



500 West Big Beaver
Troy, MI 48084
troymi.gov

CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM



Date: June 6, 2023

To: Mark F. Miller, City Manager

From: Robert J. Bruner, Deputy City Manager
Megan E. Schubert, Assistant City Manager
Dee Ann Irby, Controller
Jeanette Menig, Human Resources Director
Peter Hullinger, Fire Chief
Emily Frontera, Purchasing Manager

Subject: Bid Waiver – Professional Services – Fire Department Testing Services

History

The Fire Department has had several retirements over the past couple years and are expecting several more in the next two years. The department hires from the volunteer ranks to fill the staff lieutenant positions.

Act 78 Civil Service requires that a competitive examination be given and that an eligibility list, based on cumulative test score, be established. Upon Act 78 certification, this list would remain valid for up to two years. Candidates will participate in a written exam and an assessment center process.

Purchasing

Since 1990 Empco, Inc. has provided promotional testing services for the Fire and Police Departments. Empco has provided excellent service and the Department is satisfied with the manner in which they conduct promotional testing. Empco customizes the testing to meet the needs of the organization and comply fully with Act 78 Commission requirements. Empco provides promotional and entry level testing for numerous Fire and Police Departments and agencies around the state, and is a local company based here in Troy.

Financial

The total cost for the promotional testing depends upon the number of candidates taking the examinations. The fee structure below is an estimate based on the number of candidates that have applied for the position in the past. See below for Empco, Inc. pricing as detailed in the attached proposal for this testing.

There are sufficient funds available in the Fire Department Contractual Services budget for these services. Should the number of candidates taking the examination exceed the estimated total amount of \$15,335.00; funding is still available in the Fire Department Contractual Services budget.



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Pricing

Assessment Center – (based on 10 candidates)

		Total
Development Fee	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
Administration Fee (per day, up to 5 candidates per day)	\$2,200.00 x2	\$4,400.00
Per Candidate Fee	\$325.00 x10	\$3,250.00

Custom Written Exam

Development Fee (with 20% of test from local content)	\$2,100.00	\$2,100.00
Per Candidate Fee	\$21.00 x10	\$210.00
Proctoring of Exam	\$375.00	\$375.00

Estimated total \$15,335.00

Mileage and travel expenses will be billed as they occur at the current IRS approved rate.

Recommendation

City Management recommends, in the best interest of the City, waiving the bid process and approving the contract with *Empco, Inc of Troy, MI* to provide Fire Department Promotional Testing Services as detailed in the attached proposal and to not exceed \$20,000 as the number of candidates varies.

Legal Review

This item was submitted to the City Attorney for review pursuant to City Charter Section 3.17.

Proposal for Troy Fire Department

Staff Lieutenant
Promotional Process

Proposal Submitted by:



Submitted:
May 2023

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Proposal for The Troy Fire Department

Thank you for the opportunity to submit a proposal for your upcoming promotional process for Staff Lieutenant. Our proposal covers the development and administration of the testing process you describe in your Request for Proposal.

About Empco

Empco was incorporated in 1985 and is located in Troy, MI. Empco, Inc. specializes in employment relationships with an emphasis on testing and evaluations in the public sector. Our focus is on entry level and promotional assessments for public safety and municipal positions.

In 1987, Empco began conducting promotional testing for police departments in Michigan. From our offices in Troy, we have grown into the largest firm in the state providing promotional testing to law enforcement and the fire service. Empco also services municipal agencies and sheriff's offices in states throughout the nation.

Empco, Inc.
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E-mail address: info@empco.net

Experience and Qualifications

Empco conducts assessment centers, oral boards and written examinations for hundreds of agencies across the United States. In this, we test thousands of candidates each year.

Empco's specialization in testing for municipal and county positions give us the expertise to accommodate nuances that come with limited budgets, collective bargaining agreements, and various governing bodies and laws. Our size gives us the ability to provide excellent customer service. We pride ourselves on the relationships we have built. It must be recognized that current clients, who use our examination services annually, could switch to another vendor if our results did not only satisfy the agency's needs, but also the need for fairness among test takers. We keep our clients, and the number continues to grow because of a reputation for integrity and fairness in our examinations. At Empco, we put integrity before profit.

Job Analysis

Empco conducts a job analysis before developing any assessment. The job analysis includes meetings with subject matter experts and those persons in a position to fully understand the requirements of the job. Empco will also administer surveys about the position to these individuals.

Empco will analyze the information collected during these meetings and through the surveys. We will also examine the job description for the position, as well as any job analyses previously conducted.

The information gathered in the job analysis will be used as the basis for any assessment and is included as part of the validation of the exam.

Written Exams

After completing the job analysis, Empco will begin developing the written exam. Questions on the test will come from sources determined by the agency and Empco. These sources can include, but are not limited to, commonly accepted training books, nationally recognized standards, and agency materials such as policies, procedures and ordinances. The content of the questions will be determined by the information collected in the job analysis and information from the agency. Empco will develop a bibliography that includes sources that contain content on these knowledge areas. Empco often presents agencies with choices of texts to allow the agency to select texts that reflect their own specific philosophies. If an agency decides to use material that does not reflect the knowledge areas shown as essential by the job analysis, the agency assumes responsibility for the validity of the test.

Empco will then develop a bibliography that contains the list of sources all questions came from, and where these sources can be obtained. This bibliography will then be provided to the agency so that candidates can study the source material. Empco recommends that candidates receive at least 60 days to study for the exam. The specific study period will be determined by agency deadlines and regulations.

For this position Empco recommends a 50-question exam, with limited content. Our exams are multiple-choice. Samples of our exam questions can be found on our web site at www.empco.net. The items will be written by experts in the field and are reviewed to make certain the content is relevant and the wording is unbiased.

Empco has several options for administration of these written exams. The first option is for the agency to administer paper and pencil exams to all of the candidates. Instructions for administration would be provided to the agency by Empco. The agency would be responsible for providing proctors, a testing location and ensuring test security.

Another administrative option is to have Empco administer the exam. Empco would ensure the exams were administered in a proper manner and maintain test security. The agency would be responsible for providing a location for the test administration and would be responsible for paying the cost of an Empco representative to administer the exam.

Examinations can be developed in three formats: off-the-shelf, tailored or customized. An off-the-shelf examination is one that is used by a number of agencies desiring value testing. A tailored examination is one where the agency selects specific books from a list of texts provided by Empco. A customized examination is a tailored examination with 20% of the questions authored from the agency's own Rules, Regulations, Policies, etc. Tests can be developed with more than 20% local content, depending on the volume and quality of the material. Additional costs apply.

Scoring

Empco will consider reliability and adverse impact in determining the cut off scores for passing the assessment. Final scores will be reported after these analyses have been completed.

Empco will provide scores within two business days of receiving the exam materials back in our office. Scores can be reported in multiple formats, but always as a percentage of 100 percentage.

If requested, Empco will provide an item analysis on the test.

Question Challenges

Empco will follow the agency's written policy on challenges. However, in the absence of an agency's written policy, Empco's policy shall prevail. Empco's policy is: Candidates will be allowed to challenge any item on a written exam for up to 2 business days after the exam. Candidates who wish to challenge a question must complete a challenge form provided by Empco. Empco will review all of the challenges and provide responses to these challenges after the completion of the challenge period. If an item is challenged, and Empco agrees with the challenge, all candidates will receive credit for a correct answer to the item. Empco must be notified of the agency's challenge policy prior to the administration of the exam.

Scheduling and Billing

Off-the-shelf exams – Empco recommends a minimum 60 day study period. This is the time from the date the agency posts the bibliography to the test date. Final test counts must be given to Empco two weeks prior to the test date. Any orders/final counts given one week or less prior to the testing deadline will result in an expedited shipping fee billed to the client.

Tailored exams – Empco recommends a minimum 60 day study period. This is the time from the date the agency posts the bibliography to the test date. Final test counts must be given to Empco two weeks prior to the test date. Exams cancelled less than two weeks prior to the test will result in the client being billed the development fee for the test. Any orders/final counts given one week or less prior to the testing deadline will result in an expedited shipping fee billed to the client.

Custom exams – Empco requires a minimum 60 day study period/preparation time. This is the time from the date the agency posts the bibliography AND gets all local content material to Empco to the test date. Final test counts must be given to Empco two weeks prior to the test date. Exams cancelled less than one month prior to the test will result in the client being billed the development fee for the test. Any orders/final counts given one week or less prior to the testing deadline will result in an expedited shipping fee billed to the client.

Assessment Centers

Empco's assessment centers are designed to measure the knowledge, skills and abilities (KSA's) critical for successful performance in such jobs. These include up to 15 behavioral attributes such as: oral and written communication, problem solving, decision making, organization, planning, administrative and operational skills, staff development, supervision, analytical thinking and reasoning, etc. The job analysis, as well as information from subject matter experts in the agency, will determine the actual dimensions to be measured by the assessment center for each specific rank.

Empco's assessment centers are developed in accordance with the *Guidelines and Ethical Considerations for Assessment Center Operations (2015)*, International Taskforce on Assessment Center Guidelines. These guidelines establish specific requirements and procedures for conducting assessment centers. The following description of Empco's assessment center structure and procedures reflect the requirements of these guidelines. Following these guidelines will ensure that your agency meets any contractual obligations to conduct an assessment center as well as making the test reliable and defensible.

Based on the needs of this position, Empco will develop the following three types of exercises:

Interview Exercise: Candidates are asked to make a brief presentation describing themselves, their accomplishments, goals and other related issues - an outline of suggested topics is provided at the orientation. Each candidate is then asked a series of career and job-related questions and given a scenario(s) to solve. The same questions/scenarios are asked of each candidate. Actual agency issues are incorporated into the exercise.

In-Basket Exercise: Candidates are given a number of written situations, which might typically be found in the "In-Basket" of the job being filled. Candidates are asked to complete and submit their solutions to these in-basket items within a specific time.

Role-Play Scenario Exercises: Candidates are presented with unannounced situations from the job being sought. They are required to interact with an individual (an Empco associate playing the role of a subordinate, city council person, etc.) while being evaluated by our panel of assessors. The scenarios are job-related.

Assessors

Empco's standard practice is to provide the assessors for assessment center exercises. All assessors will be those regularly used by Empco and are therefore trained in how Empco evaluates and scores candidates. This panel will evaluate all candidates to ensure reliability of ratings. Assessors are drawn from non-contiguous agencies and have no prejudicial knowledge of the candidates.

The department will have one internal assessor which will be trained by Empco to evaluation all candidates.

Candidate Orientation

Empco will conduct an orientation for all candidates participating in an assessment center. During this orientation, Empco will explain the assessment process -- what candidates should expect and how the candidates will be evaluated. The agency is responsible for providing adequate facilities to accommodate the orientation and will be responsible for notifying all candidates as to the date, time and location of the orientation. When candidates for a position are not local (an agency is seeking outside applicants), the orientation can be conducted over the phone or by video conference.

Candidate Feedback

Empco will provide all candidates that participate in the assessment center the opportunity to receive feedback on their performance in each exercise. Candidate feedback sessions must take place within two months of the completion of the assessment. Candidates are responsible for contacting the Empco office to schedule their own feedback session. Feedback sessions are confidential and are done as an opportunity for candidates to learn how to improve on future assessments and, more importantly, how they can work to improve their management skills on the job.

Scheduling and Billing

Empco requires a minimum one month development period. The specific dates and times of each aspect of the test development and administration will depend on the availability of representatives from the agency, and how quickly surveys are completed. Final candidate counts must be given to Empco two weeks prior to the assessment. The agency will be billed for the number of candidates given at this time. Assessment centers cancelled less than three weeks prior to the assessment center will result in the client be billed the development fee for the assessment center. Reduction in the number of days for the assessment center less than two weeks prior to the assessment center will result in the client being billed \$1000 for the cancelled day(s).

Scoring

Empco will consider reliability and adverse impact in determining the cut off scores for passing the assessment. Final scores will be reported after these analyses have been completed.

Empco will provide agencies with scores on assessment centers within one week of the assessment completion. Scores can be reported in multiple formats, but always as a percentage of 100 percent.

Agency Requirements

Empco requires that the agency provide adequate facilities for all orientations, written exams, oral boards, assessment centers, and review sessions (if applicable). The agency is responsible for making sure these facilities provide adequate space and layouts conducive to the activities that will be held in the space. Empco asks that the agencies provide lunch to Empco assessors and facilitators for all oral boards and assessment centers. The agency is also responsible for notifying all candidates of the dates and times of orientation, feedback sessions (if applicable), and testing dates, as well as providing the candidates with a copy of the bibliography for the written exam. The agency will need to provide Empco with a copy of all job analyses and job descriptions for the position, and make subject matter experts available to Empco if additional job analysis information needs to be conducted. Empco also requires the agency to provide all local content materials for written exams and allow Empco use of a copy machine during the assessment center process.

It is the agency's responsibility to notify candidates that recording devices of any kind, including agency issued body cameras, are strictly prohibited at all orientations, written exams, oral boards, and assessment centers. If a candidate is wearing any of these devices upon arriving at the testing facility, they will be asked to turn the device off and remove it from the testing areas. Use of a

recording device during written exams, oral boards, or assessment centers will be considered cheating and will be handled according to the agency's discipline policy.

The agency must notify Empco of any additional requirements when scheduling a testing process. Those additional requirements could be dictated by agency policy or collective bargaining agreement and include, but are not limited to, specific cut scores, candidate reviews and candidate challenge periods. Additional fees may apply.

Project Team

Kendra Royer, President

Dr. Kendra Royer holds a master's degree and a doctoral degree in Industrial/Organizational Psychology. She has worked as a public safety consultant since 2001 and has been with Empco since 2005. Her expertise is in the development and validation of employment testing. As President, Kendra oversees the development of all assessment processes. She ensures that all Empco products are valid and reliable and consistent with industry standards.

Ken Staelgraeve, Director of Assessment Centers and Oral Boards

Ken Staelgraeve is the retired Fire Chief of the Harrison Township Fire Department. He subsequently served two years as Fire Chief for the Bruce-Romeo Fire Department. He holds a bachelor's degree in Fire & Safety Engineering Technology from the University of Cincinnati, and a master's degree in Public Administration from Central Michigan University. Ken has also received Executive Fire Officer (EFO) designation from the United States Fire Administration. Ken serves as Department Chair and Professor of Fire Science at Macomb Community College. Ken has worked with Empco in various roles since 2005. As the Director of Assessment Centers and Oral Boards, Ken administers and facilitates all aspects of the assessment center and oral board processes.

In addition to the Empco team members listed above, Empco works regularly with over 50 independent contractors to develop written examinations and act as assessors on oral boards and assessment centers. These contractors are experts in the area of public safety.

References

Empco, Inc. conducts assessment centers, oral boards, and written exams for hundreds of agencies each year. The following are a sample of agencies that we are currently doing work for or that we have recently completed work:

Police

Battle Creek, MI Fire Department	
Contact:	Victoria Houser City Clerk (269)966-3348 vlhouser@battlecreek.mi.gov Dates of Service: 2020 to present

Project:	Empco conducts written exams and assessment centers for the rank of Fire Lieutenant and Captain. The assessments reflect the contractual weighting of the exercises, and reflect the skills and abilities of fire officers in this agency.
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Bloomfield Twp., MI Fire Department	
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Contact:	John LeRoy Fire Chief Bloomfield Twp. Fire Department (248) 433-7745 jleroy@bloomfieldtwp.org Dates of Service: 2004 to present
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Project:	Empco designs and conducts written exams and oral boards for the Fire Department. The ranks tested include: Lieutenant, Captain, Inspector, Marshal, and EMS coordinator. Empco also administers the entry level exams for the Fire Department.
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Lansing, MI Fire Department	
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Contact:	Regina Wilson Human Resources Department (517) 483-4015 Regina.wilson@lansingmi.gov Dates of Service: 2018 to present
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Project:	Empco develops written exams for the ranks of Fire Battalion Chief, Fire Captain, Fire EMS Operations Division Chief, Fire Marshal, and Emergency Management Division Chief. Written exams for these positions are developed after conducting job analyses to determine the necessary skills and abilities required of someone filling each position. Assessment centers are also developed and conducted for the positions of Fire Battalion Chief and EMS Operations Division Chief.
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Livonia, MI Fire Department	
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Contact:	Jeannine Laible Human Resources Director Civil Service Department (734) 466-2527 jlaible@livonia.gov Dates of Service: 1998 to present
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Project:	Empco develops and administers an in-basket and assessment center for the Fire Chief, Deputy Fire Chief, and Fire Training Officer. Assessment centers for these positions are developed after conducting job analyses to determine the necessary skills and abilities required of someone filling each position.
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Madison Heights, MI Fire Department	
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Contact:	Amy Misczak Human Resources Director City of Madison Heights
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	(248) 837-2609 amymisczak@madison-heights.org Dates of Service: 2002 to present
Project:	Empco facilitates both hiring and promotions for the Madison Heights Fire Department. Empco develops and conducts assessment centers for the ranks of Lieutenant, Captain, and Chief. Madison Heights utilizes our Fire Testing System to create eligibility lists for entry level positions. Empco also develops and facilitates oral boards for these entry level positions.

Pembroke Pines, FL Fire Department

Contact:	Frank Martin Operations Division Chief Pembroke Pines Fire Rescue (954) 499-9580 fmartin@ppines.com Dates of Service: 2004 to present
Project:	Empco conducts both written examinations and practical examinations for the Rescue and Suppression Division of this department. The ranks include Driver/Engineer, Rescue Lieutenant, Captain, and Battalion Chief.

Southfield, MI Fire Department

Contact:	James Meadows Human Resources Director City of Southfield (248) 796-4708 jmeadows@cityofsouthfield.com Dates of Service: 1999-present
Project:	Empco has conducted written exams and assessment centers for various ranks in the Fire Department. Written exams for every rank in the Fire department is tailored or customized to that rank in the department. Assessment centers were conducted for the following ranks in the Fire Department: Chief, Battalion Chief, Captain and Fire Marshal. Written exams for the Fire Department include Driver-Engineer, Inspector, and Lieutenant.

Sterling Heights, MI Fire Department

Contact:	Kate Baldwin Human Resources Manager City of Sterling Heights (586) 446-2316 kbaldwin@sterling-heights.net Dates of Service: 1990 to present
Project:	Empco has conducted assessment centers for the ranks of Chief, Training Chief and Fire Marshal. The situations in each exercise were developed after a job analysis of the positions revealed the need for certain required dimensions. Empco recently started customizing written exams for the Captain's position.

Legal Standards

In developing all exams, Empco, Inc. followed the legal and ethical guidelines put forth in:

- *Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.*
- *Civil Rights Act of 1991.*
- *Guidelines and Ethical Considerations for Assessment Center Operations (2015)*, International Taskforce on Assessment Center Guidelines.
- *Principles for the Validation and Use of Personnel Selection Procedures*, 4th edition (2003), Society of Industrial Organizational Psychology.
- *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* (1999), American Psychological Association.
- *Uniform Guidelines on Employment Selection Procedures* (1978), Code of Federal Regulations, Chapter 41, Part 60-3.

Insurance

Empco carries required insurance.

Litigation

Empco has never been involved in any litigation of any kind.

Contact

Empco staff is easily accessible by several methods: office phone: 248-528-8060; fax: 248-526-7274; email: info@empco.net, or view our web site at: www.empco.net. We are located in Troy, Michigan near I-75, approximately 30 minutes north of Detroit.

Authorized Individual

Kendra Royer, Ph.D., President, is the person authorized to sign a contract. She can be reached at 248-528-8060 or at kendra@empco.net

Non-Collusion

Empco has not and will not work with any other vendor on this project.

Pricing

Limited Content Exam (50 questions)

Custom with 20% local content and one textbook

Development Fee	\$2100.00
Per Candidate Fee	\$21.00
Proctoring of Exam (optional)	\$375.00

Assessment Center

Development Fee	\$5,000.00
Administration Fee (per day, up to 5 candidates per day)	\$2,200.00
Per Candidate Fee	\$325.00

Mileage and travel expenses will be billed as they occur.

Prices effective for 60 days after proposal is submitted.