



# Doing Business with Charleston County Government

## How the Procurement Process Works

Charleston County posts all open solicitations online at [www.charlestoncounty.org](http://www.charlestoncounty.org).

## Types of Solicitations

Formal solicitations are used for procurements estimated to cost at least \$25,000. There are three types of formal, competitive solicitations:

### Invitation For Bids (IFB)

A method using formal, sealed bids, which are opened in public, read aloud and recorded at the Procurement Department Office at the time designated in the invitation. A contract is then awarded to the lowest bidder who is determined to be responsive to the County's request.

### Request For Proposals (RFP)

When a requirement exists for a highly technical product or service, Charleston County issues an RFP, which requires a formal, sealed bid. In a typical RFP, the County will solicit proposals from prospective contractors on how they intend to fulfill the require-



ments and at what price. This allows proposals to be compared according to how well they meet the County's needs. Bid responses to an RFP are subject to negotiation after submittal.

### Request for Qualification (RFQ)

A formal solicitation for particular types of professional services, such as architectural or engineering services. Firms are rated strictly on technical capabilities, experience and ability to complete the work in a timely manner, and compliance with Small Business Enterprise Program requirements.

## Small Business Enterprise (SBE) Program

The SBE Program is race and gender neutral with an emphasis on growing and enhancing small companies. The program is designed to increase contract competition, reach subcontract requirements for SBE firm participation on County contracts, and conduct outreach programs that will aid small businesses in development and help prepare them to compete for government contracts.

## Types of Contracts

- Architecture
- Engineering
- Construction
- Information Technology
- Medical
- Legal
- Consulting
- Janitorial Services
- Landscaping
- Security
- Automotive Fleet
- Heavy Equipment
- Other Professional Services
- Various Goods and Supplies

