

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL  
#R15003

**EMPLOYEE BENEFITS BROKER AND  
CONSULTING SERVICES**

# **Joliet Junior College**

## **EMPLOYEE BENEFITS BROKER AND CONSULTING SERVICES**

**RFP Opening March 25, 2015 at 2:00 PM**

### **Background**

Joliet Junior College is a comprehensive community college. The college offers pre-baccalaureate programs for students planning to transfer to a four-year university, occupational education leading directly to employment, adult education and literacy programs, work force and workplace development services, and support services to help students succeed. The College serves over 35,000 full time and part time students on its main campus located within the city of Joliet, and its five extension campuses located in Romeoville, Morris, Frankfort, Weitendorf, and City Center in downtown Joliet.

The college has 570 employees eligible for employee insurance benefits. Approximately 80% of those employees are covered by one of six (6) collective bargaining agreements. The college is self-insured for medical (Blue Cross/Blue Shield Illinois), vision (VSP), dental insurance (Blue Cross/Blue Shield Illinois), for its employees. The college also maintains stop loss coverage (Symetra) for individual medical claims over \$200,000.

The college provides group term life insurance to eligible full time employees. Other benefits offered on an employee-voluntary basis include spouse and child life insurance, long-term disability insurance, flexible spending accounts and deferred compensation plans (403b/457). The college offers annual onsite wellness screenings.

The college has an institutional level Insurance Committee comprised of representatives from the covered unions, management and staff. There are approximately 12 committee members. Generally, the committee will meet monthly during the academic year (9 months) to discuss information, strategies and communication of our employee benefit programs. Broker/consultant representatives are present at those meetings.

The college also offers a 100% employee-funded limited indemnity fixed benefit insurance plan (Century Healthcare) for part time employees to purchase.

### **Vision Statement**

Joliet Junior College, the nation's first public community college, will be a leader in teaching and learning, and the first choice for post-secondary education.

### **Mission Statement**

Joliet Junior College enriches people's lives through affordable, accessible, and quality programs and services. The college provides transfer and career preparation, training and workforce development, and a lifetime of learning to the diverse community it serves.

**I. SCOPE OF SERVICES**

The Board of Trustees of Joliet Junior College (hereinafter, "JJC") is requesting proposals from Employee Benefits Broker and Consulting Service Providers for day-to-day benefits customer service capabilities, to assist college management with strategic planning, underwriting/actuarial services, vendor management, administrative/communication support, and compliance as detailed in the Scope of Services section of the proposal.

Additional scope is discussed in the **SCOPE OF WORK** section of this proposal.

**II. RFP SCHEDULE**

<b>Date (2015)</b>	<b>Event</b>
<b>March 4, 2015</b>	Vendors contacted via email / advertised
<b>March 10, 2015 by 2:00 p.m. CST</b>	Last date/time for submission of written questions via email to <a href="mailto:purchasing@jjc.edu">purchasing@jjc.edu</a>
<b>March 13, 2015 by the end of the business day</b>	Responses to questions emailed
<b>March 25, 2015 by 2:00 p.m. CST</b>	Proposals must be submitted to the Business & Auxiliary Service Office, Campus Center Building A, Room 3100, 1215 Houbolt Road, Joliet, IL 60431
<b>Week of March 30, 2015</b>	JJC Evaluation Team reviews proposal
<b>Week of April 6, 2015</b>	Possible presentations by three top short-listed firms
<b>May 7, 2015</b>	Notification of Award

**III. INSTRUCTIONS TO VENDORS**

**ADVICE:** The department responsible for this RFP is the Business and Auxiliary Services department located at Campus Center, Building A, Room 3100, 1215 Houbolt Rd., Joliet, IL 60431-8938. The JJC contact will be Janice Reedus, Director of Business & Auxiliary Services, A3102, telephone (815) 280-6640; fax (815) 280-6631.

Questions concerning this RFP will be answered if sent to the Business & Auxiliary Services via email to [purchasing@jjc.edu](mailto:purchasing@jjc.edu) on or before **March 10, 2015 at 2:00 p.m. CST.**

All questions and answers will be published and provided to all potential suppliers by the end of business day on **March 13, 2015.**

**SUBMISSION:** The submission of a response shall be prima facie evidence that the supplier has full knowledge of the scope, nature, quality of work to be performed, the detailed requirements of the project, and the conditions under which the work is to be performed.

Faxed proposals ARE NOT acceptable. All RFPs must be submitted by the date and time of public opening (see above). RFPs must be submitted on the forms provided in a sealed envelope clearly marked (typed or blocking lettering only) with the vendor's name, return address, RFP for Employee Benefits Broker and Consulting Services, the opening date and time. An original and (6) hard copies and one complete (1) electronic copy (thumb drive or DVD copy) of the RFP shall be provided.

RFPs must be addressed to: Joliet Junior College, Janice Reedus, Director of Business & Auxiliary Services, Campus Center Room A3102, 1215 Houbolt Rd., Joliet, IL 60431-8938.

RFPs not submitted in the format as instructed by this RFP will not be accepted. Addendums to this RFP, once filed, may be submitted in a sealed envelope only, and properly identified, prior to the opening hour.

Receipt of RFP / Late RFP: Sealed RFPs shall be received at the place and until the time indicated in this RFP. It is the sole responsibility of the vendors to ensure timely delivery of the RFP. JJC will not be responsible for failure of service on the part of the U.S. Postal Service, courier companies, or any other form of delivery service chosen by the vendor.

RFPs received after the date and time specified shall be considered LATE, and shall not be opened.

Accuracy of Proposals / Withdrawal of Proposals prior to RFP Opening: Proposals will represent a true and correct statement and shall contain no cause for claim of omission or error. Proposals maybe withdrawn in writing or by facsimile (provided that the facsimile is signed and dated by vendor's authorized representative) at any time prior to the opening hour. However, no proposal may be withdrawn for a period of one hundred twenty (120) days subsequent to the opening of the RFP without the prior written approval of the Director of Business and Auxiliary Services or Joliet Junior College.

**ADDENDA:** The only method by which any requirement of this solicitation may be modified is by written addendum.

**PROPOSAL DUE DATE:** The proposal must be received on or before **March 25, 2015 @ 2:00 P.M. CST** at the Business and Auxiliary Services Department, Campus Center, Room A3102, 1215 Houbolt Rd., Joliet, IL 60431-8938

**TAXES:**

JJC is exempt from all federal excise, state and local taxes unless otherwise stated in this document. In the event taxes are imposed on the services purchased, JJC will not be responsible for payment of the taxes. The supplier shall absorb the taxes entirely. Upon request, JJC's Tax Exemption Certificate will be furnished.

**INDEMNIFICATION:**

The supplier shall protect, indemnify and hold JJC harmless against any liability claims and costs of whatsoever kind and nature for injury to or death of any person or persons and for loss or damage to any property occurring in connection with or in any incident to or arising out of occupancy, use, service, operations or performance of work in connection with the contract, resulting in whole or in part from the negligent acts or omissions of the supplier.

**DISCLOSURE:**

Vendor shall note any and all relationships that might be a conflict of interest and include such information with the bid.

**TERM OF CONTRACT:**

Any contract, which results from this RFP, shall be for a period of two (2) years from the date of the contract award. Assuming continued availability of funding; JJC may, at its sole option and with the consent of the supplier renew the contract for up to an additional four (4) one-year terms.

**BLACKOUT PERIOD:**

After the College has advertised for proposals, no pre-proposal vendor shall contact any College officer(s) or employee(s) involved in the solicitation process, except for interpretation of specifications, clarification of bid submission requirements or any information pertaining to prebid conferences. Such vendors making such request shall email Janice Reedus, Director of Business & Auxiliary Services, at [purchasing@jjc.edu](mailto:purchasing@jjc.edu). No vendor shall visit or contact any College officers or an employee until after the proposal is awarded, except in those instances when site inspection is a prerequisite for the submission of a proposal. During the black-out period, any such visitation, solicitation or sales call by any representative of a prospective vendor in violation of this provision may cause the disqualification of such bidder's response.

**IV. GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

**Applicability:** These general terms and conditions will be observed in preparing the proposal to be submitted.

**Purchase:** After execution of the contract, purchases will be put into effect by means of purchase orders or suitable contract documents executed by the Director of Business and Auxiliary Services.

**Right to Cancel:** JJC may cancel contracts resulting from this RFP at any time for a breach of any contractual obligation by providing the contractor with thirty-calendar days written notice of such cancellation. Should JJC exercise its right to cancel, such cancellation shall become effective on the date as specified in the notice to cancel.

**Governing Law and Venue:** This contract shall be construed in and governed under and by the laws of the State of Illinois. Any actions or remedies pursued by either party shall be pursued in the State and Federal Courts of Will County, Illinois, only after Alternate Dispute resolution (ADR) has been exhausted.

**Dispute Resolution:** JJC and the contractor shall attempt to resolve any controversy or claim arising from any contractual matter by mediation. The parties will agree on a mediator and shall share in the mediation costs equally.

**Costs:** All costs directly or indirectly related to preparation of a response or oral presentation, if any, required to supplement and/or clarify a proposal shall be the sole responsibility of and shall be borne by the vendor.

**Proprietary Information:** Vendor should be aware that the contents of all submitted proposals are subject to public review and will be subject to the Illinois Freedom of Information Act. All information submitted with your proposal will be considered public information unless vendor identifies all proprietary information in the proposal by clearly marking on the top of each page so considered, "Proprietary Information." The Illinois Attorney General shall make a final determination of what constitutes proprietary information or trade secrets. While JJC will endeavor to maintain all submitted information deemed proprietary within JJC, JJC will not be liable for the release of such information.

**Negotiation:** JJC reserves the right to negotiate all elements, which comprise the vendor's proposal to ensure the best possible consideration, be afforded to all concerned. JJC further reserves the right to waive any and all minor irregularities in the proposal, waive any defect, and/or reject any and all proposals, and to seek new proposals when such an action would be deemed in the best interest of JJC.

**Award:** The successful vendor, as determined by JJC, shall be required to execute a contract for the furnishing of all services and other deliverables required for successful completion of the proposed project. The supplier may not assign, sell, or otherwise transfer its interest in the contract award or any part thereof without written permission from JJC.

**Retention of Documentation:** All proposal materials and supporting documentation that is submitted in response to this proposal becomes the permanent property of JJC.

**Opening of Proposals:** Proposals will be opened in a manner that avoids disclosure of the contents to competing vendors. Contents for proposals will remain confidential during the negotiations period. Only the proposal number and the identity of the vendor submitting the proposal response will be made available to the public.

## **V. FORMAT FOR RESPONSE**

To achieve a uniform review process and obtain the maximum degree of comparability, it is required that the proposal be organized in the format specified.

An original and (6) hard copies and one complete (1) electronic copy (thumb drive or DVD copy) of the proposal will be required. Each shall be submitted in a binder. The original copy should be so noted and signed.

**1. Title Page**

Show the RFP subject, the name of the vendor's firm, address, telephone number, name of contact person, and date.

**2. Table of Contents**

Clearly identify the materials by sections and page number(s).

**3. Letter of Transmittal**

Limit to one or two pages.

- a. Briefly state the vendor's understanding of the scope of services to be provided and make a commitment to provide the services within the time period.
- b. List the names of the persons who will be authorized to make representations for the vendor, their titles, address, and telephone numbers.

**4. Profile of the Vendor**

Indicate the number of people in the organization and their level of experience and qualification and the percentage of their time that will be dedicated to this process.

- a. Provide a list of the vendor's top ten current and prior two-year clients indicating the type of services the organization has performed for each client.
- b. Submit independently audited financial statements (one copy only). Such information will be considered in strict confidence.
- c. Indicate any third-party firms involved with your program and state their role(s).

**5. Scope Section and Company Expertise/Experience**

Clearly describe the scope of services to be provided based upon the information in the scope section. Respond to each item listed in the Company Expertise/Experience section.

**6. Responses to Addendum**

**7. Price Responses**

**8. Invoicing Procedure**

- a. Describe the firm's invoicing procedures.
- b. Include documentation identifying all of the vendor's fees.

**9. Bidder's Certification Statement**

## V. EVALUATION

In evaluating the proposals submitted, JJC will apply the "Best Value" standard in selecting the broker/consultant services to be awarded a contract. Price/cost is not the only criteria that will be used in the evaluation process. Any award resulting from this RFP will be made to that vendor whose offer conforms to the RFP and it is determined to be the most advantageous, of "best value" to JJC, in the sole judgment of JJC. The proposals received will be evaluated based on the following criteria to determine each broker/consultant's qualifications. The order does not indicate relative ranking.

1. Demonstrated record of responsiveness and quality of customer service on this type of account.
2. Overall experience, reputation, expertise, stability and financial stability of the firm.
3. The experience and qualifications of individual team members assigned to the JJC account.
4. Experience in higher education.
5. Experience working with an employee insurance committee.
6. Rates, fees or charges including the level of detail provided in the firm's fee information, as well as the willingness of the firm to offer flexible fee arrangements.
7. Firm's awareness and ability to provide timely, accurate communication of emerging trends, opportunities, regulatory updates and liabilities to clients.
8. Firm's ability to provide a broad spectrum of consulting services, including, but not limited to actuarial, claims administration, alternative funding arrangements.
9. Firm's experience with employee/company wellness programming.
10. Responsiveness of the Firm's proposal to the RFP, including clarity and organization of response, clear presentation of Firm's experience and approach to ensuring the needs of JJC are fully met.
11. The quality and range of services the firm proposes to provide.
12. The vendor's past relationship with JJC, if any.
13. Level of technological support provided by the Firm including online employee portal, access of information, and reporting tools for management.
14. Any other relevant factors that a private business entity would consider in selecting a broker/consultant firm.

Based on a review of the written response, JJC will select a short list of candidates who will be asked to make a presentation to be arranged at a mutually convenient time at JJC's offices in Joliet, Illinois. This presentation is expected to confirm proposal representations; supplement information obtained through the proposal process and give JJC the opportunity to meet the individuals who would be assigned to our account. An agenda of items we wish to be addressed during this meeting will be forwarded to the final candidates prior to the meeting.

## **VII. SCOPE OF SERVICES**

### **A. Strategic Planning**

1. Assist JJC in short and long term employee/retiree benefit strategic planning by conducting trend-analysis forecasts.
2. Assist JJC in the development, implementation and ongoing management of an effective and measureable wellness program that will reduce health and welfare cost over the long term.
3. Assist JJC toward the development and/or use of a comprehensive on-line benefits enrollment option.
4. Participate in management presentations involving benefit strategies and issues.
5. Keep JJC informed about issues and changes in the benefits marketplace. Provide information regarding trends and benchmarks in the benefits field.
6. Provide, maintain, and update comparison reports of other colleges, universities and other organizations' benefit plan offerings and costs to determine their competitiveness to JJC programs as needed.
7. Serve as a source of general expertise for various benefit issues JJC may encounter.
8. Review and make recommendations regarding value-added benefit plans and programs, as well as modifications to the design, cost (rates), communications, and quality of current employee benefit plans, and other related programs.
9. Provide a service plan schedule yearly to ensure that JJC is compliant with all benefit related deadlines.

### **B. Underwriting/Actuarial Services**

1. Provide actuary services as needed. Calculate and recommend appropriate premium rates and administrative fees to maintain the viability of the plans, ensuring quality and cost effective benefits are provided by the plans.
2. Provide actuarial costing of legislative proposals for mandated benefit programs.
3. Analyze large claims.
4. Validate rates needed to cover insured plan liabilities.

5. Maintain full and accurate records with respect to all matters and services provided on behalf of JJC's benefits plans and programs.
6. Assist JJC by pricing and analyzing benefit change options; project effect of possible benefit changes on plan costs.
7. Assist with the development, negotiation and implementation of health and welfare providers on various topics, including, but not limited to, premium rates, benefit levels, performance standards and guarantees, contractual terms and conditions, quality assurance standards, utilization and performance reports, statistical and/or financial reports, and where applicable, plan-specific data such as medical conditions, prescriptions drugs, high cost procedures and in-patient data.

### **C. Utilization Reporting**

1. Provide detailed quarterly reporting and analysis. Collect claims experience and participation data from vendors and JJC, to include the following data:
2.
  - a. Premium or fixed costs, paid claims, and loss ratio of each line of coverage or subgroup level.
  - b. Experience categorized by type of participant, such as active employees, spouses and children;
  - c. Experience categorized by the type of service provided.
3. Medical and dental reports, to include number of claims processed, number of eligible employees covered, cost per claim processed.
4. Prepare financial exhibits that provide JJC with the information needed to make informed decisions regarding JJC's benefits plan designs and funding levels.

### **D. Vendor Management**

1. Provide support in the day-to-day management of vendors and resolve administrative issues; assist with claims and billing issues as requested, and conduct periodic meetings as necessary.
2. Assist JJC with RFP process for third party administrators for any of our benefits as identified and needed.
3. As directed, negotiate all insurance vendor contracts, services and renewals with vendors, including meeting directly with insurance company underwriters.
4. Create performance guarantees for all insurance carriers providing services to JJC.
5. Analyze insurance proposal criteria, review all insurance, benefit and administrative service documents for accuracy and adherence to prior agreements, and manage carrier/vendor relationships.

6. Review contracts with providers for accuracy in rates, benefits, eligibility, and coverage definitions.
7. Review carrier service levels and compare performance guarantees; resolve problems regarding vendors' services and performance.

**E. Administration/Communications Support**

1. Assist Human Resources and Financial Services with the administration of all group/individual insurance plans. Respond to questions and provide information to Human Resources department staff. Upon request respond to employees' questions directly.
2. Assist JJC with the implementation and communication of new programs or changes to existing programs, which will include attending and presenting information at employee insurance committee meetings, open enrollment meetings, to senior leadership and to the Board of Trustees.
3. Develop, modify and update employee benefits materials used for open enrollment meetings/presentations, and educational/promotional materials. (PowerPoint, plan summary booklet, educational materials, newsletters, etc.)
4. Provide customer service and assistance to JJC and employees with issues involving provider billing, advocacy for services, disputes, interpretation of services, etc.
5. Assist with entire open enrollment planning process each year, including, but not limited to, developing a timeline, assisting with the development of open enrollment materials and coordination and participation in open enrollment meetings. Assist in final review of open enrollment communications material.
6. Develop and maintain a JJC hosted benefit website as an employee resource.
7. Attend annual employee benefit/wellness expo/vendor fair. Coordinate attendance of representatives from various plan providers.
8. Provide regular and timely communication of changes and proposed changes in State and Federal statutes and regulations that may impact JJC's employee benefits plans and programs. Recommend procedures and/or policies.
9. Develop and/or assist in developing and evaluating employee engagement and satisfaction surveys.

## **F. Compliance**

1. Monitor emerging trends and insurers'/vendors' financial status.
2. Provide research and professional advice on new developments in benefits law (both proposed and enacted) and programs both state and federal, making sure JJC is always current on any new developments and/or requirements relative to legally administering its benefits plans, i.e. Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA), HIPAA, COBRA and others.
3. Assist in COBRA, HIPAA, and PPACA compliance, including review and preparation of SPDs and Plan Documents.
4. Review pertinent contract and other legal documents to insure that they accurately reflect negotiated benefits, services and terms.

## **G. Term of Program**

July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2017 with four (4) one (1) year renewal options.

## **VIII. Company Expertise/Experience**

### **A. Describe your firm's expertise in each of the following areas.**

1. Health and Wellness
  - a. Include information on working with self-insured organizations
  - b. Include information on voluntary benefits
2. Plan Compliance
3. Claims Management Strategy
4. Benchmarking
5. Strategic Planning/Benefit Strategy
6. Actuarial/Underwriting
7. Research and Technical Services
8. Benefits Administration
9. Employee Engagement and Benefits Communication

### **B. Marketplace Position**

1. How many of your clients do you currently work with on a broker basis?
2. How many of your clients do you currently work with on a consultant basis?

3. Describe two (2) situations where your firm has demonstrated leading edge or innovative solutions for an organization of similar size and industry. Please include results where applicable.
4. How do you provide your clients with advice around industry best practices in health improvement and wellness programs? What tools and/or resources do you utilize?
5. Describe your firm's marketplace leverage in negotiating with carriers in regards to rates, policy terms and plan design.
6. Describe your view of the role of a broker/consultant in this type of relationship and what differentiates your firm from other brokerage-consulting firms.
7. Identify a minimum of three (3) other accounts similar in size and scope for which you are presently serving as broker/consultant which can serve as a reference for your service.

**C. Insurance Carrier and Health Plan Selection Process**

1. Describe how your firm would handle the selection of insurance carriers and other service providers for Joliet Junior College.
2. Describe your firm's consulting approach for bidding and selecting the most appropriate health plan alternative.

**D. Description of Broker Services and Ability**

1. Describe the process your firm utilizes to manage and administer a benefit package of our size throughout a contract year i.e. 570 eligible employees, multiple locations.
2. What strategy does your firm utilize to manage and forecast a benefit package over a 2-3 year period?
3. Describe all services your firm/agency will offer JJC.
4. What type of performance measures would your firm use to evaluate customer service and JJC employee satisfaction? Are you willing to provide performance guarantees to JJC for your services?
5. Describe your procedure for dealing with employee inquiries. Do you offer assistance with claims and/or coverage questions?
6. Do you have any Internet- based employee communication tools? Describe your online benefits enrollment tools and functionality.
7. Describe the action that would be taken, the support provided, and the personnel who would be involved in investigating and settling a disputed claim.
8. Describe the steps you anticipate will be needed to ensure a smooth transition if you are selected as the new Agent of Record.

9. Describe your firm's approach and strategy when it comes to assisting with Healthcare Reform planning.

**IX. Cost/Fee Structure**

- A. Describe in detail how you propose to be compensated for your services. Based on the information provided within this Request for Proposal, what is the estimate of your company's consulting fees for your first two years of service to JJC's account? You are encouraged to either split out costs/fees by category and/or propose a flat annual fee for services.
- B. Are you willing to disclose any and all compensation earned, including but not limited to billed fees and/or any other compensation earned through relationships with the insurance plan provider and/or prescription benefit manager selected by JJC?
- C. What services would be billed in addition to your normal stated fees?

**CERTIFICATION OF CONTRACT/BIDDER**

The below signed contractor/bidder hereby certifies that it is not barred from bidding on this or any other contract due to any violation of either Section 33E-3 or 33E-4 of Article 33E, Public Contracts, of the Illinois Criminal Code of 1961, as amended. This certification is required by Public Act 85-1295. This Act relates to interference with public contracting, bid rigging and rotating, kickbacks and bribery.

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE OF CONTRACTOR/BIDDER

\_\_\_\_\_  
TITLE

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

THIS FORM **MUST** BE RETURNED WITH YOUR PROPOSAL TO:

Joliet Junior College District #525  
Director of Business & Auxiliary Services, A-3102  
1215 Houbolt Road  
Joliet IL 60431