

COUNTY OF ROCKLAND
Department of General Services
Purchasing Division

Contract Award Notification

Title: **Ballots – Printing, Packaging and Processing of Optical Scan Absentee Vote by Mail Ballot Packets**

Contract Period: May 13, 2021 through May 12, 2022 with 4 one-year options
Extended through May 12, 2023, w/ 3 1-year options
Extended through May 12, 2024 w/2-1-year options
Extended through May 12, 2025 w/1 year option

Original Date of Issue: May 13, 2021

Date of Revision: 03/12/24

BID No: **RFB-RC-2021-040**

Catalog: **Printing & Promotional Supplies**

Authorized Users: County Agencies, All Political Subdivisions

Address Inquiries to:

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Title: Purchaser II
Phone: 845-364-3807
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Description

This contract is for the printing and processing of vote-by-mail absentee optical scan ballots.

| Contract # | Vendor Number | Contractor & Address | Telephone No. |
|------------|---------------|---|---|
| Bid 21-040 | 0000006520 | Fort Orange Press, Inc. 11 Sand Creek Road Albany, NY 12205 Contact: Robert F. Witko rwitko@fortorangepress.com | 518-489-3233 FAX: 518-489-1638 |

| COUNTY OF ROCKLAND DGS – PURCHASING DEPARTMENT BLDG. A, 2ND FLOOR, 50 SANATORIUM ROAD POMONA, NY 10970 TELEPHONE NO.: 845-364-3820 FAX NO.: 845-364-3809 | | | | | | | |
|---|---|-------------|-------------|------------------|------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------|
| LINE NO. | DESCRIPTION | ITEM NUMBER | EST. QTY. | UNIT OF MEASURE | UNIT PRICE | MFG./PRODUCT CODE OF PROPOSED PAPER | VENDOR |
| GENERAL ELECTION AND PRIMARY ABSENTEE BALLOT VOTE BY MAIL -PRINTING, PACKAGING AND PROCESSING | | | | | | | |
| 1 | General Election and Primary - Printing, Preparing and Processing Absentee Vote By Mail Ballot packages as specified - Pricing to include services, ballots and envelopes as specified. | 96659000064 | 20000 | PACK | \$ 2.12 | Sub 80 Opaque text to Spec | FORT ORANGE PRESS |
| 2 | General Election and Primary - Mail List Setup (lists to be provided by the BOE)–Initial run free of charge, additional runs to be invoiced at the rate provided on the proposal pages. Mail list to be CASS & NTOA Certified. | 96659 | 10 | EACH | INCLUDED | INCLUDED | FORT ORANGE PRESS |
| FOREIGN ABSENTEE BALLOT VOTE BY MAIL -PRINTING, PACKAGING AND PROCESSING | | | | | | | |
| 3 | Foreign - Printing, Preparing and Processing Absentee Vote By Mail Ballot packages as specified - Pricing to include services, ballots and envelopes as specified. | 96659000065 | 500 | PACK | \$ 2.12 | Sub 80 Opaque text to Spec | FORT ORANGE PRESS |
| 4 | Foreign - Mail List Setup (lists to be provided by the BOE)–Initial run free of charge, additional runs to be invoiced at the rate provided on the proposal pages. Mail list to be CASS & NTOA Certified. | 96659 | 3 | EACH | INCLUDED | INCLUDED | FORT ORANGE PRESS |
| 5 | % Discount off cost for additional services and material needed which may be required due to changing NYS Board of Election/Governor orders. Bidder must enter in % discount offered as whole number e.g. 10% = 0.10 | 96659000066 | \$ 5,000.00 | PERCENT DISCOUNT | NONE | NONE | FORT ORANGE PRESS |

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PURCHASES BY OTHER

LOCAL GOVERNMENTS, SCHOOL DISTRICTS, AND NON PROFIT AGENCIES

As per the New York State General Municipal Law, all political subdivisions of New York State are allowed to make purchases through the resulting contract(s). As per Rockland County Procurement Policy, Non Profit Agencies approved to participate in New York State's Contract Extension Program are authorized to make purchases through the resulting contract(s).

1. The County of Rockland must make all contract award information available to other political subdivisions and non profit agencies through our website: www.rcpurchasing.com
2. Any other political subdivision or Rockland County non profit agency will issue purchase orders directly to vendors within the specified contract period referencing the County's contract and must be liable for any payments due on such purchase orders; and must accept sole responsibility for any payment due.
3. All purchases must be subject to audit and inspection by the other political subdivisions and Rockland County non profit agencies for which the purchase was made.
4. No officer, board or agency of a county, town, village, or school district must make any purchase through the County when bids have been received for such purchase by such officer, board or agency, unless such purchase may be made upon the same terms, conditions and specifications at a lower price through the County.
5. All Bidders must be on notice that as a condition of the award of a County contract, the successful bidder must accept the award of a similar contract with any other political subdivision in New York State and Rockland County non profit agencies authorized to use New York State's contracts, if called upon to do so. A listing of approved Rockland County non profit agencies is available on the Purchasing Division's website at www.rcpurchasing.com. The County, however, will not be responsible for any debts incurred by the participants pursuant to this or any other agreement.
6. Necessary deviations from the County's specifications in the award of a participant contract, whether such deviations relate to quantities, or delivery points must be resolved between the successful bidder and the other political subdivisions and Rockland County non profit agencies.

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SPECIFICATIONS

1. SCOPE OF WORK

- 1.1. The Rockland County Board of Elections is seeking to contract for the printing and processing of Vote-By-Mail Absentee Optical Scan Ballots to be used in ES&S DS200/AutoMark scanners in NYS Primary, General, and Special Elections.
- 1.2. QUESTIONS are to be submitted via email to purchasing@co.rockland.ny.us. The solicitation # above must be in the “subject” box of the email.
- 1.2.1. Deadline for receipt of questions is, Thursday, April 22nd, 2021, 3:00 PM EST.

2. MANDATORY– SAMPLES

2.1. SAMPLE BALLOTS ARE REQUIRED TO BE SUBMITTED /UPLOADED WITH THE BID PROPOSAL. Attachment numbers 1 through 3 are included with this bid solicitation. Physical Samples will be required to be submitted within three (3) days from date of request.

- 2.1.1. Attachment #1 - 2012 Primary Election –
 *Democratic Election District Ramapo 108
 *Republican Election District Clarkstown 24
- 2.1.2. Attachment #2 – 2012 Primary Election –
 *Conservative Election District Stony Point 13
 *Working Families Election District Clarkstown 1
- 2.1.3. Attachment #3 – 2012 Rockland County General Election Ballot
 *Election District Ramapo 15
- 2.1.4. Bidder must produce sample ballots from these files and submit with the bid proposal.
- 2.1.5. Samples submitted must meet the specified requirements of this solicitation.
- 2.1.6. Samples supplied must be printed on the ballot paper specified herein.
- 2.1.7. Bidder must supply a sample of the ballot paper to be used. Sample must be submitted within three business days from date of request.

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3. REQUIREMENTS

- 3.1. The successful bidder must demonstrate they have at least three (3) continuous years of successfully printing and delivering official Election Day Optical Scan Ballots for use in New York State Primary and General Elections which includes the processing of Absentee Vote by Mail packages during the 2020 Election Season. Vendor must demonstrate experience with Vote by Mail services & operating in-house redundant intelligent inserter lines as specified within.
 - 3.1.1. Bidder must submit/upload a completed Certificate of Experience with their bid in accordance with the instructions provided.
 - 3.1.2. All work performed must have been in accordance with New York States Board of Elections Regulation 6210 (see Appendix B).
 - 3.1.3. Bidder must demonstrate they have successfully completed this work for a County with a minimum of 200 Election Districts.
- 3.2. Bidders must be able to make changes, when/if necessary, print / deliver within a twenty-four-hour turnaround time upon request.
- 3.3. Proposed bidders must demonstrate that the ballots produced are compatible with ES&S (Election Systems & Software) AutoMark Ballot Marking Device and the ES&S DS200 Digital Scanner.
- 3.4. Subcontractors: Where applicable, bidders must provide the name, address, experience, and references of each subcontractor to whom the bidder proposes to sublet portions of the work.
 - 3.4.1. Subcontractors must meet all of the experience requirements specified.
 - 3.4.2. Successful bidders must not subcontract jobs to other printers without the written authorization from the Rockland County Board of Elections representative.
- 3.5. Bidder must be able to print digitally or utilize conventional printing methods.
 - 3.5.1. Successful bidder must not begin production of any ballots until proofs have been approved by the Board of Elections Representative in writing (email or fax is acceptable).
 - 3.5.1.1. All corrections required due to successful bidder's error, regardless of where in the cycle the error occurred, will be made at no cost to the County.

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3.6. Access / On-Site Inspection / Financial Responsibility

3.6.1. Representatives of the Board of Elections must be given access to the successful bidder's premises at any time (day or night) when work is being performed for the Board of Elections. The County reserves the right to inspect the facility for fitness of security and overall conduciveness of manufacturing efficiency.

3.6.2. The Board of Elections may have an on-site inspector/expeditor at the successful bidder's printing facility during production of ballots for each election. If subcontracting is approved, Contractor will inform its subcontractor of the access privileges of authorized Rockland County Board of Election representatives. Travel and lodging expenses for the Board of Elections or other County employees will be the responsibility of the County.

3.7. Financial - The County reserves the right to request a detailed financial statement and ownership statement by bidder.

3.8. Data Transfer

3.8.1. Successful bidder must be able to receive and process supplied official ballot PDF files generated by the Rockland County Board of Elections Election Management System (EMS).

3.8.2. Successful bidder must be able to accept data via transmissions using standard file transfer protocols (FTP). Files may be encrypted and compressed with standard off the shelf compression software package, but in some cases, data will be uncompressed.

3.8.3. Proofs are to be submitted to the Rockland County Board of Elections for final approval, prior to printing.

4. QUALITY CONTROL

4.1. Successful bidder is responsible for quality control procedures during the production of the ballots. Bidder must comply with the requirements specified in the ES&S Ballot Production Guide (see Appendix C).

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5. TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

5.1. Authorized Representatives

- 5.1.1. The Board of Elections must designate, in writing, employees as authorized representatives who will be responsible for coordinating printing, approving proofs, providing authorization to print, and coordinating deliveries. Successful bidder must act only on instruction from one of these designated persons. Successful bidders will likewise designate, in writing, authorized representatives who will be responsible for coordinating printing and processing under the contract. All references to the Board of Elections in the contract must include the Board of Elections and the designated authorized representatives.

5.2. Technical Specifications

5.2.1. Paper

- 5.2.1.1. Optical Scan Ballot must meet the necessary specifications of the ES&S or approved equal:

5.2.2. Paper Requirements as follows:

| | |
|------------------|--------------------------|
| Grain Direction: | Long |
| Opacity: | 97.0 |
| Brightness: | 92-94 |
| PI: | 338 |
| Basis Weight: | 80# text (36.2874kg) |
| Thickness: | 0.0061 in. (0.015494 cm) |
| Smoothness: | 130 Sheffield's |
| Moisture: | 5.5 percent |

- It is to be successful bidder's responsibility to acquire, in a timely manner, paper stock of the type, size, weight, and colors specified to meet the requirements of the Board of Elections and the specifications and requirements for reading by the ES&S DS2000 digital scanner and AutoMark reader.

- 5.2.3. Bidders must indicate what paper they propose to use and must supply to the Rockland County Board of Elections adequate samples for testing in the scanning equipment.

- 5.2.3.1. Samples of the proposed paper must be supplied within three days from date of request.

- 5.2.4. Paper substitutions will not be permitted during the term of this contract without written approval of an authorized Rockland County Board of Elections Representative.

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5.3. Ballot Styles, Sizes, Projected Usage

5.3.1. Ballots are all 8-1/2 inches wide. Length may be 11 inches, 14 inches, 17 inches, or 19 inches.

5.4. Successful bidder must keep all files until 30 days after election to ensure availability if re-runs are required.

6. Authorized Delay

6.1. Under unusual circumstances, such as but not limited to a court injunction, it may become necessary for the Board of Elections to request successful bidder to delay or stop printing certain materials. Such request may be made by telephone by an authorized representative of the Board of Elections and confirmed, in writing (email or fax is acceptable), as soon as possible. In the event of an authorized delay, the County must notify successful bidder of a revised schedule.

6.1.1. The Bidder must be paid for any quantities accurately processed at the contracted rate awarded.

7. Order Quantities

7.1. The Board of Elections will specify definite quantities, in writing, by issuance of a Rockland County Purchase Order, at the time of or before authorization to process Absentee Vote by Mail packages, by Election District and quantities, must be determined by the Board of Elections.

7.2. The Board of Elections does not guarantee any quantities. Estimated usage is based on historical data for usage. County does not guarantee any item will be purchased or any dollar amount spent.

7.3. County is not responsible for any overages printed.

7.3.1. Upon delivery of Absentee Vote-by-Mail packages, the successful bidder must certify the actual number of ballots printed, the number of ballots delivered and that all other ballots have been destroyed. pursuant to NYS Regulation 6210 of the NYS Election Law.

8. Acceptance

8.1. Successful bidder must provide a reconciliation detailing the specific quantities processed. Successful bidder must replace all quantities rejected at no cost to the County, including delivery. Replacements must be processed within 24 hours and be after notification or within a lead time accepted by the Board of Elections Representative.

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9. ABSENTEE BALLOT VOTE BY MAIL PACKAGING AND PROCESSING

9.1. Absentee Optical Scan Ballot Vote-By-Mail packages will be utilized when the volume of absentee requests exceeds The Board’s capacity. The Commissioners will determine whether they will utilize the successful bidder for processing Absentee Vote by Mail packages only.

9.2. Absentee Optical Ballot Size determined by Board to conform with ballots printed for Election Day.

9.3. Absentee Optical Scan Ballot must meet the necessary specifications of the ES&S or approved equal. See specifications for Paper Requirements.

9.4. General Election and Primary - Absentee Optical Scan Ballot Vote-By-Mail packages:

- Provide the following envelopes, forward, oath, and return as specified.
- Envelope Layouts as approved by the State Board of Elections (Forward, Oath, and Return)
- Variable Data Personalization on Forward and Oath Envelopes
- Variable and Static Data on Return Envelope
- PDF Proof of ballot and Envelopes (Forward, Oath, and Return)
- Provide the ballots as specified.
- Bindery (fold ballot to size)
- Mail Preparation (Insert ballot, return envelope, oath envelop, and instruction letter into forward envelope process and Mail from Albany or Westchester Post Office. Postage to be paid by County of Rockland BOE.
- Mail List setup (lists to be provided by the BOE)–Initial run free of charge, additional runs to be invoiced at the rate provided on the proposal pages. Mail list to be CASS & NTOA Certified.

9.5. Foreign - Absentee Optical Scan Ballot Vote-By-Mail packages Foreign will include:

- Provide the following envelopes, forward, oath, and return as specified.
- Envelope Layouts as approved by the State Board of Elections (Forward, Oath, and Return)
- Variable Data Personalization on Forward and Oath Envelopes
- Variable and Static Data on Return Envelope
- PDF Proof of ballot and Envelopes (Forward, Oath, and Return)
- Provide the ballots as specified.
- Bindery (fold ballot to size)
- Mail Preparation (Insert ballot, return envelope, oath envelop, and instruction letter into forward envelope process and Mail from Albany or Westchester Post Office. Postage to be paid by County of Rockland BOE.
- Mail List setup (lists to be provided by the BOE)–Initial run free of charge, additional runs to be invoiced at the rate provided on the proposal pages. Mail list to be CASS & NTOA Certified.

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9.6 Vote by Mail Service Printing, Packaging, Processing Requirements:

9.6.1 Vendor must be qualified by having demonstrated a minimum of three (3) years' experience, of which one year experience to include successfully processing Vote by Mail during 2020 Election Season without errors or omissions. Experience with Vote by Mail services & operating in-house redundant intelligent inserter lines capable of the following tasks:

- The ability to read a non-unique barcode and index and assign to a master .jdf input file record (*Job Definition Format*) Master File-Contains all the production parameters of any given batch mail.
- Ensuring complete accuracy for all mail pieces within each batch, as well as the ability to report detailed, accurate information on every ballot package at the end of a batch run.
- The ability to direct machine functions such as selective inserts, diverting, seal or no seal etc. from data extracted from the master .jdf file, (i.e., file-based inserting).
- Capability to produce, assign, track, and record the unique Intelligent Mail Barcode (IMb) on all return envelopes to data notated in the output mail pieces report file.
- To automatically identify, mark as suspect and divert all mail pieces within arm's reach of any open safety cover. Open safety cover reject mail piece function ensures any piece within 1 meter of an open machine cover during a production run will automatically be flagged as defective to eliminate any human error, duplication, or manipulation.
- Employ an automatic mis-match recovery system such that any mis-matched document automatically diverts all suspect ballot packages without human intervention. Human touch can inadvertently compound a mis-match problem should one arise.
- Have double detection at all insert feeders to avoid any double pulls and potential mismatches.
- Intelligent barcode inserters such as-the W+D BB820 have an integrated, secure, in-line oath envelope printing unit on a raised parallel inserting platform that prints, scans, and generates a unique mail piece ID which is used to identify the proper voter information for the printing of the forwarding envelope after all components have been inserted and the envelope is sealed. All inserted pieces are scanned and verified by 2D barcodes. A final check of the ballot for the voter data is done *after inserting through a window* on the outer envelope to ensure every voter is receiving the correct ballot.
- Vendor must have the ability to read code information from both the top side of the insert as well as the bottom side of the insert. A so-called High Track and Low Track capability to identify any individual piece that is detected to have a mis match error between the insert and the envelope address.
- Elevated track for overprinting of VDP information as well as location tracking from the upper deck to ensure oath/reply is accurately matched to the correct machine slot for its corresponding mail piece.
- Ensure the accurate overprinting of unique variable data information, as well as location tracking with the USPS Informed Visibility – *Mail Tracking & Reporting System* or similar to ensure oath/reply

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envelope is accurately matched to its corresponding mail piece and further trackable through the mail stream, *even if the USPS fails to properly cancel or scan the envelope.*

- Additional fail-safe filled envelope thickness verification for misses and/or doubles after the inserter sealing section sufficient to detect the presence or lack of presence for 2x thicknesses of paper such as in a bi-folded piece (i.e., approx. .012”) and automatically divert any suspect package that does not meet the set threshold.
- Employ cameras to verify forms/material types to ensure that the operators load the correct job materials and automatically alerting the operator when not correct while then diverting all suspect pieces.
- The ability to store each camera’s read image to an archive file.
- The ability to read and verify multiple AOI’s (*Area of Interest-*) All the barcoded areas top and bottom of a mail piece and verifying the inserted ballot barcode from below (or from above depending upon job requirements) for each ballot package and automatically divert any suspect packages should any single integrity check fail. These barcode reads must be coincident with the filled envelope thickness detector cycle, i.e., *same envelope being subject to all of these final integrity checks during the same machine cycle.*

9.7 Vendor Workflow

9.7.1 The vendor must follow a designated workflow in which voter records are processed and Ballot packages mailed within 24 hours of receipt from The County of Rockland Board of Election with following requirements met:

- Separate, remote, off-line, and redundant storage and audit log of all VDP content (Variable Data Printing)-Every piece is unique printed on all envelopes during the inserting process.
- Automated loading of variable data content in PDF format.
- Vendor server’s must be secure including HTTPS and full data encryption at rest.
- Complete CASS (*Coding Accuracy Support System*) Certification in real-time via an automated process of all supplied voter data files to ensure voter records qualify for IMb assignment at either the First-Class or Presorted First-Class postage rates.
- Ability to programmatically pre-check integrity of data on behalf of The County of Rockland Board of Election to reduce imperfect records *prior to CASS certification* process.
- Complete automated workflow that allows The County of Rockland Board of Election to upload voter data files directly to a web portal which automatically assigns appropriate ballot style and 2D barcode of mail piece id.

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- Complete Intelligent Mail Barcode (IMb) *outbound* and IMb *inbound* mail reporting functionality. This reporting must include the ability to report mail tracing in real-time, if required, provide automated quality assurance checks throughout pre-processing to ensure that data and ballot print images are to spec and accurately mapped prior to print production.
- Notification to voter where ballot is in the mail stream, interface of mail track system that allows voter to access location of ballot in the mail stream.
- Comprehensive reporting 3 times daily of number of pieces mailed within any 24-hour period including aggregate totals within template specs of The County of Rockland Board of Election provided database structure.
- Vendor must have standing appointment with the Westchester or authorized USPS SCF for on-demand entry of daily ballot packages.
- Vendor must have a minimum of two years' experience providing VBM services.
- Vendor must have experience printing election ballots for ES&S high speed central count scanner.
- Vendor must have a complete workflow to handle any ballots lost during the production process. Such ballots deemed needing "remake" must be accounted for, reported on, and remade within a 48 hour time period.
- Ability to verify all remakes are in fact valid through cross checking of IMb barcodes in USPS mail stream.
- Vendor must have quality controls in place to ensure production workers handling the processing of ballot packages are following Standard Operating Procedures.
- Every ballot will require a set of 3 security envelopes with the following specifications: *Outbound* 6 1/8"x 9 5/8" window forward envelope with tamper evident flap, 5 15/16"x 9" window reply envelope with security UV seal and tamper evident, peel & seal flap, and 5 3/4"x 8 3/4" oath envelope with security UV seal and tamper evident, peel and seal flap.

9.8 Ballot Tracking Reporting System must include:

9.8.1 Admin website which includes:

- Counts of files received, voters in the file, imperfect addresses, foreign addresses, mailed to voter, USPS 1st Scan to Voter, Delivered to Voter, Mailed by Voter, USPS 1st Scan to Municipality, Delivered to Municipality, voters & users registered by age, voters & users registered by party, voters receiving & delivered email notifications, voters receiving & delivered SMS notifications, voters receiving & delivered voice notifications.

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9.8.2 Prior list files broken out by current ballot location, file, voter zip codes:

- Voter list and search
- Voter file upload & download
- Downloads of outbound & return PDF labels, voter file with outbound & return IMB
- Voter website which includes:
 - Multi-language support
 - Ballot status lookup and notification settings (by email, SMS, and/or voice)
 - Municipality contact information

9.8.3 Prior list files broken out by current ballot location, file, voter zip codes:

USPS Mail Anywhere Program.

- The County of Rockland Board of Election' have greater flexibility in managing their mail from one site to another without having to open another permit at a new site or change the imprint on the mail.
- Mailers will be able to maintain one locally held trust account or a single EPS account for mailings nationwide under the ***USPS Mail Anywhere program.***
- Mailers will be able to manage one permit versus multiple permits.
- Mailers will not need to worry about getting last minute postage checks or credit cards to fund any mailing. Simply fund your locally held permit.
- Issuing office Permit Number and City / State or Company Permit Imprint indicia may be printed in the indicia on the piece and entered at a remote location.

10. Award and Contract Term

- 10.1. The initial contract period will be one year from date of award. It will cover any scheduled and unscheduled elections during that period and may be extended four additional one-year periods. Option years must be mutually agreed upon by the County and the Bidder.
- 10.2. Unanticipated elections may include special or municipal elections.
- 10.3. Bid will be awarded as a whole to the lowest responsive responsible bidder meeting the stated requirements.

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- 10.3.1. The County reserves the right to award the Vote by Mail packages and services as a group to a single provider submitting the lowest responsive responsible bid meeting the stated requirements.
- 10.4. Bidders must submit pricing on all items to be considered for award.
- 10.5. Upon the award(s) of contract, vendor **MUST** continue to demonstrate the ability to meet strict timeline turnaround of ballots and accuracy in printing standards specified.
 - 10.5.1. Failure to satisfactorily adhere to these standards and specifications, may result in termination of your contract award , at which time the County may move to award the contract to the 2nd lowest, responsive responsible bidder meeting the stated requirements.
- 10.6. In order to provide and maintain continuity of service, the County of Rockland reserves right to award a Secondary provider who submits the 2nd lowest price and is a responsive responsible bidder meeting the stated requirements.