

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF FINANCIAL SERVICES REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI)

DFS AA RFI 12/13-10

Preparation and Development of the Florida Surplus Lines Agent Study Manual

Begin Date: February 15, 2013

End Date: March 11, 2013

THIS IS NOT A REQUEST FOR COMPETITIVE BID OR REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL AND NO CONTRACT WILL BE AWARDED IN RESPONSE TO SUBMISSIONS.

The Florida Department of Financial Services (“Department”), Division of Agent and Agency Services, Bureau of Licensing, hereby releases this Request for Information (RFI) to collect information, options, and solutions associated with the development, preparation, and distribution of the *Florida Surplus Lines Study Agent Manual* that is currently distributed by the Florida Surplus Lines Service Office. (“Manual” includes paper or electronic documents) covering the Department’s examination content outline, on the Department’s behalf, for the following:

1. Objective and Requirements for Surplus Lines Manuals

Pursuant to section (s.) 287.012 (21), Florida Statutes (F.S.), the Department is requesting information from qualified vendors concerning certain services. A vendor’s response does not prevent a vendor who responds to a request for information from being eligible to contract with an agency. Please note that under s. 287.012 (21), F.S., responses to this request are not offers and may not be accepted by the Department to form a binding contract.

Pursuant to s. 624.313, F.S., and authorized for surplus lines pursuant to s. 626.927 (5), F.S., the Department is requesting information on the availability of vendors who can provide the development, production, and distribution of the Manual which is available to the public for a cost agreed upon by a vendor and the Department. The vendor must be able to provide the high quality services and products required by the Department including the functional equivalent of the Manual preparation requirements as described herein in the quantities described below and providing compiled data in an electronic data processing format that is compatible with the systems of the department pursuant to s. 624.313 (4), F.S.

The vendor must be able to annually revise the Manual so as to maintain technical accuracy and applicability to the related state licensure examination. Revisions to the Manual must cover all subject areas covered in earlier editions to at least the same extent as those subjects are covered in the earlier editions. Revisions must keep the Manual current with applicable changes in Florida law and Department regulations in addition to applicable changes in the insurance

industry within Surplus Lines. Applicable changes in the insurance industry include, but are not limited to, trends, conditions, and new developments. The vendor must be able to adhere to any style and formatting requirements set by the Department and must ensure that the Manual is made available for distribution to match the frequency of the examinations given by the Department's current license examination vendor, Pearson Vue. The contract information can be found on the Florida Accountability Contract Tracking System (FACTS).

<https://facts.fldfs.com/Search/ContractDetail.aspx?AgencyId=430000&ContractId=D0132>

The vendor must also have sufficient knowledge of the insurance industry and Florida law so as to develop revisions without guidance from the Department. The vendor will be required to make comprehensive and thorough recommendations as dictated by regulations and applicable events in the Florida insurance industry. If the Department recommends any modifications to the Manual, the modifications shall be incorporated into the revisions, and the revisions shall be resubmitted to the Department for approval. The vendor must obtain from the Department prior written approval for all material incorporated in the Manual. Any text will be the property of the Florida Department of Financial Services. Revisions may not be printed, incorporated or included in the Manual without the Department's express written approval. The vendor must be able to adhere to a Manual revision schedule provided by the Department that begins at the end of each legislative session and ends approximately August 31 of each year. The Manual must be available for distribution and made available for sale no later than November 1 of each calendar year. Additionally, the vendor must be able to attend the Examination Review Workshop conducted annually by the Department's testing contractor Pearson Vue (www.pearsonvue.com) in approximately July of each calendar year and incorporate revisions resulting from that workshop to the Manual. The vendor must cover all costs associated with its attendance at the workshop.

2. Background regarding Surplus Lines Manuals

The current vendor distributed approximately 250 manuals last contract year and the Department anticipates that future distribution levels for resident and non-resident applicants will be similar. However, the vendor must be able to produce manuals as demand dictates.

3. Information Requested

Respondents to this RFI should address the following areas:

- 3.1 **Requirements Approach:** What is your approach to the requirements as mentioned above?
- 3.2 **Approach to Payment and Shipping:** What is your approach to payment methods and shipping for Manuals (paper and/or electronic) purchased by the public?
- 3.3 **Experience with Similar Services:** Respondents are asked to identify other state, county or municipal governmental entities within Florida where they have performed similar services consistent with the content of this RFI and provide a summary of the services provided and results achieved. Experience with the federal government may also be included.
- 3.4 **Personnel:** Describe your company's typical personnel management style. Would a contract manager be assigned? Respondents are asked to provide the company name

and contact person. Also, in a normal situation what would you identify as your company's typical staffing levels to be provided to perform a contract for services similar in scope and size, the typical location of staff who would be assigned, hours of availability of the staff, and the training provided to staff.

- 3.5 Continuity of Operations:** Describe your company's typical plan to transition to/from other vendors and implement your services to ensure continuity of operations from a similar contract's incumbent vendor.
- 3.6 Areas of Concern:** Are there any specific areas of concern, not mentioned above, that your company would like to see addressed in a solicitation that may result from this RFI?
- 3.7 State Resource Needs:** Identify the nature and amount of typical Departmental resources (including staff) needed from date of a contract execution to implementation.
- 3.8 Expertise:** Describe the vendor's specific experience and expertise as a company and staff specifically in performing the types of services contemplated in the RFI, and identify whether services would be typically provided by sub-contractors or employees of the vendor.

4. Submission Process

Questions/Comments: Any questions or concerns regarding this RFI must be submitted in writing via email, to the Contact Person identified below, , no later than **5:00 p.m., ET, February 26, 2013.**

All responses to written inquiries will be posted on the Vendor Bid System ("VBS") website, at http://myflorida.com/apps/vbs/vbs_www.main_menu on or about, **March 1, 2013.**

Contact Information: Department of Financial Services, Bureau of Licensing
Attn: Brandi McNealy, M.P.A.
Contract Manager
200 East Gaines Street
Tallahassee, Fl 32399-4219
Telephone: 850-413-5420
Email: Brandi.McNealy@myfloridacfo.com

Responses should be no more than 10 pages in length. **DO NOT INCLUDE MARKETING LITERATURE AS PART OF YOUR RESPONSE.** Please provide responses to this RFI to the address mentioned above, either by mail or via email by **5:00 p.m. ET, March 11, 2013.**

5. General Terms and Conditions of the Request for Information (RFI)

- 5.1 This is a **REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI)** and should not be construed as an intent, commitment or promise to acquire purchase of the described services presented by vendors. This is a Request for Information as defined in s. 287.012(21), F.S., for planning purposes only. This is not a solicitation for offers. The information gathered from this RFI may be used to develop a future competitive solicitation. It is the responsibility of all interested parties to monitor the Vendor Bid System for any changes or notices prior to submitting their response.

- 5.2 The Florida Department of Financial Services will not be obligated to any vendor as a result of this RFI. The Department is not obligated for any cost incurred by vendors in the preparation of their response to this RFI. The Department will not pay for any information herein requested nor be liable for any costs incurred by the vendor. For economy of presentation, special bindings, colored displays, promotional materials and the like are not required but if they are presented, the Department will not be responsible for this cost.
- 5.3 This RFI is being submitted strictly for the purpose of gaining knowledge of services available on the market for the provision of these services, related services, and options available.
- 5.4 The vendor is not required to provide prices for any solutions described. However, general cost estimates for services similar in scope and size would be appreciated. The figures provided are not binding to the company.
- 5.5 These costs will assist the Department in developing its initial strategy and planning for these services, related services, and desirable options.
- 5.6 From the information collected through this RFI, the Department will review all information and options related to the services, related services, and desirable procurement options.
- 5.7 At a later time, it is anticipated that the Department may release its requirements through the formal bidding process.
- 5.8 All information obtained shall become the property of the Department upon receipt and will not be returned. The Department cannot guarantee that it will not be compelled to disclose all or part of any public record under the Florida Sunshine Law. Therefore, proprietary or trade secret information should not be included in your response.
- 5.9 In the RFI, the Department has addressed a series of questions to vendors, and requests that vendors reply to the Department in the same sequence and format.
- 5.10 The Department requests that all vendors submit replies that are short, clear, concise and complete.
- 5.11 Minority Business Enterprises are encouraged to participate in the Request for Information process.
- 5.12 Responding to the Request for Information does not prevent a vendor from being eligible to contract with an agency pursuant to section 287.057(17)(c), Florida Statutes.

Thank you for your interest in this Request for Information.