

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Benefits Related Legal Services

City of Lock Haven

The City of Lock Haven invites qualified applicants who are members of the Pennsylvania bar to provide appropriate legal services, as outlined in this request for proposals. All proposals must be received by 4:00 p.m. on March 28, 2025 at the Office of the City Manager, 20 East Church Street, Lock Haven, PA 17745. Proposals may be submitted in person, sent through the mail or by email to the City Manager at gwilson@lockhavenpa.gov. The background information and requirements for providing proposals are included in this request packet.

A. PLAN AND SPONSOR

The City maintains 2 defined benefit plans, approximately 52 actives, 19 uniform retirees and 32 nonuniform retirees and \$17 million in assets, and a number of welfare benefits arrangements. The Employer contributes its actuarially determined minimum funding obligation.

The Employer is a City in Clinton County, Pennsylvania.

B. SCOPE OF SERVICES

The selected firm may be asked to respond to any municipal needs related to the City's pension plan including, but not limited to:

- Preparing plan documents, benefit eligibility determinations, and qualifications and calculations related thereto; and all legal issues associated with the investment of pension funds.
- Interpretations of all applicable acts or legal requirements of the plans, including but not limited to Act 205 and Act 44; responding to benefit claims, and interfacing with Internal Revenue Service and Commonwealth of Pennsylvania pension regulatory agencies.
- Preparing all documentation of pension plans and interpreting new pension laws and providing proactive legal advice to the City.

C. REQUESTED SERVICES [including specifications and qualifications]

Selected firm may be asked to respond to any municipal needs related to retirement and welfare benefits (see the Scope of Services), including preparing plan documents, benefit eligibility, qualification and calculation, interpretations of Act 205, the Third Class City Code, the Internal Revenue Code, and Act 44; responding to benefit claims, interface with Internal Revenue Service and State pension regulatory agencies; documentation of pension plans and interpreting new pension laws and providing proactive benefits related legal counsel.

1. Provide a brief summary (general description) of your firm's practice in the subject matters covered by the RFP including the size and scope of the practice.
2. Please document your experience related to the above matters over the last five years. Please specify how many Pennsylvania local governmental plan documents you have written in the last five years.
3. How many local governmental entities do you provide benefits legal advice to?
4. To how many Pennsylvania local government pension arrangements do you provide legal advice? Please list three with contact information.
5. How many Pennsylvania local governmental pension plans have you updated with the requisite Internal Revenue Code language in the last three years?
6. To which Pennsylvania Third Class Cities does your firm provide benefits related legal advice?
7. What percentage of the work performed by your firm is for Pennsylvania local governmental pension arrangements?
8. Describe any special services your firm provides; particularly those that may not be offered by other law firms.
9. What is the rate schedule to be utilized to perform the above work?

PROCEDURES TO COMPETE FOR CONTRACT

The City is solely responsible for the selection process in consultation with its pension boards. The procedures for receiving and evaluating applicants to determine the most qualified include a review of the applicant's qualifications, experience, expertise, and fees, as well as completion of the required disclosures. Note that while fees are a consideration, the contract will not necessarily be awarded to the lowest cost applicant but shall be awarded to the most qualified. Upon review the City may request additional information from each, some, or all applicants or request to interview each, some, or all applicants. The City retains the right to reject any proposal at the outset of the process where requested information has been omitted or where the application is submitted after the deadline. If the City is not satisfied with the proposals received, the City may place a second advertisement with any appropriate revisions or cancel the solicitation of services.

Upon award of the contract, the City shall provide the unsuccessful applicants with a copy of the successful application (minus protected information), disclosure forms and a summary of the relevant evaluation factors considered. This information shall be posted and displayed as required by law.

The successful applicant will be required to file Act 44 disclosure forms upon being appointed.

C. FIRM DESCRIPTION

Provide general details on your firm including location, number of clients, number of benefit plans for which you provide services and employees and total benefits related legal services offered. Also specify the amount of Errors and Omissions coverage carried.

D. INDIVIDUALS PROVIDING SERVICES

Please list the individuals who will be providing services to the Plan. A biographical summary of each should at minimum include the individual's title, professional designations, and number of years of experience in the specified field. Also, the responsibilities for providing services assigned to the individuals should be listed. Include any advisors or subcontractors to be employed.

E. DISCLOSURE FORM

1. List the names and titles of each individual who will be providing professional services relative to this contract including advisors and subcontractors.

2. Relative to question 1 above, describe the following:
 - A. Are any of the above current or former officials of employees of the City of Lock Haven? When were they last employed by the City of Lock Haven?

 - B. Are any of the above a registered federal or state lobbyist?

 - C. What are the responsibilities of each individual with regard to the proposed services?

3. Have you in the last year or do you now retain a third-party intermediary, agent, or lobbyist to directly or indirectly communicate with the City of Lock Haven? If so, please describe.

4. Has your firm or anyone in your firm solicited a contribution to any municipal office in the City of Lock Haven or to the political party or political actions committee of an official at the City of Lock Haven or candidate for elected office at the City of Lock Haven?

5. Confirm that no one at your firm (after March 10, 2025) will communicate with (or cause or agree to allow a third party to) communicate with officials or employees of the City of Lock Haven except for request for technical clarification which should be directed to Gregory Wilson, City Manager.

6. List all contributions made by your firm or an Affiliated Entity to a municipal official or candidate for office in the City of Lock Haven made on or after December 17, 2009. An affiliated entity means:
 - (1) A subsidiary or holding company of a lobbying firm or other business entity owned in whole or in part by a lobbying firm.
 - (2) An organization recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (Public Law 99-514, 26 U.S.C. §501(c)) established by a lobbyist or lobbying firm or an affiliated entity.

7. List any direct financial, commercial, or business relationship with any municipal official or pension system of the City of Lock Haven held by your firm or any Affiliated Entity.

8. List any gift including money, services, loan, travel, lodging, entertainment, discount, or other thing of value, to any official, employee of the City of Lock Haven or a fiduciary of its pension plan.

9. Confirm that no one at your firm or an Affiliated Entity was employed by the City of Lock Haven in the last 12 months.

10. List any other disclosures made pursuant to Act 44 of 2009.