**Section 2000.4015 Acquisition of Leases by RFI**

All leases, except those falling under the exceptions listed in Section 2000.4020 or emergency procurements (Section 2000.4045) will be acquired as follows:

a) All leases will be procured by a Request for Information (RFI). RFIs will contain at a minimum the following information:

1) A description of the general type of property to be leased.

2) The proposed use of the property.

3) The proposed term of the lease.

4) The preferred location of the property.

5) The general information such as size of space, configuration desired, and any other appropriate requirements.

6) The address to which requests for proposal may be sent.

7) The date by which responses are due.

8) Response forms and instructions for completing forms.

9) A copy of spatial and performance guidelines required to meet the needs of the SOS Department that will occupy the real property being procured.

b) Notice of the RFI shall be published at least 14 days prior to the deadline for responding in the Bulletin.

c) Responses.

1) The Request for Information may include a form or format for submitting responses. If a form or format is specified, vendor shall submit responses as instructed.

2) The RFI response must detail how the respondent will meet all required criteria set forth in the RFI.

d) Proposal packages must, at a minimum, include:

1) A Proposal Form.

2) A copy of the agency program requirements.

3) The date by which proposals must be submitted.

e) All responses to the RFI will be publicly opened on the announced opening date. Names of all parties submitting proposals will be made available to the public.

f) Secretary of State representatives may conduct discussions with respondents to further clarify the needs of the State or obtain further information on responses.

g) Based on the responses to the RFI, the Chief Procurement Officer (CPO) or a designee will make a written determination of which RFIs submitted are responsive to the State's basic criteria.

h) Secretary of State representatives will enter into negotiations with all parties submitting responsive RFIs for the purpose of obtaining the best terms for the State. A written record of all negotiations will be maintained by the Secretary of State.

i) A Secretary of State representative will review all relevant information and recommend to the CPO which proposal should be accepted.

j) The CPO will make the final award, which will be announced in the Bulletin.

k) The lease will be reduced to writing and executed by all parties.

l) If the lowest-priced proposal is not selected, the CPO will publish notice, along with the reasons for such selection, in the next available edition of the Bulletin.

m) The Secretary of State reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to request and evaluate "best and final" proposals. All decisions on compliance, evaluations, terms, and conditions will be made solely at the Secretary of State's discretion and made to favor the State.

(Source: Amended at 47 Ill. Reg. 10622, effective July 3, 2023)