



GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS OFFICE

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REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS – GUARDIAN AD LITEM LEGAL SERVICES

1. Background

The Pueblo of Laguna seeks proposals from any law firm (large or small) or individual practicing attorneys that can demonstrate proficiency serving as *Guardian ad litem* (GAL) in cases involving “child in need of services” and elder neglect or abuse. The Pueblo of Laguna, a federally-recognized Native American tribal government (“Pueblo”), is a rural community of approximately 4,000 located in west central New Mexico, approximately 40 miles west of Albuquerque. The Pueblo Court is a two-minute drive from Interstate-40 at Exit 114. The Pueblo of Laguna Court and Children’s Court has jurisdiction over such cases and makes assignments. Pueblo laws and rules of procedure are accessible by Internet. Pueblo Court judges are NM licensed and experienced attorneys. Pueblo Court can, and often does, conduct hearings via teleconference and other virtual meeting platforms due to precautions against COVID-19, and as an accommodation to practitioners.

2. Purpose and overview

The purpose of this RFP is to identify a panel of pre-qualified firms and individual practitioners with necessary demonstrable experience to receive engagement contracts from the Pueblo for the calendar years **2023** and **2024**. Contractors may be assigned one or more cases on short notice to represent individuals in cases pending before the Court. Contracts may be renewed each year without further solicitation upon satisfactory performance. Receiving an engagement contract does not guarantee case assignment(s) and the volume and timing of case assignments will vary according to circumstances. This solicitation does not affect existing retainer agreements for other legal services.

3. Responsibilities

The GAL Contractor shall, when assigned by the Pueblo Court or Children’s Court, provide competent legal representation services as *Guardian ad litem* to adults or to minors within the Pueblo Court’s jurisdiction, in civil cases involving an allegation of abuse or neglect or in civil child custody proceedings. Representation shall include client consultation and advocacy in the Pueblo Court at all stages of legal proceedings. During legal representation, the Contractor reviews Pueblo law, investigative reports, written opinions from the Pueblo of Laguna Court of Appeals, and appellate courts of other jurisdictions, and any other material that might be relevant to competent representation, including medical or business records. The Contractor also drafts case-related documents such as motions, orders, and memorandums. The Contractor conducts interviews of clients or witnesses and reviews evidence in preparing for advocacy or resolution of an assigned case before the Pueblo Court. Contractor advises

client of issues and rights based on client's competency, and advocates case resolution in the best interest of the client.

4. Requirements

Attorney at law admitted and in good standing to practice law in any State, the District of Columbia, or any Pueblo or Tribal Nation, plus experience representing individual adults and minors as Guardian ad litem in civil cases. Selected contractor must provide a W-9, provide a certificate of professional liability insurance, and timely apply for and be admitted by the Pueblo Secretary to practice in Pueblo Court under Title V, Chapter 3 of the Pueblo of Laguna Code. The annual admission to practice fee is \$100 per calendar year.

5. Preference

Preference in contracting shall be afforded to law firms owned by Pueblo members or other Native Americans, except those that have demonstrated poor performance, in accordance with Pueblo Fiscal Management Policies, Part VII, Section 5.

6. Proposal Information Required

- a. Indicate the relevant practice area(s) you or your firm possess in serving as GAL.
- b. For each practice area, list the attorney(s) that will be assigned and provide a description of the relevant experience of each.
- c. Identify the primary contact person for assignment/representation matters and for billing matters.
- d. State the proposed compensation and payment terms for cases assigned in the relevant practice areas to which the proposal applies.

7. Submission of Proposals

This is an open RFP. Submit responsive proposals as a PDF document attached to an email with subject line "RFP – GAL Legal Services" transmitted to James Burson, Government Affairs Director, at jburson@pol-nsn.gov. Call 505-552-5781 to obtain additional information or clarification regarding this solicitation. **Proposals will be considered when received and a contract may be let at any time.**