basket or may we bid different discounts between like product categories on the Core list vs the discounts provided on the Market Basket List?

The market basket survey should reflect the discounts offered on the items listed. If items listed are on a vendor's core list, then the discounts should match.

26. Is it acceptable to NO Bid an item if it is an item which we do not carry?

Yes.

27. I have a question on Solicitation Number 14-17. Can we get clarification on

shipping times, as there are several locations in the RFP where the shipping time differs?

Region 4 ESC's expectation is that orders of stocked products, within standard delivery areas, will be shipped within 48 hours of receipt of order.

28. Please confirm that proposals based on a national wholesaler catalog showing manufacturer list price conforms to your pricing requirements listed as listed in Section B. under Scope. In the event that a wholesaler catalog is not utilized by a responder, how will TCPN insure that List Prices are actual MSRP?

Vendors may propose alternative forms of pricing if they choose. Vendors who propose alternative forms of pricing must still fill out the Market Basket Survey in order to be considered. Region 4 ESC has asked for auditable pricing from all respondents, and any alternative pricing methods which are not auditable by Region 4 ESC will not be considered.

29. Please see Recitals in Appendix A, “ upon registering and becoming a member with TCPN.” it would appear that only active TCPN members will be able to participate in contract utilization. Is this correct?

Not necessarily. Requirements placed on users of this contract will vary according to state and local procurement statutes.

30. Appendix A, Section 5.5 – “Either party may cancel this contract in whole or in part by providing written notice. This cancellation will take effect 30 business days after the other party receives notice of cancellation.” In the case of cancellation by TCPN without cause, a vendor could be put in a position of extreme and undue hardship. This contradicts the normal spirit exhibited by TCPN as it relates to its vendor and member partnerships. Does TCPN intend to work with the vendor, enter into negotiations with vendor and exhaust other remedies before exercising right to cancel?

Yes.

31. Will this contract be used by districts in any ESC Regions outside of Region 4?

Yes, Region 4 ESC intends for contract(s) resulting from this RFP to be available nationally through the cooperative.