

DGS Wants End-to-End Procurements Completed in 90 Days

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By Matt Williams | October 14, 2016

Earlier this year the Department of General Services started a business re-engineering process to speed up the time it takes to award new statewide contracts.

Bidders on IT contracts may start seeing the fruits of that labor in 2017, DGS deputy director Jim Butler said during a customer forum the Department of Technology convened this month.

The new process, developed through a Lean Six Sigma methodology, frontloads research and requirements gathering outside of the procurement itself, Butler explained. DGS also intends to pre-publish bids to get feedback from vendors before going out to bid.

"We're really going to try to front load the requirements gathering and not do any requirements work during the procurement — understand what we want to buy, go out and buy it, and then get up and running," Butler said.

The goal is for the procurement to take 90 days, from the advertisement all the way through to the award.

The first contract that will go through the shortened process is for enterprise storage, in a bid that will be coming out in spring 2017, Butler said.

If achieved, 90 days would be a much shorter than what has been typical. Butler acknowledged that statewide IT contracts that have gone through DGS for desktop, storage, hardware and other commodities have traditionally taken a year, two years or longer.

For the remainder of 2016, DGS will continue releasing bids under the old process. Butler said bids for copiers and PC goods should come out in November.

Butler also dished information about the Department of General Services' IT Master Service Agreement (MSA) for staff augmentation services. The contract will be re-bid in 2017 (bid coming out November 2016), with some changes on the way. More job classifications will be added, and contractors will be allowed to increase their pricing based on the Consumer Price Index; before, they were locked in to pricing for a three-year period.

"As successful as that [IT MSA] contract has been, we knew there were some features we needed to improve," Butler said.