



Request for Qualifications 20RFQ095 Group Health Benefits Consulting Services

Date	Event
January 28, 2020 and February 4, 2020	Dates of public notice
February 5, 2020	Due date for questions by 5:00 pm
February 12, 2020	Questions and answers posted on our website
February 20, 2020	RFQ opening / due date at 2:00 pm CST
Week of March 2, 2020	Finalist Interviews and Presentations (optional)
May 18, 2020	AISD Board meeting for review/approval

<p>Deliver Sealed Response to: Austin ISD Contract & Procurement Services 1111 West 6th Street Building A, Suite 330 Austin, TX 78703</p>	<p>Contact: Kristy Gonzalez Senior Procurement Specialist Phone: 512-414-2123 kristy.gonzalez@austinisd.org</p>
---	--

- Questions must be submitted via e-mail to the contact person listed above. **In the e-mail subject line, type: Questions 20RFQ095 Group Health Benefits Consulting Services** Q & A and addenda will be posted on our website: www.austinisd.org/cp/bids
- **Statement of Qualifications are due no later than 2:00 pm on the date indicated.** Your statement of qualification must be delivered by mail or hand delivery in a sealed envelope or carton. Responses received after the specified time shall not be considered.
- **Please submit the following:**
 - Required**
 - One (1) hard copy marked “original” – include signed “required” forms
 - One (1) digital copy on a flash drive – include signed “required” forms
- FAX, e-mail or other electronic responses will not be accepted.
- Statement of Qualifications must be plainly marked with:
 - Name and address of the respondent
 - RFQ number and title above

Checklist and Submission Guidelines

This checklist is provided to help you conform to all form/document requirements stipulated in this solicitation and attached herein.
(This is not a required form, it is not necessary to return this checklist with your statement of qualification.)

Understanding the Statement of Qualifications

Completed

- Read entire RFQ document, appendices and attachments
- Review AISD Policy and Provisions on our website: [Policy and Provisions](#)
- Attend pre-proposal conference (not required)
- Submit questions properly before deadline
- Review addenda, Q&A and other additional attachments
- Review Statement of Qualification Format section of RFQ

Forms

Completed | Required

- | Bid Certification
- | Notification of Criminal History of Contractor
- | Debarment, Suspension and Ineligibility Certification
- | Conflict of Interest Questionnaire (CIQ) – electronic
- | Strategic Partner Profile
- | EDGAR Vendor Certification
- | Software Vendor Certification Form

Submitting the Statement of Qualifications

Completed

- Prepare the statement of qualifications in the format specified and sign all required forms
- Submit required hard copy marked “original”
- Submit requested quantity of digital copies on flash drive
- Package responses in sealed envelope or carton properly labelled
- Deliver responses to delivery address by RFQ opening / due date and time

Table of Contents

Section I	Introduction
Section II	Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) Program Requirement
Section III	Statement of Qualifications Format
Section IV	Initial Review of Statement of Qualifications
Section V	Competitive Selection / Evaluation
Section VI	Scope of Service and Performance Requirements
Section VII	Terms and Special Instructions
Section VIII	Appendices and Attachments

I. INTRODUCTION

The Austin Independent School District (herein after referred to as “AISD” or the “District”) is seeking statements of qualifications from firms qualified and experienced in providing Group Health Benefits Consulting Services for the Employee Benefits Program including (but not limited to): Group Health & Pharmacy, Stop Loss, Dental, Life, Disability and Third Party Administrator (TPA). Being a legal method of procurement for school districts in Texas, AISD would like to utilize current platforms to engage Consultants.

The Austin Independent School District encompasses 230.3 square miles. At present, the District operates 130 campuses in addition to several administrative and support facilities. Austin Independent School District employs 12,000 people including a teaching staff of 6,100. AISD operates a self-funded health plan administered by Aetna. The plan offers ACO and HSA options. Delta Dental provides the Dental plan. Group Life, Disability plans, and other ancillary products also are provided. The Districts administration has expressed an interest in learning what other providers are available, any alternate services which might be offered in addition to those already provided and at what costs. Austin ISD offers three (3) PPO plans, one of which is a Health Savings Account. All three plans are similar but, based upon employee paid premiums, each varies with regard to deductibles, co-pays and out of pocket costs. Austin ISD is a Texas education entity and as such, retirees move to the Teachers Retirement System where they will obtain benefit plan coverage.

Each Respondent, by submitting its statement of qualifications, agrees that the response is subject to the Austin ISD Policies and Provisions and agrees to comply with those conditions. Acceptance of a statement of qualifications will occur only when a contract is executed. Any contract will incorporate the Austin ISD Policies and Provisions and Standard Terms and Conditions and no commitment exists until a contract is executed by both parties.

II. HISTORICALLY UNDERUTILIZED BUSINESS (HUB) PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

The HUB Program promotes and strongly encourages the involvement and participation of Historically Underutilized Businesses in District-wide procurements. According to AISD policies CH (LOCAL) and CV (LOCAL), the HUB Program guidelines are not applicable for this type procurement.

III. STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS FORMAT

A. Preface

The Firm shall provide an executive summary of two (2) pages or less, which gives in brief, concise terms, a summation of the statement of qualifications.

B. Statement of Qualifications

The Firm’s statement of qualifications itself shall be organized in the following format and informational sequence:

Section I - Summary of Experience and Capabilities

This section shall contain the full name and address of the firm submitting the Statement of Qualifications and a brief summary of the firm's experience and individual experience for personnel who will provide this service.

1. Name, address, telephone number and fax number of the consultant's firm.
2. History of the consultant's firm, indicating date the firm was founded and how long the firm has provided group health benefits consulting services.
3. Organization of the consultant's firm, including a listing of the total number of full time employees and number of professional employees.
4. Principal or officer of the firm who would be directly responsible to the District for services provided and their position in the organization.
5. Organizational chart.

Section II - Summary of Qualifications

1. Summarize the consultant's experience relative to Section III, "Scope of Service and Performance Requirements". Include in this summary a reference list of clients most similar to Austin I.S.D. and the representative who was assigned to each of the listed clients during the past five years (include address, phone number and contact persons). Indicate those clients the consultant firm currently has under contract as a group health benefits consultant.
2. Identify the specific individuals who will be assigned to the District. Provide brief resumes for each of them, highlighting relevant experience with similar clients. Indicate each individual's role relative to the District's account. Also indicate each individual's availability and the minimum notice required by the consultant to guarantee availability.

Section III - Scope of Service

A description of services and capabilities as outlined in the Scope of Service and Performance Requirements sections of this RFQ, in the order shown. Clearly state any exceptions taken to the specifications of this RFQ, or any conditions of the statement of qualifications.

Section IV - Capability Documents- Sample

Submit sample copies of documents prepared by the consultant, which are relevant to the Scope of Service as described herein and which would provide an example of consultant's abilities and qualifications. Include the following:

1. A description and sample of the methodology your firm has used in the past to evaluate the quality of care provided by varying network and plan design strategies.
2. A description of how you would compare the level of discounts between competing provider networks.
3. A detailed description to your approach to managing pharmacy cost for an employer.
4. A description of your approach to Vendor Performance management.
5. A copy of your service agreement. While the final signed version, may be an AISD generated document, review of your service agreement, if requested, should be submitted additionally.

Section V - Financial Proposal

This section shall contain a straightforward, concise delineation of the firm's fees to satisfy the requirements of this RFQ. It is the firm's responsibility to specify all costs (i.e. administrative fees, processing fees, etc.) associated with providing the services required herein.

Provide a complete fee schedule along with Attachment 01.

1. The following costs shall be included as a minimum:
 - A. Provide total annual cost of services
 - B. Provide itemized fee for service is not included in total annual cost of services
2. Costs not specifically detailed in Attachment 01, Fee Schedule, shall be included as an addendum to the schedule and included in the total cost proposed.
3. It is the consultant's responsibility to specify all costs associated with providing the services as required herein.
4. Travel expenses; Specify travel cost separately, estimating travel required to provide the services as required herein. AISD shall reimburse consultant for actual out of town travel expenses incurred for food, lodging and transportation, hotel and flight accommodations provided such expenses are authorized by AISD and reasonable. AISD's judgment shall prevail in any dispute arising over the reasonableness of such expense.

Section VI - References

References are to be from government agencies and/or firms, which are substantially serviced by the vendor (references most similar to Austin ISD should be provided). Each reference must contain the reference's name, address, telephone number, and point of contact (including email address). A list of at least three (3) references from current customers must be provided.

Section VII - Conflict of Interest

Identify and discuss any potential conflicts of interests.

C. Required Forms

Forms are required with **Original response & flash drive only**; they can be excluded from additional requested copies.

Firm shall execute the following required forms (located on our website: [Required Forms link](#)), and return the **signed original** with the statement of qualification:

- Bid Certification
- Notification of Criminal History of Contractor
- Debarment, Suspension and Ineligibility Certification
- **EDGAR Vendor Certification**
- **Software Vendor Certification Form (when applicable)**
- Conflict of Interest Questionnaire (CIQ). The CIQ is prepared by the Texas Ethics Commission, in compliance with Chapter 176 of the Texas Local Government Code. The form should be submitted on-line at [Conflict of Interest Questionnaire - CIQ](#).

IV. INITIAL REVIEW OF STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS

Any firm determined non-responsible or any statement of qualification determined non-responsive will not be evaluated further. The firm will be notified of a non-responsible or non-responsive determination.

Responsive

In order for a statement of qualification to be responsive:

- ALL required forms listed above shall be signed and included with statement of qualification;
- Statement of qualification shall be received prior to the RFQ opening date at the address listed on the cover page;
- Statement of qualifications shall respond to the entire scope of service and performance requirements as requested.

Responsible

In order for a statement of qualifications to be responsible, the firm shall be in good financial standing with the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts.

V. COMPETITIVE SELECTION / EVALUATION

- A. This is a NEGOTIATED procurement and as such, award will not necessarily be made to the offeror submitting the lowest priced statement of qualifications. Award will be made to the firm submitting the best responsive statement of qualifications satisfying AISD’s requirements, price and other factors considered. Consistent with state law and district policy, this RFQ does not commit the district to award a contract. The district reserves the right to accept or reject any or all statements of qualifications and/or award in whole or in part any statement of qualifications if the district determines it is in the best interest of the district to do so.

- B. The district anticipates that the evaluation process may include multiple levels of evaluation, as for example, but not limited to:
 - Phase 1: Initial review of the statement of qualifications by the district’s evaluation team.
 - Phase 2: Interviews and/or presentations of top statement of qualifications from Phase 1, followed by administrative review of finalist(s) and award recommendation.

PHASE 1

Points	Item	Detailed Description
30 Points	Firm's Capabilities	The criteria will include an evaluation of the Firm's Capabilities sample document (section IV Capability Documents- Sample).
20 Points	Firm's Qualifications	This criteria will include the Firm’s prior experience, reputation, and references. The statement of qualifications should demonstrate the firm's ability to handle the outlined requirements under Section IV. Scope of Services and Performance Requirements.
20 Points	Firm's Proposed Personnel Qualifications	This criteria will include the resume outlining the experience of staff that will be assigned to AISD, including time and availability dedicated to servicing AISD.
30 Points	Financial Proposal	This criteria will include an evaluation of the firm's fee structure, including minimum and maximum hourly rates, out-of-pocket reimbursements, expenses, and any other relevant factors.

PHASE 2 (optional)

Points	Item	Detailed Description
35 Points	Interview / Presentation	The adequacy and completeness of the plan offered addressing the Scope of Service.
35 Points	Firm's Capabilities	The demonstrated ability of the firm to provide services, including references.
30 Points	Financial Proposal	Start-up costs, fixed product costs, ongoing maintenance fees, etc.

- C. The committee evaluating the statements of qualifications submitted in response to this RFQ may require any or all Firms to give an oral presentation in order to clarify or elaborate on their statement of qualification as well as to provide a demonstration. Upon completion of oral presentations or discussions, firms may be requested to revise any or all portions of their response and submit a best and final offer (BAFO) for consideration.

- D. If the district determines that additional evaluation steps are required to determine the best value between Firms, the district reserves the right to consider any or all of the following additional criteria; the proposed price, Firm’s experience, references and record for responsibility, or any other relevant factor that the district deems necessary to determine best value.

VI. SCOPE OF SERVICE AND PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS

Term

The agreement(s) resulting from this solicitation will be in effect for an initial term of one (1) year from the date of award by the Board of Trustees, or such date established by the agreement. The parties by mutual consent may renew the agreement for up to four (4) additional one (1) year periods. In addition, the district reserves the right to extend the contract for an additional time beyond the final expiration date if necessary to ensure no lapse in service.

Under the direction of the Districts Benefit Department, the consultant shall deliver an accurate forecast and industry trends including costs for two (2) and three (3) years ahead for budgeting purposes; negotiate provider contracts with the District’s best interests in mind; and consistently works to offer the best benefit options for Austin ISD staff members, including monetary savings. Additionally, the consultant should have adequate staff to be ever accessible and available to the district. AISD values a consultant that has the ability to provide assistance and support to Austin ISD on a timely basis, is a proactive resource, and a strategic problem solver. The Consultant shall develop and maintain productive relationships with all benefit providers.

1. Review the District's current self-funded health plan, self-funded dental, basic life, voluntary life and short term disability programs along with the administration services provided by a Third Party Administrator for flexible spending account, long-term disability, vision, cancer, COBRA and benefit administration systems.
2. Aid in the evaluation of vendor renewal proposals and assist with rate negotiations.
3. Review existing plans for possible design changes and recommend development of future benefit programs.
4. Advise of any health, dental and TPA plan changes necessary for the administration of COBRA rules and regulations.
5. Advise of any possible legislative changes including health care reform (i.e., Affordable Care Act) timelines and provide appropriate updates and recommendations as necessary.
6. Advise of possible changes in industry norms and what impact these would have on district health plans.
7. Review the employee communications information and recommend changes.
8. Prepare AISD's Request for Proposal (RFP's) for the following items:
 - Group Health Insurance & Pharmacy Benefits - Third Party Administrator (TPA)
 - Dental Insurance
 - Life Insurance
 - Employee Benefits Program
 - Disability Insurances & all other ancillary products
 - Vision Insurance
 - Stop Loss Coverage
 - Provide Open Enrollment Onsite Enroller solution for district
9. Provide answers to interested RFP responder questions and assist with the review and evaluation of the proposal (RFP) responses.
10. As part of the review and analysis of the proposal responses, provide an evaluation of the quality of care delivered by the bidding health plan providers including networks. This evaluation should use a proven and quantifiable methodology and should be performed by an M.D. who has experience in managed care.
11. As part of the evaluation of proposal responses, quantify the difference in the level of discounts between bidding networks and estimate the impact on AISD's expected claims.

12. On an ongoing basis, analyze AISD's prescription drug program and make recommendations with regard to plan design and drug utilization. Benchmark AISD's drug program against other employer programs. In addition, review AISD's drug utilization and identify utilization patterns, which are not cost effective or represent a health risk for AISD employees. A licensed pharmacist with managed care experience should perform this review and provide day to day oversight of the plan.
13. Make recommendations to the AISD administration for selected vendors.
14. Present the administration approved recommendations to the AISD Board of Trustees.
15. Prepare a benefits comparison sheet of the various plans being offered as well as comparisons to the plans offered by surrounding school districts.
16. Attend employee meetings as required of the Joint Insurance and Consultation committees.
17. Review and monitor AISD's drug program on an ongoing basis against established performance objectives.
18. Access to a licensed physician for assistance in member appeals and patient advocacy.
19. Annually provide AISD with an independent, actuarially certified estimate of expected medical claims and total expected costs. (IBNR)
20. Provide underwritten performance projections for the self-funded health plan. For district budgeting purposes, cost projections for two or three out years may be required.
21. Provide underwritten calculation for reserve adjustments of the self-funded health plan.
22. Prepare and review internal open enrollment communications and review communications prepared by the TPA.
23. Provide assistance with and oversight of open enrollment sessions.
24. Coordinate with inside and outside legal counsel on all plan documents / amendments.
25. Provide the District with access to ERISA counsel. ERISA counsel is utilized in situations unrelated to medical such as plans offered under the Cafeteria 125 program (i.e., tax implications), interpretations of Affordable Care Act rulings, Qualified Events and unforeseen situations that had not been anticipated previously. The current ERISA counsel also sponsors webinars on a host of benefit related topics.

26. Develop contribution scenarios for future plan years for the self-funded health plan.
27. Develop a Vendor Management program for AISD that will establish performance goals for benefit vendors and periodically measure vendors against these goals.
28. Develop a monthly reporting package for AISD senior management which will provide a snap shot of the performance of the benefit plan as well as detailed reporting of the benefits program down to the plan level.
29. Provide an annual audit of medical and pharmacy claims
30. Provide a dependent documentation audit every 3 years (upon request)

VII. TERMS AND SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

- A. The agreement(s) resulting from this RFP will be in effect for a one (1) year from date of award. AISD may renew the contract for four (4) additional one-year periods. Any contractual agreements may be terminated by AISD by written notice to this effect sent to the Vendor at least thirty days prior to the date of cancellation.
- B. AISD reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and to waive all formalities in the RFP process.
- C. AISD desires to have all firms submit a proposal which incorporates all significant points enumerated in this RFP. Where the proposal is silent, AISD assumes the services set forth in Section III. SCOPE OF SERVICE AND PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS to be accepted as part of the proposal. The Board of Trustees will pass a resolution accepting the written proposal and appropriate portions (if applicable) of the successful proposer.
- D. AISD will not be responsible for any expenses incurred by a firm in preparing and submitting a proposal.
- E. Any contract resulting from this solicitation is contingent upon the continued availability of appropriations and is subject to cancellation, without penalty, either in whole or in part, if funds are not appropriated by the AISD Board of Trustees or otherwise not made available to the District.
- F. A written notice of award mailed or otherwise furnished to the successful offeror results in a binding contract without further action by either party.
- G. The District reserves the right to terminate all or any part of the undelivered portion of any order resulting from this solicitation with thirty (30) days written notice; upon default by the vendor, for delay or nonperformance by the vendor or, if it is deemed in the best interest of the District, for convenience.

- H. AISD may award consulting services to one or more consultants.
- I. Successful consultant will be compensated by AISD for services satisfactorily performed in accordance with contract requirements. As such, during the term of the contract, consultant shall be prohibited from receiving commissions from group health benefit insurance companies, agents or their affiliates who may be proposing group health benefit insurance services to AISD or, are currently providing group health benefit insurance services to AISD.

VIII. APPENDICES AND ATTACHMENTS

- Appendices (Documents included within this request for qualification):
 - Appendix 1 - Purchasing and Acquisition Vendor Relations Policy CHE-LOCAL
- Attachments (Separate documents available to download):
 - Attachment 1 - Fee Schedule