



Department of Procurement Services

160 South Hollywood Street | Room 126 | Memphis, TN 38112 | (901) 416-5376

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

RFP 073126TW Custodial Cleaning Services Zones (1 – 4)

1. Will the contract awards be made by zones or regions within inside the zones?

For purposes of this solicitation, Zones and Regions are considered one and the same. Each Zone represents a distinct service Region, and proposers should develop their staffing, management approach, and pricing accordingly for each individual Zone/Region."

2. Management Structure & Pricing - As we understand the RFP, the District is requesting pricing for all four zones. For a project of this scale, our management approach differs depending on whether each zone is intended to function as an independent operation or as part of a consolidated, district-wide service model. With that in mind, would the district prefer that proposers develop pricing for each zone as a standalone operation, or should pricing reflect an integrated management structure across all four zones?

The District is requesting pricing for each individual Zone. Respondents may choose to develop their management structure and pricing approach either as a standalone operation for each Zone or as part of an integrated district-wide service model. However, proposers should be mindful that each Zone may be evaluated and awarded separately. Therefore, pricing and operational plans should clearly support the District's ability to assess each Zone independently.

3. Existing Equipment - On contracts of this nature, it is common for the district to retain ownership of equipment at the conclusion of the contract term through a buyback or ownership provision. With that in mind, does the district currently have custodial equipment available that will be incorporated into the new contract(s)? If so, could the district please provide an inventory identifying the type, quantity, age, and condition of the available equipment, as well as indicate how the equipment is expected to be allocated among the four zones?

The District does not currently have custodial equipment available for use under this contract and does not intend to purchase equipment at the conclusion of the contract term. Respondents shall provide all equipment, tools, machinery, supplies, and other resources necessary to perform the required custodial services throughout the duration of the contract. Pricing should include all costs associated with providing and maintaining the equipment required to meet the specifications of this solicitation.

4. Appendix C – References has space for responding Respondents to include 3 customer references, while page 22 states responding Respondents should “List five (5) references with a minimum of three (3) customer references where you are currently providing comparable custodial services, including large facilities (prefer greater than 3MM sq. ft. and 25+ buildings), multiple facilities, preferably school systems.” Should we want to provide references in excess of 3, should we duplicate Appendix C to provide reference details? Will Respondents who provide fewer than 5 customer references be penalized in the evaluation process?

Only three (3) references and testimonials are required. Respondents should complete Appendix C as provided and submit the required three (3) customer references. Additional references are not required and will not be considered as part of the evaluation. Respondents will not be penalized for providing only three (3) references requested in Appendix C. References should demonstrate the vendor's experience providing comparable custodial cleaning services in environments of similar size, complexity, and multi-facility operational requirements to those outlined in this solicitation.

5. In section 2.0 Proposal Format, pricing (Appendix I) is requested in Tab F as well as Tab G. Should pricing be included in both sections, or is one preferred over the other for ease of evaluation?
- Pricing should be submitted in Appendix I (Pricing Schedule), pages 58–61, and on the Excel pricing chart posted on the MSCS Procurement website. The completed Excel pricing chart must also be included in the USB drive submitted with the proposal. Respondents are not required to duplicate pricing information elsewhere in their proposal.**

6. The RFP states that the district reserves the right to require a performance bond. Should respondents include the cost of obtaining a performance bond in their proposed pricing, or will it only be required if requested after contract award? Please clarify whether respondents should include the cost of both a statutory bond and a performance bond in their proposed pricing, or only the cost of a performance bond, if applicable.

For this solicitation, the District reserves the right to require a Performance Bond from the successful respondent. If required, the bond must be provided by the awarded vendor at the vendor's expense. The cost of any required bond shall not be reimbursed by the District and should be accounted for by respondents when developing their pricing proposals.

7. The RFP contains two separate bonding provisions that appear to conflict, and we would appreciate clarification before submitting our proposal.
- Section 18.0, "Bonding" (p. 7–8) states that for services involving "any type of construction or maintenance of public building" with a contract price over \$100,000, the contractor "will execute and provide to SCBE a good and solvent bond... for at least twenty-five (25%) of the contract price," as a mandatory condition prior to commencement of work.
 - Section 1.7.2, "Rights of SCBE" (p. 19–20) states that "SCBE reserves the right to require a Performance, Materials and Labor Bond from the successful bidder," and that if required, such bond must be notarized, from a TN-licensed insurer, for "100% of the contract amount awarded," with the bonding cost reimbursed to the bidder.
 - Would you please clarify which bonding requirement applies to this custodial services contract, and the correct bond percentage?

Section 18.0 does not apply to this solicitation. The bonding requirements referenced in Section 18.0 are specific to construction and maintenance projects and are not applicable to this custodial services contract. This solicitation is for custodial cleaning services, not construction or maintenance services.

The references to bonding within the solicitation are included solely to preserve the District's right to require a Performance Bond, if deemed necessary. At this time, no bond is specifically designated or required as part of this solicitation. However, the District reserves the right to require a Performance Bond from the successful respondent at its discretion. If a bond is required, all costs associated with obtaining and maintaining the bond shall be the sole responsibility of the vendor and will not be reimbursed by the District. Respondents should consider this when developing their proposals.

8. Section 1.1 (p. 13) states labor and supervision must be provided "for full 12 months of the year including summer." Does this mean full staffing is required for 12 months out of the year, including school breaks, where staff would perform periodic/reduced-scope work rather than standard daily service levels?

Yes, staffing is required for the full twelve (12) months of the contract term. The District has not identified or authorized any reduction in staffing levels during the contract period. Respondents should propose staffing levels sufficient to meet all contractual requirements throughout the year.

Only during periods when schools or facilities are officially closed and unoccupied may service levels be adjusted as appropriate to meet operational needs. However, the contract does not authorize a blanket reduction in staffing during school breaks or summer months. Respondents should base their proposals on providing the staffing necessary to fulfill all contracted services for the entire contract term.

9. Appendix I, the Pricing Schedule, asks respondents to enter the "# of Staff" needed for each location, but does not define the hourly basis for that count. Section 1.3.4.E (p. 15) states "1 lead/general cleaner = 7.5 hours" in the context of the Monthly Head Count Average KPI.

- a. Can you confirm that the "# of Staff" figure requested in the Pricing Schedule should be based on this same 7.5-hour/day definition?

Yes. The staffing requirements outlined in the Pricing Schedule are based on Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs). For purposes of this solicitation, one (1) FTE is defined as an employee working 7.5 hours per day. Respondents should calculate and report their proposed staffing levels using this 7.5-hour FTE standard.

The total number of staff proposed for each location and zone will be evaluated on an FTE basis. Therefore, respondents should ensure that the staffing counts provided in the Pricing Schedule accurately reflect the total FTEs necessary to perform all required services in accordance with the specifications of this contract. Part-time staffing may be utilized by the respondent; however, staffing levels will be evaluated based on the total FTE equivalent, with one (1) FTE equal to 7.5 hours of labor per day.

Part III (p. 9) outlines the proposal format using a TAB structure (TAB A through TAB H). Section 1.8.2 (p. 22) outlines a different "Proposal Inclusions" structure with items I through X.

- b. Should respondents organize the proposal following the TAB structure on page 9, or the numbered items I-X structure on page 22? If both structures apply, please specify how they should be integrated.

Respondents should organize their proposals using the TAB structure (TAB A through TAB H) outlined in the Proposal Format section of the RFP. In the event of a discrepancy, the TAB structure should be used as the organizational format for proposal submission.

10. Page 28 states "Common areas are to be cleaned and disinfected a minimum of 2x's a day (during lunch & the end of the day)."

- a. Please clarify: (1) What specific areas are defined as "common areas" (e.g., hallways, lobbies, entryways, cafeteria, library, stairwells), and (2) What specific disinfection method or product should be used for common areas?

The definition of "common areas" is provided in the RFP. Respondents should refer to Section V, Page 31 of the solicitation for the specific areas included under the common area cleaning requirements.

11. Page 28–29 specifies that classroom floors are to be buffed daily (high traffic areas) and weekly (low traffic areas). For our proposal pricing, could you please confirm whether this daily and weekly buffing specification is currently being performed as part of the existing scope of work, or if this represents a new/enhanced requirement in this RFP?

The requirement for daily buffing of high-traffic classroom areas and weekly buffing of low-traffic classroom areas is not a new or enhanced requirement.

Proposers should not assume a reduced level of service or interpret these requirements as an increase in scope beyond the District's established custodial standards.

12. Section 1.1 (p. 14) requires the contractor to "compensate all assigned employees who were regularly scheduled to work during the closure period at their full regular rate of pay for all scheduled hours missed as a direct result of the closure" when MSCS closes schools for inclement weather.

- a. If MSCS schedules make-up school days later in the school year to compensate for inclement weather closures, will the contractor be required to provide custodial services on those make-up days? If so, will those make-up days be billable work orders, or will they be considered part of the base contract scope since the contractor has already compensated employees for the original closure?

This contract is structured as a twelve (12) month, year-round service agreement. As such, there is no need for a contract adjustment, billing modification, or additional compensation related to make-up school days resulting from inclement weather closures.

Under the terms of this contract, the contractor is expected to maintain staffing and operational readiness throughout the contract period. During District-authorized closures, employees are to be compensated in accordance with the contract requirements. If the District subsequently schedules additional instructional days to make up for closure days, those days remain part of the District's annual operating calendar and are covered under the existing twelve-month contract structure.

Therefore, any make-up days that are added to the school calendar shall be considered part of the contractor's normal contractual obligations and shall not result in additional compensation beyond the agreed-upon contract pricing. The contractor will continue to be compensated through the existing twelve-month contract model.

13. Page 4, Section 2.0 states "The anticipated term of the contract is one (1) year with the option to renew for three (3) additional terms of one (1) year each." However, Page 14, Section 15.0 states "The cost for each additional year of the four-year term shall not exceed..." and "The option to renew for one (1) additional one (1) year term..."

a. Please clarify the actual contract structure: Is the initial term one (1) year with three (3) optional one-year renewals (totaling up to 4 years), or is the initial term four (4) years with one (1) optional one-year renewal (totaling up to 5 years)?

The contract term for this solicitation shall be as stated in Section 2.0 – Terms of Agreement (Page 4): an initial term of one (1) year with the option to renew for three (3) additional one-year terms, subject to the approval of the District. Please see page 4 for clarification.

14. Would you please provide copies of the sign-in sheets from the Mandatory Pre-Proposal Conference (July 14, 2026) and the Mandatory Site Visits (July 15, 2026)?

The sign in sheets for the Pre – Proposal Conference and Site Visits are posted on the Memphis Shelby County Schools Website.

15. Please provide additional details regarding the custodial services required at the Nutrition Services Center, including the specific areas to be cleaned and the expected service frequencies?

There are no special or unique custodial service requirements for the Nutrition Services Center beyond the general custodial services outlined in this solicitation. Respondents should provide the same level and scope of custodial cleaning services required for other District facilities, as applicable. Respondents should develop their staffing plans, service approach, and pricing based on the standard custodial requirements identified in the RFP and should not assume any additional scope related to food production, food handling, or specialized sanitation services associated with the Nutrition Services operation.

16. Are propane-powered burnishers approved for use at all district facilities, or are there any location-specific restrictions that Respondents should consider when developing their proposals?

Any proposed use of propane-powered burnishers should be clearly identified by the respondent and will be subject to District review and approval prior to use within District facilities.

While propane-powered equipment may be allowed under certain circumstances, it is not the District's preferred method of operation. The District has concerns regarding exhaust emissions and the potential impact on building environments, including considerations related to ventilation and fire suppression systems.

17. Would the district consider a single, consolidated pricing proposal covering all four zones? While Page 39 indicates that alternative bids will not be accepted, we would appreciate clarification as to whether a consolidated pricing structure would be considered an alternative bid.

The District is requesting pricing for each individual Zone. Respondents may choose to develop their management structure and pricing approach either as a standalone operation for each Zone or as part of an integrated district-wide service model. However, proposers should be mindful that each Zone may be evaluated and awarded separately. Therefore, pricing and operational plans should clearly support the District's ability to assess each Zone independently.

18. Will the district provide warehouse or storage space for the selected contractor to house equipment, supplies, and materials necessary to perform the services?

The District will not provide a centralized warehouse, storage facility, or dedicated storage space for contractors. Respondents shall be responsible for providing and managing all equipment, supplies, and materials necessary to perform the required services under this contract.

If awarded a Zone, the contractor may utilize designated storage areas within the awarded school locations for the storage of equipment and custodial supplies, subject to the approval of the school administration and District requirements. Storage capacity may vary by location, and respondents should recognize that some facilities, particularly larger high schools, may have more storage capacity than others.

Respondents should not assume that additional District-owned warehouse or storage space will be made available beyond the storage areas available at the assigned schools. Contractors are responsible for managing their operations accordingly and ensuring that all equipment and supplies are stored in a safe, secure, and code-compliant manner.

19. Will office space be made available for the contractor's on-site management and administrative personnel?

The District will not provide office space for the contractor's management, administrative, or support personnel. Respondents shall be responsible for securing and maintaining any office space necessary to support their operations under this contract.

20. May proposers utilize the district logo, individual school logos, and photographs available on the district's website and social media platforms within their proposal submissions?

Proposers may utilize the District logo, individual school logos, and photographs available on District-owned websites and official social media platforms solely for inclusion in their proposal submitted in response to this RFP. Such use shall be limited to the proposal submission and shall not imply endorsement by Memphis-Shelby County Schools of any proposer, product, or service.

21. Can the district please provide information regarding the composition of the evaluation or selection committee that will be reviewing proposals?

The evaluation committee is a group of MSCS employees, consisting of subject matter experts (SMEs) from the custodial department and additional core members of the MSCS staff.

22. Are you a network provider?

Additional clarification is needed.