

# **City of Myrtle Beach Request for Qualifications**

## **Legal Services for Indigent Defendants**

**Issue Date: March 15, 2022**



*First in Service*

**Issued By:**

**Purchasing Division  
3231 Mr. Joe White Avenue  
Myrtle Beach, SC 29577  
Phone: 843-918-2170**

**[www.cityofmyrtlebeach.com](http://www.cityofmyrtlebeach.com)**

## **Introduction and Background**

The City of Myrtle Beach is soliciting Request for Qualifications from legal firms and/or attorneys who are interested in providing legal defense services for indigent defendants charged with offenses in Myrtle Beach Municipal Court. Qualified Offerors must hold a Juris Doctorate degree from an accredited law school and meet the minimum qualifications as listed below:

- Be a member in good standing with the South Carolina Bar Association. Any attorney not admitted to the bar or awaiting bar results will not be considered.
- Previous trial experience and minimum three (3) years' criminal law experience preferred.
- Be familiar with the statutes, court practices and procedures, constitutional provisions, City ordinances, and case law relevant to criminal laws.
- Be familiar with the collateral consequences of conviction, including possible immigration consequences and the possibility of civil commitment proceedings based on a criminal conviction.
- Be familiar with mental health issues to be able to identify the need to obtain expert services.
- Excellent organizational, oral presentation, and communication skills; ability to work under pressure

Eligibility for public defender services will be determined through a screening process established by the City. Cases will be assigned by the Municipal Court Judge when it is determined that a defendant is indigent and entitled to legal defense services. Myrtle Beach Municipal Court holds bench trials on Mondays and Wednesdays at 10:00AM; and Tuesdays and Thursdays at 5:00PM at the Law Enforcement center, located on 1101 North Oak Street, Myrtle Beach. Jury trials are held for one (1) week, Monday through Thursday, every other month. Notification is sent regarding the specific dates. Roster meetings are held every other month, for one (1) day, at 2:00PM. Notification is sent regarding the specific dates. Homeless Court is held the second Wednesday of each month, at 1:00PM.

## **Scope**

The attorney/legal firm selected to provide legal services for indigent defendants is expected to provide quality representation for clients including, but not limited to:

- Represent indigent defendants in the City of Myrtle Beach Municipal Court to include consulting and advising clients; interview client and witnesses; engage in pre-trial discovery as appropriate; prepare motions and other pleadings; negotiate plea bargains; represent client at trial and at other court appearances
- Prepare for and participate in court proceedings, including hearings and trials
- Be responsive to the Municipal Court staff, City Attorney, Police Department, Victims' Advocates, and witnesses. The attorney is expected to return telephone calls in a timely manner. The City anticipates that a caller would get a response from someone who is familiar with pending deadlines and legal issues in the case by the end of the next business day.
- Prepare and draft a variety of correspondence including letters, memos and pleadings regarding litigation, settlements, plea bargains, and negotiations.

- Report any South Carolina State Bar complaint that has been lodged against him to the City Administrator within ten (10) days of the attorney’s answer to the complaint. The attorney shall inform the City Administrator of the results of any South Carolina State Bar disciplinary action.
- Accept nothing of value from anyone in connection with representation under these regulations during the period of representation. Notify Myrtle Beach Municipal Court in writing of any conflict of interest, conflicting litigation, or inability to practice law.
- Perform other legal duties as required or assigned.

### **Response Requirements**

Attorneys who are licensed in good standing with the South Carolina Bar Association and who are interested in providing legal services for indigent defendants should provide evidence of qualifications, including:

- Letter of Interest containing Offeror’s contact information and signature in ink (2 pages)
- Resumes of key personnel (1 page per person)
- Summary of qualifications, experience, and availability to provide requested services to the City (5 pages)
- Proposed approach to providing services to the City and indigent clients (3 pages)
- List of references with contact information – no less than 3 references (1 page)

Responses must be held firm for at least 120 days after response due date. Responses, as described above, must be sent to:

City of Myrtle Beach  
Procurement Office  
3231 Mr. Joe White Avenue  
Myrtle Beach, SC 29577  
Attn: Ann Sowers

Four (4) copies of responses must be submitted in a sealed envelope, and are due no later than 2:00PM on Tuesday, March 29, 2022. Electronic submissions will not be accepted. The City of Myrtle Beach is not responsible for late or misdirected mail.

### **Response Evaluation**

The City intends to “short-list” attorneys/firms responding to this RFQ and may interview one or more attorneys/firms to better assess their qualifications. The City will evaluate based on qualifications, experience, performance in similar roles, references, as well as opportunities and constraints.

### **Evaluation Team**

The responses received will be independently evaluated by a review team who will work together to arrive at a final ranking of all submittals. The team will then make a recommendation. The City would then negotiate with the number one ranked attorney/firm to determine if it is possible to come or enter into agreement. If the City determines that it is unable to come to an acceptable agreement, or if the City refuses to approve the number one ranked attorney/firm, then the City shall negotiate with the number two ranked attorney/firm. This process shall be followed until agreement can be reached.

**Reserved Rights**

The City reserves the right to waive technicalities or irregularities, to accept or reject any and all qualifications received, to re-advertise the project, to negotiate for a partial scope of work, or to negotiate separately with any source whatsoever in any manner necessary to serve the best interests of the City.

The City of Myrtle Beach does not expressly state or imply any obligation to reimburse responding firms for any expenses incurred in preparing submissions in response to this request.