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# Request for Proposal #12PSX0184

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## Office Supplies, Toner and Cut Sheet Paper

Department of Administrative Services

Contract Specialist: Jill Belisle

Date Issued: 7 November 2012

Due Date: 19 December 2012



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# Request for Proposals

## Office Supplies, Toner and Cut Sheet Paper

### Overview

The Department of Administrative Services, Procurement Services is seeking proposals from Office Supply contractors capable of providing direct delivery of Office Supplies, Toner, and Cut Sheet Paper to all Connecticut State Agencies and eligible Connecticut Political Subdivisions (including, but not limited to cities, towns, school boards, and not-for-profit organizations) for a five year period from July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2018. In addition, the contract may be extended for the original term of the contract or parts thereof at the sole discretion of the State.

Successful contractor(s) shall be required to make inside or dock delivery (at the request of the customer) within 24 to 48 hours after receipt of order.

Direct delivery is understood to be as delivered and unloaded in-house to each delivery location as requested; freight fully prepaid F.O.B. Destination. It may also be necessary for contractors to wrap and divide orders separately to each delivery location requested (teacher packs) by the contract customer.

Services shall include warehousing and distribution of office supplies, toner, and cut sheet paper; filling of orders received by telephone, mail, facsimile, Internet and the State's E-Commerce initiative (Core-CT).

Currently, Executive Branch Agencies of State government are required to use the State's E-Commerce (Core-CT) system - PeopleSoft Version 9.1 - for order placement.

Contract customers other than Executive Branch Agencies may place orders by the ordering method of their choice.

With the implementation of the contract issued from this RFP; State agencies encumbering funds through the use of blanket purchase orders and/or the State's P-Card (credit card) program will have the option of utilizing Core-CT and/or the vendor's web-site for order placement. Restrictions for on-line ordering would be for inventory and asset item purchases for State agencies only.

At a minimum, the vendor should be able to support the following:

- The initial population of 650+ State Agency Executive branch accounts and additional eligible Political Subdivision and Not-For-Profit accounts
- Ability to use Oracle/PeopleSoft catalog management for order placement
- Ability to build and update templates for repeat purchases
- Utilize a web-based interface for order placement
- Feature a robust shopping cart experience
- Ability to accept "blanket" purchase orders for order placement
- Ability to accept the State's P-Card (Credit Card) for order payment
- Electronic order submittal to the supplier
- Electronic order tracking status
- Be able to price compare similar items
- Support long-term retention of purchase history

At a minimum, the vendor must be able to support the following technical requirements:

- Allow for integration with the State's E-Commerce system (Core-CT) – PeopleSoft Version 9.1

## Scope of Services

It is the intent of the State to offer and encourage use of the contract to all eligible entities statewide. The State makes no representations or warranties concerning the use of the contract from any Political Subdivision or Not-For-Profit Organization of the State. Volumes listed in this proposal are annual estimates only and do not constitute actual volume guarantees or commitments from any contract customer.

The annual estimated dollar volume for each contractor on the current contract award (07PSX0044) is listed below for **informational purposes**:

	<b>2011 Total Purchases</b>	<b>2011 Total Purchases</b>
	<b>State Agencies</b>	<b>Political Subdivisions of the State</b>
Staples	\$1,803,256.89	\$1,798,876.06
Suburban Stationers (SBE)*	\$3,982,948.97	\$ 298,416.01
Aztec Technologies (MBE)*	\$ 46,790.99	\$ 82,922.54
CCPA/LaserPro	\$ 136,534.21	\$ 165.44

### 2011 Breakdown Paper

Staples	\$ 638,823.53	\$199,466.44
Suburban Stationers	\$1,475,987.30	\$ 56,493.05

### 2011 Breakdown Toner

Staples	\$592,422.16	\$887,582.09
Suburban Stationers	\$979,641.22	\$ 68,003.46

\*Note: SBE and MBE designations listed are for those contractors certified through the State of Connecticut's Supplier Diversity Program as Small Business Enterprise (SBE) and Minority Business Enterprise (MBE).

Awarded contractors will be expected to serve all eligible entities. There are approximately 650 Connecticut State Agency delivery locations statewide.

Please note that the most advantageous proposal to the State would be from those proposers who supply a Full Line proposal of Office Supply products Fixed Price and Full Catalog. (i.e. office supplies tab, toner tab, cut sheet paper). The State reserves the right to reject proposals that do not meet these criteria.

Proposers who have only the ability to offer Cut Sheet Paper items and/or Toner Cartridges are also encouraged to submit proposals.

The following items will be restricted from purchase under contract:

- Office Equipment (Fax Machines, Computers, Printers, Telephones, Copiers)
- Office Furniture (File Cabinets, Desks, Chairs, Book Cases, Tables, Credenzas, Open Panel Systems, Lockers)
- Appliances (Refrigerators and Microwaves)
- Food Service Supplies

This contract replaces the following contract award(s) in part or in total: 07PSX0044

## Instructions to Proposers

### I. Proposal Schedule

RELEASE OF RFP:	Date: 7 November 2012
OPTIONAL PRE-PROPOSAL MEETING:	Date: 27 November 2012 at 9:00 am Eastern Time
RECEIPT OF QUESTIONS:	Date: 16 November, by noon Eastern Time
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS POSTED AS ADDENDUM:	Date: 26 November 2012 or sooner
RFP DUE DATE:	Date: 19 December 2012 at 2:00 pm Eastern Time

During the period from your organization's receipt of this Request for Proposals, and until a contract is awarded, your organization shall not contact any employee of the State of Connecticut for additional information, except in writing, directed to the Department of Administrative Services, Attn.: Jill Belisle, Procurement Services, 165 Capitol Avenue, 5th Floor South, Hartford, CT 06106.

Please note that RFPs are not publicly opened and are not available for viewing until after the Contract has been awarded.

### II. Optional pre-proposal meeting:

This proposal contains an optional pre-proposal meeting, allowing potential proposers the opportunity to ask questions in an open forum. Proposers that do not elect to attend will not be disqualified from the proposal submittal process. This allows for the proposer to determine whether or not to attend the meeting without disqualification for absence as a possible result.

The meeting will be held on: 27 November 2012 @9:00 a.m.  
State Office Building  
165 Capitol Avenue, Room G38 A&B  
Hartford, CT 06106

Vendors will not be admitted to state buildings without a valid photo ID.

The state will not be responsible for reiteration of the items discussed at the optional pre-proposal meeting to companies and their representatives who did not attend the meeting. Furthermore, those proposers who do not attend the meeting waive their right to take exception for inaccuracies in their proposal based upon omissions and non-compliance due to information discussed at the pre-proposal meeting.

### III. Questions

Questions for the purpose of clarifying this RFP must be emailed to: [jill.belisle@ct.gov](mailto:jill.belisle@ct.gov) and must be received by the Contract Specialist no later than the date and time specified.

#### IV. Solicitation Submission

Solicitations shall be submitted online by the RFP due date and time only. Proposers must upload their solicitation submission to their company's BizNet Account. Any material that is not submitted online with your company's solicitation submission may not be considered. Documentation shall not be submitted by hardcopy, fax or email unless specifically requested by DAS.

At the time of proposal submittal, the only hard copy to be submitted under separate cover is the current published office supply catalog and current United Stationers Dealer Net Pricer Book.

### Proposal Requirements

#### I. Contract Period

The State intends that this contract shall be in effect for a period of 5 years, beginning July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2018.

The State may extend this Contract in its sole discretion, prior to Termination or expiration, one or more times for a combined total period not to exceed the complete length of the original term.

#### II. Mandatory Extension to State Entities

Proposers are required to offer and extend this contract (including pricing, terms and conditions) to Political Sub-Divisions of the State (Towns and Municipalities), Schools, and Not-For-Profit Organizations.

When a Political Sub-Division, School, and/or Not-For-Profit Organization utilizes this contract all references to the "State" are hereby replaced with the Name of the Using Sub-Division, School, or the name of the Not-For-Profit Organization.

#### III. Set Aside

It is the intention of the state to award 50 % of this contract to only Connecticut Small Business Enterprises (SBE) and Minority Business Enterprises (MBE) certified by the State of Connecticut's Department of Administrative Services/Supplier Diversity Program, pursuant to Connecticut General Statute 4a-60g. SBE and MBE proposal are required to be certified at the time of the proposal opening and are requested to provide a copy of their company's current certification certificate with their proposal.

Further information about the Supplier Diversity Program can be found at the following link:

<http://das.ct.gov/cr1.aspx?page=34>

#### IV. Motor Carrier Safety Review

If the performance of the Contract requires the use and operation of any commercial motor vehicle, as defined in section 14-1 of the Connecticut General Statutes, or other motor vehicle with a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) of 18,000 pounds or more, each proposer will be the subject of an evaluation, conducted by the Connecticut Department of Motor Vehicles (CTDMV) of its motor carrier safety fitness. The primary factor in the evaluation is the current SAFESTAT score, calculated by the U.S. Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) in accordance with the provisions of Title 49, Section 385.1, et seq., of the Code of Federal Regulations.

## Proposal Requirements

To be deemed qualified; the proposer must have an overall SAFESTAT category rating of "D" or better, on the date of evaluation. In addition, the proposer's driver and vehicle out-of-service rates will be consulted. The rates are determined by the number of out-of-service violations cited to the motor carrier in the course of all official, reported vehicle and/or driver inspections conducted during the preceding thirty (30) months. To be deemed qualified, the proposer must not have either a vehicle or driver out-of-service rate, by percentage of out-of-service violations per the total number of inspections reported, that is more than twice the national average. In addition, the proposer must have a current federal safety management practices rating of "Satisfactory," as defined in 49 CFR section 385.3, as amended.

Proposer must provide the company's Federal DOT ID number where specified in Exhibit B. Failure to provide this information may result in the rejection of your proposal.

Further information concerning the motor carrier safety evaluation, to which a proposer is subject, may be obtained from CTDMV, at <http://www.ct.gov/dmv/cwp/view.asp?a=798&q=413206&dmvPNavCtr=|#49068>. All official inspection and rating data that is used in the performance of each evaluation is available to any motor carrier through the federal SAFESTAT website, at <http://www.ai.volpe.dot.gov/>.

### V. Quantities and/or Usages

These are estimated quantities and/or usages only and in no way represent a commitment and/or intent to purchase. Actual quantities may vary and will be identified on individual purchase orders issued by the requesting state entity.

### VI. Emergency Standby for Goods and/or Services

In the event of a declared emergency or natural disaster within the State of Connecticut, not resulting from inadequate inventory or contract expiration, but which are expected to be temporary in nature, DAS and/or the Client Agency reserves the right to request the goods and/or services called for in this contract from the Contractor. The Contractor shall make best effort to provide goods and/or services at the time and in the manner specified by DAS and/or the Client Agency. From the time a request for goods and/or services is made the contractor shall acknowledge the request within two (2) hours. If the Contractor is unable to respond or provide the goods and/or services requested, DAS and/or the Client Agency reserves the right to procure said good and/or services from another source. Contractors called upon to perform under emergency circumstances shall supply goods and/or services in a timely manner such that time is of the essence.

Contractors shall offer the DAS and/or Client Agency first priority for goods and/or services, which are unknown at this time, but which may be required during an actual emergency, from its regular sources of supply at the rates set forth in Exhibit B of this Contract.

### VII. Brand Name Specifications and/or References

The use of the name of a manufacturer or of any particular make, model or brand in describing an item does not restrict proposers to that manufacturer or specific article unless limited by the term "no substitute". However, the article being offered must be of such character and quality so that it will serve the purpose for which it is to be used equally as well as that specified, and the proposer shall warrant to the State that it is fit for that purpose. Proposals on comparable items must clearly state the exact article being offered including any and all applicable options and the proposer shall furnish such other information concerning the article being offered as will be helpful in evaluating its acceptability for the purpose intended. If the proposer does not indicate that the article offered is other than as specified, it will be understood that the proposer is offering the article exactly as specified.

## Proposal Requirements

### VIII. P-Card (Purchasing Credit Card)

Purchases for all state agencies that are less than \$1,000 shall be made using the State of Connecticut Purchasing Card (MasterCard) in accordance with Memorandum No. 2011-11 issued by the Office of the State Comptroller.

Contractor shall be equipped to receive orders issued from this Contract using the purchasing card. The Contractor shall be responsible for the credit card user-handling fee associated with credit card purchases. The Contractor shall only charge to the State's MasterCard upon delivery of goods or rendering of services.

The Contractor shall capture and provide to their Merchant Bank, Level 3 reporting at the line item level for all orders placed by State purchasing cards.

Questions regarding the state of Connecticut MasterCard Program should be directed to Ms. Kerry DiMatteo, Procurement Card Program Administrator at (860)713-5072.

### IX. E-Commerce (Electronic Commerce)

The State utilizes an internet-based E-Procurement ordering system, known as Core-CT. Awarded contractors will receive purchase orders from the State through the Core-CT System and shall provide electronic invoicing to be loaded into the Core-CT System.

Contractors shall provide the State with functional data files that include specific formats for product and pricing information to be loaded into the Core-CT system, or enable electronic access/interface to the Contractor's catalog (either through a punch-out catalog or a third-party hosted catalog). In the event third-party hosted catalog is used, the Contractor shall invoice the State for the awarded products at the contracted prices. By providing a punch-out catalog solution, the Contractor shall provide its own online catalog of the State's offerings. By providing a third-party hosted catalog, the Contractor shall provide a list of its products/pricing in an electronic data file to a third-party provider which hosts multiple catalogs for the State.

Upon contract award, the Contractor shall provide the State with a functional data file that will then be loaded into a catalog in Core-CT for Client Agency ordering purposes. The Core-CT Catalog will be maintained in Core-CT by State personnel or through a third-party acting on the State's behalf. Contractors shall provide functional data files within ten (10) business days from the date of contract award notification. Failure to provide functional data files within the time allotted will constitute breach of the contract. Detailed information on the functional data file requirements and Core-CT is available at <http://das.ct.gov/SupplierKitCoreCT>

When the Contractor is required to provide the State with a punch-out or third-party hosted catalog, the Contractor shall cooperate with the State to create a project plan, project schedule and methodology of operation to enable and maintain the integration of the Contractors statewide contract offerings within a timeframe that is mutually agreeable to the State and the Contractor. The State will determine which of the catalog structures (either punch-out or hosted) must be provided by the Contractor. The State may utilize a third-party provider to coordinate this integration on behalf of the State.

Contractor's functional data files or catalogs must contain the most current pricing, as well as the most up-to-date product offerings that the Contractor is authorized to provide in accordance with the Contract. During the term of the contract, functional data file updates and/or catalog updates must be provided in a timely manner. Frequency of these updates are outlined in the pricing specification section of the Contract. Additional information on functional data file updates is available in the "Supplier Kit" found at <http://das.ct.gov/SupplierKitCoreCT> State approved price adjustments are not effective until implemented within the Core-CT catalog, punch-out catalog or third-party hosted catalog and a Contract Supplement is issued by the State.

## Proposal Requirements

Existing pricing/product information will remain in effect until a functional data file or catalog is received, approved, loaded and a contract supplement is issued by the State.

### A. Contract Award

1. Upon contract award, contractors will be notified that a functional data file is needed.
2. Contractors shall provide functional data files within ten (10) business days from the date of notification.
3. Failure to provide functional data files within the time allotted will constitute a breach of contract.

### B. Data Updates

1. During the term of the contract, data file updates (price changes, product changes) must be provided in the format specified.
2. Frequency of data file updates is outlined in the pricing specifications section of this RFP document). Additional information on data updates is available in the supplier kit found at: <http://das.ct.gov/SupplierKitCoreCT>.
3. Existing pricing/product information will remain in effect until a functional data update is received and a contract supplement is issued.

## X. Contract Award

The State reserves the right to award this Contract in a manner deemed to be in the best interest of the State and may include, but not be limited to:

- A. by item, group of items, or in its entirety
- B. geographic location to adequately service the entire State of Connecticut in the best possible manner
- C. Multiple Vendor Award

## XI. Stability of Proposed Prices

Any price offerings from proposers must be valid for a period of 180 days from the due date of the proposals.

## XII. Amendment or Cancellation of the RFP

DAS reserves the right to cancel, amend, modify or otherwise change this RFP at any time if it deems it to be in the best interest of the State to do so.

## XIII. Proposal Modifications

No additions or changes to any proposal will be allowed after the proposal due date, unless such modification is specifically requested by DAS. DAS, at its option, may seek proposer retraction and/or clarification of any discrepancy or contradiction found during its review of proposals.

## XIV. Proposer Presentation of Supporting Evidence

Proposers must be prepared to provide any evidence of experience, performance, ability, and/or financial surety that DAS deems to be necessary or appropriate to fully establish the performance capabilities represented in their proposals.

## Proposal Requirements

**XV. Proposer Demonstration of Proposed Services and or Products**

At the discretion of DAS, proposers must be able to confirm their ability to provide all proposed services. Any required confirmation must be provided at a site approved by DAS and without cost to the State.

**XVI. Erroneous Awards**

DAS reserves the right to correct inaccurate awards. This may include, in extreme circumstances, revoking the awarding of a contract already made to a proposer and subsequently awarding the contract to another proposer.

Such action on the part of DAS shall not constitute a breach of contract on the part of DAS since the contract with the initial proposer is deemed to be void and of no effect as if no contract ever existed between DAS and such proposer.

**XVII. Proposal Expenses**

Proposers are responsible for all costs and expenses incurred in the preparation of proposals and for any subsequent work on the proposal that is required by DAS.

**XVIII. Ownership of Proposals**

All proposals shall become the sole property of the State and will not be returned.

**XIX. Ownership of Subsequent Products**

Any product, whether acceptable or unacceptable, developed under a contract awarded as a result of this RFP shall be the sole property of the State unless otherwise stated in the contract.

**XX. Oral Agreement or Arrangements**

Any alleged oral agreements or arrangements made by proposers with any State agency or employee will be disregarded in any State proposal evaluation or associated award.

**XXI. Subcontractors**

DAS must approve any and all subcontractors utilized by the successful proposer prior to any such subcontractor commencing any work. Proposers acknowledge by the act of submitting a proposal that any work provided under the contract is work conducted on behalf of the State and that the Commissioner of DAS or his/her designee may communicate directly with any subcontractor as the State deems to be necessary or appropriate. It is also understood that the successful proposer shall be responsible for all payment of fees charged by the subcontractor(s). A performance evaluation of any subcontractor shall be provided promptly by the successful proposer to DAS upon request. The successful proposer must provide the majority of services described in the specifications.

## Selection Criteria/Submittal Requirements

A selection committee will review and score all proposals. The following information, in addition to the requirements, terms and conditions identified throughout this RFP Document, will be considered as part of the Selection process and are listed in order of relative importance.

### 1. Value- Pricing Pages

- a. Form RFP-16 Exhibit B Price Schedule
- b. Prompt Payment Discount

### 2. Account Management

- a. Discuss strategy for managing contract and customer service approach throughout the contract period.
- b. Discuss strategy for problem resolution if dispute arises.
- c. Ability to offer special prices for large quantity orders of individual items.
- d. Provide a copy of your current catalog(s) and requisition form(s) with your proposal response and discuss your company's willingness to modify in order to meet the State's needs.
- e. Discuss distribution of catalogs and requisition forms(s) to all customers.
- f. Ability to adhere to Quality Assurance

Discuss in detail, any quality control programs your company currently has in place

Detail how order discrepancies will be handled, including a time-frame in which the discrepancy will be resolved in the following situations:

Shortages  
Overages  
Breakage  
Items Shipped Incorrectly

- g. Product Warranties
- h. Delivery

Ability to adhere to delivery requirements, 24-48 hour inside and /or dock delivery

Detail under what conditions your company would not be able to provide 24-48 hour delivery.

Detail method of delivery.

Extent of ability to fulfill geographic areas

## Selection Criteria/Submittal Requirements (con't)

- i. Billing
  - Method of Invoicing, include a sample invoice
  - Acceptance of P-Card (Credit Card)
  - Flexibility in invoicing customers separately
- j. Discuss your ability to identify and allocate business to certified small business companies in the State.

### 3. Computer Systems

Discuss your company's technical capabilities, operating systems, and the software utilized in the performance of services.

Provide a narrative on your company's plan to meet the E-Commerce requirement of this RFP Document; with detailed information on all methods of order placement available to contract customers- including, but not limited to "punch-out" to the proposer's web-site from the State's E-Commerce (Core-CT) system.

Detailed any other computerized methods of order acceptance your company can offer in addition to the State's E-Commerce system.

Provide a sample file, in the format required for Core-Ct. A hyperlink to website is provided for your information <http://das.ct.gov/cr1.aspx?page=94>. Contractors may modify the spreadsheet provided for the Fixed Price Items to meet this requirement.

### 4. Transition/Implementation Plan

Discuss how your company will use the period between contract award and commencement date to prepare for delivery of goods. Please provide a timeline and names of assigned personnel, including telephone numbers.

### 5. Reporting Capabilities:

- a. Ability to provide reports as outlined in the Request for Proposal document (excel format).
- b. Provide sample copies of reports currently available.
- c. Ability to provide reporting structure to be used noting the usage of certified SBE/ MBE companies and post consumer recycled content.

## Selection Criteria/Submittal Requirements (con't)

### 6. Business Information:

- a. Company History/Location and Length of Time in Business
- b. Company of most recent annual report or financial statement

*Should proposers wish this information to be considered confidential, this information should be placed in a sealed envelope marked "Confidential", this information will not be made viewable to the public and will only be reviewed by the evaluation committee.*

- c. Distribution Center Information. If there is more than one distribution center, please repeat information for each distribution that service this contract.

Location of distribution center

Number of Vehicles

Total square footage of distribution center

Number of employees at this location

Hours of operation

Number of shifts

- d. Client References for your five largest clients please provide the following information for each reference.

Name of company, Contact name, Telephone number, Dollar value, and Description of work provided.

### 7. Valued Added

Provide information regarding value added facilities or devices that your company can provide to promote cost-savings or enhanced service levels during the term of contract.

Does your company offer any incentive programs based upon a rebate percentage of total dollars spent during the contract period? If so, a description of the incentive program must be include with your response.

## Index of Abbreviations

### Abbreviations:

DAS	Department of Administrative Services
RFP	Request for Proposal

## ATTACHMENT 1 - CONTRACT

This RFP is not a contract and, alone, shall not be interpreted as such. Rather, this RFP only serves as the instrument through which proposals are solicited. The state will pursue negotiations with the highest scoring proposal. If, for some reason, DAS and the initial proposer fail to reach consensus on the issues relative to a contract, then DAS may commence contract negotiations with other proposers. DAS may decide at any time to start the RFP process again.

Thereafter, Proposers will be required to sign a formal contract as identified in "Contract". The contract may include a liquidated damages clause at the discretion of the State.