



**COUNTY of VENTURA
HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY
&
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD**

Present a Request for Proposals For

**WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT- RAPID
RESPONSE**

**Business Retention –
Layoff Aversion Services
(Rapid Response)
(RFP #1718.02)**

RELEASE DATE: August 28, 2017

DUE DATE: 5:00 P.M. – September 25, 2017

BIDDERS CONFERENCE: 9:00 – 10:00 A.M. – September 8, 2017
In the Pepper Tree Conference Room at:
Human Services Agency
855 Partridge Drive
Ventura, CA 93003

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COUNTY OF VENTURA - WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD RAPID RESPONSE/BUSINESS RETENTION AND LAYOFF AVERSION SERVICES

SECTION I: PROGRAM INFORMATION

A. BACKGROUND/OVERVIEW

The Workforce Development Board of Ventura County (WDB) is seeking proposals from qualified, experienced organizations for a regional business expansion-layoff aversion project to promote the WDB's role in the County's overall economic vitality and workforce development. Proposals are being accepted from agencies that demonstrate a familiarity with the local economy and workforce issues. Interested bidders will demonstrate knowledge of local education and training programs available to job seekers and employers, exhibit strong linkages to local businesses and the public sector and demonstrate expertise in inter-agency collaboration.

In partnership with the Board of Supervisors, the Workforce Development Board implements the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA), oversees the America's Job Center of California in Ventura County and establishes programs in response to the needs of Ventura County employers. The WDB includes representatives from private businesses, education, labor, economic development and community-based organizations. The Board of Supervisors appoints WDB members who serve as volunteers for three-year terms.

The primary purpose of Rapid Response Services, as mandated by the EDD Directive WSD 16-04, and as stated in federal guidance, is to enable affected workers to return to work as quickly as possible following a layoff, or to prevent layoffs altogether.

To pursue these responsibilities, the WDB requires the following allowable types of Rapid Response and Layoff Aversion services:

1. Helping unemployed workers quickly return to productive positions in the labor force
2. Helping employers explore alternative to layoffs through human resource solutions
3. Reducing the economic and social burdens that unemployment adds to employers, workers and the community
4. Providing local communities, workforce investment partners, employers and workers with timely and pertinent information to anticipate and profit from economic development opportunities

The WDB actively works to carry out the following essential responsibilities:

- To articulate and express the workforce development needs of the community
- To promote collaboration among the several local stakeholders in workforce preparation and development
- To build consensus on workforce needs, issues and priorities
- To provide current and accurate information on which to base decisions
- To help define the important workforce issues in Ventura County
- To be an engaged advocate and decision-maker in the development of public policy decisions affecting the local workforce and business productivity

B. FUNDING SOURCE AND PERFORMANCE PERIOD

Funding for this project is available from the County's allocation of WIOA Title I-D resources for Rapid Response and the selected contractor will be considered a subawardee of prime federal

funds per 2 CFR 200 and subject to pass-through terms and conditions (CFDA #17.278).

The Workforce Development Board may enter into a contract with the successful bidder for a base term beginning July 1, 2018, through June 30, 2019, with two options years (extending through June 30, 2021) to be exercised at the discretion of the Workforce Development Board and the County Board of Supervisors. The initial base-year contract will not exceed \$95,000.

This will be a cost-reimbursable subaward contract. Payment will be made upon submission and approval of monthly invoices.

All activities must be allowable under the provisions of Code of Federal Regulations, part 682, Rapid Response Activities under the WIOA and in compliance with applicable WIOA regulations and any other requirements identified by the State, County or federal governments. See Employment Development Department (EDD) Directive WSD 16-04 for the Dislocated Worker 25 Percent Funding Policy and Allowable Rapid Response Activities.

C. SCOPE OF WORK

The purpose of this proposed grant of WIOA funds is to develop and oversee the implementation of a regional strategic plan for rapid response and layoff aversion to benefit Ventura County employers and workers. This grant must minimize employee layoffs and increase job growth in the area. Provision of these services will entail the following:

- Use of current data relating to short-term and long-term economic dislocation/layoffs, business retention, labor market information and business expansion
- Ongoing engagement, partnership, and relationship-building activities with businesses, in order to create an environment for successful layoff aversion efforts
- Integration of workforce development and economic development needs in the region
- Close communication with businesses to regularly monitor early warning indicators of potential layoffs
- Provide assistance to employers in managing reductions in force, which may include early identification of firms at risk of layoffs, assessment of the needs of and options for at-risk firms
- Connect businesses to resources such as loans, business assistance programs, market analysis, and economic development activities to prevent layoffs
- Develop process for identifying early warning of potential layoffs or opportunities for layoff aversion
- Leverage accurate information about regional economic trends, labor markets, new business development, and education and training resources

Contractor will be expected to provide appropriate outreach as needed to deliver services. All such materials will require WDB approval and may include:

- A monthly newsletter, distributed electronically to businesses throughout the County
- A business retention/layoff aversion print ad campaign
- Printed flyers distributed via local chambers of commerce and their publications and through libraries, banks, *etc.*
- Press releases and feature story pitches to Ventura County media on services available and local business success stories
- A website, including a link to the WDB website
- Public service announcements on radio outlets
- Regular meetings with the business community through a variety of forums, including, but not limited to, focus groups, advisory committees, Rapid Response Services, community-based organizations and contractor's already established network of service organizations

- Report of program activities and outcomes as required to document achievement of program objectives identified by the WDB Executive Committee and/or the WDB Board
- Provide incumbent worker training services as defined in WIOA 134(d)(4) & CFR section 680.780, 680.790 and 680.800.

The contractor will be expected, as part of allowable WIOA Rapid Response activities, to undertake an incumbent worker training program, with the purpose of retaining workers in their current jobs or enabling them to earn an industry-recognized certificate. WIOA comprehensive incumbent worker services include, but are not limited to, recruitment and determination of WIOA eligibility, curriculum development, assessment, case management, delivery of skill attainment training, provision of support services and job retention services.

The contractor may establish cooperative financial or non-financial agreements with other qualified agencies to assist in the provision of incumbent worker training for employers at risk of having to lay off workers and their incumbent workers. Such services may include any of the allowable incumbent worker services as noted above, including collecting and maintaining required participant tracking data. Any such agreement(s) will require the approval of Workforce Administration.

The success of Rapid Response activities and incumbent worker training will be measured against the development, coordination and phased implementation of a plan consistent with WDB priorities, and aligned with the work of the WDB Outreach Committee and approved by the WDB (or the WDB Executive Committee).

D. PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES

Contractor performance will be evaluated against quantitative measures. Planned performance achievement levels will be established through the WDB Executive Committee evaluation process. Areas of WDB evaluation may include any or all of the following:

- Number of employers who indicate that at least five of their employees are at-risk of layoff, who are then provided layoff aversion services. (Employers will self-identify and certify jobs “at-risk” of elimination.)
- Number of at-risk jobs retained as a result of efforts of the Contractor’s services. (A “job retained” will be measured as a worker who is still employed six weeks after all services to the employer have been completed.)
- Number of workers provided incumbent worker training that results in skill attainment that improves worker’s qualifications or skill levels
- Satisfactory customer satisfaction survey results of employers served under this project

E. BIDDERS CONFERENCE/TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

A Bidders’ Conference to answer questions about the RFP, the application process, program specifications and contract requirements will be held at **9:00 a.m. on September 8, 2017**, at HSA, in the Pepper Tree Room at 855 Partridge Drive, Ventura, CA 93003. If there are any significant interpretations, direction or revisions to the RFP such information will be posted on the HSA website. Attendance at the Bidders’ Conference is optional, but strongly recommended.

All inquiries regarding this RFP must be submitted in writing no later than September 12th, to allow sufficient time for preparing responses. Submit questions to Tina Knight, HSA Contracts & Grants Manager, at the address specified above or by e-mail at Tina.Knight@ventura.org or by fax at (805) 477-5490. Questions and answers regarding this RFP will be posted on the HSA website continually throughout the grant application process.

F. AWARD PROCESS TIMETABLE

Activity	Date
Bidders' Conference*	September 8, 2017, 9:00 – 10:00 a.m.
Last Date to Submit Questions	September 12, 2017, 4:00 p.m.
Proposal Submission Deadline*	September 25, 2017 5:00 p.m.
Notification to Selected Contractors	by March 1, 2018
Contract Approval by the Board of Supervisors (tentative)**	May- June 2018
Contract Start Date	July 1, 2018

* Human Services Agency, Administrative Offices, 855 Partridge Dr., Ventura, CA 93003

SECTION II – RFP GUIDELINES

A. RESPONSIVE PROPOSAL

A "responsive proposal" means one that substantially complies with all requirements of the RFP, including evidence that the bidder will adhere to all required State and County regulations, required insurance coverage limits, fiscal responsibilities, contract conditions and reporting requirements governing the proposed activity.

Any proposal may be declared non-responsive if it fails to conform to the essential requirements of the RFP and submission process and will not be considered or evaluated.

The bidder agrees to provide the County with any other information the County determines as necessary for an accurate determination of the prospective contractor's qualifications to perform services.

B. ACCEPTANCE OF PROPOSAL CONTENT

The contents of a successful proposal shall become contractual obligations if procurement action ensues. Failure of a successful bidder to accept these obligations in a contractual agreement may result in cancellation of the award. The County of Ventura reserves the right to negotiate additional provisions to those stipulated in the proposal; recommend and/or award in amount(s) less than stated in the RFP and negotiate a reduction or increase in service levels commensurate with funding availability.

The successful bidder must have the ability to negotiate the terms of the contract agreement with the County within thirty days following selection. The County of Ventura will make the final decision on contract award.

C. REJECTION OF PROPOSALS

Failure to furnish all information requested in this RFP or to follow the proposal format requested may disqualify the proposal. Any exceptions to the Scope of Services required by this RFP must be justified in the proposal.

The County reserves the sole and exclusive right to reject any or all proposals received in response to this RFP, or to cancel this RFP, in whole or in part, with or without cause, if it is in the best interest of the County to do so.

A bidder's submitted proposal may be withdrawn by written request prior to the proposal submission deadline.

D. EVALUATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

All proposals will be subject to a standard review process. An initial review of each proposal will be conducted by HSA staff to determine if it is complete, in the required format and in compliance with all requirements of this RFP. Failure to meet all of these requirements may result in a rejected proposal.

Each proposal that passes the initial review will be evaluated and scored by a review panel comprised of WDB members and/or County staff. The review panel may interview bidders as part of the review process. Panel members will review and score each proposal on the basis of the criteria stated in Section III below: Attachment 2 (Narrative).

Final scores will be reviewed by County staff and presented to the WDB Executive Director in developing a final recommendation to the WDB and Board of Supervisors for award of a contract.

It is County of Ventura policy that review panelists not solicit or receive any oral communication from any potential contractor regarding any proposal under consideration, with the exception of a formal panel interview, if requested.

Evaluation Criteria	Point Value
Project Design and Implementation	40
Knowledge Experience and Performance	45
Budget and Cost Effectiveness	15
Total	100 Points

Narrative responses to each section of the application, any attachments and the completed budget forms will be reviewed to determine compliance with the requested information and the feasibility and reasonableness of proposed program design, cost and expected outcomes.

E. PROTEST RIGHTS

Upon written request, any unsuccessful bidder is entitled to an explanation as to why its proposal may have been irregular and/or the basis for the award of the contract to the successful bidder. Protests shall be in writing and received within ten (10) calendar days following the announcement of intent to award contract.

It is the bidder’s responsibility to ensure receipt by County to the designated address. A postmark will NOT be accepted as meeting the deadline requirements. No extensions may be provided to this protest provision. Protests shall be addressed to:

Tina Knight, Contracts & Grants Manager
 County of Ventura
 Human Services Agency
 855 Partridge Drive
 Ventura, CA 93003

The protest shall state the reason for the protest, citing the law, rule, regulation, or practice on which the protest is based. A written response will be sent to the protester within ten (10) working days after receipt of the written protest. Prior to the award of a contract, if any bidder files protest against the awarding of the contract, the contract may not be awarded until either the protest has been withdrawn or HSA has decided the matter.

F. AWARD AND COMMENCEMENT OF WORK

1. Recommendation for award is contingent upon successful negotiation of the contract and resolution of any protests. The successful bidder shall be required to sign the negotiated contract, which will be in the form and content as approved by County.
2. The final authority to award a contract rests solely with the County of Ventura. The successful bidder shall not be allowed to begin work under any negotiated contract until such time as the contract has been approved by the County of Ventura.
3. The successful bidder must agree to all terms, insurance coverage provisions and conditions of the contract with HSA.
4. If only one proposal is received and it is deemed that such proposal meets requirements for funding, County reserves the option to award such entity a contract on a sole-source basis. In the event no proposals are received, or proposals received do not meet requirements for funding under this RFP, County reserves the right to be the contractor of last resort, or to designate another qualified entity to operate the program on a sole-source basis.

G. LIMITATIONS

This RFP does not obligate the County of Ventura to award a contract, to pay for any costs incurred

in the preparation of a proposal, or to procure or contract for services or supplies.

The County reserves the sole and exclusive right to accept or reject any or all proposals received as a result of this RFP, to negotiate with all qualified sources, or to cancel in part or in its entirety this RFP, with or without cause, or to issue a new RFP, if it is in the interest of the County to do so. A bidder may be required to enter into negotiations and to submit any price, technical or other revisions of the proposal as may result from negotiations.

H. METHOD OF PAYMENT

A cost reimbursement contract will be developed. This contract is considered a subaward, pass-through from federal funds per 2 CFR 200. The contractor will be reimbursed monthly in arrears for approved and allowable contract costs in accordance with a detailed line item budget approved by the County. The County may choose to negotiate other contract payment methods. Applicants must have the ability to maintain sufficient cash flow (e.g., lines of credit, cash reserve on hand) to meet ongoing financial obligations of program operation, pending reimbursement monthly from the County, in arrears net 30 days of approved and allowable claims for services rendered. No cash advances are provided.

I. PROHIBITION OF COLLUSION

Respondents to this Request for Proposals shall not engage in any actions, conversations or agreements with other parties that would be considered in restraint of free and open competition. Such activities that are intended to limit open competition by deceiving, misleading, or attempting to otherwise divide the market for the services being requested through this RFP are prohibited. If collusion is determined, it may be grounds for disqualification from the competitive process.

J. PROPOSALS PROPERTY OF COUNTY

All proposals become the property of the County of Ventura upon opening and shall not be returned to the bidder. Proposals shall remain confidential until the evaluation process is completed and tentative award has been posted by HSA. All proposals will be considered public documents, subject to review and inspection by the public at the County's discretion, in accordance with the Public Records Act.

K. ADDENDA AND SUPPLEMENT TO RFP

If revisions or additional information to this RFP become necessary, HSA will post the addenda or supplements on the HSA website.

L. ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

1. The selected contractor(s) shall operate the project continuously throughout the term of the contract with HSA. Personnel shall be qualified in accordance with the applicable requirements of the agreement and any future amendments thereto.
2. All bidders responding to this RFP are specifically prohibited from soliciting letters of support from HSA staff. Bidders are hereby notified that HSA maintains a policy that prohibits its employees from providing letters of support, recommendations or advocacy for an outside agency, firm, or individual engaged in a competitive procurement process managed by HSA.
3. The County shall have the right to review the work being performed by the Contractor(s) at any time during the Contractor's usual working hours.
4. If a bidder is recommended for contract award under this RFP, they shall be required to certify and provide certain documents as identified below *prior* to contract award.

Signed copies of each of the following forms:

- Drug Free Workplace certification pursuant to 20 CFR Section 667.200(d)
- Debarment and Suspension pursuant to regulations implementing Executive Order 12549
- Certification Regarding Prohibition on Lobbying using federal funds

5. The recommended bidder will need to submit evidence of the following insurance requirements effective on or before start of the contract:

- A. Commercial General Liability "occurrence" coverage, naming the County of Ventura as additionally insured, in the minimum amount of \$1,000,000 combined single limit (CSL) bodily injury & property damage each occurrence and \$2,000,000 aggregate, including personal injury, broad form property damage, products/completed operations, broad form blanket contractual and \$50,000 fire legal liability.
- B. Commercial Automobile Liability coverage in the minimum amount of \$1,000,000 CSL bodily injury & property damage, including owned, non-owned and hired automobiles. Also to include Uninsured/Underinsured Motorists coverage in the minimum amount of \$100,000 when there are owned vehicles. Contractor must have on file evidence of auto insurance in the minimum amount of \$100,000 CSL bodily injury & property damage for all employees and volunteers associated with the contract.
- C. Workers' Compensation coverage, including a Waiver of Subrogation in full compliance with California statutory requirements, for all employees of Contractor and Employer's Liability in the minimum amount of \$1,000,000.

Additional information regarding insurance requirements can be found in the Human Services Agency Contracts Manual. A copy of the Contracts Manual is available at www.vchsa.org on the Request for Proposals page. Click on the Partners & Providers link on the left navigation bar; then click on the Request for Proposals link for RFP-related items.

6. The recommended Contractor will be subject to the County of Ventura Living Wage Ordinance. The Ordinance requires the payment of a living wage and accompanying paid time off to all covered employees engaged in providing services pursuant to a service contract as defined in Sec. 4952(f) of the County's Living Wage Ordinance.

7. Misrepresentation during the procurement or contracting process in order to secure the contract will disqualify a bidder or contractor from further consideration in the procurement or contracting process. Failure to comply with contract requirements once a contract has been awarded will constitute a material breach of the contract and may result in the suspension or termination of the affected contract and debarment from future County contracting opportunities for a period not to exceed three years. Other penalties may also apply.

8. As applicable, the successful bidder shall also submit to the County prior to contract award the following documents:

- Most recent Audit
- Articles of Incorporation or business license
- Handicapped Access Survey

SECTION III – SUBMISSION PACKAGE

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Applications submitted in response to this RFP must include the items and be in the order as listed below. All of the items combined comprise your completed Application pursuant to this RFP.

1. Executive Summary: Complete as directed – indicate what program activity you are applying for.

2. Narrative Section: Complete and submit a response to the narrative section that fully addresses each of the evaluation criteria listed. The narrative must be typed in 12 point font, paginated on 8 1/2" x 11" white paper. The narrative section is limited to 12 pages.

3. Program Budget: Complete the line item budget forms for the services proposed (note - an electronic version of the EXCEL budget worksheet is available at www.vchsa.org). No other budget forms will be accepted. Matching resources (cash or in-kind contributions), if any as well as their source should be identified in the budget. The budget should be reasonable and accurate and provide a clear and concise description of your costs relating to the proposed project. Applicants should provide a narrative to justify their budget detail expenses.

4. Financial Audit: Please submit one copy of your most recent financial audit prepared in accordance with the applicable requirements of your fund source(s). For example, compliance with the Single Audit Act and 2 CFR 200 may be requirements relating to the preparation of your annual audit. If an audit has not been completed, your most recent tax return, 990 or financial statement may be substituted, as well as your prior year's audit. The audit will be reviewed to determine applicant's financial position, compliance with regulatory requirements and documentation of solvency. If within the last three years there has been an audit exception, disallowed cost and/or questioned costs for the performance of any government (*i.e.*, Federal, State, County) contract or grant, applicant must provide an explanation along with the audit.

5. Other attachments, as applicable (optional): Please include any supplemental information that will provide further information about the proposal or your firm, as applicable: *e.g* staff resumes, portfolio of media materials, *etc.*

It is the responsibility of the bidder to ensure the proposal is submitted by the time and date and location as specified. Postmarks will not be accepted in lieu of this requirement. Therefore, use of the U.S. Mail is at the bidder's own risk. Proposals submitted to any other office will not be accepted. To be considered for funding, all proposals submitted in response to this RFP must be received no later than **5:00 PM September 25, 2017** with **one complete application package with original signature and nine copies** excluding audit documents, either delivered in person or mailed to:

Tina Knight, Contracts & Grants Manager
County of Ventura
Human Services Agency
855 Partridge Drive, Ventura, CA 93003

Tina.Knight@ventura.org, 805-477-5442

Attachment 1-EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Bidders Legal Name

Firm Name	
Address	
Telephone	Website address:

2. Program Name:	3. Funding Requested: \$
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4. Briefly summarize your proposed program design (700 character max):

5. Chief Executive Contact

Name of Chief Executive	
Title	
Telephone	email:

6. Primary Application Contact

Name of Primary Contact	
Title	
Telephone	email:

7. Legal Status Information

Federal Employer Identification (FIN)	
California Taxpayer I.D. No.	

An unsigned proposal will be rejected

I certify that the information provided in this proposal is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and that I have been duly authorized by applicants' governing body or other authority to file this proposal. This proposal is submitted as firm and fixed offer valid for 120 days of the submission date.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name and Title: _____

Attachment 2 – NARRATIVE/REQUIRED SUBMITTAL ITEMS

Please provide a written response to each section. Your proposal will be reviewed and scored according to the following evaluation criteria. All proposals will be reviewed for demonstrated capacity to provide the services/activities sought through this solicitation.

1. Project Design and Implementation

40 points

- Provide a summary of your proposed layoff aversion service strategies and expected outcomes that addresses the allowable and requested services. (15 points)
- Identify specifically the implementation plan to provide incumbent worker services. Address how you will accomplish the required WIOA process. Please also identify if any subcontractors will be used. (15 points)
- Provide a work plan and implementation schedule for the recommended deliverables. (10 points)

2. Knowledge, Experience, and Performance

45 points

- Describe your firm's experience and qualifications in performing the services described in Section I. C. SCOPE OF WORK. Include information that demonstrates any experience and length of time in coordinating with business, education, organized labor, government and community-based organizations. (25 points)
- Provide an organization chart and a brief description of the qualifications and experience of members of your firm, including relevant subcontractors. Indicate how you will document the performance outcomes listed in Section I.D. PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES. (10 points)
- Describe your firm's ability to maintain accountable for contract funds and your internal control and oversight procedures. Describe your firm's history in successfully managing government contracts and/or federal pass-through subawards and/or contracts. If your firm has audit findings related to federal pass-through funds, please list them here along with your corrective action plan. If your firm has no findings in relation to federal pass-through funds, please make a statement to that effect in this section. (10 points)

3. Budget and Cost Effectiveness

15 points

- Provide a line item budget for conducting the proposed project, using the budget template included on the HSA website. (5 points)
- Identify any in-kind or cash contributions and/or other services that will be provided as part of this project and describe the anticipated added value of such contributions. (5 points)
- In the narrative, provide details to justify that costs are both necessary and reasonable and provide pertinent information that will help to evaluate the proposed project's cost effectiveness. (5 points)

Total Points 100

Attachment 3- BUDGET

Complete the line item budget attached to this RFP. An electronic version of the budget is available for downloading and use at <http://www.ventura.org/human-services-agency/request-for-proposal-rfps>.

Attachment 4- AUDIT

Include one copy of your most recent financial audit, IRS 990 form, or tax return.

Attachment 5- OTHER EXHIBITS, ATTACHMENTS AND/OR APPENDICES

Include any supplemental documents, resumes, job descriptions, letters of support, *etc.*, as applicable to support your application.