

Custodial & Housekeeping Services

RFP Checklist

for Schools & Colleges

Selecting the right custodial and housekeeping provider is crucial to maintaining a safe, clean, and welcoming environment for students, faculty, and staff.

This checklist will help you develop a clear and structured RFP, ensuring you receive well-aligned proposals from qualified vendors.



1. INTRODUCTION

A strong introduction sets the stage for your RFP. It should provide vendors with a clear understanding of your school's needs and expectations.

- **Provide an overview** of your school or college, including size, number of buildings, and student population.
- **Define your goals** for custodial services, such as improving cleanliness, enhancing sustainability, or reducing costs.
- **Specify the contract duration**, including any renewal terms.

2. SCOPE OF SERVICES

Define the daily cleaning expectations and outline key areas that require attention. Consider benchmarking industry standards such as APPA Cleaning Standards—APPA Level 2 is the most widely used standard in schools. Establish a schedule for daily, weekly, and monthly tasks to ensure consistency and accountability.

- **Daily Cleaning Services:** Specify cleaning expectations by area (classrooms, restrooms, hallways, offices, etc.), considering APPA Level 2 cleaning standards.
- **Day Porter Services:** Identify whether on-site support is needed during school hours for high-traffic areas, spills, and emergency cleanups.
- **Project Work (Breaks & Holidays):** Project work includes deep cleaning during breaks and holidays, with summer focusing on floors, carpets, and furniture, while winter and spring target classrooms and high-use areas.
- **Event Support:** Experience doing this work on campuses
- **Emergency/As-Needed Services**

3. VENDOR QUALIFICATIONS

Requiring specific qualifications ensures you select an experienced and reputable service provider that meets your institution's standards.

- **Minimum of three years of experience** in cleaning schools, colleges, or universities.
- **Experience with residential facilities** (if applicable, e.g., dormitories).
- **Proper licensing, insurance, and background** check processes that comply with state regulations.
- **References** from at least five similar schools.
- **Membership in APPA** or similar industry organizations.

4. QUALITY ASSURANCE & COMPLIANCE

A well-defined quality assurance program ensures consistent performance and compliance with industry safety standards.

- **Require vendors to outline their quality assurance program**, including inspection processes and reporting tools.
- **Ensure compliance** with OSHA and industry safety regulations.
- **Define how vendors will handle performance** monitoring, audits, and corrective actions.

5. STAFFING & SUPPORT MODEL

Understanding how the vendor will staff and manage the contract is critical to ensuring service reliability and consistency. Look for an Employee-Focused Organization who emphasizes career growth, team recognition, and professional development programs.

Staffing Plan:

- On-site manager dedicated to overseeing daily operations.
- Defined evening and day cleaning teams, with weekend coverage if needed.
- Contingency plan for absenteeism to prevent service interruptions.
- Regional/District Support: Define expectations for off-site management oversight, including regular site visits.
- Staff Training Programs: Require information on onboarding, ongoing training, and professional development programs.

6. EQUIPMENT, SUPPLIES & SUSTAINABILITY

The right equipment, supplies, and sustainability initiatives contribute to service efficiency and environmental responsibility.

- **Cleaning Equipment:** Request a list of equipment to be used, including any specialized tools.
- **Cleaning Supplies & Chemicals:** Require an itemized list of cleaning products and confirm their compliance with health and safety standards.
- **Consumables Management:** Determine if the school or vendor will be responsible for paper products, trash liners, and soap supplies. Look for ways vendor can provide savings on these purchases for you.
- **Sustainability Initiatives:** Consider green cleaning products, recycling programs, and energy-efficient equipment.
- **Technology Integration:** Experience with your CMMS systems and digital tools for tracking, scheduling, and quality control.



7. TRANSITION PLAN

A smooth transition is essential for ensuring uninterrupted service if switching providers.

- **Require a detailed transition plan** with key milestones and responsibilities.
- **Outline staffing continuity plans** and the status of existing custodial staff.
- **Define the onboarding and training** process for new staff.

8. PRICING STRUCTURE

Seek a vendor who is open to sharing detailed cost information and willing to collaborate on a shared savings model to encourage cost efficiencies. Request a detailed cost breakdown, including:

- **Labor costs and proposed wage rates**
- **Equipment costs**
- **Cleaning supplies & chemicals costs**
- **Consumables (paper, plastic, soap, etc.) budget**
- **Vendor fee**
- **Billing process and frequency**

9. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Clearly defining submission requirements ensures proposals are complete and easy to evaluate.

- **Company Profile:** History, experience, and qualifications.
- **Service Plan:** Description of how services will be provided.
- **Staffing Plan:** Number of staff assigned, supervision structure, and training programs.
- **Pricing Structure:** Detailed cost breakdown.
- **References:** At least five similar schools.
- **Insurance & Compliance:** Proof of liability insurance and required certifications.

10. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Establishing clear evaluation criteria ensures an objective selection process and helps identify a vendor that truly understands your school's culture, needs, and goals.

- **Experience and Qualifications**
- **Service Approach and Methodology**
- **Staffing and Supervision Plan**
- **Quality Assurance Program**
- **Sustainability Initiatives**
- **References from Similar Schools**
- **Cost and Overall Value Proposition**

Beyond a well-structured proposal, an in-person presentation allows vendors to showcase their approach, outline their transition plan, and demonstrate their commitment to your institution. This is an opportunity to assess their experience, service methodology, and ability to align with your school's long-term objectives.