

Doing Business with Pinal County

The purpose of this information is to acquaint those who desire to sell products or provide services to Pinal County with the purchasing procedures used by the County. The County engages in varied activities while providing services for its residents. A great variety of equipment, supplies and services must be purchased in support of these operations. If you sell a commodity or service, and you have competitive pricing, then the Purchasing Division of the County's Finance Department is interested in providing you with opportunities to sell to the County. The principal objective of the Purchasing Division is to acquire quality goods and services that meet the County's needs at the lowest price while ensuring a fair and open process. This is accomplished through the use of sound, competitive procurement procedures.

If you are interested in becoming a Pinal County vendor, please send a letter to the Pinal County Purchasing Department, PO Box 1348, Florence Arizona, 85232-1348. In the letter please provide information about the commodities your business can provide, your taxpayer id number and your mailing address.

Procurement Policies

Because public money is involved, Pinal County Purchasing is guided in its procurement procedures by several established policies. These policy mandates are:

- To conduct all procurement according to the Arizona State Law and the Pinal County Procurement Code;
- To obtain the quantity and quality of materials at the right price and when needed;
- To maximize competition, and provide interested and qualified vendors with the opportunity to offer their products or services to the County.

Informal Purchase Procedures

Informal purchases are purchases of a commodity that on a County-wide basis, the County spends less than \$50,000 in a year. Quotations are solicited by Buyers for this category of purchases between \$5,000 and \$50,000. They may be made by telephone, mail, e-mail or fax. Generally the quotation process takes from three days to two weeks to complete. This includes the evaluation and award process. Quotations represent the most frequent type of buying transaction. Award of these purchases is made by purchase order to the vendor submitting the lowest responsive and responsible offer that meets specifications.

If the County spends less than \$5,000 on a commodity during the year, the Buyers are authorized to use their best judgment to select the most appropriate product and source.

Formal Purchase Procedures

Formal purchases are those buying activities that, on a County-wide basis, involve over \$50,000 of purchases for a given commodity. Buyers use Invitations for Bids and Requests for Proposals to make these purchases. The formal competitive process – from the issuance and advertising to the opening of the sealed offers – generally takes three weeks. After the opening of bids or RFPs, the evaluation and approval process takes an additional four to six weeks before being presented to the Board of Supervisors for authorization.

Invitations for Bids are awarded to the bidder submitting the lowest priced, responsive, and responsible offer that meets specifications. Request for Proposals are awarded to the proposer determined to have submitted the most advantageous offer to the County. With proposals, an evaluation committee evaluates and scores proposals based on factors such as cost, compliance to specifications, references of staff and capabilities of the firm.

All formal bids and RFPs are opened in a legally noticed public meeting and all interested parties are invited to attend. The date, time of day, and location of the meeting to open the bids and/or RFPs is included in the formal Call for Bids (or RFP) document.

There may be bids or proposals issued for which you would consider submitting offers. All formal bids and proposals are publicly advertised prior to their due date. Pinal County recognizes that our local business community has a keen interest in doing business with the County. To that end, we advertise all Calls for Formal Bids and/or Requests for Proposals in the Florence Reminder & Blade Tribune. These calls for bids and RFPs are also listed on the Pinal County website (<http://co.pinal.az.us>). Click on the Department Links section, click on the Finance Department link, and then in the upper right-hand corner, click on Bids & Proposals in the Services box.

Pinal County Purchasing

Supporting County operations is a complex responsibility. Public funds are a public trust. Tax dollars must be used wisely. The Pinal County Purchasing Division of the Finance Department is in the position of spending the available funds to obtain the materials and services to keep the county operating in an effective manner. It is important that purchases represent the “best value” for the cost and the products are of good quality and delivered when needed.

If you have any ideas or suggestions on how we can improve our service to our customers and business community please call 520-866-6209.