

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL  
FOR MUNICIPAL LEGAL SERVICES  
GENERAL SERVICES – TOWN SOLICITOR  
TOWN OF COVENTRY**

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

The Town of Coventry is seeking qualified counsel to handle all legal matters relating to the operation of town government. School Department and bond counsel services are handled under separate agreements and thus are not part of this search.

Written proposals in hard copy must be received no later than 4:00 PM on Friday November 21, 2025. Proposals must be sealed and clearly marked "Proposal for General Legal Services – Town Solicitor" on the exterior of an envelope addressed to:

Joanne Amitrano, Town Clerk  
Coventry Town Hall  
1670 Flat River Road  
Coventry, RI 02816

**SUMMARY DESCRIPTION**

Town Council seeks a law firm to provide comprehensive legal services for the remainder of the current Town Council term, (December 2026) in accordance with the "Scope of Services and Qualifications" below. The Town has determined that a blend of a fixed fee arrangement and hourly charges for the range of municipal legal services detailed below is in the Town's interest. The Town's emphasis will be on selection of a firm to provide indicated services at a competitive fee / hourly rates and with the required degree of specialization and quality.

**SCOPE OF SERVICES & REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS**

**Coventry Home Rule Charter Requirements**

Article 7 of the Coventry Town Charter establishes the following qualifications and duties for the appointment to the position of Town Solicitor:

*"Section 7.01 Appointment.*

*There shall be a Town Solicitor who shall be appointed by the Town Council, to serve at the pleasure of the Town Council. The Town Solicitor may, in like manner, and subject to the approval of the Town Council, appoint one (1) or more assistant Town Solicitors. The two current Assistant Solicitors for Criminal Prosecution and Land Use will remain.*

*Section 7.02 Qualifications.*

*The Town Solicitor and any assistant Town Solicitor shall be an attorney-at-law in good standing of the bar of this state. The solicitor need not be a resident of the town. The Town Solicitor and any assistant Town Solicitor shall not hold any other office in the town government, except that of acting Judge of Probate when so necessary.*

### *Section 7.03 Duties.*

*The Town Solicitor shall serve as chief legal advisor to the Town Council and to the Town Manager.*

*The Town Solicitor shall appear for and protect the rights of the town in all actions, suits, or proceedings, civil or criminal, in law or equity, brought by or against it, or for or against any of its departments, offices, or agencies, including the Town Council, the Town Manager, and the School Committee.*

*The Town Solicitor shall also perform such other duties, appropriate to the office, as the Town Council and the Town Manager may require.*

*The Town Solicitor shall examine and approve the form of all ordinances and resolutions and of all invitations to bid, contracts, and other legal documents issued by any department, office or agency of the town."*

### **General Position Descriptions**

The Town Solicitor, with the assistance of any assistant solicitors, shall be the attorney for the Town and legal advisor to the Town Council, Town Administrator, and all other offices, departments, and agencies of the Town. The successful bidder shall have a primary office or home office located within the State of Rhode Island and must have at least fifteen (15) years' experience in the general practice of law, including at least ten (10) years' active experience representing at least one Rhode Island municipal government. The successful bidder will include in its response a selection of the partner level attorney in the firm that will be the Solicitor and he/she must individually possess the experience required above; both the firm and the assigned Solicitor therefore must have the requisite experience; proposals that do not meet this requirement will not be considered.

Bidders will be compared along many lines, including their experience in the following areas:

1. Public Law. The prevailing bidder must have substantial experience in representing a major municipality and/or state or federal government entities and authorities with respect to all facets of public law, including civil rights issues, Open Meetings Act, Public Records Act, and similar regulatory frameworks. The prevailing bidder must be able to review ordinances, and sometimes resolutions and other written documents, to be considered for adoption by the Town Council for legal sufficiency, in a timely fashion. It is recognized that attorneys who represent public entities may concentrate their practice in other specific areas and should have experience in representing public entities generally.
2. Constitutional Law. The Town sometimes confronts situations where it needs advice with respect to constitutional issues such as First Amendment (Freedom of Speech and Religion), defamation, Fourth Amendment (Search and Seizure), and civil rights issues generally. Therefore, the successful bidder must specify at least one attorney who, as a litigator, has devoted a substantial part of his or her practice to constitutional law and civil rights issues, and will be the designated professional to handle such matters for the Town either as a partner or "of counsel" to the successful bidder.
3. Litigation. The Town is a litigant in numerous on-going matters, some minor and some substantial. The successful bidder must demonstrate that it has a substantial litigation capability sufficient to accommodate all of the Town's on-going cases as well as acting as "in house" counsel with respect to those cases that are handled through the Rhode Island Interlocal Risk Management Trust and legal counsel assigned by the Trust.
4. Tax Issues. From time to time the Town has complicated tax issues associated with certain matters. The successful bidder must have a record of working with municipal taxation issues such as liens, tax foreclosures/sales and tax appeals.

5. Criminal Prosecution. The prevailing bidder will represent The Town in prosecuting violations of municipal ordinances and minor criminal offenses that occur within Town limits. These duties will include reviewing cases, presenting evidence, negotiating plea agreements, and working with law enforcement to ensure local laws are enforced. They will handle cases like traffic violations and misdemeanors and often cooperate with other local or state-level offices when necessary.
6. Land Use. The prevailing bidder will provide the Town with legal counsel for land use matters including Zoning and Planning Board meetings and applications as well as land use matters which sometimes rise to the level of Town Council involvement and protracted litigation. Further, there will be matters that fall to the Solicitor to handle, including disputes over public and private rights of way, for example. The Town Solicitor or an Assistant Town Solicitor providing general legal services to the Town must have experience working with land use issues in the Rhode Island and municipal court system and before administrative bodies.
7. Contract Law. The prevailing bidder must have experience creating, negotiating, and enforcing municipal contracts. Examples include, but are not limited to contracts the Town may enter into for services, construction, large purchases, and labor/collective bargaining.

Generally, the Town Solicitor or designated Assistant Town Solicitors shall appear for and protect the rights of the Town in all actions, suits, or proceedings civil or criminal brought by or against it or for or against any of its offices, departments, or agencies and shall perform such other duties as the Council may require.

The Town Council may retain special counsel in such cases or other matters as the Town Council shall deem advisable. The Town Solicitor shall assist and advise in this respect. The Town Solicitor will coordinate the transmission of cases referable to legal counsel of the Town's insurance carriers which may be obligated to furnish the defense of liability suits.

The Town Solicitor shall retain full responsibility for review of all cases that have been transferred to outside counsel. The Town Solicitor shall provide the Town Council with a minimum of quarterly reports summarizing the status of all pending litigation including those cases represented by outside counsel.

The Town Solicitor shall examine and approve the forms of all ordinances and resolutions and the forms of all invitations for bids, contracts and other legal documents sent out by any office, department, or agency of the town. Legal responsibilities not assigned to an Assistant Town Solicitor shall be that of the Town Solicitor. The Town Solicitor shall also perform the duties of probate judge in the absence of the probate judge or when the probate judge is unable to perform his or her duties.

Attendance at all Town Council meetings and work sessions is mandatory unless excused by the Town Council. Attendance will also be required from time to time at meetings of Town boards, commissions, and committees.

The Town Solicitor shall handle all suits brought against the Town, its officials, departments, and agencies or suits initiated by the Town as authorized by the Town Council. Actions covered by this area of responsibility are normally heard in the Superior Court of Rhode Island and would include any appeals therefrom. The Town Solicitor shall work directly with the Town Administrator, Town Clerk, Town Treasurer, and the Town's administrative staff on a wide range of municipal issues. At the request of the Town Solicitor, the Town Administrator will establish a priority order for providing legal services to the administrative staff. The Town Solicitor will not initiate any legal action without first conferring with the Town Council.

Telephone communications between the Town Solicitor and Town officials will transpire on an as needed basis and the Town Solicitor will be on call seven days per week.

The Town Solicitor shall perform such other duties as directed by the Town Council. The Town Solicitor shall remain neutral on all political issues. The Town Solicitor serves at the pleasure of the Council under

a fee agreement that shall last for two years and must be renewed by each Town Council elected in turn every two years. The Solicitor may leave the service of the Town after providing the Town Council with no less than a sixty (60) day notice of resignation and meeting all of the requirements of the professional code of conduct for attorneys regarding the transition of pending matters to new counsel.

The Town's criminal prosecutor will work under the general supervision of the Town Solicitor and will work directly with the Police Department and its personnel. This position provides legal counsel to handle all misdemeanor criminal prosecutions of the Town in both the district and family courts, including any appeals therefrom.

It is strongly preferred that the prosecutor be a partner level attorney in the successful bidder's firm or "of counsel" to the same and have no less than ten (10) years of experience litigating criminal matters before Rhode Island courts and other judicial and/or quasi-judicial bodies. The designated prosecutor must be willing and available to conduct interviews of police witnesses at the Coventry Police Station. Legal advice will be transmitted to the Police Chief and his subordinates. In-service training of police personnel in applicable criminal laws and procedures and court rulings may be requested from time to time.

### **Service Level and Operational Requirements**

The law firm/attorney shall indemnify the Town of Coventry from all suits, actions, or claims of any kind brought on account of any injuries or damages sustained by any person in consequence of any negligence in performing this work, or on account of any act of commission by the attorney or the firm or its employees, or from any claims or amounts arising or uncovered under the law, ordinance, regulation, or decree violated by such attorney or firm. Any law firm or attorney representing the Town shall be required to carry professional liability insurance of not less than \$3,000,000 per claim. Proposals must specify the coverage limits of the firm's policy and include the cover page of the firm's policy.

The selected attorney or firm will be prohibited from assigning, conveying, subcontracting, or otherwise transferring this agreement or its rights, title, or interest therein, or its power to execute such agreement to any other person, company, or corporation, without the consent of the Town Council. The attorney or firm must also provide advance notification to the Town Manager of times when counsel will be unavailable (vacations, professional conferences, etc.) and the name(s) of legal counsel who will handle Town affairs in the absence of the principal.

Any and all report, studies, or other works commissioned by the Town Solicitor shall be carbon copied to the Town Manager.

Any and all communications with regulatory agencies received by the Town Solicitor shall be provided to the Town Manager in a timely fashion. When responding to regulatory agencies the Town Solicitor shall direct the respective regulatory agencies to also include the Town Manager on all correspondence. Any and all meetings with regulatory agencies attended by the Town Solicitor shall be also be attended by the Town Manager or his representative, at the Town Manager's discretion.

The selected attorney or firm shall be required to provide a detailed monthly statement, in a manner acceptable to the Town Manager, documenting all hours (and portions thereof) employed providing legal services on behalf of the Town. All monthly statements shall be provided unredacted.

The selected attorney or firm shall agree not to represent any client, or continue to represent any existing client, that may have a legal position, purpose, or interest that is adverse to the legal position, purpose, or interests of the Town of Coventry.

### **Application Requirements**

Each applicant must respond to the following items in order for the application to be considered complete. (Please note that for purposes of this request, the term "law firm" or "firm" includes sole practitioner,

partnerships, and multi-person law firm, etc.)

1. Provide a brief background of the law firm that is applying. (Date of establishment, area of practice, etc.). Also provide the resume of each candidate proposed for appointment.
2. Provide a general overview of how your firm proposes to represent the Town of Coventry. (What structure and expertise will be used?)
3. Provide background and professional references relative to the firm's expertise in the area (s) noted above (in "general position descriptions"):
4. If a lead attorney is to be assigned to Coventry as the "Town Solicitor," how will this person be selected? Include the individual's background and expertise in the general practice of law as well as the particular areas listed above.
5. It is important that the Town Solicitor or any Assistant Solicitor representing the Town not have any other clients that have or would be in conflict with Town issues. Specify if there are any actual or potential conflicts of interest with the Town. Include a disclosure of clients who have had dealings with the Town, including all boards and commissions. Explain how your firm would handle such conflicts. Also, set out any allowance in contract price if the Town has to retain other legal counsel because of a conflict of interest with your firm.
6. Present evidence of the firm's malpractice coverage meeting the requirements herein, including the policy cover page.
7. The attached sheet must be completed and submitted for every attorney of the firm, as a component of any formal response to this RFP. Failure to complete and submit this required sheet, which authorizes Disciplinary Counsel disclosure, shall be considered grounds for rejection of the tendered proposal.
8. Please submit ten (10) complete copies of your proposal.
9. Any attorney or firm who submits a proposal in response to the Request for Proposal shall disclose in its proposal any disciplinary actions and malpractice claims made against any attorney of the firm within the last ten (10) years, and whether any settlement or verdict or decision was rendered.
10. Any attorney or firm who submits a proposal in response to the Request for Proposal may be required to make an oral presentation of the proposal to the Coventry Town Council upon notification of such request. The contents of the proposal submitted by all interested parties responding to this RFP may become part of a written agreement between the Town of Coventry and said attorney or firm. All submissions shall be considered public documents.
11. Any party, including every attorney in the firm, submitting a response to this Request for Proposal shall be required to execute a written authorization for the release of records on file with the Disciplinary Counsel of the Rhode Island Supreme Court relative to complaints filed against the submitting attorney. This information shall not be made public; however, the Town Council reserves the right to question any of the information obtained from the Disciplinary Counsel during the public interview process. The Town shall only request information from the Disciplinary Counsel on those candidates that are to be interviewed by the Town Council.
12. The Town Council reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received in response to this request or to negotiate separately in any manner necessary to serve the best interests of the

Town. Attorneys or firms whose proposals are not accepted will be notified.

**Additional Parameters**

1. Payment of Interest. Under no condition shall the Town be liable for interest payment on any unpaid balance owed the law firm for any reason under a contract awarded as a result of this RFP.
2. Additional Terms and Conditions. The Town reserves the right to include additional terms and conditions during the process of contract negotiations. These terms and conditions shall be within the scope of the original RFP and contract document, and shall be limited to cost, definition and administrative and legal requirements.
3. Cost of Proposal. This invitation to bid does not commit the Town to pay any costs incurred by any bidder in the submission of a proposal, or in making necessary studies or designs for the preparation thereof, or for procuring or contracting for the items to be furnished under the invitation to bid.
4. Conflict of Interest. A bidder filing a proposal thereby certifies that no officer, agent or employee of the Town has a pecuniary interest in the bid, that the proposal is made in good faith without fraud, collusion or connection of any kind with any other bidder for the same call for bids, and that the bidder is competing solely in his own behalf without connection with, or obligation to, any undisclosed person or firm.

TOWN OF COVENTRY, RHODE ISLAND

AUTHORIZATION FOR RELEASE OF DISCIPLINARY RECORDS

I hereby provide to the Disciplinary Counsel of the Rhode Island Supreme Court my written authorization for the release of any and all records including, but not limited to, complaints, investigation reports, recommendations, and sanction actions pertaining to any complaints filed against the undersigned with the Office of the Disciplinary Counsel.

Name of Candidate: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Bar Registration Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_