

REQUEST FOR BID: VOTE BY MAIL ABSENTEE BALLOTS

On Wednesday, July 29, 2020 at 10:45 a.m. the Summit County Board of Elections (the “Board”) will open bids for the printing, stuffing and mailing of absentee ballots to be used with the Election Systems & Software (ES&S) Precinct Count Optical Scan voting system. The awarding of this contract will include the printing of all non-UOCAVA absentee ballots for the November 3, 2020 General Election.

Summit County Board of Elections reserves the right to print ballots in house for absentee use.

SUMMIT COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS

- Located at 470 Grant St., Akron, OH 44311-1193
- Phone: (330) 643-5200 - Fax: (330) 643-5422 - www.summitcountyboe.gov

ELECTION PROFILES

The number of precincts for the general election will be determined by the number of subdivisions and offices involved in the election.

November 3, 2020

- 420 precincts. (525 Ballot Styles)
- 365,492 registered voters in Summit County as of June 22, 2020.
- (Estimate Only) Absentee by mail ballots for November 3, 2020 General Election 75,000 – 175,000.

VOTE BY MAIL BALLOT SPECIFICATIONS

- **SIZE:** The ballots shall be printed on 8.50 in. (+0.030 in. to -0.020 in.) X a length of 14 inches. The ballot heights are finished size lengths and do not include ballot stub.

Paper Stock: ES&S certified 80 lb. Opaque White Ballot.

Grain Direction on Finished Ballot: Long

Basis Weight: 80 # text weight (36.2874 kg)

Thickness: 0.0061 in. (0.015494 cm)

Smoothness: 130 sheffields

Moisture: 5.5 %

Opacity: 97.0

Brightness: 96

PPI: 338

Ballot layout specifications shall follow Ohio Revised Code section 3505.08.

- **STUB NUMBERS:** Each ballot shall have one, color-coded stub attached at the bottom, the width of the ballot and each exactly one (1) inch in length. The color of the stub is determined by the split number for that precinct. The ballot serial number shall appear on the stub in the space provided as “Consecutive Number _____” The Board will supply the stub number, and shall contain a corresponding bar code

unique to each ballot. The stub shall be separated from the ballot by perforations. Use a micro-perfing wheel to place perforations on the ballot **to facilitate removing the stub from the ballot easily without doing damage to the ballot or stub.**

- **VOTE BY MAIL BALLOT PACKETS:** Vendor shall print and stuff the ballot inside of the mail packets. The mail packets are to include the following:
 - A. Voter's Ballot
 - B. Absentee Outgoing Envelope – 6.125" x 9.75" (12-A Outgoing Envelope 2020)
 - C. Absentee Identification Envelope – 5.75" x 8.875" (12-A Identification Envelope 2020))
 - D. Absentee Return Envelope – 6" x 9.25" (12-A Identification Envelope 2020)
 - E. Instructions to Voters of Absent Voter's Ballots – 8.5" x 11" (Secretary of State Form 12)
 - F. Special Notice to Absentee Voters – 8.5" x 5.5" (Secretary of State Form 12-1)
 - G. Any Other Notices/Withdrawals as prescribed by the Board of Elections
 - H. Postage Notices.

- **VOTE BY MAIL BALLOT PACKETS PRINTING REQUIREMENTS:**

- A. **Absentee Outgoing Envelope:**

- The piece shall be printed on 6.125" x 9.75" 24# Western Sulphite booklet window envelopes with a gummed flap.
 - Window size is 3.875" x 2.25" and is placed 5.25" from the left edge and .625" from the bottom edge.
 - Printing is on both sides in color.
 - PDF of artwork is attached.
 - Note: Artwork does not reflect actual size. Please refer to dimensions as listed in RFQ. (See attached 12-A Outgoing Envelope 2020, for artwork).
 - Envelope is for mailing purposes.
 - In upper left-hand corner of the front side of envelope where it says Official Seal of County or State please apply the Seal of Summit County (See attached Seal of Summit County, for artwork)

- B. **Absentee Identification Envelope:**

- The piece shall be printed on 5.75" x 8.875" 28# Western Sulphite booklet envelopes with a gummed flap.
 - Printing on the front side in black and yellow ink. Printing on the back side (Below Flap) is in black and yellow ink. Printing on flap is black ink only.
 - Art is Ohio Secretary of State Form No. 12-A. Preliminary artwork in PDF is attached but final artwork may be revised.
 - Note: Artwork does not reflect actual size. Please refer to dimensions as listed in RFQ. (See attached 12-A Identification Envelope 2020, for artwork).
 - Envelope is not for mailing purposes

- In middle left hand corner of the back side of envelope where it says Official Seal of County or State please apply the Seal of Summit County (See attached Seal of Summit County, for artwork)

C. Absentee Return Envelope:

- The piece shall be printed on 6" x 9.25" 24# Western Sulphite booklet envelopes with a gummed flap.
- Printing is on the front side in black ink only.
- PDF of artwork is attached.
 - Note: Artwork does not reflect actual size. Please refer to dimensions as listed in RFQ. (See attached 12-A Absentee Return Envelopes 2020, for artwork).
- Envelope is for mailing purposes.
- Final product **MUST** be 6" x 9.25" with **NO EXCEPTIONS**.
- In upper left-hand corner of the front side of envelope where it says Official Seal of County or State please apply the Seal of Summit County (See attached Seal of Summit County, for artwork)

D. Instructions to Voter's of Absentee Voter's Ballot:

- The piece shall be printed on 8.5" x 11" 20# canary bond paper.
- Printing is on the front side in black ink only.
- PDF artwork is attached.
 - Note: Artwork does not reflect actual size. Please refer to dimensions as listed in RFQ. (See attached 12 Instructions to Absent Voters 2020, for artwork).

E. Special Notice to Absentee Voters:

- The piece shall be printed on 8.5" x 5.5" 20# white bond paper.
- Printing is on the front side in color.
- PDF artwork is attached.
 - Note: Artwork does not reflect actual size. Please refer to dimensions as listed in the RFQ. (See attached 12-1 Special Notice to Absent Voters 2020, for artwork).

F. Any Other Notices/Withdrawals as Prescribed by the Board of Elections:

- Board shall provide list of withdrawals.
- Printer will ensure that the proper notice is printed and inserted in the Vote by Mail Packets for those voters in the withdrawal area **ONLY**.
- Any other notices/withdrawals will be provided to the Vendor for stuffing into the appropriate vote by mail packet.
- There may be exceptions to this rule, but the Vendor will be provided with all the artwork, dimensions and paper type by the Board.
- There may be short notice of withdrawals depending on when a candidate drops from the race.

G. Postage Notices:

- The piece shall be printed on 8.5” x 11” 20# white bond paper.
- Printing is on the front side in black and white ink only.
- PDF artwork will be sent to the winner of this bid closer to the election date when the ballot is ready, weighed and we know what postage cost will be.

H. Other Printing Requirements:

- The Summit County Board of Elections **requires** a hard copy proof of the printed material prior to print.
 - Vendor is responsible for ensuring the final mail piece has been examined by a USPS Mail Design Analyst and approved by the USPS prior to print.
 - Vendor is responsible for ensuring envelopes contain proper ‘ZIP +4’ address information for the Summit County Board of Elections (return address portion) from USPS.
 - For all envelopes for mailing purposes Vendor **MUST** submit the written approval of the U.S.P.S. mail design analyst to the Director and Deputy Director prior to print.
Joseph P. Masich, Director – jmasich@summitcountyboe.gov
Paula A. Sauter, Deputy Director – psauter@summitcountyboe.gov
 - Adjustments to the submitted .PDF are permitted so long as the final window envelope opening coordinates with the art from the Absentee Identification Envelope (Form No. 12-A) attached for reference.
 - Board **must** approve any changes to envelope prior to print.
- **VARIABLE DATA:** For each vote by mail ballot pack, Vendor shall print the following variable information on the Voter Identification (“ID”) Envelope (* indicates included in voter file provided by Board)
 - A. Voter’s Last Name*
 - B. Voter’s First Name*
 - C. Voter’s Middle Name*
 - D. County ID Number*
 - E. 3 of 9 Barcode of County ID Number
 - F. Voter’s Registered Address (or Mailing Address if Different than Registered Address) *
 - G. Precinct ID Number (Including Split Number) *
 - H. Sequence Number (Stub Number)
 - I. Date Sent
 - J. Precinct Name*
 - K. App Number*
 - L. Election Date
 - M. Basic Service Intelligent Mail Barcode (IMb) for the Voter’s Address

- **FOLDING:** The ballots to be inserted into the vote by mail ballot packs shall be folded two or three time between the timing marks depending on the size envelopes utilized.
- **AUTOMATED ASSEMBLY:** Vendor shall employ an automated method to assemble the ballot packs. Such method shall have the capacity to insert all the materials for the vote by mail ballot packs described above, along with up to a 2-sheet ballot, into the outbound envelope. Such method shall also have a system of automatically verifying that the correct ballot and personalized ID envelope are included in each ballot pack. Such method may include a system that produces a unique sequence number printed on the ballot stub (I.E. the stub number), and ID envelope with a camera system to verify that such numbers match. Vendor shall use the automated assembly system to assemble each ballot pack unless permission to assemble such packs manually is specifically given by a Board project manager.
- **MAIL PREPARATION:** Vendor is responsible for applying any and all United States Postal Service (USPS) bar-coding. The USPS barcode should be sorted down to provide the Board with the lowest possible postage rate available. This postal barcode will allow the USPS to provide the most reliable service of delivery of the absentee ballot from the Board to the voter. This is to include postal trays, tray covers, USPS tag #191 (green and white with black text) “Ballots Only”, presorted tray labels, and all tags and labels affixed to the trays. Vendor shall also be responsible for preparing and sealing all required mailing statements and supporting documentation in accordance with USPS standards and shall provide a complete sample packet of the mailing piece for each mailing statement.
- **ADDRESSING:** Vendor shall print the addressee’s city as provided by the Board. It is not to be changed based on USPS matching software or for any other reason without prior written approval from the Board.
- **SAMPLE BALLOTS:** Vendor shall submit a duplicate sample of every one-hundredth (100th) Absentee Vote by Mail Ballot to the Board and is responsible for the timely delivery of these sample ballots. The duplicate sample shall have sample written across the face of the ballot so that it does not interfere with the timing marks or code channel. Samples of Absentee Mail ballots must be delivered by noon the following business day. For the purposes of these bid specifications, “Business Day” means any calendar day the Board is open and providing services to the public; “Business Day” may include Saturday, Sunday or any legal holiday.
- **DELIVERY AND MAILING:**
 - A. All absentee by mail ballots processed, printed and assembled prior to October 5, 2020 are to be mailed October 6, 2020.

- B. Absentee Vote by Mail ballots shall be delivered to the Post Office on a daily basis every Business Day. The Board will provide Vendor with data file(s) of ballot styles every Business Day by 5 P.M. Vendor will deliver daily the Absentee Vote by Mail Ballots to the Post Office no later than 2:00 P.M. the following Business Day.
- C. The large volume of vote by mail ballot requests anticipated for the 2020 Presidential General Election may require the Board to send vote by mail data files to the Vendor on weekends. If Vendor is provided with a data file on any Saturday during the absentee voting period, Vendor shall print the ballot packets and deliver them to the Post Office on the next business day after the file was sent. Data files sent to the Vendor on any Sunday during the absentee voting period shall be printed and delivered to the Post Office on the Tuesday following receipt of the data file. Board staff shall make every effort to communicate in advance to Vendor if such files will be required.
- D. Vendor may be required to deliver ballots on Saturday (files will be ready on Saturday by 12:30 P.M. and vendor must deliver the ballots by 4:00 P.M. Saturday). Board staff may work past the 12:30 P.M. Saturday deadline if necessary, in which case the 4:00 P.M. Saturday delivery time will be extended by a like period of time.
- **ON-SITE OFFICE SPACE:** A reasonable amount of on-site office space is to be provided by Vendor for Board staff. Absentee ballots with name, address and barcode must be delivered with a Republican and a Democrat in a secured vehicle. A background check must satisfy the Board standards and must be provided to the Board. Vendor is required to conduct this inquiry. Any costs related to this background check shall be reflected in the grand total of the proposal. Vendor delivery staff will be given Board vendor badges that will be required to be worn at all times while at the Board.
 - **VOTER FILE:** Vendor shall utilize the registration file which the Board will provide as a DBF file, and compare the absentee voter request city/ward/precinct against the registration data base for accuracy. If a discrepancy occurs, Vendor must immediately notify the appropriate Board contact person.
 - **DUPLICATES:** Vendor shall verify that no duplicate voter requests have been issued in prior data files or the current file utilizing the voter's election identification number. If a discrepancy occurs, Vendor shall immediately notify the appropriate Board contact person.
 - **UPLOAD SITE:** Vendor shall provide a secure upload site that automatically confirms receipt of the data file(s) and the number of records in each file. The site must provide for real time viewing of each processed ballot and must allow for multiple file transfers with HTTPS/FTPS secure transfer of files.

- **STORAGE:** Vendor shall store all envelopes, vote by mail instruction guides and any other items used to assemble the vote by mail ballot packets as needed. The bid shall include all such storage costs.
- **ERRORS:** Any errors or issues identified by the Board upon delivery of the Vendor printed absentee ballots shall be resolved by the Vendor immediately. Replacement or repaired ballot packs must be provided to the Board, at no cost to the Board unless such error or issues are a result of an act or omission by the Board, by the opening of the Board's business the next day unless otherwise mutually agreed upon by the parties. (The Board may be open for business on Saturdays and/or Sundays during an election cycle.)

TEST-DECK BALLOT SPECIFICATIONS

- **TYPES:** Only one type of test deck with pre-voted ballots will need to be printed for each election for testing purposes. The PDF images for these Test Decks will be generated by the Board (which will include all voted ovals) and sent to Vendor for printing. Ballots for test decks will not include any stubs. The type of test deck includes the following:
 - A. **APPROVAL TO PRINT ("ATP") ABSENTEE BALLOT TEST DECK:** Includes one test deck printed from the absentee ballot file to be delivered in alphabetical order by precinct. (One ballot for every ballot style).

BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES

- **PROJECT MANAGERS:** The Board shall assign members of its staff to serve as managers of this project. Project managers shall facilitate Vendor's activities, provide access to relevant individuals and data, and be responsible to review Vendor's performance. Project managers shall be neither directly nor indirectly responsible for performing any project activities for Vendor.
- **VOTE BY MAIL BALLOT PACK MATERIALS:** If applicable the Board shall provide any withdrawal notices for the vote by mail packets.
- **ARTWORK TEMPLATES:** The Board shall provide Vendor with the artwork templates for the cover sheets and warning sheets, such templates may be updated prior to or during an election cycle, as needed.
- **DAILY VOTER FILES:** The Board will deliver the first voter file of absentee vote by mail ballots on Wednesday, September 23, 2020. The Board shall provide Vendor with the voter file of absentee vote by mail ballots by 5 P.M. each Business Day or by 12:30 P.M. on the final Saturday before an election or as soon as reasonably possible.
- **WEEKEND WORK:** The Board shall make every effort to notify Vendor in advance if it plans to send a voter file on a weekend.

- **TEST DECK PDF'S:** Prior to the election, the Board shall provide to Vendor the PDF files to be used for the test deck.
- **POSTAGE:** The Board shall provide Vendor with access to its PI account for postage purposes. The Vendor can use access to this account to apply and pay for postage needed to mail out all absentee ballots.

REQUIRED BID DOCUMENTS

- **COVER LETTER:** A cover letter that includes a brief description of the firm, including: history, number of years in business, type(s) of service(s) provided, and legal status of Bidder's organization (i.e., corporation, partnership, sole proprietor, etc.)
- **SUMMARY:** A summary of the Bidder's prior experience that describes the adequacy of staff, equipment, and past performance of the organization relevant to this project. Additionally, such summary shall answer, at a minimum, the following questions:
 - A. What method and equipment will you use to ensure the automated and accurate assembly of vote by mail ballot packs?
 - B. What is the maximum number of inserts that can be automatically inserted into the vote by mail packets?
 - C. What are the minimum and maximum envelope sizes that are compatible with your proposed automated process of assembling vote by mail ballot packs?
 - D. What is your projected per hour rate for printing and assembling vote by mail ballot packs for a one-sheet, two-sheet, and three-sheet ballot?
 - E. Will you utilize subcontractors to complete this work? If so, please list the names and information for such subcontractors.
- **OTHER REQUIREMENTS:**
 - Quote **must** be inclusive of weight of paper and the shade of Western Sulphite used for envelope.
 - Quote **must** be inclusive of any/all art or production costs, cost of supplies, printing, cutting, assembly and perforation.
 - Quotes **must** be inclusive of delivery fees/charges.
 - Quotes and final invoices containing overruns of more than +/- 5% will not be accepted.

- Any variation from this quote may be acceptable, provided it is a cost savings to the Board, but must be explained in the quote.
- Quote **must** be inclusive of turnaround time.
- **BALLOT SAMPLES:** A ballot pack of 10, 14-inch ballots with 1” stub. Each pack shall be stapled, perforated, and consecutively numbered in the same manner as required for Vote by Mail Ballots. These ballots will be subject to testing on Board voting equipment by Board staff.
- **METHOD OF SUBMITTING BID:** Bids shall be delivered in a sealed envelope/package to the following address by the deadline listed on the cover page of these bid specifications:

*Summit County Board of Elections
Attn: Director Joseph P. Masich
470 Grant Street
Akron, Ohio 44311*

Hand-delivered bids may be delivered ONLY between the hours of 8:00 A.M. and 4:30 P.M., Monday through Friday, excluding holidays observed by the Board. Bidders assume the risk of the method of delivery chosen. The Board assumes no responsibility for delays caused by any delivery service. Postmarking by the due date will not substitute for actual bid receipt. Late bids will not be considered nor will additional time be granted to any bidder. Bids may not be delivered via facsimile transmission or other telecommunication or electronic means.

- **DISCREPANCIES AND ADDENDA:** Should a bidder find any discrepancy in or omission from these specifications, the bidder shall at once notify the Board employees listed above. The Board reserves the right to issue addenda to the RFB at any time. However, if an addendum is issued less than 72 hours prior to the bid deadline, the deadline will be modified accordingly. Addenda will be posted on the Board’s website and e-mailed to any potential bidders that have requested to receive such information for the RFB. If you would like to have addenda e-mailed to you for this RFB, please contact, Brian Williams at bwilliams@summitcountyboe.gov.
- **WITHDRAWAL OF BIDS:** Bidders may withdraw a bid that has been submitted at any time up to the bid deadline via either a written request or e-mail to the RFB contact.

BID DEADLINE AND SURETIES

Sealed bids will be received up to Tuesday, July 28, 2020 and must be time stamped at the office of the Summit County Board of Elections, 470 Grant Street, Akron, Ohio 44311-1193 no later than **4:00 p.m.** of that day. Any envelope containing a bid should be identified in the following manner, "BID ENCLOSED".

A bond must accompany bids with at least two sureties, or a surety company, satisfactory to the Board, in a sum double the amount of the bid, conditioned upon the faithful performance of the contract for such printing as is awarded and for the payment as damages by such bidder to the Board of any excess of cost over the bid which it may be obliged to pay for such work by reason of the failure of the bidder to complete the contract. The Board shall consider no bid unaccompanied by such bond.

All ballots shall be printed within the State of Ohio (O.R.C. 3505.13). The contract shall be let to the lowest and best responsible bidder. The Board, however, reserves the right to reject any or all bids.

Any and all dates and/or deadlines are subject to change based upon any future legislative action or by a court of competent jurisdiction at the federal, state, or local level. The Board shall not be held liable for any such changes.

NO EXCEPTIONS TO THE BID SPECIFICATIONS ALLOWED WITHOUT APPROVAL OF THE SUMMIT COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS.

SUMMIT COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS

WILLIAM D. RICH, CHAIR

JOSEPH P. MASICH, DIRECTOR

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF AND AGREEMENT TO ADHERE TO BID SPECIFICATIONS

By signing below and returning this Acknowledgement, I agree that I am submitting a bid to provide the enumerated products and services in accordance with the above bid specifications, terms, and conditions and that I can provide the same. I further acknowledge that neither this acknowledgement nor the request for bids constitutes the Summit County Board of Elections (SCBOE) awarding me the contract. The awarding of this contract shall be announced after the SCBOE has reviewed all bids.

In the event that I am awarded this contract, I further agree that I will supply the products and services in conformance with my bid herein.

The products and services for which I am submitting a bid, and for which the SCBE may award a contract, relate to only all non-UOCAVA absentee ballots for the November 3, 2020 General Election.

Date

Signature

Printed Name