



Legal Aid
Agency

Additional procurement process for 2024 Standard Civil Contract from September 2024- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Many questions will be answered by the information given in the Invitation To Tender documents which are available on the Tenders' page of our website:

Where not defined in this FAQ document, capitalised terms are either defined in the relevant ITTs or in the 2024 Contract ([Additional Procurement: Civil 2024 Contract Procurement Process - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)).

As set out at paragraph 2.2 of the SQ ITT, the deadline for questions about the ITTs or the Tender was **23:59 on 1 April 2024** (note this is referred to as the "End date for supplier clarification messages" on the eTendering system). We will therefore not answer questions received after that deadline.

Questions that we consider to be of wider interest have been collated and answered centrally in writing to ensure that all potential Applicants have equal access to information. These questions and answers have been published in this FAQ document.

Technical questions on how to use the eTendering system

There is a helpdesk to provide technical support to Applicants using the eTendering system. However, the helpdesk is unable to assist with problems with Applicants' own computer hardware or systems. For these types of issues Applicants should contact their usual IT support.

Questions for the helpdesk should be emailed to: help@bravosolution.co.uk. Alternatively, the telephone number for the helpdesk is 0800 069 8630 and lines are open from 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday.

The helpdesk will be accessible until the Tender closes. However, we recommend that Applicants start to complete their Tender early so that they identify any areas in which they need technical support as soon as possible, as the helpdesk is likely to be very busy in the days leading up to the Tender Deadline and the Legal Aid Agency (LAA) cannot guarantee that queries received close to the Tender Deadline will be dealt with in time.

The Tender Deadline is 17:00 on 22 April 2024.

FAQs from Additional Civil 2024 Tender:

1. Q: We have noted the announcement of additional tenders and so we would be grateful if you could kindly confirm whether we are required to submit a further ITT for our family bid.

A: The individual bid(s) that have been successful in the previous procurement process will not need to be re-submitted at this time. Please see section 3.2 of the Award ITT ([Procurement of Civil Legal Aid Services in England and Wales from 1 September 2024 Award ITT \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)):

Applicants must submit an SQ ITT ADD Response before the eTendering system will allow them to submit an Award ITT ADD Response. Applicants must complete an Award ITT ADD Response for each Category of Law they wish to deliver, including all scenarios defined below:

- the Applicant has not previously tendered for a 2024 Civil Contract;
- the Applicant has previously submitted a Tender for a 2024 Contract and been notified of an unsuccessful Tender;
- the Applicant has previously successfully tendered for a 2024 Contract and wishes to apply for additional Categories of Law;
- the applicant has previously successfully tendered for a 2024 Contract and wishes to apply to deliver Contract Work from additional Offices/Procurement Areas.

Applicants who:

- have been notified of a successful outcome of their Tender through the eTendering message board; and
- are not seeking to deliver Contract Work in additional Categories of Law and/or from additional Offices/Procurement Areas.

Do not need to submit a response to this procurement process.

2. Q: We are wishing to submit a Tender in this Additional Tender process to correct an error in the original tender process - could you please confirm whether we are required to submit a request for all offices (even those that we have been successful in during the previous Tender process) or whether we are only required to submit a request for the office we wish to make the correction for?

We understand that we will still need to list the details of our head office as well as the additional office we wish to make the correction for but are keen to get the re-tender process correct and provide as little admin for the LAA as possible.

A: As stated in the in the award ITT you are required to submit a SQ (as it is a new procurement process) and bid for the relevant Individual Bid(s). The Individual Bid(s) that have been successful in the previous procurement process will not need to be re-submitted at this time.

3. Q: Do you require any additional documents to be submitted alongside the SQ and Award/Specific category of law ITT?

Once the documents have been submitted are we then given access to the SQ assessment?

A: Applicants are not required at this stage and there is no opportunity to upload documentation with their SQ or Award ITT Responses. Some questions in the HLPAS ITT include a request for supporting documentation.

Verification information will be requested from successful Applicants in the notification of outcome.

4. Q: How soon after submission of the above documents will we be given access to the SQ assessment?

A: Complete Tender is defined at paragraph 4.1 of the SQ ITT and consists of:

- a SQ ITT Response; and
- at least one Award ITT Response and (where applicable)
- at least one HLPAS ITT Response (where you are tendering for HLPAS Contract Work).

Please also refer to the answer for question 3.

5. Q: Regarding a legal aid contract termination within the last five years (Question C.8 of the SQ ITT). Please confirm if the time begins to count from 18 March 2024 when the contract becomes opened for tendering or from when I will send my application.

A: The 5-year period applies to the 5 years preceding the date the Applicant executed their SQ ITT response. For example, if the SQ Declaration is executed on 02/04/2024, then the 5 year period commences on 01/04/2019.

6. Q: I am applying for the tender for family civil legal aid.

Currently, I have a contract under name 'ABC' However, my registration on the e-tendering portal is under name of 'XYZ'. This was the name of the firm prior to being registered as a Ltd Company. Does the name on the portal matter? Or can it be changed please? I have spoken with the technical support team and they said it should not matter but I should check with you.

A: No, having a different name in the eTendering system to the name of your organisation will have no impact on the outcome of your tender. The 2024 Contract will be completed in the name of the organisation that is provided by the Applicant in their SQ ITT. However, if you wish to change your name please go through Bravo solutions. There is a helpdesk to provide technical support to Applicants using the eTendering system. However, the helpdesk is unable to assist with problems with Applicants' own computer hardware or systems. For these types of issues Applicants should contact their usual IT support.

Questions for the helpdesk should be emailed to: help@bravosolution.co.uk. Alternatively, the telephone number for the helpdesk is 0800 069 8630 and lines are open from 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday.

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days leading up to the Tender Deadline and the LAA cannot guarantee that queries received close to the Tender Deadline will be dealt with in time.

7. Q: Is there a given number of HLPAS contract a supervisor may supervise, when complying with the supervisor-to-caseworker ratio of 1:4?

And is the supervisor required to be based at the firm's office to which the contract is awarded?

A: There is no separate supervisor to caseworker ratio for HLPAS. The standard supervision rules apply - 1 FTE supervisor: 4 FTE caseworker rule (para 2.26).

Paragraphs 2.10 – 2.28 of the 2024 Standard Civil Contract set out the rules regarding supervision. Para 2.21 sets out that 'Arrangements must be in place to ensure that each Supervisor is able to conduct their role effectively including but not limited to: (a) designating time to conduct supervision of each Caseworker; (b) attendance at each Office at which they supervise staff where you determine this is required; and (c) ensuring that the level of supervision provided reflects the skills, knowledge and experience of the individual Caseworker.'

8: Q: As we have tendered for a different HLPAS area with the court's possession listing on the same day as another Procurement Area, and considering our capacity (to ensure that our authorised litigator/supervisor is available on the possession listing day for every court we may be awarded), how do we express alternative options in tenders? We do not want to be in the difficult situation of being successful in two courts sitting on the same day of the week?

A: Paragraph 4.3 of the Award ITT ADD expressly states:

"Applicants must ensure that the entire Tender is capable of concurrent delivery. Where an Applicant submits a response to multiple ITTs, it is warranting that it will be able to deliver services concurrently under the 2024 Contract if successful."

This means you need to be able to deliver concurrent bids for all separate HLPAS areas which you have bid for, even if the court sits on the same day.

The LAA will also engage with relevant partners to discuss scheduling options in relation to this.