

6/25/14 Public Safety Committee  
recommends approval

14-1385

**CITY OF MANITOWOC, WISCONSIN**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

**EMS BILLING SERVICES**

**2014-2017**



# CITY OF MANITOWOC

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**CITY OF MANITOWOC  
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

**General Information**

The City of Manitowoc (also herein referenced as the “City”) is requesting proposals from qualified Emergency Medical Services (EMS) billing service providers to provide ambulance patient billing services for a three year period for the calendar years 2014-2017 with an option to renew for an additional two years based on performance and renewal rates. Notification of renewal rates for 2017-2019 will be to the City Finance Director six (6) months before the end of contract.

**City of Manitowoc Fire & Rescue**

The City of Manitowoc Fire & Rescue Department provides advanced life support (ALS) to the community.

**Billing Service Needs**

The City is seeking an EMS services billing and collection provider with extensive experience and expertise in ambulance services billing to provide timely, accurate, and effective accounts receivable billing and collections. The City needs a service provider that will function as an extension of the City’s Finance Department, working as a partner with the City to ensure our collection of EMS revenues, while maintaining *excellent customer service* for our patients.

The City's successful billing provider will be representing the City of Manitowoc and is expected to communicate in a highly professional manner, in both written correspondence and verbal communication with patients, ensuring that the high level of patient care that we provide continues throughout the billing process.

The City's priorities are as follows:

- Timely billing
- Accuracy
- Knowledgeable and trained staff
- Professional, courteous, and respectful communication
- Professional judgment to identify issues and trends
- Accounting policies and procedures including internal controls and review procedures
- Effective use of technology

The City seeks to obtain quality billing services at a competitive price. We seek to maximize collection of EMS revenues while maintaining our high quality patient customer service. The City will entertain new ideas for enhancing revenue collection and reducing costs throughout the term of the contract.

## **II. NATURE OF SERVICES REQUIRED – Mandatory proposal elements**

The following section describes the City's needs and requirements in the various areas of EMS billing. Please address each of these areas of operations in your proposal. Your proposal should describe in detail, how your organization operates in each of these areas, including controls that you have in place or special efforts you make.

If you have recommendations for improvements or optional services that you feel the City might wish to consider, include them in your proposal. If optional services would require additional fees, the fees should be listed in the fee schedule.

### **A. Emergency Medical Services (EMS) billing expertise**

Provide expertise in billing related to Emergency Medical Services. Monitor changes to laws and regulations and communicate to the City the affects of these

changes and adapt procedures as necessary. Monitor and implement industry best practices.

Describe your training and expertise in this area. Provide documentation including proof of attendance for all Medicare, Medicaid, or reimbursement training that individuals from your company have attended over the past three (3) years.

Provider must supply documentation that it currently provides similar services as outlined in this RFP to at least five (5) other Emergency Medical Services of similar size and level of care.

Our current contract expires on November 1, 2014, and thus it is anticipated the provider awarded the contract would begin on or around November 2, 2014.

Describe your transition plan for assuming the City's billing service responsibilities. Include estimated timeline for completion of transition.

**B. Trained staff**

Staff assigned to the City's accounts shall have adequate training and skills to effectively complete the duties delegated. Staffing levels will be adequate to provide continuous coverage of the City's accounts. The provider will be able to continue to process the City's accounts and provide customer service during staff vacations, illnesses, and in the event of staff turnover. The provider will inform the City of any relevant staffing changes. Is a background check part of your hiring process?

Please provide your organization's overall staffing levels, qualifications, and describe in detail how you will staff the City of Manitowoc's account. The provider must have EMS trained individuals including, at a minimum, with First Responder training. Preference will be given to those who have trained Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics that function in positions with the provider. Please provide names and certification levels of any staff with EMS specific training and certifications.

**C. Patient billing**

The City will provide emergency medical service data. Provider must have the ability to accept the City's billing information electronically from the City's EMS software. Selected provider will supply and use encryption software for patient billing information. The City prefers Image Trend Software 5.0 or higher to be offered by the provider. The City is to be provided a minimum of six (6) software licenses and annual maintenance and updates. The system must be capable of wireless data transfer.

Provider will:

- Review for completeness, accuracy and correct medical codes.
- Gather any missing patient information required for collecting service charges and when reconciling with the City's records.
- Minimize the time between obtaining information and issuance of bill.

Describe your approach to processing patient billing and resolving discrepancies. Include samples of billing invoices and standard request for patient information letters. Describe your abilities to accept the City's data electronically.

**D. Third party payer billing**

Provider will verify reimbursement rates and procedures from third party insurance companies, HMO's, Medicare, Medicaid and other related parties. Provider will respond to inquiries and requests for additional information in a timely manner to expedite the reimbursement process. Provider expertise is required to ensure that the City is in compliance with government laws and regulations with respect to claims for reimbursement. Claims should be submitted electronically when possible.

What techniques are utilized by your company to maximize third party reimbursements and keep your clients in compliance with laws and regulations?

**E. Customer service inquiries**

Provider will respond to customer service billing inquiries in a professional, caring manner. Customer services representatives must be fully knowledgeable in EMS billing and collections. Although not all questions can be anticipated, standards for responding to frequently asked questions must be well defined. The City expects that patients will be treated with respect and their billing concerns addressed by a knowledgeable staff person.

Questions regarding service quality should be forwarded to the City of Manitowoc Fire Department staff at 920-686-6540.

Phone support hours must be staffed at a minimum, of Monday – Friday from 8:00 AM until 5:30 PM, Central Standard Time (excluding regular business holidays). Provider shall have an 800 number. Additional consideration shall be given to providers that offer extended evening business hours. Please provide a detailed description of your company’s customer service hours that patients may call regarding their accounts. Describe your customer service standards and capabilities.

Provider must provide digital recording capabilities of all incoming and outgoing telephone communication. The provider must also be willing (upon request), to forward any telephone communications that occur between patients transported by the City of Manitowoc and the provider’s office, via email.

Please describe your capabilities in fulfilling this requirement.

**F. Cash collection**

All payments on accounts will be directed to the provider. The provider will provide reports of payment information received for the City of Manitowoc and must maintain accurate receivable records. The provider and the City of Manitowoc will discuss a mutually agreeable frequency, timing, and method of delivery of payments and information to the City of Manitowoc. The provider must have the ability to accept credit cards and ACH, or checks by telephone. The provider must also have the ability to accept payments and other information

via the worldwide web. It is the sole responsibility of the provider to comply with all laws and regulations regarding the acceptance of electronic payments.

Describe your procedures for ensuring compliance with all laws and regulations.

Please provide a website where payments can be made via the web, and describe your abilities to accept payments as described above.

### **G. Reporting**

Monthly reports of account balances and activity will be provided. Carry forward reconciliation of prior month's balance to current month's balances will be provided. In addition, analytical receivable analysis should be provided to identify trends and analysis of those trends as necessary.

The provider must be able to allow access via the worldwide web to initial data collected and also collection activity via a secure internet connection. Please describe in detail the capabilities of your system.

Provider must have the ability to provide a wide-range of management reports to meet the City's need to monitor the activities of its Accounts Receivable. Provider must have the ability to provide reports in electronic format via the internet. Include samples of standard monthly reports that you provide.

### **H. Account collection efforts**

The provider will earn their commission only on actual collections during the period the account is placed with the billing service provider. At some point the account will be turned over to an independent licensed collection agency.

Describe the time period you would recommend prior to turning over the account to the collection agency?

Do you have any suggestions for maximizing collection of accounts during the initial billing phase?



**I. Accounting procedures and internal controls**

The billing provider will follow accounting practices and procedures that provide for assurance of accurate and timely billing of the City's EMS accounts. Procedures should be efficient and cost effective, but should include a system of segregation of duties, review procedures, and internal controls to ensure the City's receivable assets are protected.

Provider shall include documentation of internal controls used to ensure security of the City's assets.

The City of Manitowoc Finance Director shall have the right to inspect any and all records related to the City's account upon a notice of 48 hours.

The City shall have the right, at its own expense, to have an independent audit firm review any and all records related to the billing activities on the City's account upon a 48 hour notice.

Please provide a copy of your standard contract for billing services used for other EMS Agencies.

**J. Records management & disaster recovery planning**

The provider must maintain adequate accounting records of the City's EMS receivables and make access readily available to the City or its representatives for all records related to the City's accounts. Records must be maintained for a minimum of seven (7) years. The City owns all of the data collected.

The provider must have procedures in place to protect the City's information from loss due to disaster or computer failures. Adequate daily data backups must be maintained with frequent transfer of data to offsite storage. What are your data backup procedures and how will you prevent a significant interruption in business due to loss of data? Do you have a disaster recovery plan in place? Describe in detail your plan.

The provider must have the ability to digitally image any paper documents that are forwarded to the provider for processing. The provider must, upon request, make available digital copies of images that have been processed on behalf of the City of Manitowoc. Please describe your abilities to meet these requirements.

**K. HIPAA**

Knowledge of HIPAA regulations and compliance with HIPAA requirements is mandatory. How will you safeguard our patient's information?

**L. Account set-up and transition**

Describe your preferred approach to set up for the City of Manitowoc's account and transition of outstanding accounts.

**M. Insurance**

The provider will carry adequate insurance coverage. Coverage must include an errors and omission policy. A certificate of insurance must be included with your proposal.

It is hereby agreed and understood that the insurance required by the City of Manitowoc is primary coverage and that any insurance maintained by the City of Manitowoc, its officers, council members, agents, employees, or authorized volunteers will not contribute to a loss. All insurance shall be in full force prior to commencing work, and remain in force until the entire job is completed in the length of time that is specified, if any, in the contract or listed below, whichever is longer.

Provider may effect and maintain any insurance coverage, including, but not limited to, Worker's Compensation, General Liability, Professional and Automobile Liability, Excess/Umbrella Liability to support such financial obligations.

<u>Type of Coverage</u>	<u>Minimum Limit</u>
<u>Worker's Compensation</u>	Statutory – as required by State Statute
<u>Professional Liability</u>	\$1,000,000 – Each Claim \$1,000,000 – Aggregate
<u>Commercial General Liability</u> Bodily Injury & Property Damage (Incl. Personal Injury, Fire, Legal Contractual & Products/Completed Operations)	\$1,000,000 – Per Occurrence \$1,000,000 – Personal & Adv Injury \$2,000,000 – General Aggregate \$1,000,000- Products-Comp/OP Aggregate \$5,000–Med.Exp. (Any one person)
<u>Automobile Liability</u> Bodily Injury & Property Damage All Autos – Owned, Non-Owned and/or Hired Uninsured Motorists	\$1,000,000 Combined Single limit
<u>Excess/Umbrella Liability</u>	\$1,000,000 – Each Occurrence

**THE CITY OF MANITOWOC, AND ITS EMPLOYEES, COUNCIL MEMBERS, AS ITS INTERESTS MAY APPEAR, SHALL BE NAMED AS AN ADDITIONAL INSURED FOR COMMERCIAL, GENERAL, LIABILITY, AUTOMOBILE LIABILITY, EXCESS/UMBRELLA LIABILITY, AND BE AFFORDED A THIRTY (30) DAY WRITTEN NOTICE OF CANCELLATION OR NON-RENEWAL. DISCLOSURE MUST BE MADE OF ANY NON-STANDARD OR RESTRICTIVE ADDITIONAL INSURED ENDORSEMENT, AND ANY USE OF NON-STANDARD OR RESTRICTIVE ADDITIONAL INSURED ENDORSEMENT WILL NOT BE ACCEPTABLE. A CERTIFICATE INDICATING THE ABOVE COVERAGES SHALL BE SUBMITTED FOR REVIEW AND APPROVAL BY THE CITY FOR THE DURATION OF THIS AGREEMENT.**

**Q. Training**

The provider must include training to EMS personnel upon request, focusing on documentation as well as State and Federal reimbursement rules and regulations. The provider's trainer should have extensive EMS and trainer experience. Please provide a resume for your trainer.

## **R. Other services**

The City expects to maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of the use of EMS billing services over the term of this contract. The City is seeking a billing provider that offers a full line of services and one which demonstrates its commitment to expertise and knowledge of medical billing and expanding its line of services as new technology and new industry trends develop. Proposers are invited to suggest specific tasks and activities to improve billing, patient service, or collections.

## **III. FEES & CHARGES**

The City is open to considering various types of fee structures. The City will consider all factors that will increase the City's net EMS revenue (collected EMS fees less billing service costs). Proposal must include a detailed fee structure.

Additional or optional charges must be included (and clearly identified) in the proposal. The provider may not charge the City fees for services not specifically listed in the proposal unless mutually agreed upon in advance.

A minimum of a three year contract is contemplated, subject to an annual review and satisfactory performance. Fees included in the proposal are for the three year period of time. If you are proposing any annual fee increase, this should be clearly stated in your proposal.

Based on satisfactory performance and satisfactory negotiation of terms (including a price acceptable to both the City of Manitowoc and the selected billing service provider), the City may extend the agreement without solicitations from other billing service providers. In the event of unsatisfactory performance, or when in the best interest of the City, proposals may be solicited before the end of the three year period. In the event of a fee increase, the City has a 90- day out clause. In the event of fraud the contract would be terminated immediately. At the end of the contract all records of the City's accounts will be transferred to the City.

#### IV. EXPERIENCE & REFERENCES

Provide in detail of your experience including number and types of entities served, length of services, volumes in number of claims, and total dollars. Please provide specific references.

#### V. PROPOSAL TERMS & CONDITIONS

##### A. Inquiries

All responses, questions, and correspondence should be directed to Manitowoc Fire & Rescue Department, (920) 686-6540.

For those companies selected, there will be a meeting held at the Manitowoc City Hall, 900 Quay Street, Manitowoc, on August 18, 2014, at 2:00 PM, to review the proposals and ask questions of the providers. Finance, I.T., and Fire & Rescue Department staff will be on hand to answer any questions you may have on operations or to provide clarification on the RFP.

##### B. Submission of Proposals

The proposal should be prepared simply and economically, providing a straightforward, concise description of the proposer's capabilities to satisfy the requirements of the request for proposal. While additional data may be presented, the items listed in Section II must be addressed in your proposal. They represent the criteria against which the proposal will be evaluated.

**Proposals shall be clearly marked, "EMS BILLING SERVICES" and must be received by 4:00 PM on Thursday August 7, 2014, at the City Clerk's Office, 900 Quay Street, Manitowoc WI 54220.**

Submit five (5) hard copies of the proposal. Proposals should be submitted to the attention of:

City Clerk's Office  
Proposal for: **EMS BILLING SERVICES**  
City of Manitowoc  
900 Quay Street  
Manitowoc WI, 54220  
(920) 686-6950

The proposal should include the following:

- Title Page

Title page showing the request for proposal's subject; the billing service provider's name; the name, address, and telephone number of the contact person; and the date of the proposal.

- Table of Contents

- Transmittal Letter

A signed letter of transmittal briefly stating the proposer's understanding of the services to be provided, the commitment to perform the services, a statement why the proposer believes itself to be best qualified to provide billing services to the City of Manitowoc, and a statement that the proposal is a firm and irrevocable offer for the calendar years 2014-2017.

- Detailed Proposal

The detailed proposal should address all items set forth in Section II of this request for proposal.

- Proposer Guarantees and Warranties (Appendix A).

- Listing of Client References

- Fee Schedules

- Sample copy of your standard contract for service

- Proof of Insurance

### **C. Terms and conditions**

The City of Manitowoc reserves the right, to except or reject any or all proposals. At the discretion of the City of Manitowoc, service providers submitting proposals may be requested to make oral presentations as part of the evaluation process.

There is no expressed or implied obligation for the City of Manitowoc to reimburse responding providers for any expenses incurred in preparing proposals in response to this request.

Proposals submitted are considered public information in accordance with Wisconsin statutes governing data practices. Should you have any sections of the proposal that are considered trade secrets, please identify those in a separate document at the end of the proposal.

## **VI. EVALUATION PROCEDURES**

Proposals will be evaluated on the basis of conformance with the terms of this RFP and how those proposals meet the overall objectives of the City. The City reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received which are deemed incomplete. The evaluation process will consist of the following:

### **A. Review Committee**

Proposals submitted will be evaluated and a committee will conduct interviews. The review committee will evaluate and rank all responsive bid proposals on the basis of the general qualifications of the Service Provider, the responsiveness of the proposal to the City's needs, and the competitive pricing of services.

### **B. Evaluation Criteria**

Proposals will be evaluated using seven sets of criteria. Firms meeting the mandatory criteria will have their proposals further evaluated using the following principal selection criteria:

1. Experience
2. Expertise
3. Technology
4. Fees
5. Processes
6. Accounts Receivable and Reports
7. Service Delivery Capabilities

The City seeks competitively priced billing services; however, cost may not be the primary factor in the final selection of billing service provider. Revenue collection capability and performance will be an important factor in the selection.

**C. Oral Presentations**

During the evaluation process, the Review Committee will request the highest rated proposers to make oral presentations. Such presentations will provide firms with an opportunity to answer any questions the Review Committee may have on a firm's proposal. The number of proposers asked to make such oral presentations will be determined based on the quality of the written proposals.

**D. Final Selection**

The City will select a billing service provider based upon the recommendation of the Review Committee.

**E. Right to Reject Proposals**

Submission of a proposal indicates acceptance by the firm of the conditions contained in this Request For Proposal unless clearly and specifically noted in the proposal submitted and confirmed in the contract between the City of Manitowoc and the billing service provider selected. The City of Manitowoc reserves the right, without prejudice to reject any or all proposals. The City may choose not to select some services as noted in this RFP.

The City of Manitowoc appreciates your time and effort in completing your response to our Request For Proposals for EMS billing services. We look forward to reviewing your proposals.



## APPENDIX A

### PROPOSER GUARANTEES AND WARRANTIES

- I. The proposer certifies it can and will provide and make available, as a minimum, all services set forth in Section II, Nature of Services Required.
- II. Proposer warrants that it currently has and will furnish an errors and omissions insurance policy providing the amount of coverage identified in this RFP for the willful or negligent acts, or omissions of any officers, employees or agents thereof.
- III. Proposer warrants that it will not delegate or subcontract its responsibilities under an agreement without the prior written permission of the City of Manitowoc.
- IV. Proposer warrants that all information provided by it in connection with this proposal is true and accurate.
- V. Proposer must identify below any specific area(s) where they cannot meet the requirements set forth in this RFP.

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Signature of Official: \_\_\_\_\_

Name (typed): \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Firm: \_\_\_\_\_

(\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City                      State                      Zip

Terms of Payment, from the City to 3<sup>rd</sup> party \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_