

PIERCE COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM

E-Rate BEN 145283

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (“RFP”)

Title	Proposal Submission Date
RFP for E-Rate Cybersecurity	Tuesday, July 22, 2025 at 5 p.m. Pacific Time

Submit proposals and direct questions to:

Contact: Claire Christnacht, Consultant, E-Rate Expertise, Inc.
Phone: (253) 320-0664
Email: claire@erateexpertise.com

GENERAL PROJECT SUMMARY

The Pierce County Library System (the “Library”) has been selected to participate in the E-Rate Cybersecurity Pilot Program (CBR) and seeks multi-year contracts with E-Rate eligible service providers for the following products and services described below that fall into the categories of Advanced/Next-Generation Firewalls, Endpoint Protection, Identity Protection and Authentication, and Monitoring, Detection, and Response. The specific projects include:

1. Upgraded Next-Generation Firewall Licenses
2. Endpoint Detection Upgraded Licenses with Configuration and Installation
3. Immutable Backups and Data Protection
4. Basic and Add-On Services for Multi-State Information Sharing and Analysis Center (MS-ISAC)
5. Multi-Factor Authentication(MFA)/phishing-resistant MFA

These projects may fall under multiple categories and are listed to conform as best as possible with the requirements of the E-Rate Cybersecurity 470 form. The categories are not intended to restrict options for proposing solutions to the Library’s needs and the Library may choose to recategorize the services as needed based on the proposed products and services.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Library System Architecture: The Library’s current network architecture includes a central hub at the Library’s Administrative Center that has a single 10 G synchronous fiber internet connection with a Service Level Agreement (SLA) that provides internet access to the 18 branches in the library system through the WAN. The Administrative Center has a 10 G WAN connection, and the branches are each connected to the Administrative Center with a 1 G WAN connection. These synchronous fiber lines provide service to all hard-wired computers in the library system. The Library also has separate 1 G asynchronous direct cable internet connections to the service provider with no SLA at each branch and this service is segmented for only the Wi-Fi users. Due to lack of available infrastructure, the kiosk at

Anderson Island is currently independent from the rest of the Library's system, but if it can be connected during the CBR Pilot Program period, it will also be covered by the CBR contracts.

Existing circuit speeds meet current demands and the Library projects that demand could increase to require WAN and internet speeds up to 50 G in the next 5 to 10 years. The Library does not have plans to change its current architecture.

Library Network Equipment: The Library has secured E-Rate funding to replace network equipment in the 2025-26 program year and purchasing for these projects will begin in July 2025. The chart below in the RFP shows the equipment and the approximate quantities that will be installed. Any new proposed cybersecurity equipment or services should be compatible with this system environment. Cybersecurity enhancements funded through this Pilot Program will be purchased and installed after the new network equipment has been installed and after the CBR funding commitment has been received.

Product Number(s)	Description	Quantity
C9500-24Y4C-EDU C9500-DNA-L-A-5Y	Administrative Center Core Switches with DNA License and EDU Support	2 (at Administrative Center)
C9300-48P-EDU C9300-DNA-E-48-5Y	Branch Switches with DNA License and EDU Support	54 (2-3 at each branch)
FPR3120-ASA-K9	Administrative Center Central Firewalls	2 (at Administrative Center)
FPR1120-ASA-K9	Branch Firewalls	20 (at Administrative Center & branches)

General Library Statistics:

- Library locations including a central Administrative Center, 18 branches and a kiosk on Anderson Island can be found at <https://mypcls.org/visit-the-library/locations-hours/>. If the Library opens a new branch during the contract period, it would also be included. The quantity of locations on the CBR 470 form includes the above 20 locations, plus 1 potential new branch.
- Approximately 400 staff computers
- Approximately 500 public computers
- Public Wi-Fi at all locations totaling approximately 90 indoor and outdoor WAPs systemwide (3-5 WAPs per branch).
- Over 640,000 patrons in a county-wide system
- \$46,343,000 operating budget

REQUESTED PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

The information below describes the projects, functions and services sought through this RFP. In some cases, products that have the desired features are listed, but all equivalent products will be considered. The Library welcomes all bids with solutions that are compatible with their network environment. Proposals should include any required components, modules, accessories, racks, mounting equipment, hardware, etc. to make the new products and services function. Proposals should also include costs for configuration

and installation if applicable, and the Library will select the most cost-effective options that meet their needs, including self-installation, based on the submissions received.

Parameters are listed to provide basic information to facilitate the creation of bids. Vendors may also provide prices per unit or general pricing thresholds if the info below does not provide all the data needed to calculate a final cost.

Project 1. Upgraded Next-Generation Firewall Licenses

Category: Advanced/Next-Gen Firewalls

Function Requested: Advanced threat detection and prevention that centralizes the creation and deployment of security policies across multiple firewall devices—access control, IPS, SSL decryption, application control, and more.

Product Name/Number(s) or Equivalent: Cisco Secure Firewall Management Center

Relevant Parameters/Info:

1. Expanded security licensing for firewalls listed above.
2. 3-year and 5-year license costs.
3. Product/service summary information and costs on the available license types.

Project 2. Endpoint Detection Upgraded Licenses with Configuration and Installation

Category: Endpoint Protection

Function Requested: Endpoint Detection & Response (EDR), Extended Detection & Response (XDR), anti-malware, anti-ransomware, anti-spam, anti-virus.

Product Name/Number(s) or Equivalent: Add-on licenses, including configuration and setup/installation services, for Microsoft Sentinel and Microsoft Purview and Endpoint Protection.

Relevant Parameters/Info:

1. The Library has the basic Microsoft 365 license and seeks licenses for enhanced security features, including itemized costs for configuration, setup, and installation services.
2. Up to 500 user licenses.

Project 3. Immutable Backups and Data Protection

Categories: Identity Protection and Authentication; Monitoring Detection and Response

Function Requested: A Comprehensive Storage Area Network (SAN) solution with on-premises and off-premises solutions including both onsite data loss prevention and offsite/Immutable back-ups. The onsite and offsite solutions should be coordinated and include storage equipment, controllers and backup software. The offsite equipment quote should include configuration and installation of immutable backup equipment at an off-site location, which may include a branch or another independent location. Vendors

may provide information on cloud-based options, but since ongoing funding for this function is uncertain, the Library prefers a more sustainable solution with low or no ongoing costs.

Product Name/Number(s) or Equivalent: Any brand of Network Attached Storage (NAS) will be reviewed. The Library currently uses the VEEAM data platform for onsite protection but will consider all brands for replacing it.

Relevant Parameters/Info:

1. Up to 100 TB with fiber network capability for each of the onsite and offsite solutions.
2. Include configuration, set up, and installation services.

Project 4. Basic and Add-On Services for Multi-State Information Sharing and Analysis Center (MS-ISAC)

Category: Monitoring, Detection, and Response

Function Requested: Equipment and services that monitor for and detect threats to a network and that take responsive action to remediate those threats. The equipment and services may include Malicious Domain Blocking and Reporting (MDBR), Endpoint Detection and Response (EDR), the Nationwide Cybersecurity Review (NCSR) and Foundational Assessment, and 24x7x365 CIS Security Operations Center (SOC) support (to include issuance of Cyber Advisories and IP and Domain Monitoring activity).

The Library currently employs the services offered through MS-ISAC, which can be purchased through independent resellers. MS-ISAC recently announced that their free basic services will now require a membership fee. In addition, the Library requests quotes for Add-On Services including the features provided by the Albert Network Monitoring and Management Sensors.

Product Name/Number(s) or Equivalent: Products/Services that are equivalent to what is provided by the basic membership in the federal MS-ISAC and the Add-On for the Albert Network Monitoring and Management Sensors.

Relevant Parameters/Info:

1. See <https://www.cisecurity.org/ms-isac> for more details on the MS-ISAC services.
2. MS-ISAC membership fees are based on an entity's operating budget which is \$46,343,000 for PCLS. This appears to fall into the MS-ISAC Tier 2, \$25M-\$100M rate level.
3. Albert Network Monitoring and Management Sensors quote should include the appropriate capacity of equipment, software, licensing, or other components and accessories required to ensure the service is fully functioning.
4. Include configuration, set up, and installation services if applicable.

Project 5. Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) / Phishing-Resistant MFA

Category: Identity Protection and Authentication

Function Requested: Multi-Factor Authentication(MFA)/phishing-resistant MFA.

Product Name/Number(s) or Equivalent: Features found in Yubikey OATH-TOTP or USB Security Key. Proposed solution must be compatible with Microsoft MFA.

Relevant Parameters/Info:

1. Up to 300 security keys

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

1. Provide a description of the products and services your company proposes to address the needs identified in this RFP. Provide an explanation of how your products would integrate with the Library's network equipment and systems.
2. Proposals should include the unit price for every product (or equivalent) listed above. Total prices should be included where they are possible to calculate. The Library welcomes recommendations and alternatives to their existing cybersecurity requests to accomplish the listed functions and will work with the winning proposer to finalize the exact models, services, and quantities that best meet the Library's technical and financial needs. Finalized models, services, bundles, and quantities will be consistent with the scope of this RFP and will provide equivalent functionality of any products listed above. The winning vendor will provide updated quote(s) with the required models and quantities for each year for purposes of both contracting and E-rate applications. Equivalent substitutions can also be made via amendments or updated quotes throughout the term of this contract.
3. If your company's cybersecurity solutions are scalable, please provide the thresholds where additional services would be required and the costs associated with the required upgrade. Discuss the limitations of your equipment and services, where applicable. For example, if the Library adds users or computers, when would they need to pay for an upgraded service or license.
4. The Library's network equipment is covered by basic licensing and support. Please provide product/service summary information and costs on the available license types along with 3-year and 5-year licensing costs. The Library will determine the most cost-effective license type and term based on technical needs, budget resources, and prices once the winning proposal has been selected, and these details will be included in the final quote from the vendor that will be included in the contract.
4. Provide the manufacturer's current list prices for the proposed products and services as a point of comparison.
5. Provide pricing for both product configuration and installation. Based on the technical needs of the project, IT resources and budget constraints, and the Library's intent to select a cost-effective solution, the decision regarding outsourcing the configuration and installation will be made once the proposals have been evaluated and the winner has been selected. The per-unit configuration and installation price in your proposal will be reviewed at the time of the future purchases and may be added to the contract with a new quote and/or amendment.
6. Proposals must identify any cost estimates for shipping and other handling fees, if any. The Library will not pay shipping and handling costs that are included in the final invoice but not estimated in the original bids. Please include the estimated lead time between order date and delivery date.
7. Include a copy of your company's standard contract for these products/services (if any).
8. Proposers have the option to include up to three (3) references where your company has performed a similar service, including business name, contact name and contact information. The Library prefers

at least one reference be for a library or school district of similar size within Washington State. Vendors that have done business with the Library may submit the Library as a reference.

9. Please indicate if your company has sold this equipment as part of the E-rate program and provide your number of years of experience with the E-rate program. Vendors should include their E-Rate SPIN number in their proposal and confirm that they are or will become current with their USAC SPAC/Form 473 requirements before the purchases are made. Failure to maintain E-rate SPIN eligibility requirements could result in contract termination. Vendors must be willing to do either SPI or BEAR methods of reimbursement, and the Library will select the reimbursement method.

VENDOR CONTRACT TERMS

1. **Contract Documents:** This RFP, the winning proposal, and/or the final quote will be considered part of the contract and are applicable unless specifically negated in the contract.
2. **Contract Term:** The Library seeks a multi-year contract to coincide with the timing of the 3-year pilot program. The contract will include optional automatic extensions so that the services could be continued if the pilot program is renewed, is expanded into the main E-Rate program, or if the Library chooses to continue these services without E-Rate funding.
3. **Purchase Start/End Dates:** The Cybersecurity purchases will be made after the E-Rate funding is approved by USAC and will be coordinated into the Library's 2025-26 project to upgrade its network equipment and services. The Library may choose to make annual purchases and renewals during the 3-year pilot program or may choose to make purchases up front with multi-year terms. The purchase end date will coincide with the end of the E-Rate Pilot Program Service Delivery End date, but certain multi-year licenses and services that are paid upfront may extend beyond this period.
4. **Non-Appropriation of Funds:** In the event of loss of federal E-rate, State, or Library funds, the contract may be canceled or unrenewed.
5. **Price Updates:** If the market supports a price reduction after the initial term, the Library will exercise price reduction options, if available, through an amendment to the original contract or an updated quote. Similarly, the Library recognizes that market conditions, inflation, and other factors beyond the vendor's control could increase the pricing of the products during the term of this contract and reasonable changes may be made via updated quotes and amendments, provided that any price increases are commensurate with the increase over the manufacturer's list price.
6. **Secure Networks Act:** The Library is prohibited from accepting equipment or services that violate title 47, part 54, section 9 of the United States Code of Federal Regulations Title (CFR). A list of prohibited communications equipment and services can be found on the FCC's website at <https://www.fcc.gov/supplychain/coveredlist>. The list will be updated as necessary, and proposers have the responsibility to check for updates and to ensure that all products and services in quotes and final contracts are compliant.
7. **Taxing District & Library Information:** The Library is a junior taxing district under the laws of the State of Washington established in 1946 as a rural library district under Chapter 27.12 RCW. The Library provides library services for the residents of unincorporated Pierce County, 15 annexed cities and towns (Bonney Lake, Buckley, DuPont, Eatonville, Edgewood, Fife, Gig Harbor, Lakewood, Milton, Orting, South Prairie, Steilacoom, Sumner, University Place, and Wilkeson). The total estimated population served is 680,000. More information about the Library may be found online at www.mypcls.org.

8. **Terminology:** This RFP uses the words “proposal” and “proposer” et al, consistent with the use of a Request for Proposal conducted in a public entity procurement process. USAC terminology for competitive E-rate process for procurements may use words such as “bid” and “bidders”. As such, without discrimination to terminology used by either the Library or USAC, the word “proposal” and any derivatives are considered the same as USAC’s usage of the word “bid” and any derivatives. Typical words used in procurement processes, such as “submission”, “response”, and “vendor” are considered materially similar as used between the Library and USAC.

PROPOSAL PROCESS, EVALUATION, AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Process Information:

1. Vendors may submit a proposal for any or all of the projects listed in this RFP.
2. The submission date and time are listed above. The submission period may be extended at the Library's discretion. Depending on the bids received, the Library may also choose to extend the submission period for some but not all of the projects listed in this RFP. Any extensions would be posted for all vendors to see as noted in the Contact, Submittal & Miscellaneous Information section at the end of this RFP.
3. The Library reserves the right to request additional information or a “Best and Final Offer” (BAFO), or both, during any part of the submission process.
4. The Library reserves the right to reject all proposals or cancel the process with or without cause.
5. Responders are expected to read and understand all information contained within this RFP. Submitting a proposal constitutes acceptance of the terms and conditions contained herein.

Evaluation Criteria for Selecting the Winning Proposal:

Proposals will be judged on the following criteria:

- | | | |
|----|-----------|--|
| 1. | 30 Points | Price (most heavily weighted criteria) |
| 2. | 25 Points | Products meet Library’s needs and are compatible with existing systems |
| 3. | 20 Points | Completeness, quality and reliability of submission |
| 4. | 15 Points | Prior experience with the Library, quality of references, or prior experience with libraries |
| 5. | 10 Points | Compliance with E-rate rules and prior E-rate experience |

Disqualifying Factors:

This RFP process has disqualifying factors. Bids that do not meet these requirements will not be evaluated:

1. Recycled or refurbished products will not be considered.
2. Generic or auto-generated bids will not be considered.

Contact, Submittal & Miscellaneous Information:

1. **The proposal submission date and time are listed above.**
2. Questions regarding the RFP should be submitted in writing to Claire Christnacht at claire@erateexpertise.com within fourteen (14) days after the E-rate 470 form has been issued.

Answers will be posted on the Library's website and on the E-rate 470 form within five (5) business days after the deadline for submitting questions.

3. Proposals should be submitted via email to Claire Christnacht, claire@erateexpertise.com and to PCLSITPurchasing@piercecountylibrary.org
4. All RFP documents, including instructions, proposal formats, Q&A, updates, etc. will be uploaded to the original E-Rate 470 form and will also be posted on the Library's website at <https://mypcls.org/get-involved/partner-with-us/>
5. For Library branch addresses, please see <https://mypcls.org/visit-the-library/locations-hours/>