

Memorandum

To: ITS Customers Requesting the Cabling Express Products List (EPL) 4342
From: David C. Johnson
Date: June 17, 2021
Re: Instructions for Use: ITS Cabling EPL 4342
CC: ITS Project File Number 46025

1. Introduction

- 1.1 ITS Express Products Lists (EPLs) are multi-vendor awards that meet Mississippi requirements for legal purchases.
- 1.2 The Cabling EPL is the result of a competitive procurement. Request for Proposal (RFP) No. 4342 was issued to create a Cabling EPL to be used in the acquisition of inside and outside communications cabling projects involving both labor and materials.
- 1.3 Cabling procurements made in accordance with this Instructions for Use Memorandum meet all Mississippi purchasing laws and requirements.
- 1.4 The Cabling EPL is governed under Procurement Instruments: Express Products Lists (EPLs) in the ITS Procurement Handbook (Chapter 011-030). The EPL is not to be confused with state contracts issued by the Department of Finance and Administration, Office of Purchasing, Travel and Fleet Management (DFA-OPTFM).

2. Scope

- 2.1 The Cabling EPL provides a group of Vendors from whom quotes can be obtained to provide the materials and labor needed to satisfy requests for inside and/or outside communications cabling.
- 2.2 In no event does this EPL provide procurement authority for the purchase of materials only.
- 2.3 Should a customer have already procured the cabling materials and wish to obtain quotations for the installation using the Cabling EPL, the vendor may choose to provide quotations but is not required to do so.

3. **EPL Effective Dates**

The Cabling EPL 4342 will be valid from the published date of this memo through November 30, 2025.

4. **Who May Use**

4.1 The Cabling EPL is available for use by any of the following entities:

4.1.1 State Agencies – The Cabling EPL may be used by any agency under ITS purview except for projects involving buildings within the capitol complex. The ITS Telecom Services Division is responsible for all cabling projects, even single drops, for state buildings in the capitol complex. There is zero delegation for agencies with offices in these buildings to use the Cabling EPL or work with any vendor directly on cabling projects. These projects will be handled by the ITS Telecom Services Division. The list of buildings is provided on the main Cabling EPL page.

4.1.2 Public Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL)

4.1.3 Public Community/Jr Colleges

4.1.4 Public K-12 Schools

4.1.5 Governing Authorities (cities, counties, school districts, etc.)

4.2 Any entity using this EPL must abide by the instructions in this memorandum even if that entity is not under ITS purview.

4.3 Local governmental entities are able to use the EPL in lieu of conducting their own procurements, based on MS Code 31-7-13(m)(xi) that allows “governing authorities” to do so as an exception to the bidding requirements found in Public Purchasing Code.

5. **Dollar Limitations of Use and Quote Requirements**

5.1 The maximum dollar limit is **\$150,000 per project** for the use of the Cabling EPL without additional approval from ITS.

5.2 The following are dollar limit/quote requirements for using the Cabling EPL. *Please note that the limits and quote requirements have changed from the previous EPL.*

5.2.1 **\$150,000.00 or less** – Solicit quotes from all vendors in the Cabling EPL Vendor Pool.

5.2.2 **\$150,000.01 and above** – ITS involvement is required. Submit to ITS either a Competitive Procurement Request for ITS to handle the procurement or a Planned Purchase Request to exceed the EPL limit.

- 5.3 For K-12 schools, the dollar limitation is **\$150,000.00 per school or campus per fiscal year with a maximum dollar limitation of \$1,000,000.00 per school district per fiscal year.**
- 5.4 Projects costing more than \$150,000.00 are beyond the scope of this delegated process and subject to full ITS review and authorization. Authorization to exceed the EPL dollar limitation is described in the ITS Procurement Handbook under the EPL Planned Purchase process, Chapter 013-080 available at the link below:
<http://www.its.ms.gov/Procurement/Documents/ISS%20Procurement%20Manual.pdf>

6. Authorized Vendors

- 6.1 Authorized Vendors for the Cabling EPL
 - 6.1.1 Academic Technologies Inc.
 - 6.1.2 General Informatics
 - 6.1.3 Innovative Software Inc. dba S.H.O.T.S.
 - 6.1.4 James Self Inc. dba JSI Communications
 - 6.1.5 Lane-Tedder & Associates, Inc.
 - 6.1.6 McInnis Systems, Inc.
 - 6.1.7 Network Cabling Solutions, Inc.
 - 6.1.8 Sunrise Network Solutions, Inc.
 - 6.1.9 Synergetics DCS, Inc.
- 6.2 There is a separate document for each authorized vendor containing contact and ordering information. Each authorized vendor's document may be found on the Cabling EPL page under the heading "Vendor Contact and Ordering Information". Here is a link to the page: <http://www.its.ms.gov/Procurement/Pages/Cabling.aspx>

7. Selection of Vendor by the Customer from the Cabling EPL

- 7.1 The customer must solicit quotes from all vendors in the Cabling EPL vendor pool.
- 7.2 Each vendor quotes the total configuration, including labor, materials, and travel. Below are "Pricing Requirements" that were posted in the RFP.
 - 7.2.1 Cost for cabling materials and labor were not requested as part of the Vendor's RFP response. All pricing will be provided by Vendor at the time of quote.
 - 7.2.2 Cabling EPL Vendors may not charge for an on-site walk-through.

- 7.2.3 All products must be delivered FOB destination to any location within the geographic boundaries of the State with **all transportation charges prepaid and included in the proposal price.** Destination is the point of use.
 - 7.2.4 Vendors may not charge for out-of-state travel.
 - 7.2.5 When negotiating travel fees with the Vendor, the purchasing entity should consider if the cost estimate is one-way or two-way and if the estimate is a per person or per vehicle cost.
 - 7.2.6 Per Diem charges for meals, mileage, hotels, airfare, etc. are not authorized under this RFP. Should a project involve extended on-site work involving such expenses, those per diem charges should be itemized in the cost estimate. The authority for such expenditures would be using other public purchasing procedures. In no event should travel expenses be proposed or invoices at rates exceeding the reimbursement rates defined by the Mississippi Department of Finance and Administration, Office of Purchasing, Travel and Fleet Management (DFA-OPTFM) for Mississippi state government.
- 7.3 The customer chooses the “lowest and best” vendor from the quotations.
- 7.3.1 The customer must determine and document a scoring methodology prior to sending a solicitation for quotes to vendors
 - 7.3.2 The scoring methodology must list all evaluation factors to be considered and the percent at which each will be weighted. The sum of the weights of all evaluation factors must be 100%. Cost must always be included as the primary evaluation factor. ITS Cabling EPL 4342 requires that cost quotations from the vendor pool be weighted at 51% or higher among the evaluation factors used to determine the awarded vendor.
 - 7.3.3 See “Best Practices Checklist” within this document for suggestions of evaluation factors to be considered in creating a scoring methodology.
- 7.4 ITS is not requiring that a vendor respond to a request for quotation for every project under this RFP. However, it is ITS’ expectation that awarded vendors will make best efforts to respond to as many project requests as feasible. Lack of participation by vendors in this process could result in suspension or removal from the EPL. ITS requests that customers provide feedback to ITS regarding vendor participation.

8. How to Place Your Order

- 8.1 Place Cabling EPL orders directly with the approved EPL vendors.
- 8.2 Confirm your order with the vendor and issue appropriate purchase orders.
- 8.3 Please include the following information on all purchase orders.

- 8.3.1 CABLING EPL 4342 (This will identify your purchase for audit purposes.)
- 8.3.2 Vendor Order Information
- 8.3.3 Bill to Address
- 8.3.4 Ship to Address
- 8.3.5 Purchase Order Number
- 8.3.6 Clear Description and Part Number
- 8.3.7 Contact Name and Phone Number for your Agency/Institution Purchasing Agent
- 8.4 The purchase order and quote should match in terms of items purchased, quantities purchased, and total amount.
- 8.5 Shipping costs are to be included as part of the purchase price.

9. Mississippi's Accountability System for Government Information and Collaboration (MAGIC)

- 9.1 State agency customers are required to purchase through Mississippi's Accountability System for Government Information and Collaboration (MAGIC).
- 9.2 The MAGIC Contract Number (ex. 8500000xxx) and Supplier Number (ex. 3100020xxx) for each authorized vendor is provided on the respective vendor link under "Vendor Contact and Ordering Information" as noted in the "Authorized Vendors" item above.
- 9.3 State agency customers will be required to use NIGP codes when purchasing through MAGIC. The following NIGP codes will be used for labor and materials purchased using the Cabling EPL:

NIGP Code	EPL Category	Use For
83828	Cabling Products	Telecommunications Equipment, Cable, Copper (CAT 5E/6, etc.)
92031	Installation	Installation of Computers, Peripherals, and Related Equipment (Including Software)

- 9.4 For Cabling EPL purchases, the following documents must be uploaded to MAGIC as attachments to your purchase order:
 - 9.4.1 A copy of each quote received
 - 9.4.2 A copy of the Statement of Work

- 9.4.3 A copy of the Best Practices Checklist or Customer's scoring methodology
- 9.4.4 A copy of this Instructions for Use Memorandum
- 9.4.5 A copy of the related planning form from the ITS planning system if the purchase is related to a project that is part of the Agency's IT Plan
- 9.5 NOTE: If MAGIC routes your Purchase Order to ITS for approval, ITS will vet the information provided and may have additional requirements before approving your Purchase Order. Any deviation from this Instructions for Use Memorandum may result in delays in the approval of your purchase. ITS will also vet the items being purchased to ensure that they are within the scope of this EPL.

10. EPL Audit Integrity

- 10.1 It is the responsibility of every customer using the EPL to maintain proper records to reflect that all procurements from the EPL are made in accordance with ITS policies and procedures.
- 10.2 What Goes in Your Purchase/Audit File

Make sure you provide adequate documentation that you followed the recommendations and directives in this Instructions for Use Memorandum. At a minimum include:

 - 10.2.1 Customer's Statement of Work
 - 10.2.2 Best Practices Checklist

It is the customer's responsibility to evaluate and choose the vendor services that best meets the requested needs. A "Best Practices Checklist" has been provided on the main Cabling EPL webpage to assist you with your evaluation.
 - 10.2.3 A copy of all vendor responses to Customers' Statement of Work or Quote Sheet
 - 10.2.4 A copy of the purchase order
 - 10.2.5 A copy of this Instructions for Use Memorandum
 - 10.2.6 A copy of the awarded vendor's contact and ordering page
 - 10.2.7 A copy of the related planning form from the ITS planning system if the purchase is related to a project that is a part of the Agency's IT Plan
 - 10.2.8 Any additional project-related documentation, justification, or evaluation materials

11. Contracts and Additional Considerations

- 11.1 Customers should be aware that all vendors approved under Cabling RFP 4342 have furnished to ITS a copy of their Certificate of Responsibility from the Mississippi Board of Contractors as well as proof of General Liability Insurance in the amount of one million dollars.
- 11.2 Customers should be aware that ITS did not require the submission of a Performance Bond or a Payment Bond at the time of the vendor's proposal submission. The customer should work with the vendor at the project level regarding the inclusion of these bonds when needed.
- 11.3 Each participating vendor has signed a *Master Cabling Agreement* with ITS. The purchase order from any individual customer will serve as a supplement to these agreements. You may request a copy of a vendor's Master Agreement from the vendor or from ITS. Additional terms and conditions may be negotiated between the customer and vendor at the time of sale, as needed, as a supplement to the Master Agreement.

12. American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009

- 12.1 To the best of our knowledge and current assessment, ITS believes the EPLs are valid purchase instruments for the use of ARRA funds.
- 12.2 We recommend that customers complete the following steps when purchasing from EPLs with ARRA funds:
 - 12.2.1 Customers must solicit quotes from all vendors within the pool
 - 12.2.2 Ensure the quotations state that ARRA funds will be used for the purchase
 - 12.2.3 All quotations should be maintained in the purchase file
- 12.3 ITS EPLs are established based on sealed proposals submitted by vendors in response to RFPs advertised in accordance with all state statutory requirements for legal procurements of IT products. This EPL RFP was advertised both in a newspaper with statewide circulation and on the Procurement Portal at Transparency.mississippi.gov. Advertisements exceeded the minimum time frames required for ARRA purchases. Proposals received in response to these RFPs were evaluated, validated, and published for the use of any public entity in the state in accordance with the Instructions for Use published by ITS.
- 12.4 Each vendor has a designation in their contact information as to whether they are an ARRA participant. Those vendors noted as ARRA participants have agreed to work with EPL customers to fulfill purchases that are funded by ARRA. The Master Agreement for these vendors includes conditions pertaining specifically to ARRA purchases.

13. To Report Problems or Request Assistance

- 13.1 If you have any problems with your EPL order, notify the vendor of the problem in writing and send a copy to ITS.
- 13.2 Please let us know if you have any feedback that may help us to improve this process.
- 13.3 You may contact us in writing by one of the following ways:
 - 13.3.1 E-mail: isshelp@its.ms.gov
 - 13.3.2 FAX: (601) 713-6380
 - 13.3.3 Mail: ITS, 3771 Eastwood Drive, Jackson, MS 39211
- 13.4 If you have questions about using the EPL, please contact the ISS Help Desk at isshelp@its.ms.gov.