



GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS OFFICE

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REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS – DEFENSE 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 in practice areas of adult criminal defense or representation of juveniles in delinquency proceedings. 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. Pueblo Court arraignments and pre-trial conferences are generally scheduled on Mondays and Thursdays. Pueblo laws and rules of procedure are accessible by Internet. Pueblo judges and prosecutors are NM licensed attorneys.

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 this and next calendar year. Contractors may be assigned one or more cases on short notice to represent individual Pueblo residents where the full-time Public Defender or another assigned attorney has a conflict of interest or is otherwise unavailable for Court proceedings. This solicitation does not affect existing retainer agreements for similar services. Contracts may be renewed 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.

3. Responsibilities

The Public Defender Contractor shall provide competent legal defense services, as assigned by the Government Affairs Director or Public Defender, to adult Native American defendants in criminal actions or to Native American minors in juvenile delinquency actions when the Pueblo’s Public Defender or other assigned attorney has a conflict of interest or is unavailable. Representation shall include client consultation and advocacy in the Pueblo Court at all stages of legal proceedings. During legal representation, the Contractor reviews or drafts case related documents such as motions, orders, memorandums, sentencing reports, probation 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 conducts interviews of clients or witnesses and reviews evidence in preparing a defense or resolution of cases before the Pueblo Court, and advises clients and advocates case resolution on client’s behalf.

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 in criminal cases, and/or representing individual minors in juvenile delinquency proceedings. 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.

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 is interested in serving as conflict/substitute defense counsel (e.g., adult criminal, juvenile delinquency).
- 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 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 with no closing date. Proposals will be considered when received. Submit responsive proposals as a PDF document attached to an email with subject line “**RFP – Defense 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.