

SWL Tender FAQ - North Lincolnshire, Oxfordshire, Warwickshire South & City of Westminster

1. Is an Advice Services Alliance course "Supervision Skills; effective legal aid contact supervision" an approved course that meets the supervision requirements?

Without further details of the specific content of the course you refer to, it is not possible to confirm whether this course meets the supervision requirements as set out in the Contract. However, generally to meet the requirement, a course needs to cover the following key supervisory elements:

- Managing work (e.g. planning, organising and delegation)
- Effective communication and working relationships
- Performance Management and performance improvement
- Developing teams/individuals to deliver objectives

For individuals new to supervision we would expect the duration of the training to be at least 7 hours.

Training need not be undertaken in one consecutive run, and may be spread over a period of time (sometimes as much as six to 12 months from the first to last day of training), giving opportunity to apply new skills in the intervening period(s).

2. Do all supervisor declaration forms need to be submitted at the same time with the bid?

Where a supervisor is currently in place the applicant organisation should submit a completed Supervisor Declaration Form at the same time as submitting their tender bid. However, if the applicant organisation does not have a supervisor(s) in place they will not be required to submit a Supervisor Declaration Form at the same time as submitting their tender bid. It should be noted, however, that any contract award will be subject to successful applicants submitting a valid Supervisor Declaration Form prior to the contract start date.

3. We were not successful in our Contract tender to offer SWL from November 2010. However, we passed the PQQ. Do we need to submit a new PQQ for this tender?

If you submitted a PQQ in 2010 and that PQQ was successful and it remains up-to-date there is no need to submit a new PQQ for this tender exercise. When submitting your tender you will be required to confirm that you have completed and submitted, or previously submitted, a PQQ and that it contains up to date information about your organisation.

4. Please can you confirm the total annual number of NMS in each of the categories? I am not clear whether the numbers proposed are for 4 months or the whole year.

Annex B of the IFA sets out the numbers of matter starts available in each of the areas in which we are tendering for services. As the first contract schedule will only run for 4 months (until 30 November 2011) the matter starts for this period have been set out on a pro rata basis in the Annex B table. In addition, Annex B also sets out the minimum matter starts available, by area, in subsequent contract years.

5. We currently hold a Housing and Family contract until 30th November 2011. Are we allowed to bid for the Housing part of the recently opened SWL tender as part of a Consortium?

If you currently hold a Unified Civil Contract in Family and Housing you will not be excluded from bidding for these contracts. However, should you be successful in your bid to deliver this work you will not be able to deliver housing under the Unified Contract and Standard Civil Contract. If successful you would need to decide whether to continue to deliver Housing under the Unified Contract with Family or in a consortium as part of a combined Debt, Housing and Welfare Benefits service under the Unified Contract. With the latter you could continue to deliver Family services under your Unified Contract, but all Housing advice would need to be delivered under the SWL contract.

6. We were successful in our bid for the Housing and Family contract in the last tendering process for the City of Westminster procurement area (which has been deemed invalid). We intend to tender in for both family and Housing again when the tender opens sometime at the end of this year. We have been approached by another provider who has asked if we would to join their consortium to bid for the Housing part of the SWL tender which was recently opened. Please will you clarify if we will be able to join this consortium and still bid for the Housing and Family later in the year. Has the position changed from the last tendering process where you can only bid in one or the other and not both. I hope to hear from you team shortly for clarification.

If you are successful in bidding for this work and deliver the Housing element of the contract as part of a consortium then you will not be precluded from bidding for Family and Housing work advertised in any forthcoming Family re-tender. If successful in tendering for Family and Housing work, Housing NMS awarded would be added to your Standard Civil Contract in addition to any previously awarded as part of a tender to deliver combined Debt, Housing and Welfare Benefits Services from that office.

7. Can you confirm that, if we do not already have a permanent presence in the North East Lincolnshire and North Lincolnshire Procurement Area, the office we establish to provide services under this tender must be a permanent presence? Is it a requirement that we provide more than one office location within the access point?

Applicants bidding to deliver services in North Lincolnshire must have, by the Contract Start Date, at least a Permanent Presence in one of the two Access Points within the Procurement Area of North East Lincolnshire & North Lincolnshire. In addition, all offices from which an Applicant Organisation tenders to deliver services from must be at least a Part-time Presence in the Access Point of North Lincolnshire. It is not a requirement to have multiple offices within the Access Point.

The definitions permanent and part-time presence are set out in Section 2 of the Civil Contract Specification which can be found at www.legalservices.gov.uk Civil contracts 2010 > Standard Civil Contract.

8. The maps referred to in ITT 8.2 for North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire show 3 access points in the Procurement Area, but only two are named – North East Lincolnshire and North Lincolnshire. Can you clarify which of the Access Points, on this map that this tender refers to?

Unfortunately there is an error on the published map. There should only be two Access Points shown on the map. The revised map has now been published alongside this FAQ. We apologise for any confusion caused.

9. All the selection criteria questions contain a question asking whether the applicant organisation has advised or represented clients face-to-face in the various law categories since 13th April 2010. There is no specification here as to the location of this work. Can work undertaken in any office in any procurement area "count" in this regard ?

The criterion refers to experience related to the individual bid therefore it relates to the office from which you are tendering. If you are setting up a new presence in the Access Point this would need to be treated as "not yet operational" from the answer options available for each relevant selection criterion.