

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS DUE BY: August 26, 2026

The Clare County Board of Commissioners invites qualified firms to provide information technology managed services to the County at various sites of service.

To be considered for this engagement, a proposal must meet the qualifications and requirements set forth in this Request for Proposals. Proposals must be received by Lori Phelps, Clare County Administrator, no later than 4:00 p.m. on August 26, 2026.

Clare County
Lori Phelps, Clare County Administrator
225 W. Main St.
Harrison, MI 48625
Phone: 989-539-2510 ext. 0
E-mail: phelpsl@clareco.net

I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Request for Proposals (RFP) is to provide interested and qualified firms and individuals with sufficient information to enable them to prepare and submit proposals for consideration by the Clare County Board of Commissioners as part of its procurement of needed professional services.

A. Bid Submission and Project Representative

To be considered, a digital copy of the proposal must be received by Lori Phelps, Clare County Administrator, at phelpsl@clareco.net no later than 4:00 p.m. on August 26, 2026. Requests for information, interpretation, or clarification regarding this RFP must be directed to the contact listed above.

Proposals must be signed by an official authorized to bind the firm to its provisions and the proposal must remain valid for at least one hundred twenty (120) days. All proposals must include a "not to exceed" fee including all out-of-pocket expenses for this proposal. There is no expressed or implied obligation for Clare County to reimburse responding firms for any expenses incurred in preparing proposals in response to this request.

B. Right of Refusal

Clare County reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, to negotiate separately with any source whatsoever in any manner necessary to attend to the best interests of the County, to waive irregularities in any proposal and to accept a proposal which best meets the needs of the County, irrespective of the bid price.

C. Project Description

Clare County is receiving proposals from qualified firms to provide information technology managed services. Technical questions or requests for clarification shall be directed to the key contact listed above. Clare County responses to a firm's questions will be posted as an informational document added to this request for proposal on the Clare County website. (The firms asking the question will not be revealed.)

IT Structure and Scope of Services

Clare County currently utilizes a managed service provider to provide user support, technology support, cybersecurity services, and project execution, with strategic direction provided by County department heads.

Clare County is looking to retain this model of a co-managed IT environment. Currently our managed service provider provides support via a remote helpdesk when the IT Director is unavailable or as needed but must be available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year if needed, and staff assistance on site as needed.

If your firm provides staff augmentation, please include it in your proposal based on the above parameters and break out this cost as optional. If your firm does not provide staff augmentation, please indicate so on your proposal.

Clare County operates out of 5 locations throughout Clare County and has approximately 250 users. Staff utilize both desktop workstations, laptops, tablets, and cellular phones. Some staff are mobile and work remotely, off-site, or in the field.

Each machine and user vary in use of network services, some machines are shared between multiple users, some are dedicated to a single user, and some users don't access any machines at all. Consistent, reliable, and secure access for all staff at any location is critical to the scope of work.

Clare County intends to award a contract with a base year that will begin on October 1, 2026, with options from 3 to 5 years.

Services that the Managed Service Provider would provide:

Discovery & Deployment

- Full documentation and inventory of the network
- Best-practice configuration of the network for monitoring and management
- Orientation and training for IT staff on RMM system, ticketing system, helpdesk workflow
- Performance monitoring of network prior to and after implementation

24/7 Monitoring & Incident Response Services

- 24/7 incident response services for all server and network devices.
- Phone, remote, and on-site support to authorized users for all included server and network devices
- Track all incidents through an ITIL-based service desk system.
- 24/7 collection of performance data for our included server and network devices
- Utilize industry-best practices for remote access, control, and management of all devices
- Patching: Deploy, manage, monitor the installation of firmware updates, operating system updates, security updates, reliability updates, software updates as deemed necessary on all applicable devices with additional emphasis on devices connected to the network
- Resolution of monitoring alerts
- Resolution of performance issues

- Resolution of availability issues

Foundational Protection

- Deploy Endpoint Detection and Response (EDR) to all workstations and servers with MSP-supplied RMM
- Monitor workstations and servers with EDR installed via 24/7/365 partner SOC.
- Respond to incidents and service requests. All requests will be prioritized and processed per a structured priority-based system.
- Remote Backup with at least annual recovery testing
- Cyber security training

Email Security and Business Email Compromise Protection

- Provide, implement, monitor, and maintain an advanced cloud email security solution for the County's Microsoft 365 environment, or its then-current cloud email platform. The solution may be Abnormal AI or an equivalent platform and must supplement, not replace, endpoint detection and response, managed detection and response, and firewall controls.
- The proposed solution must address phishing, business email compromise, account takeover, impersonation, malicious links and attachments, and threats originating from both external senders and compromised or malicious in-tenant accounts.
- Describe the solution's detection, automated remediation, quarantine and release workflow, false-positive management, alerting, investigation, reporting, and integration with Microsoft 365 and the provider's security operations processes.
- Identify the proposed product, licensing assumptions, implementation approach, ongoing management responsibilities, user-awareness integration, and all one-time and recurring costs as a separately itemized component of the proposal.

Strategic IT Planning

- Provide the client with a named strategic resource to assist the client with the following:

Budgeting

- Work with client to develop an annual technology budget for recurring expense items and new capital requirements in alignment with organizational goals

Strategic Planning

- Recommend technology solutions as well as provide roadmaps that support key business processes in order to help the client leverage technology appropriately.

Analyzing IT Health Data

- Perform a periodic analysis of the data collected by MSP's monitoring systems to proactively resolve issues and assess potential risks within the environment. MSP will make this analysis available to County data team.

IT Asset Administration

- Hardware and software asset and warranty expiration tracking
- Domain name expiration tracking
- Hardware and software purchase specification
- Web portal access for ticket creation and management
- Maintaining network documentation and secure password storage

- Interfacing with vendors such as internet service providers (ISPs)

Procurement

- Ability to provide quotes or, at a minimum, recommendations for the following types of assets: servers; networking and power equipment; desktops; laptops; tablets; peripherals, including printers; software, including subscription-based services; domain names; and security certificates.

Helpdesk

- Repair and maintenance of computer equipment and computer network, including:
 - Existing computers (approximately 150 workstations and 7 servers)
 - One Local AS/400 system used for archival lookups
 - One Cloud AS/400 system (managed service provider's responsibility would be limited to account creation and printer troubleshooting, with State of Michigan State Court Administrative Offices helpdesk providing advanced support)
- Includes support coverage on new equipment or software obtained for use by the county over the course of the contract
- Includes but not limited to setup of computers, creation of images, repair of hardware if applicable and correction of software and Windows operating systems errors and problems.
- Ticketing system that can be monitored by Clare County IT staff and other staff designated by County Administration
- Technical support provided by phone, remote access or by onsite support technician.
- Afterhours callback/ remote support required
- Technical support covers all hardware components under the scope of this RFP
- Initial point of contact for most technology related issues, working on behalf of the user when issues must be resolved with other vendors (building security vendor, software vendors, PC hardware vendors, etc.)

Documentation

- Documentation of processes, systems, workflows, software installers, etc.
- Up-to-date physical mapping of servers and networks.

CJIS / LEIN Requirement

Any managed service provider technician shall be LEIN certified or capable of being LEIN certified and have no criminal convictions, including convictions that may have been expunged.

Remote support technicians must use CJIS certified remote desktop software.

All applicable solutions, remote-access methods, encryption, and data-handling practices must be FIPS compliant.

The managed service provider shall support Clare County's ongoing compliance with all applicable CJIS Security Policy requirements, including identifying gaps, recommending corrective actions, maintaining required documentation, and assisting with audits and remediation efforts.

Sites of service include:**Clare County Courthouse**

225 W. Main St
Harrison, MI 48625

Clare County Sheriff's Office, 911 and County Jail

255 W. Main St
Harrison, MI 48625

Senior Services

212 Broad St.
Harrison, MI 48625

Clare County Animal Shelter

4038 Hazel Rd.
Harrison, MI 48625

City of Clare Police Department (Backup 911 Center)

207 W. Fifth St
Clare, MI 48617

Hardware and software purchase responsibility

- Clare County is responsible for purchase of any hardware or line-of-business software items. Software associated with providing MSP services (ticketing system, remote monitoring, patch management, etc.) should be included in the proposal.

In your proposal, please:

- Describe your firm's capabilities to conduct network and security assessments and ability to complete any necessary system enhancements.
- Describe your approach to provide installation, configuration management, patching, monitoring, and ongoing maintenance for network devices.
- Detail the process of providing services, as outlined above. Define standard service hours during regular business hours, weekends, and holidays. Any applicable Service Level Agreement (SLA) for response time options should be included.
- Detail your firm's proposed approach to offering end users a consistent working experience, providing reliable and secure access to files, folders, email, and printers.
- Describe any software utilized for routine patching and updates, as well as software for communication and remote support, such as a helpdesk ticketing system.
- Describe any additional service items, and cost, which may be of interest to Clare County.
- Provide a clear fee schedule that outlines all monthly service delivery costs, as well as any proposed one-time software or start-up costs. The fee schedule should include a breakdown of pricing structure (per user, per hour, etc.) any additional billing rates, hourly costs, and additional expenses for each individual or service.

- Provide any other fee information applicable to the proposal that has not been covered.
- Outline all provisions, termination clauses, and/or penalties for closing or changing the number of services as needed.
- Describe any additional facets relevant to this RFP, which have not been previously mentioned that you feel warrant consideration or add to your firm's value as a strategic partner to Clare County.
- Provide a brief description of your firm, including but not limited to an overview of your firm, including name of the principal(s) of the firm, address, total number of employees, overall industry experience, certifications, and any affiliations.
- Describe your firm and its capabilities. In particular, support your capacity to perform the services detailed in this RFP.
- Indicate which employees your firm would be involved in providing services to Clare County, including their designated roles, qualifications, and experience.
- Provide a list of references, with names and contact information, for organizations or businesses for whom you have performed similar work. A minimum of three references are required. References from local government organizations, especially Michigan counties, are preferred.
- Provide proof of insurance coverage as outlined in Appendix A. The anticipated start date for services is October 1, 2026.

Appendix A

CONTRACTOR INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

The contractor, and any and all of their subcontractors, shall not commence work under this contract until they have obtained the insurance required under this paragraph, and shall keep such insurance in force during the entire life of this contract. All coverage shall be with insurance companies licensed and admitted to do business in the State of Michigan and acceptable to the County. The requirements below should not be interpreted to limit the liability of the Contractor. All deductibles and SIRs are the responsibility of the Contractor.

The Contractor shall procure and maintain the following insurance coverage:

1. Worker's Compensation Insurance, including Employers' Liability Coverage, in accordance with all applicable statutes of the State of Michigan.
2. Commercial General Liability Insurance on an "Occurrence Basis" with limits of liability not less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence and aggregate. Coverage shall include the following extensions: (A) Contractual Liability; (B) Products and Completed Operations;
(C) Independent Contractors Coverage; (D) Broad Form General Liability Extensions or equivalent, if not already included; (E) Deletion of all Explosion, Collapse, and Underground (XCU) Exclusions, if applicable.
3. Automobile Liability, including Michigan No-Fault Coverages, with limits of liability not less than \$500,000 per occurrence combined single limit for Bodily Injury and Property Damage. Coverage shall include all owned vehicles, all non-owned vehicles, and all hired vehicles.
4. Additional Insured: Commercial General Liability and Automotive Liability, as described above shall include an endorsement stating the following shall be Additional Insureds: Clare County, all elected and appointed officials, all employees and volunteers, agents, all boards, commissioners, and/or authorities and board members, including volunteers thereof. It is understood and agreed by naming the County as additional insured, coverage afforded is considered to be primary and other insurance the County may have in effect shall be considered secondary and/or excess.
5. Cancellation Notice: Worker's Compensation Insurance, Commercial General Liability Insurance, Automobile Insurance, as described above, shall be endorsed to state the following: It is understood and agreed Thirty (30) days, Ten (10) days for non-payment of premium, Advance Written Notice of Cancellation, Non-Renewal, Reduction, and/or Material Change shall be sent to: Clare County, Attention: Melanie Thume, 401 W. Cedar Ave., Clare, MI 48624.
6. Owners' and Contractors' Protective Liability: The Contractor shall procure and maintain during the life of this contract, a separate Owners' and Contractor's Protective Liability Policy with limits of liability not less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence and aggregate. The County shall be "Named Insured" on said coverage. A thirty (30) day, ten (10) day for non-payment of premium, Notice of Cancellation shall be endorsed onto this policy. In lieu of this requirement, per project aggregate on

the Commercial General Liability policy may be acceptable for jobs requiring a \$1,000,000 liability limit.

7. Proof of Insurance Coverage: The Contractor shall provide the County at the time the contracts are returned by him/her for execution a Certificate of Insurance as well as the required endorsements. In lieu of required endorsements, if applicable, a copy of the policy sections where coverage is provided for additional insured and cancellation notice would be acceptable. Copies of all policies mentioned above shall be furnished, if so requested.

If any of the above coverages expire during the term of this contract, the Contractor shall deliver renewal certificates, endorsements, and/or policies to the County at least ten (10) days prior to the expiration date.