

**Request for Proposals
Kent County Levy Court
555 Bay Road, Dover, DE 19901**

www.co.kent.de.us

ISSUED: September 21, 2022

RESPONSES DUE: October 21, 2022, at 4:00 p.m., prevailing time



Subject: Compensation & Classification Study

Proposal Specifications

SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

A. OBJECTIVES

Kent County Levy Court desires to enter into a contract with a highly qualified and experienced consulting firm for the purpose of conducting a Compensation Study within the existing Classification System with particular attention given to State mandated minimum wage increases scheduled annually through 2025. The Study recommendations are expected to maintain appropriate employee compensation over the next few years as the minimum wage increases. In addition, the study should ensure County positions performing similar work with essentially the same level of complexity, responsibility, and knowledge, skills, and abilities are classified together; provides salaries commensurate with assigned duties; clearly outlines promotional opportunities and provides recognizable compensation growth; provides justifiable pay differential between individual classes; and is competitive within relevant labor markets.

B. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Kent County Levy Court (KCLC) is the governing body for one of the three counties comprising the State of Delaware. Kent County is centrally located and is home of the State capital - Dover, which is also the county seat. The current population is estimated to be 181,851.

Kent County government currently has 188 position titles occupied by 299 full-time employees (when fully staffed, and not including elected officials). Positions are single or multiple incumbent positions in a job series (such as Permit Technician I, II, III). The County Pay Plan has 22 grades (1 - 22) for a mixed hourly and salaried workforce that works either 35 hours per week or 40 hours per week. Current pay ranges, pay rates, and position descriptions are available on the KCLC website at www.co.kent.de.us

A comprehensive job classification and compensation study was completed in 2019/2020, which resulted in a renumbering and expansion of job classification pay grades and widening of the pay ranges, and all new position descriptions effective July 1, 2021. Twenty years earlier, a similar study reduced the number of pay grades, introduced annual step increases, and increased pay rates while an accompanying staffing needs and efficiency study resulted in the consolidation of 13 individual County Departments into six Departments with 12 supporting Divisions, a reduction in the number of different position titles from 144 to 129, and significant position description revisions. The study was subsequently updated in 2002/2003, in 2005/2006, and a comprehensive study was completed in 2014/15.

SECTION II. SCOPE OF SERVICES

Kent County requests proposals from interested, highly qualified firms experienced in the study, analysis, and design of comprehensive public sector compensation and position classification systems to provide the following: (The selected firm will consider the objectives of the County and recommend changes necessary to establish and maintain an equitable and competitive compensation plan within the existing position classification system for Kent County's full-time positions.)

A. COMPENSATION STUDY

Shall include but not be limited to:

1. Review of current compensation practices.
2. Complete internal salary relationship analysis including the development of appropriate internal relationship guidelines (internal equity).
3. Identify and recommend appropriate salary and benefits survey labor market and benchmark classes that provide relevant/meaningful comparative salary data, which can be utilized in creating a competitive pay plan. Benchmark classifications must be a good representation of an occupational group or profession.
4. Conduct market salary and benefits survey of at least six (6) public sector organizations comparable to the County in size, population, economic climate, proximity to major cities, etc., which are selected by the consultant in consultation with the County Administrator and Personnel Director. Market survey should include the hours worked per week by employees in each position in those comparable communities to consider both internal and external equity. Survey should compare base annual salary for each position included in the study by minimum, midpoint, and maximum.
5. Conduct a pay compression analysis, identify potential pay compression issues, and provide alternative solutions.
6. Utilizing the market survey results, comparable job descriptions, and other data collected, prepare a recommended compensation plan design and salary schedule to correspond to the classification plan and customized to reflect the County's pay progression policy and compensation philosophy; recommend the vertical salary relationship and/or differentials between classes in each class series; provide for annual compensation plan adjustments to address any adverse impacts related to minimum wage increases.
7. Develop externally competitive and internally equitable salary/step pay plan recommendations for each job class included in the study; provide written documentation of assessment methodology and assessment for each position.

8. Develop and prepare appropriate written training materials and conduct comprehensive training sessions for key staff in the methodology used to systematically assess job classifications in order to maintain internal compensation equity in the future when adding, changing, or deleting classifications.

B. CLASSIFICATION STUDY

Shall include but not be limited to:

1. Review background materials including organizational charts, budget information related to staffing, personnel rules, existing classification and compensation plan, and other related information.

2. Meet with County Administrator, Personnel Director and others to discuss study; provide options and recommendations for job evaluation methodologies; identify the advantages and disadvantages of each; and agree on methodology and process to be used in the study.

3. Meet with Department Heads and other supervisory staff to explain the study, the process to be used, and potential outcomes.

4. Conduct on-site orientation and briefing sessions for employees covered within the scope of the study to explain the methodology of the project and the job analysis questionnaire. Assist in the development of informational materials appropriate for distribution to staff and/or in employee newsletters or mailings to help explain the project to employees.

5. Develop a job analysis/position description questionnaire to be used as part of the position review process. The questionnaire must include an FLSA exempt test and an evaluation of working conditions which can be used effectively when engaging in the interactive process in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Final design of the questionnaire must be approved by the Personnel Director prior to distribution.

6. Review all current classification specifications and analyze, document, and validate same for distinguishing characteristics, position definition and purpose, knowledge, skills, abilities, essential job functions, minimum qualifications, education and experience relevance and hierarchal consistency, conformity with ADA language relative to essential job functions (including physical and intellectual requirements), working/environmental conditions, supervision received and exercised, standby/call back responsibilities, and special requirements including licensing, regulatory, certification requirements, etc.

7. Coordinate distribution and oversee the completion of the job analysis/position description questionnaire by all employees covered within the scope of the study. Appropriate supervisor and department head will review and comment on (not change) each completed questionnaire; the County Administrator will review and comment (not change) all department head responses.

8. Review and analyze the completed questionnaires and management review for all employees covered within the scope of the study.

9. Conduct on-site interviews with all (or a representative sample of) covered employees, as well as appropriate supervisor and management personnel, to verify/clarify information received in the questionnaires and to ensure information regarding organizational structure, supervision, essential job duties, and working environment is accurately captured and reflected in the descriptions that are developed. Interviews may be conducted individually or in groups based upon classification. The County Administrator or designee may be interviewed to verify/clarify information gained from interviews with department heads.

10. Compare job analysis/position description questionnaire and interview results to existing position classifications. Recommend updates if warranted to the current classification structure or propose a new system utilizing a standardized rating system that analyzes each position against multiple evaluation criteria. Recommend the allocation of each employee covered within the scope of the study to an appropriate job class within the classification structure.

11. Recommend and develop new classes if warranted; recommend deletion of outdated or unnecessary classes as appropriate.

12. Identify management, supervisory, professional, technical, public safety, labor, and general employees (EEO category), including FLSA status (exempt/non-exempt).

13. Review and recommend, if warranted, classification series and levels within the series (i.e., I/II, Senior/Lead, etc.). Review reporting/organizational structure and make suggestions. Develop and identify viable career progressions within the classification plan.

14. If needed, draft and submit up-to-date, uniform, and accurate class specifications for positions within the scope of the study in a format approved by the Director of Personnel. Specifications must reflect distinguishing characteristics, position definition and purpose, knowledge, skills, abilities, essential job functions, minimum qualifications, education and experience relevance and hierarchal consistency, conformity with accurate ADA-compliant language relative to essential job functions (including physical and mental requirements), working/environmental conditions, supervision received and exercised, standby/call back responsibilities, and special requirements including licensing, regulatory, and certification requirements. Ensure that desirable experience and education qualifications are appropriate and defensible while serving to select qualified candidates.

15. If needed, recommend, and assist with an employee review and appeal process including a clear understanding of the steps employees must follow and what they should expect in response to their appeal. This process must include personal contact with consultants. Documentation of appeals and recommended resolution is required. Appeal process must be completed within 30 days of plan adoption.

16. Present proposed class specifications to employees, supervisors, and management for review; receive and incorporate input prior to final classification determination.

17. Prepare final version of all class specifications, including correction of discrepancies identified

during the review process; present to the County for final approval. Following approval, provide the County with all class specifications in paper and electronic (Microsoft Word) format.

18. As needed, develop and prepare classification manual to be used by Kent County to objectively evaluate new or revised positions following the conclusion of the study. The Manual shall describe the methodology used by the consultant to undertake the study and how it can be maintained and utilized by the County in the future, as well as a detailed and standardized procedure or rating structure for analyzing each position against multiple evaluation criteria to determine job classifications and pay grades. The Manual shall also include a description of class concepts, information about the distinctions of various levels within a class series, and other pertinent information.

19. As needed, develop and prepare other appropriate written training materials, including tools, matrices, and/or guidelines, to assist staff in evaluating and determining job classifications and pay grades; conduct comprehensive training sessions for key staff to ensure maintenance of the classification and compensation structure until the next formal study is conducted.

20. Provide periodic status reports on progress as requested.

C. STUDY CONCLUSION

Shall include but not be limited to:

1. Prepare written final report with specific, itemized recommendations, including discussion of methods, techniques, and data used to develop the Classification & Compensation Plan and Benefits Program.
2. Prepare an analysis of the financial impact for implementation of the new classification and compensation plan and any recommended benefit program adjustments and define funding issues.
3. Provide implementation support and additional training as needed to ensure maintenance of the classification and compensation structure until the next formal study is conducted.
4. In addition to meetings specified in (A), and (B) above, attend meetings, if requested, throughout the process with the County Administrator, employees, and/or KCLC to explain methodology, survey results, and recommendations or assist in implementation of the plan.

SECTION III. TECHNICAL PROPOSAL AND FORMAT

All proposals shall respond to all questions and requirements listed in this RFP.

A. Basic Information

1. State the name of your firm, address, telephone and telefax numbers and the name and title of the person who will serve as the KCLC's key contact with your firm with respect to your proposal.
2. Provide a general description of the firm, including size, number of employees, primary

business (consulting, etc.), other business or services, type of organization (franchise, corporation, partnership, etc.), and other descriptive material.

3. Please provide a list of five (5) current or previous clients as references, including names, titles, affiliations, telephone numbers, and type of consulting work performed.
4. Please explain the data gathering and analysis method(s) to be used to accomplish the requirements of this RFP.
5. Please comment on what distinguishes your firm from its competitors and why it is uniquely qualified to provide the requested services.
6. Provide a description of how reports will be produced, type of word processing software, etc. to be utilized in the performance of the agreement.

B. Financial Condition

1. Has your firm experienced any significant financial difficulties or other problems which could negatively affect its ability to carry out its duties and responsibilities to KCLC? If yes, please specifically identify the problem(s) and discuss why such problems should be disregarded.
2. Are there any pending or threatened investigations, litigation or pending litigation regarding the conduct or business conduct of your firm or its management. Could any of these directly or indirectly affect your role as a consultant to the KCLC as described in this RFP? Have there been any such investigations or litigation or threats thereof within the past three years? If so, describe thoroughly.

C. Personnel Assigned

1. Identify the consultant(s) in your firm who will be involved with this engagement, (i.e., the person(s) who will have the direct reporting and administrative responsibility to the KCLC). Please indicate the status of this individual within your organization and his/her professional background and experience. Provide other relevant information regarding this individual.
2. Provide professional backgrounds for all associates and other personnel who will be involved with the engagement.
3. Describe your organizational approach to this engagement; utilize if appropriate, an organizational table. Explain how the various professionals and staff will be organized and managed. Indicate if any portion of the work will be subcontracted or assigned to another outside consultant(s) or firms.

D. Project Timetable

Submit a detailed project timetable setting forth a suggested commencement date and completion date for the project. The successful firm must be prepared to undertake commencement of the project immediately upon award of contract. All work is targeted to be completed and the final report submitted to KCLC by February 16, 2023, so recommendations may be considered for inclusion during the annual budgeting process.

E. Proposal Structure

Proposals are limited to 24 double sided pages, excluding cover letters and appendices. Proposals should not contain extraneous promotional materials. Proposals will be evaluated based on information presented by the Offeror and evaluation criteria listed in this RFP.

SECTION IV: EVALUATION CRITERIA

1. 40% - Cost of Services
2. 15% - Experience in similar consulting services and project management plan.
3. 15% - Qualification of project staff, including internal staff and/or staff that may be involved in duties being outsourced.
4. 15% - Performance History (References)
5. 15% - Demonstration of the firm’s ability to successfully complete all requirements as specified in Scope of Work within provided timeframe.

A Selection Review Committee will review RFPs received for completeness, quality, and accuracy/relevancy of information therein utilizing a standardized review and scoring process and will make an award recommendation to the Kent County Levy Court for the respondent whose proposal is judged to be in the best interest of Kent County, based upon criteria set forth herein and the most advantageous cost proposal.

Review Committee members will assign up to the maximum number of points listed for each of the five (5) evaluation areas listed below:

Evaluation Criteria Areas		
1.	Cost of Services	40
2.	Experience/Project Management Plan	15
3.	Qualification of Staff	15
4.	Performance History	15
5.	Ability to Complete Scope of Work	15
TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE		100

SECTION V: COST PROPOSAL

1. Indicate fee for providing services identified in the Scope of Services. Please quote fee for each component (A), (B), and (C) of Section II separately (D - Study Conclusion is inclusive), as well as a total package fee. Also list any additional services that will be provided for the stated fee(s). Please explain any variables which might affect the fees or the fee structure.

SECTION VI: GENERAL INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS

A. Issuing Office

This request for proposals is being issued through the Personnel Office in the Administration Department of Kent County Levy Court. Unless otherwise specified, the County Administrator and/or Personnel Director are the sole points of contact for the purposes of the RFP and subsequent responses will be in writing.

B. Addendum to RFP

The KCLC reserves the right to amend the RFP prior to the due date of responses. If it becomes

necessary to revise any part of the RFP, an addendum shall be provided to all offerors who have been sent a copy of this RFP. All offerors shall include acknowledgment of all addenda as part of this proposal. Failure to acknowledge addenda may be grounds for disqualification of the proposal.

C. Questions

Questions will be accepted in writing via email or by letter up to or before 5:00 PM on Friday, October 7, 2022, and will be answered in the mode received (either email response or letter response) no later than Wednesday, October 12, 2022.

All questions regarding this Request for Proposal shall be referred to:

Allan Kujala
Kent County Personnel Director
555 Bay Road
Dover, Delaware 19901
Phone: (302) 744-2310
Email: allan.kujala@kentcountyde.gov

D. Cost of Preparing Proposal

The cost of developing and submitting the proposal is entirely the responsibility of the offeror. This includes costs to determine the nature of this engagement, preparation of proposal, submission of proposal, negotiation for the contract, and all other costs associated with this RFP and responses thereto. All responses will become the property of the KCLC and may be a matter of public record subsequent to award of the contract or rejection of all proposals.

E. Submissions of Proposals

Five (5) copies of each offeror's proposal(s) shall be submitted in a sealed package marked “**COMPENSATION CONSULTING SERVICES PROPOSAL**” to **Michael Petit de Mange, County Administrator, Room 243, Kent County Administrative Complex, Kent County Levy Court, 555 Bay Road, Dover, DE 19901** no later than 4:00 p.m., prevailing time, on Friday, October 21, 2022, at which time they will be opened, and relevant information publicly read. Interviews, if necessary, with a short-listed number of firms meeting the minimum criteria, are expected to be scheduled during late October/ early November 2022 with award expected by mid-November 2022.

F. Independent Price Determination

A proposal will not be considered for award if the fees were not arrived at independently and without collusion, communication, or agreement as to any matter related to such prices with any other vendor, competitor, or public officer. The vendor must include a certified statement in the proposal transmittal letter certifying that the price was arrived at without any conflict of interest.

G. Preparation

Responses should provide a straightforward, concise description of offeror's capabilities to satisfy the requirements of this RFP. Emphasis should be on completeness and clarity of content.

Repetition of the terms and conditions of the RFP, without additional explanation, will not be considered sufficiently responsive.

H. Errors in Proposal Preparation

The KCLC has the right to rely on any price quotes provided by offerors. The offerors may be responsible for any mathematical error or incorrect extension of any calculations leading to the offeror's price quotes. The KCLC reserves the right to reject proposals which contain errors.

I. Appearance Before KCLC Committee

Any or all offerors may be required to appear before one or more KCLC Committee(s) to explain the offeror's understanding and approach to the project and/or respond to any questions regarding the proposal submitted. The project manager shall make any requested oral presentations before the KCLC Committee(s).

J. Insurance

The successful Contractor awarded the Contract pursuant to this Solicitation shall be responsible for keeping in force a general comprehensive policy insuring against personal injury and property damage in an amount no less than one million dollars (\$1,000,000). In addition, the Contractor shall be required to obtain and keep in force for all non-County employees and workers, workers compensation and other required insurance in the minimum limits required by State law. The Contractor shall be required to submit a certificate of insurance, naming the County as an additional insured, prior to the signing of the final contract.

K. Indemnification

The Contractor awarded the Contract pursuant to this Solicitation shall indemnify and hold harmless the County, its officials, and employees from the following:

(a) Any and all direct or indirect damages, costs, claims, actions, suits, judgments, or liens resulting from the negligent act or commission or omission of the Contractor, its employees, agents, or subcontractors, and

(b) Any and all direct or indirect costs, claims, actions, suits, judgments, or liens for damages resulting from the Contract arising from the negligence or omission of the Contractor, its employees, agents, or subcontractors. The Contractor shall, upon completion of work, provide the County with a Release of Liens from any subcontractor, supplier, material, or other supplier of goods and services to the project.

L. Awards

Awards will be made by the Kent County Levy Court consistent with 9 Del. C. §314 (d) and based upon the best potential interest of Kent County. The KCLC reserves the right to reject any or all responses to the RFP, for whatever reason deemed by it to be appropriate, and shall not be obligated to return any material in connection with this request.

M. Payments

Payments to successful Contractor(s) shall be contingent upon negotiation of fees and acceptance of the proposal and will be made in accordance with mutually agreeable terms by the KCLC.