

Compensation Market Study

La Crosse County

Request for Proposal

**SECTION 1- OVERVIEW**

* 1. **INTRODUCTION**

La Crosse County is seeking proposals for a Compensation Market Study for all exempt and non-exempt positions within our organization that provides a sound system compliant with all state and federal legal requirements. We are a public entity with approximately 1,250 employees, 27 unique and diversified departments, and 247 position titles. Many departments operate Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm, but others are 24/7. To view more information, view the County website links below.

##### About La Crosse County

La Crosse County is home to around 118,274 residents, located in the Driftless Region of Southwestern Wisconsin where the mighty Mississippi, Black, and La Crosse Rivers meet, and lies within the boundaries of the ancestral land of the Ho-Chunk Nation.  Known as the Coulee Region, the land was not reshaped by glaciation events and therefore boasts stunning valleys and towering bluffs that provide ample recreational opportunities like trout fishing on the 236 miles of trout stream, kayaking and canoeing in the rivers and lakes, hiking and biking on the 963 acres of parks and forests, and camping on one of more than 400 sites in the two County campgrounds. La Crosse County offers great sense of community, with an active and engaged population including a vibrant art scene, live music and performance, and diverse community festivals and events.

La Crosse County is home to three post-secondary educational institutions and two major medical centers. Educational services, health care, and social assistance are the top industries in the county followed by retail trade; arts/entertainment/recreation, and manufacturing.

While riverboats travel the Mississippi with stops at the Port of La Crosse, La Crosse Regional Airport provides service to the area with flights to and from Chicago.  Amtrak Borealis runs each day providing access to Chicago and Minneapolis.  Interstate 90 runs through La Crosse County, providing easy access to the capital city, Madison, as well as Minneapolis/St. Paul in Minnesota.

For more information:

La Crosse County Website [La Crosse County Website](https://lacrossecounty.org/)

La Crosse County Board Strategic Plan [La Crosse County Board Strategic Plan](https://lacrossecounty.org/docs/default-source/county-board/plans-projects-presentations/la-crosse-county-strategic-plan.pdf?sfvrsn=295f7185_6)

Community <https://www.explorelacrosse.com/>

**1.2 OBJECTIVE**

Conduct a compensation market study of exempt and non-exempt roles in La Crosse County using a reputable and credible vendor. Leverage the study to benchmark La Crosse County with other organizations in the public and private sectors, bring consistency across the county in our compensation best practices, and design a sound system that is scalable, sustainable, defensible, and equitable that complies with all state and federal legal requirements.

**1.3 PROJECT PARAMETERS**

Vendors will offer solutions or options within parameters listed below:

* Include **All** exempt and non-exempt positions/job classifications.
  + Full Time (FT) and Part Time (PT) roles
  + In-office and remote roles
  + On-call roles
  + All shifts
* Compare Compensation on a local and regional level to include base wage, shift differential and premium pay.
* Compare Compensation across the public and private sectors including:
  + Seven like-sized counties (Dodge, Eau Claire, Marathon, Sheboygan, Washington, Fond du Lac, Rock, Walworth).
  + Four contiguous counties (Monroe, Vernon, Jackson, Trempealeau)
  + Top four La Crosse County private sector businesses (Kwik Trip, Trane, Mayo, Gundersen/Emplify)
  + All city and municipal governments in La Crosse County (City of La Crosse, City of Onalaska, Village of Holmen, Village of West Salem, Village of Bangor, Village of Rockland, Town of Onalaska, Town of Shelby, Town of Holland, Town of Barre, Town of Bangor, Town of Burns, Town of Campbell, Town of Farmington, Town of Greenfield, Town of Hamilton, Town of Medary, Town of Washington)
  + Local school districts and universities
  + Local nursing homes (BSJ Care Center, Marinuka Manor, Norseland Nursing Home, Onalaska Care Center, Benedictine Living Community, Eagle Crest South CBRF, Brookdale La Crosse)

**Special Considerations**

* Unique or hard-to-match positions
* Deputy sheriff union contract
* Compatibility with Dayforce, our current Human Capital Management (HCM) System.
* The project should align with our [La Crosse County Board Strategic Plan](https://lacrossecounty.org/docs/default-source/county-board/plans-projects-presentations/la-crosse-county-strategic-plan.pdf?sfvrsn=295f7185_6) outcome measure of wages at or above market rate for all positions by 2029

**1.4 VENDOR EXPECTATIONS AND DELIVERABLES**

Vendors will be able to meet expectations and deliverables below:

* Complete, deliver, and implement work by the end of 2025.
* Deliver 1 system for compensation and job evaluation that is sound, scalable, sustainable, defensible, and equitable, and that is more science than art.
  + Solution must be agile enough to seamlessly transition in the event of potential future changes.
  + Deliver a minimum of 3 optimal solutions for La Crosse County to choose (traditional grades, broad bands, hybrid, etc.).
* Competitive compensation to source, hire, and retain top talent.
* Establish and maintain consistency across the county in our compensation practices.
* Minimize compression between job levels across all departments and all jobs.
* Leverage multi data sources (surveys, public records, third-party databases).
* Adheres to established budget.
* Provide project plan with clear timelines.
* Establish clears stakeholder roles and responsibilities.

**1.5 HISTORY AND CONTEXT**

**10-Year Context and History of Wage Reviews in La Crosse County:**

* Collective bargaining agreements defined wages prior to 2010
* Compensation operating model was an inconsistent step system (i.e. some jobs had 6 steps, some had 3, some had 10, etc.)
* Inconsistent step progression timeframes. Typically, 1 year between steps, but some grades had 6 months or 18 months
* Little to no performance-based compensation increases
* Compensation approved by the County Board through annual budget resolution. 3% Cost of Living Adjustment for past three years for all roles except for bargaining unit
* Limited non-exempt wage study for admin grade levels and implementation was completed by La Crosse County 8 years ago
* Exempt level wage review was completed 5 years ago and was implemented 2 years ago. Administered mid-year on July 1
* Wage review for non-exempt 1 year ago. Completed by La Crosse County. Impact to 40% of total employees
* Eight years with no change in Total Rewards plan nor health premiums

**Current State:**

* Operating two distinct comp systems; one exempt, and one non-exempt
* Regular requests for review of individual position wages or wages by department are received in inconsistent ways, outside of the budget cycle
* Compensation is not dependent nor connected to performance. It is dependent on years of service and a current compensation step system
* Job grades are not equitable nor comparable (i.e. three different job grades for Supervision, three different admin level job grades)
* There are pockets of compression i.e. Long-Term Care
* One remaining bargaining Union for Sheriff Deputies
* Use Dayforce HCM

**SECTION 2 - CULTURAL AND LEADERSHIP REQUIREMENTS**

Vendor will spend time engaging our Department Heads, listening to, and understanding the unique needs of the county and our culture, while also aligning with our leadership and cultural competencies listed below:

1. Act with integrity and build trust.
2. Drive for results.
3. Develop talent and effective teams.
4. Lead with vision and strategy.
5. Lead with paradoxical, critical, and agile thinking.
6. Build and maintain effective relationships.
7. Cultivate community engagement and provide excellent service.
8. Demonstrate emotional intelligence.

**SECTION 3 - RFP VENDOR RESPONSE REQUIREMENTS**

Vendor will provide the list of items below in the response to the RFP:

* Letter of introduction that incudes name of contact person and contact information (email address, phone number, etc.) no more than (1) one page.
* Office location(s) that would service this contract.
* Three or more Public Sector References: Provide client agency name, contact name, title, address, phone number of references from at least three clients that have been or are currently being provided similar service within the last 5 years who are of a similar size and complexity to La Crosse County.
* Itemized project cost breakdown.
* Describe the expertise and skillsets you have available to support your product.
* What is your customer service philosophy and how do you demonstrate it?
* Provide a method to manage internal equity comparisons.
* Provide a detailed project plan with milestone events. Examples include but not limited to:
  + Conduct project information meetings with La Crosse County to explain the scope of the project, methods used, and the role of staff.
  + Present to the County Administration a report on the plan that is understandable and summarizes the information gathering process and findings.
  + Work with La Crosse County Administration to:
    - Develop an implementation plan.
    - Create options for implementation.
  + Present progress reports to County Administration as requested and provide a final presentation to County Administration upon completion of the project.

**SECTION 4 - INSTRUCTIONS**

**4.1 RFP SCHEDULE**

The following is a list of the important dates for activities related to the RFP process. The County reserves the right to change these dates and will post the changes on its web site.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Time** | **Date** |
| RFP released |  | 2/10/2025 |
| Submission of Proposals | 9 am | 2/28/2025 |
| Vendor Interviews |  | 3/17 – 3/28/2025 |
| Executive Committee |  | 4/9/2025 |
| Contractual Start Date |  | 5/1/2025 |

**4.2 RFP LOCATION**

This RFP is posted on the La Crosse County website. The County reserves the right to amend this RFP at any time. In the event it becomes necessary to amend, alter or delete any part of the RFP, changes to the RFP will be posted on the web site and on the ***DemandSta*r** website. It is the vendor’s responsibility to be aware of amendments that are posted on the County website and the ***DemandStar*** website.

**4.3 SUBMISSION OF QUESTIONS**

**Questions regarding this RFP to be directed to:**

Bryan Jostad Purchasing Manager [bjostad@lacrossecounty.org](mailto:bjostad@lacrossecounty.org)

**4.4 SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS**

All proposals shall be submitted in complete original form using the [DemandStar Network](http://network.demandstar.com/for-government/) as the procurement information notification and document distribution system. ***DemandStar*** will also serve as the proposal collection destination.

La Crosse County will no longer accept proposals that are mailed, (UPS, Fed EX, U.S.P.S.) faxed or dropped off in person.

Vendors may register on-line on the general [DemandStar website](http://network.demandstar.com/for-government/) or ([https://www.demandstar.com](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.demandstar.com%2Fapp%2Flogin&data=04%7C01%7Ctjclark%40lacrossecounty.org%7Cb0e6012b60b34a6001f208d94d2bc24f%7C90642ce53c114728aa2dfc5917738a93%7C0%7C0%7C637625672607349105%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=i5UZa173wv5xyCnmhXcMVhBIYsZXhJqVOiY%2BZVeS1I0%3D&reserved=0)) to ensure free automatic notification of and access to RFP’s, RFQ’s, and bids. If your business currently subscribes to DemandStar Services, and its service territory includes the entire State of Wisconsin or a larger area, the service connecting your business to this RFP may already be included within your subscription.

**Proposals submitted will be marked as “La Crosse County Compensation Market Study” and must be submitted to *DemandStar* no later than 9:00 am, CST, February 28th, 2025.**

**Proposals received after the above date and time will not be reviewed.**

**4.5 OPENING OF PROPOSALS**

The proposals will be publicly opened at 9:05 am, February 28th, 2025, in the following location:

**County Administrative Center**

**Conference Room 1107**  
**212 North 6th Street**  
**La Crosse, WI**

At that time, the names of vendors who properly submitted proposals will be announced. Announcement of the names of the vendors who submitted proposals is not a guarantee that the proposals otherwise comply with the specifications of this RFP.

Vendors may attend the Opening of Proposals virtually. Please contact Bryan Jostad at least 24 hours in advance.

**4.6 OWNERSHIP OF PROPOSALS**

All proposals submitted on time become the property of the County upon submission, and the proposals will not be returned to the Vendors. By submitting a proposal, the Responder agrees that the County may copy the proposal for purposes of facilitating the evaluation.

**4.7 OTHER INFORMATION**

Vendors may submit any other information that is not described in this proposal that would be beneficial to the County. If in the vendor’s opinion the County has overlooked anything material or relevant, such item(s) may be brought to the County’s attention and be included in the proposal.

**SECTION 5 EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS**

**5.1 EVALUATION CRITERIA**

La Crosse County will evaluate the proposals using the criteria described below.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Category** | **Points** |
| Qualifications | 100 |
| Satisfaction of Requirements | 200 |
| Cost | 100 |
| **Initial Total** | **400** |
| Interview | 400 |
| **Grand Total** | 800 |

**5.2 INITIAL EVALUATION**

Each proposal shall receive an initial evaluation. The proposals will be reviewed by an evaluation team. Highest evaluated vendors, shall be requested to meet with the evaluation team for an interview. Vendors will be informed of their interview status after the evaluation team has reviewed the proposals. Vendors advancing to the interview stage will be provided the interview location and agenda in the same email as the status notification. Interview dates and times will be mutually agreed upon by vendors and the county. The county will provide a minimum of 10 days’ notice for the first round of interviews. We are anticipating multiple rounds of interviews.

**5.3 VENDOR INTERVIEW**

Vendors participating in this process shall explain and support their written proposal through a presentation, and question/answer forum. Interviews will be scheduled in March. **Vendors may interview in-person or interview virtually by video conference.**

**5.4 FINAL APPROVAL OF VENDOR**

The evaluation team will make a recommendation to the Executive Committee on April 9th, 2025.

**SECTION 6 TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

**6.1** The County reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals or portions thereof without stated cause.

**6.2** The County reserves the right to re-issue any requests for proposals.

**6.3.** Upon the selection of a finalist vendor, the County by its proper officials, employees, or agents shall attempt to negotiate and reach a final agreement with this vendor. If the County, for any reason, is unable to reach a final agreement with this vendor; the County reserves the right to reject such vendor and negotiate a final agreement with the vendor who has the next most viable proposal. The County may also elect to reject all proposals and re-issue a request for proposal.

**6.4** Clarification of proposals: The County reserves the right to obtain clarification of any point in a vendor’s proposal or obtain additional information.

**6.5** The County is not bound to accept the proposal with the lowest cost but may accept the proposal that demonstrates the best ability to meet the needs of the County.

**6.6** The County reserves the right to waive any formalities, defects, or irregularities in any proposal, response, and/or submittal where the acceptance, rejection, or waiving of such is in the best interests of the County.

**6.7** The County reserves the right to disqualify any proposal, before or after opening, upon evidence of collusion, intent to defraud, or any other illegal practice on the part of the vendor.

**6.8** The Vendor agrees to the fullest extent permitted by law, to indemnify, defend and hold harmless, the Purchaser, and its agents, officers and employees, from and against all loss or expense including costs and attorney fees by reason of liability for damages including suits at law or in equity, caused by any wrongful, intentional, or negligent act or omission of the Vendor, or its (their) agents and / or sub-contractors which may arise out of or connected with activities covered by this contract.

**6.9** The selected vendor shall not subcontract or assign any interest in the contract and shall not transfer any interest in the same without prior written consent of the County.

**6.10** No reports, information, or data given to or prepared by the firm under contract shall be made available to any individual or organization by the firm without the prior written approval of the County.

**6.11** Should the selected vendor merge or be purchased by another individual or firm contract continuation would be at the County's option.

**6.12** The contract with the selected vendor shall contain a 90-day written notice, without cause, termination clause that can be exercised by the County or the selected vendor.

**6.13** All proposals submitted on time become the property of La Crosse County upon submission, and the proposals will not be returned to the Vendors. By submitting a proposal, the Responder agrees that La Crosse County may copy the proposal for purposes of facilitating the evaluation.

**6.14** All proposals are subject to Wisconsin Public Records Law.

**6.15**   The successful vendor shall be required to sign the Certification Regarding Suspension and Debarment Document stating they are not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible or voluntarily excluded from covered transactions by any Federal department or agency. If the successful vendor cannot, in good faith, sign the certification document the County reserves the right to reject such vendor and negotiate a final agreement with the vendor who has the next most viable proposal or bid. The County may also elect to reject all proposals and re-issue a request for proposal. All proposals submitted on time become the property of La Crosse County upon submission, and the proposals will not be returned to the Vendors. By submitting a proposal, the Responder agrees that La Crosse County may copy the proposal for purposes of facilitating the evaluation.  
The Certification Regarding Suspension and Debarment is located on the County RFP webpage [Requests For Proposals](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Flacrossecounty.org%2Fhome%2Fbusiness%2Frequests-for-proposals%2Frequests-for-proposals&data=05%7C02%7Cbring%40lacrossecounty.org%7C2a4019d54c5b4fa2b3f808dd49eab186%7C90642ce53c114728aa2dfc5917738a93%7C0%7C0%7C638747995149789620%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=IohcLEDlmP0AsuBrJINoe4Kdg9x28VbKYaogcC8F1VQ%3D&reserved=0)