



COUNTY OF SONOMA

575 ADMINISTRATION
DRIVE, ROOM 102A
SANTA ROSA, CA 95403

SUMMARY REPORT

Agenda Date: 4/7/2026

To: Board of Supervisors

Department or Agency Name(s): Sonoma County Public Infrastructure

Staff Name and Phone Number: Johannes J. Hoevertsz, 707-565-2550

Vote Requirement: Majority

Supervisorial District(s): Countywide

Title:

Blanket Purchase Order Agreements for As Needed Interpretation and Translation Services

Recommended Action:

Award agreements for as needed interpretation and translation services and authorize the Purchasing Agent to execute the proposed Blanket Purchase Order Agreements for:

- 1) Countywide as-needed interpretation and translation services.
- 2) Countywide as-needed interpretation and translation services during emergencies and declared disasters.

Executive Summary:

Sonoma County Public Infrastructure (SPI) requests that the Board authorize the Purchasing Agent to execute Blanket Purchase Order Agreements with 10 firms. In total, there will be ten (10) standard agreements for use during the normal course of business and ten (10) that meet Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) requirements and will be utilized only in the event of an emergency or declared disaster.

The proposed Blanket Purchase Order agreements will provide comprehensive, as needed interpretation and translation services to support County operations both during regular business activities business and in an emergency or declared disaster.

Each agreement will have an initial term of one (1) year, with the option to extend the agreement for up to four (4) additional one (1) year periods.

Discussion:

Background:

A Blanket Purchase Order (BPO) is a procurement instrument established and administered by the Purchasing Division to secure goods and services under negotiated pricing, terms, and conditions. BPOs streamline purchasing activities by enabling County departments to obtain frequently used goods and services without issuing separate solicitations, thereby reducing administrative workload and maintaining consistent pricing across departments.

The County has an ongoing and critical need for interpretation and translation services to support departmental operations and ensure equitable access to County programs and services. While Human

Resources and Employee Relations confirmed that 740 County employees are currently certified as bilingual, this does not fully meet the objectives of the County's Language Access Policy, necessitating continued use of external interpretation and translation services. Over the past five years, fourteen firms have been available for these services under BPO agreements, and these agreements are now approaching expiration.

To ensure continuity of services and maintain a qualified pool of vendors, the Purchasing Division, in collaboration with the Office of Equity, issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for As-Needed Interpretation and Translation Services, on July 22, 2025. The primary purpose of the Request for Proposals was to ensure continuity of these critical services by establishing new BPO agreements that address gaps identified by the Office of Equity, meet countywide needs, and uphold the County's commitment to language access.

County policy promotes business opportunities for local firms and provides for application of local preference in solicitations where appropriate. The Purchasing Division consulted with the County's Office of Equity to determine the most appropriate approach to address identified service gaps while remaining consistent with County policy and advancing equitable outcomes.

The recommended awardees were selected based on demonstrated qualifications, specialized capabilities, and capacity to provide services necessary to bridge critical gaps not currently addressed by other providers. The recommendation reflects the County's responsibility to act in the best interests of the public by ensuring continuity, quality, and completeness of services. Notably, five of the recommended awardees are minority- and women-owned small businesses, further supporting the County's commitment to advancing equitable contracting opportunities.

The RFP closed September 2, 2025, and thirty (30) proposals were submitted. Twenty-eight (28) of the proposals met the minimum requirements and were deemed responsive and responsible and were moved forward to the evaluation phase. These twenty-eight (28) proposals were evaluated by an evaluation team comprised of representatives from the CAO, Department of Health, and Office of Equity.

Proposals were evaluated on the following criteria:

Demonstrated ability to perform the services described – 20%

Experience, qualifications and expertise – 25%

Demonstrated history of providing similar services to comparable entities as verified by references – 10%

Costs relative to the scope of services – 25%

Willingness to accept County's contract terms – 10%

Responsiveness, ability to respond to rush requests & accessible 24/7 – 10%

After thorough review by the evaluation committee consensus was reached to recommend awards be made to the following firms:

1. Universe Technical Translation, Inc.
2. The Communication Bridge, LLC
3. Avantpage Inc.
4. Hanna Interpreting Services LLC
5. Focus Language International Inc.

6. Interpreters Unlimited, Inc.
7. International Effectiveness Centers
8. TransPerfect Translations International Inc.
9. Big Language Solutions Holdings, LLC
10. Global Intermix, LLC

These firms collectively provide a comprehensive range of interpretation and translation services to meet the County's needs, including, but not limited to:

- Document translation
- Oral interpretation and in-person services
- Interpretation for Persons with Hearing Impairments, In Person Service
- Video Remote Interpretation (VRI)
- Over-the-Phone Interpretation (OPI)
- Conversion of materials into alternative formats such as large print, audio CD, data CD, and braille

All recommended firms have committed to 24/7 availability to ensure services are accessible whenever needed.

County best practice is to establish two, separate BPOs: one BPO for as-needed, non-emergency basis services, and the other for use during emergency and disaster events that may qualify for federal reimbursement. The emergency BPOs (sometimes referred to as "pre-positioned" contracts) ensure critical response capabilities and are immediately available during emergency situations to support continuity of operations and public safety. These emergency contracts are activated during qualifying events and include appropriate terms and conditions for such emergency events, including outlining contractor obligations for mandatory response and compliance with federal program contracting requirements. Additionally, emergency contract costs are tracked separately from non-emergency expenditures for potential reimbursement through federal or state funding sources.

Two versions of BPO Agreements will be executed with each supplier. The scope of services for each is the same, however one agreement is for use during normal operations while the second agreement complies with federal reimbursement requirements for use during emergencies and declared disasters.

Strategic Plan:

This item directly supports the County's Five-year Strategic Plan and is aligned with the following pillar, goal, and objective.

Pillar: Racial Equity and Social Justice

Goal: Goal 1: Foster a County organizational culture that supports the commitment to achieving racial equity.

Objective: Objective 5: Align procurement and grant guidelines with strategic priorities and racial equity principles.

Racial Equity:

Was this item identified as an opportunity to apply the Racial Equity Toolkit?

No

Prior Board Actions:

August 4, 2020: BPO Agreements awarded to various firms for as needed interpretation and translation services

January 27, 2015: BPO Agreements awarded to various firms for as needed interpretation and translation services

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY 25-26 Adopted	FY 26-27 Projected	FY 27-28 Projected
Budgeted Expenses			
Additional Appropriation Requested			
Total Expenditures			
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal			
Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance			
Contingencies			
Total Sources			

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

Total amount spent on prior Interpretation and Translation Services BPOs for the past 3 years is \$849,552.

The recommended BPO agreements for interpretation and translation services will be funded through each department’s existing budget appropriations. Services are procured on an as-needed basis, providing cost control and flexibility for routine operations. FEMA-specific agreements will only be utilized during emergencies or declared disasters, with costs potentially eligible for federal reimbursement. This structure ensures departments have access to critical language services while maintaining predictable costs within their existing budgets.

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

None

Attachments:

Blanket Purchase Order Professional Services Agreements:

1. Universe Technical Translation, Inc.
2. Universe Technical Translation, Inc. – Emergency
3. The Communication Bridge, LLC
4. The Communication Bridge, LLC – Emergency
5. Avantpage, Inc.
6. Avantpage, Inc. – Emergency
7. Hanna Interpreting Services, LLC
8. Hanna Interpreting Services, LLC – Emergency
9. Focus Language International, Inc.
10. Focus Language International, Inc. – Emergency
11. Interpreters Unlimited, Inc.
12. Interpreters Unlimited, Inc. – Emergency
13. International Effectiveness Centers
14. International Effectiveness Centers – Emergency
15. TransPerfect Translations International, Inc.
16. TransPerfect Translations International, Inc – Emergency
17. Big Language Solutions Holdings, LLC
18. Big Language Solutions Holdings, LLC – Emergency
19. Global Intermix, LLC
20. Global Intermix, LLC - Emergency

Related Items "On File" with the Clerk of the Board:

None