



## **OFFICE OF COUNTY MAYOR GLENN JACOBS**

Procurement Division, 1000 N. Central Street, Suite 100, Knoxville, TN 37917

### **Knox County Procurement Division Addendum I to Request for Proposals No. 3549 Drug and Alcohol Testing Services**

**Addendum Date: April 5, 2024**

**Buyer: Heather Whitehead**

**Closing Date: April 25, 2024 @ 2:00 p.m.**

**Total Page(s): Three (3) pages**

The following is to be amended:

- Question 1. Who is the incumbent vendor for these services?  
Answer 1. We do not currently have a contracted vendor providing these services for the court system. The courts have been self-testing with bulk instant cup tests.
- Question 2. What is the County currently paying for these services?  
Answer 2. N/A
- Question 3. Is there a current contract available to view?  
Answer 3. N/A
- Question 4. What is the historical annual volume of testing done under this contract?  
Answer 4. N/A, there is not a contract currently in place for drug and alcohol testing through the court system. For self-testing, there are approximately 30 participants associated with the MHC Program, 70 participants through the RC&VTC and Probation varies with up to 2,500 participants. The number of tested individuals is expected to increase once a contract is established. We are estimating a minimum of 400 screens per month, with closer to 750 screens being realistic with the potential for more. As noted in Section 3.33, Knox County does not guarantee any quantity of service will be utilized and usage will be monitored so as not to exceed available funding for any given fiscal year.
- Question 5. Please confirm all testing for this contract will be done at the Contractor's certified laboratory and not via onsite tests.  
Answer 5. Collections will be performed on site and sent to outside certified laboratory for analysis.
- Question 6. Please confirm the County will be paying all collection and testing costs for this contract. If not, please state the expected payment process and payment source for the drug testing and collections.  
Answer 6. The County will be responsible for the payment of invoices associated with any awarded contract. The awarded vendor must furnish all necessary sample collection and transportation supplies. Proposed costs should be inclusive of all expenses.



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Question 7. The Scope of Work requires lab accreditation from DHHS, CLIA and CAP-FDT, per 4.3 on page 11 of the RFP. Please note that the DHHS/Substance and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) certification was created specifically for the purpose of regulating federally mandated workplace drug testing (not criminal justice or treatment related testing). For example, Department of Transportation and the Federal Aviation Administration employees must be tested by a SAMHSA certified laboratory. All aspects of the testing are highly specific, and these specific procedures are often considered limitations for governmental and abstinence-based testing clients. For example, SAMHSA limits testing to a very narrow drug class menu (not allowing testing for alcohol, fentanyl or benzodiazepines, among others), mandates higher testing cut offs than are recommended for abstinence-based testing, requires specially trained and certified collectors, use of split sample specimens and a medical review officer to review all positive results before release. These additional requirements are cost and time prohibitive and do not meet the needs of the wider drug testing community. Conversely, the national CAP-FDT certification was specifically created for laboratories that perform testing for criminal justice, public safety, social services and similar agencies.

Like DHHS, CAP-FDT accreditation requires labs to adhere to rigorous forensic standards and quality guidelines. However, CAP-FDT standards apply to forensic drug testing for all drugs tested and not just the substances outlined under DHHS. CAP-FDT also includes standards requiring customer service and results interpretation assistance, whereas DHHS accreditation does not.

Further, requiring the SAMHSA certification will limit competition for the County's drug testing contract. Will the County accept the CAP-FDT and CLIA certifications as sufficient for its testing program?

Answer 7. The County will accept CAP-FDT and CLIA certifications.

Question 8. Under Laboratory Testing on page 12, the 3<sup>rd</sup> bullet requests positive immunoassay screens to be run a second time with a new aliquot of the specimen prior to reporting the positive specimen. Is this requirement requesting a re-screen or a confirmation test?

Answer 8. Confirmation Test.

Question 9. If a re-screen of a positive immunoassay screen is required, please note that while "re-screens" have historically been conducted to ensure internal chain of custody integrity (that is, to make sure the correct specimen was tested), electronic tracking like bar codes make a second immunoassay screen on the same specimen no longer necessary. Furthermore, a re-screen is not a substitute for a confirmation test and does not validate the initial screen result. Any substances present in the specimen that cause a false positive in the first screen will again cause a false positive in the rescreen. The only acceptable way to confirm/validate a positive screen is with a different, more sensitive and more specific method, such as LC/MS/MS (or GC/MS). Finally, re-screening is time-consuming and costly. The County will save valuable tax-payer dollars and promote fiscal responsibility by removing the requirement to re-screen positive specimens. Will the County consider removing the requirement that "All positive immunoassay screens must be run a second time.." (if this requirement is requesting a second immunoassay screen)?

Answer 9. A re-screen of a positive immunoassay screen is required.



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Question 10. Under Laboratory Testing, the 4<sup>th</sup> bullet requests negative results on the next business day, and non-negatives in 3 business days. Please confirm these time frames are following receipt by the lab.

Answer 10. Correct, post lab receipt.

Question 11. How many hair tests are being performed per year?

Answer 11. None currently. The option of hair tests is not a requirement, but may be utilized if available. Pricing for such testing should be included as an attachment to the Cost Sheet (Attachment B), if applicable.

Question 12. On page 14 under TAB V, there is a note that the Cost Sheet (Attachment B) shall only be included under this tab on the one (1) original, one (1) exact copy and electronic copy. Because these are the number of copies requested at the top of Page 14, it appears the Cost Sheet shall be included in all submitted copies. If this is not correct, please state how the bidder is expected to redact the Cost Sheet.

Answer 12. The cost sheet can be included in the original, exact copy and electronic copy.

Question 13. The proposal referenced in the subject line says on page 1, item 1.3 that "Alternative Proposals" will not be accepted "...unless authorized by the RFP." Page 7, item 3.14 "Exceptions to Specifications" lays out a format for such exceptions by the vendor. We are just wanting to confirm that Knox County will accept a proposal that does not conform to all requirements in the RFP. Please advise.

Answer 13. Any response submitted must meet the requirements detailed in the RFP to be considered responsive. If an alternate schematic has been identified as acceptable in the solicitation, it may be submitted. Section 1.28 does allow Knox County to waive any minor informalities or technicalities when it is in the best interest of the County.

Section 3.14 "Exceptions to Specifications" provides instructions for detailing any deviations or requested deviations. Please note that a deviation from the requirements could result in your organization's submittal being deemed non-responsive.

Question 14. Would the County be open to extending the deadline for approximately two weeks following the date that all questions are answered?

Answer 14. No.

End of Addendum I.

Please acknowledge Addendum I in your response.

Heather Whitehead, CPPB  
Knox County Procurement