

Section 2-26-6. Local preference, tie bids, local business defined.

(a) Whenever a responsible local business bidder and a responsible non-local business bidder are found, upon the opening of bids, to have both submitted the lowest responsive bid, the bid of the local bidder shall be awarded the contract. Should more than one responsible local business bidder match the responsible non-local business bidder's lowest responsive bid, or should no responsible local business bidder match the lowest responsive bid but two or more responsible non-local business bidders submit lowest responsive bids for equal amounts, then the award of the contract shall be determined by a chance drawing, coin toss, or similar tie-breaking method conducted by the purchasing office and open to the public. Any bidders seeking to be recognized as local businesses for purposes of this local business preference provision may be required by the terms of the bid announcement to certify they meet the definition of local business set forth in this section, and to register as a local business with the county in the manner prescribed by the county to facilitate the county's ability to track the award of contracts to local businesses and to allow the county to provide future notifications to its local businesses concerning other bidding opportunities.

(b) Nothing herein shall be deemed to prohibit the inclusion of requirements with respect to operating and maintaining a local place of business in any invitation for bids when the bidder's location materially affects the provisions of the services or supplies that are required by the invitation.

(c) Local business is defined as a business legally authorized to engage in the sale of the goods and/or services to be procured, and which certifies within its bid that for at least six (6) months prior to the announcement of the solicitation of bids it has maintained a physical place of business in Manatee, Desoto, Hardee, Hillsborough, Pinellas or Sarasota County with at least one full-time employees at that location.

(d) Each solicitation for bids made by the county shall contain terms expressly describing the local business preference policies of the county, and shall provide that by electing to submit a bid pursuant to a request for bids, all bidders are deemed to understand and agree to those policies.

(e) For all contracts for architecture, professional engineering, or other professional services governed by Florida Statute § 287.055, the Consultants' Competitive Negotiation Act, the county shall include the local business status of a firm among the factors considered when selecting which firms are "most highly qualified." In determining which firm is the "most qualified" for purposes of negotiating a satisfactory contract, preference shall be given to a local business where all other relevant factors are equal.

(f) Local preference shall not apply to the following categories of contracts:

1. Goods or services provided under a cooperative purchasing agreement or similar "piggyback" contract;
2. Contracts for professional services subject to Florida Statute § 287.055, the Consultants' Competitive Negotiation Act, except as provided for in subsection (e) above;
3. Purchases or contracts which are funded, in whole or in part, by a governmental or other funding entity, where the terms and conditions of receipt of the funds prohibit the preference;

Section 2-26-6. Local preference, tie bids, local business defined. (Continued)

4. Purchases or contracts made pursuant to a non-competitive award process, unless otherwise provided by this section;

5. Any bid announcement which specifically provides that the general local preference policies set forth in this section are suspended due to the unique nature of the goods or services sought, the existence of an emergency as found by either the county commission or county administrator, or where such suspension is, in the opinion of the county attorney, required by law.

(g) To qualify for local preference under this section, **a local business must certify to the County that it:**

1. Has not within the five years prior to the bid announcement admitted guilt or been found guilty by any court or state or federal regulatory enforcement agency of violation of any criminal law, or a law or administrative regulation regarding fraud;

2. Is not currently subject to an unresolved citation or notice of violation of any Manatee County Code provision, except citations or notices which are the subject of a current legal appeal, as of the date of the bid announcement;

3. Is not delinquent in the payment of any fines, liens, assessments, fees or taxes to any governmental unit or taxing authority within Manatee County, except any such sums which are the subject of a current legal appeal.

Ref: Ordinance 09-21 and 09-23 **PASSED AND DULY ADOPTED** in open session, with a quorum present and voting, on the 17th day of March, 2009.

END OF SECTION