

PROTEST

Policy

Any actual or prospective bidder, proposer or contractor who alleges a grievance by the solicitation or award of a contract may submit a grievance or protest to the appropriate agency/department Deputy Purchasing Agent.

Procedure

All protests shall be typed under the protester's letterhead and submitted in accordance with the provisions stated herein. All protests shall include at a minimum the following information:

- The name, address and telephone number of the protester;
- The signature of the protester or the protester's representative;
- The solicitation or contract number;
- A detailed statement of the legal and/or factual grounds for the protest; and
- The form of relief requested.

Protest of Bid/Proposal Specifications:

All protests related to bid or proposal specifications must be submitted to the Deputy Purchasing Agent no later than five (5) business days prior to the close of the bid or proposal. Protests received after the five (5) business day deadline will not be considered by the County.

In the event the protest of specifications is denied and the protester wishes to continue in the solicitation process, they must still submit a bid prior to the close of the solicitation in accordance with the bid/proposal submittal procedures provided in the bid/proposal.

Protest of Award of Contract:

In protests related to the award of a contract, the protest must be submitted no later than five (5) business days after the notice of the proposed contract award is provided by the Deputy Purchasing Agent. Protests relating to a proposed contract award which are received after the five (5) business day deadline will not be considered by the County.

Protest Process

- In the event of a timely protest, the County shall not proceed with the solicitation or award of the contract until the Deputy Purchasing Agent, the County Purchasing Agent or the Procurement Appeals Board renders a decision on the protest.
- Upon receipt of a timely protest, the Deputy Purchasing Agent will within ten (10) business days of the receipt of the protest, issue a decision in writing which shall state the reasons for the actions taken.
- The County may, after providing written justification to be included in the procurement file, make the determination that an immediate award of the contract is necessary to protect the substantial interests of the County. The award of a contract shall in no way compromise the protester's right to the protest procedures outlined herein.
- If the protester disagrees with the decision of the Deputy Purchasing Agent, the protestor may submit a written notice to the Office of the County Purchasing Agent requesting an appeal to the Procurement Appeals Board, in accordance with the process stated below.

Appeal Process

If the protester wishes to appeal the decision of the Deputy Purchasing Agent, the protester must submit, within three (3) business days from receipt of the Deputy Purchasing Agent's decision, a written appeal to the Office of the County Purchasing Agent.

- Within fifteen (15) business days, the County Purchasing Agent will review all materials in connection with the grievance, assess the merits of the protest and provide a written determination that shall contain his or her decision on whether the protest shall be forwarded to the Procurement Appeals Board as described in Section 1.4 of this manual.
- The decision of the County Purchasing Agent on whether to allow the appeal to go forward will be final and there shall be no right to any administrative appeals of this decision.