

## **DIVISION 8. CONE OF SILENCE**

### **Sec. 7-192. Cone of Silence.**

(a) Purpose and intent. The requirements of section 2-11.1(t), Cone of Silence Ordinances of the Code of Miami-Dade County, Florida, as amended, shall be applicable to the city. It is the intent of this code to prevent potential bidders, offerors or service providers from communicating with city department heads, their staff or selection and evaluation committee members during the period of time in which the cone of silence is imposed.

#### **(b) Cone of silence is defined to mean a PROHIBITION on:**

(1) Any communication regarding a particular RFP, RFQ or IFB between a potential offeror, service provider, bidder, lobbyist, or consultant and the city's professional staff including, but not limited to, the city manager and his or her staff;

(2) Any communication regarding a particular RFP, RFQ or IFB between the mayor, city council or their respective staffs and any member of the city's professional staff including, but not limited to, the city manager and his or her staff;

(3) Any communication regarding a particular RFP, RFQ or IFB between a potential offeror, service provider, bidder, lobbyist, or consultant and any member of the selection committee or evaluation committee;

(4) Any communication regarding a particular RFP, RFQ or IFB between the mayor, city council or their respective staffs and any member of the selection committee or evaluation committee; and

(5) Any communication regarding a particular RFP, RFQ or IFB between a potential offeror, service provider, bidder, lobbyist, or consultant and the mayor, City Council and their respective staffs.

(c) The city manager and the chairperson of the selection committee may communicate about a particular selection committee recommendation, but only after the committee has submitted an award recommendation to the city manager and provided that should any change occur in the committee recommendation, the content of the communication and of the corresponding change shall be described in writing and filed by the city manager.

(d) Notwithstanding the foregoing, the cone of silence shall not apply to:

(1) Competitive processes for the award of CDBG, HOME, and SHIP funds and community-based organization (CBO) competitive grant processes, administered by the city;

- (2) Communications with the city attorney and his or her staff;
- (3) Duly noticed site visits to determine the competency of bidders regarding a particular bid during the time period between the opening of bids and the time the city manager makes a written recommendation;
- (4) Emergency procurements of goods or services pursuant to section 7-144;
- (5) Communications regarding a particular RFP, RFQ or IFB between any person and the director of the purchasing department or designee, provided the communication is limited strictly to matters of process or procedure already contained in the corresponding solicitation document; and
- (6) Communications regarding a particular proposal, quotation or bid between the director of the purchasing department or designee and a member of the selection committee or evaluation committee provided the communication is limited strictly to matters of process or procedure already contained in the corresponding solicitation document.

**Sec. 7-193. Procedure.**

**(a) A cone of silence shall be imposed upon each RFP, RFQ and IFB after the advertisement of said RFP, RFQ or IFB. At the time of imposition of the cone of silence, the director of the purchasing department or designee shall provide for public notice of the cone of silence. The director of the purchasing department shall issue a written notice thereof to the affected departments, file a copy of such notice with the city clerk, with a copy thereof to each city council member, and shall include in any public solicitation for supplies or services a statement disclosing the requirements of this ordinance. Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, the imposition of a cone of silence on a particular RFP, RFQ or IFB shall not preclude procurement staff from obtaining industry comment or performing market research provided all communications related thereto with a potential offeror, service provider, bidder, lobbyist, or consultant are in writing or are made at a duly noticed public meeting.**

**(b) The cone of silence shall terminate at the time the city manager makes his or her written recommendation of award; provided, however, that if the city manager refers the recommendation back to the director of the purchasing department for further review, the cone of silence shall be re-imposed until such time as the city manager makes a subsequent written recommendation of award. If the city manager rejects all bids or proposals submitted in response to an RFP or IFB and concurrently requests the re-issuance of an RFP or IFB, the rejected bids or proposals shall remain under the cone of silence until such time the city manager issues a written recommendation of award or until the city manager withdraws the re-issued RFP or IFB.**

(c) *Exceptions.* The provisions of this code shall not apply to oral communications at pre-bid conferences, oral presentations before selection committees or evaluation committees, contract negotiations during any duly noticed public meeting, public presentations made to the city council during any duly noticed public meeting or communications in writing at any time with any city employee, official or member of the city council unless specifically prohibited by the applicable RFP, RFQ or IFB documents. The offeror or bidder shall file a copy of any written communication with the city clerk. The cone of silence shall not apply to small purchases or emergency purchases, pursuant to this code.