

County Code Section 2-189 Pertaining To Lobbying

Lobbying shall be prohibited on all county competitive selection processes, and contract awards pursuant to this division, including but not limited to requests for proposals, requests for quotations, requests for qualifications, bids or the award of purchasing contracts of any type. The purpose of this prohibition is to protect the integrity of the procurement process by shielding it from undue influences prior to the contract award, a protest is resolved, or the competitive selection process is otherwise concluded. However, nothing herein shall prohibit a prospective bidder/proposer/protestor from contacting the purchasing department or the county attorney's office to address situations such as clarification and/or questions related to the procurement process or protest.

Lobbying of evaluation committee members, county government employees, or elected officials regarding request for proposals, request for qualifications, bids, purchasing contracts, or bid protests, by the bidder/proposer/protestor any member of the bidder's/proposer's/protestor's staff, any agent or representative of the bidder/proposer/protestor, or any person employed by any legal entity affiliated with or representing a bidder/proposer/protestor, is strictly prohibited from the date of the advertisement, or on a date otherwise established by the board of county commissioners, until either an award is final, any protest is finally resolved, or the competitive selection process is otherwise concluded. Any lobbying activities in violation of this section or on behalf of a bidder/proposer/protestor shall result in the disqualification or rejection of the proposal, quotation, statement of qualification, bid or contract, and may lead to debarment of the bidder or proposer/protestor as provided in Pinellas County Code, Section 2-161(8)b.

For purposes of this provision, lobbying shall mean influencing or attempting to influence action or non-action, and/or attempting to obtain the goodwill of persons specified herein relating to the selection, ranking, or contract award in connection with any request for proposal, request for quotation, requests for qualification, bid or purchasing contract through direct or indirect oral or written communication. The final award of a purchasing contract shall be the effective date of the purchasing contract.

Any evaluation committee member, county government employee or elected official who has been lobbied shall immediately report the lobbying activity to the director of purchasing.