

**E-rate 471 Window – July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2027**

# **Request for Proposal**

## **Internet Access**

### **Middle Georgia Regional Library**

**E-rate Funding Year  
July 1, 2024 through  
June 30, 2025**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL**  
**Internet Access**  
**Middle Georgia Regional Library**

The Middle Georgia Regional Library (MGRL) invites vendors to submit proposals in accordance with the terms and conditions of this Request for Proposal (RFP). This RFP provides the requirements and evaluative criteria for Internet services and requests a detailed response from all prospective vendors, including pricing and service descriptions, in a specified format.

Our goal is selecting an Internet Service Provider or Internet Services Providers that can provide Internet Access with sufficient speed and bandwidth needed at each of the branches comprising the Middle Georgia Regional Library.

The works proposed in these specifications are dependent upon receipt of E-rate Funding for Internet Access for the E-rate Funding Year July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025.

The intent of this RFP is to enter into a contract Internet Access for a three (3) year period to begin July 1, 2024, and run through June 30, 2027. Extensions of the contract or contracts could be for a 4th year (July 1, 2027 through June 30, 2028) and a 5th year (July 1, 2028 through June 30, 2029) at the discretion of the Middle Georgia Regional Library.

Internet Service Providers must be able to deliver the following features:

- 1) Standard Internet service (Fiber or cable)
- 2) Static IP address allocation for continued access to IP-based library resources
- 3) CIPA compliance
- 4) Managed Services of the Internet connection to each of the individual libraries.

**Background Information**

The Middle Georgia Regional Library is headquartered in Macon, Bibb County, Georgia. The library system consists of 17 libraries within seven (7) counties, Bibb, Baldwin, Jones, Twiggs, Macon, Wilkinson, and Crawford. The library system presently has approximately over 300 computers in the system and all sites are presently connected through fiber lines to the Internet.

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## **Services required for this RFP**

Services sought in a contract resulting from this RFP are as follows:

- Standard Internet service (Fiber or cable)
- Managed Internet service with basic firewall service & CIPA compliant content filtering **bundled in one cost**
- Separate pricing for the advanced firewall
- Static IP address allocation for continued access to IP-based library resources
- Monitoring and support of the Internet connection
- Wireless Access Point compatibility

**All the E-Rate eligible cost items should be a bundled in price. Ineligible items should be mentioned separately.**

Service Provider will provide all necessary equipment, IP addresses, connections, routers, Firewall, switches etc. needed for Internet Access at the library. CIPA (Child Internet Protection Act) compliant content filtering must be included as part of service.

The vendor will be responsible for all service, maintenance, and support and monitoring of Internet connections. Any and all equipment necessary for providing internet services to the Middle Georgia Regional Library locations (i.e. routers, switches, Firewall, Ethernet cable, etc.) will be provided by the vendor, and included in the initial bid. Prompt response times and on-site repairs during operating hours and proactive monitoring are required.

Troubleshooting service will be provided within four (4) hours of reported problem(s) during library operating hours. Refunds will be provided for periods of service outage lasting more than 12 hours.

Full implementation of Internet service must occur by July 1, 2024. Bids must include all costs (eligible, ineligible, one-time, etc.) necessary to bring service to the Middle Georgia Regional Library.

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### Requested Bandwidth for each library:

<b>Library</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Current Bandwidth</b>	<b>Requested Bandwidth</b>
<b>Baldwin County</b>			
Hancock Library	127 E Hancock Street, Ste C Milledgeville, GA 31061	No connection – New Entity	Quotes for 200 - 300 Mb/s (or increments by 100 mbps)
Lake Sinclair Library	130 Log Cabin Road, Unit D Milledgeville, GA 31061	200M Fiber	Quotes for 200 - 300 Mb/s (or increments by 100 mbps)
Mary Vinson Memorial Library	151 S Jefferson St SE Milledgeville, GA 31061	200M Fiber	Quotes for 300 - 500 Mb/s (or increments by 100 mbps)
<b>Bibb County</b>			
Washington Memorial Library	1180 Washington Avenue Macon, GA 31201	500M	Quotes for 500 -1000 Mb/s (or increments by 100 mbps)
Library Annex	Macon Mall 3661 Eisenhower Pkwy Macon, GA 31206	100M Fiber	Quotes for 100 - 300 Mb/s (or increments by 100 mbps)
Bloomfield Library	1931 Rocky Creek Road Macon, GA 31206	100M Fiber	Quotes for 100 - 300 Mb/s (or increments by 100 mbps)
Charles A. Lanford, M.D. Library	6504 Houston Road Macon, GA 31216	100M Fiber	Quotes for 100 - 300 Mb/s (or increments by 100 mbps)
Riverside Library	110 Holiday Drive North Macon, GA 31210	100M Fiber	Quotes for 100 - 300 Mb/s (or increments by 100 mbps)
Shurling Library	1769 Shurling Drive Macon, GA 31211	100M Fiber	Quotes for 100 - 300 Mb/s (or increments by 100 mbps)
<b>Crawford County</b>			
Crawford County Public Library	144 McCrary Avenue Roberta, GA 31078	50M Fiber	Quotes for 75 - 200 Mb/(or increments by 100 mbps)

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<b>Jones County</b>			
Jones County Public Library	146 Railroad Street, Gray, GA 31032-0156	100M Fiber	Quotes for 100 - 300 Mb/s (or increments by 100 mbps)
<b>Macon County</b>			
Marshallville Public Library	106 Camellia Boulevard Marshallville, GA 31057	100M Fiber	Quotes for 100 - 300 Mb/s (or increments by 100 mbps)
Montezuma Public Library	506 North Dooly Street Montezuma, GA 31063	100M Fiber	Quotes for 100 - 300 Mb/s (or increments by 100 mbps)
Oglethorpe Public Library	115 Chatham Street Oglethorpe, GA 31068	100M Fiber	Quotes for 100 - 300 Mb/s (or increments by 100 mbps)
<b>Twiggs County</b>			
Twiggs County Public Library	109 Main Street Jeffersonville, GA 31044	100M Fiber	Quotes for 100 - 300 Mb/s (or increments by 100 mbps)
<b>Wilkinson County</b>			
East Wilkinson County Public Library	154 East Main Street Irwinton, GA 31042	100M Fiber	Quotes for 100 - 300 Mb/s (or increments by 100 mbps)
Gordon Public Library	284 Milledgeville Highway West Gordon, GA 31031	100M Fiber	Quotes for 100 - 300 Mb/s (or increments by 100 mbps)

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### **Invoicing**

Vendors submitting responses to this Request for Proposal agree to provide discounted billing for services associated with this proposal and seek reimbursement of the discount amount according to the invoicing/reimbursement guidelines of the Schools and Libraries Division of the Universal Service Fund. **The Middle Georgia Regional Library requests SPI invoicing.** Middle Georgia Regional Library will pay for the non-discounted portion of services provided. Contracted vendor will seek the balance of monthly recurring charges from USAC. Invoices should be broken down by individual library listing the appropriate discounted charge for each contracted facility. Total costs may be listed minus the applicable discount amount to arrive at the discounted amount accounted to each library in the Middle Georgia Regional Library System.

Services may be requested under this RFP for both E-rate eligible and non-E-rate eligible locations and /or services. The Service Provider will provide a summary of the services ordered and the corresponding locations, together with all costs. It is the burden of the Service Provider to reconcile, to the Middle Georgia Regional Library's satisfaction, its invoices to that summary.

All invoices must be in a clear form and format with identifiable charges for each location. Invoices should only be submitted after services have been provided.

All invoices must be based on a first-of-the-month through end-of-the-month cycle.

Errors on invoices cannot be remedied by credits on invoices. All errors must be repaid by a check cut by the Service Provider within 30 days of notification such error.

### **Invoices for Non-E-rate Eligible Services**

**All the E-Rate eligible cost items should be a bundled in price. Ineligible items should be mentioned separately.**

All services not eligible for E-rate must be invoiced separately. The Middle Georgia Regional Library will attempt to pay correct and properly submitted invoices within 30 days of receipt.

## **Service Provider Requirements**

### **SPIN and FCCRN Required**

It is the intention of The Middle Georgia Regional Library to apply for discounts under the Schools and Libraries (“E-rate”) program for the services that are the subject of this RFP. Therefore, all Service Providers responding to this RFP must participate in the E-rate Program and must comply with all applicable FCC rules.

The Service Provider is required to submit its SPIN and FCCRN as part of the Proposal. If you do not have a SPIN and FCCRN, you MUST obtain them before you respond to this RFP.

\*You can obtain a SPIN by following the directions on the Schools and Libraries Division (“SLD”) web site which is found at the following URL:

<https://www.usac.org/e-rate/service-providers/step-1-obtain-a-spin/>

\*You can obtain an FCCRN from the FCC web site which is found at the following URL:

<https://fjallfoss.fcc.gov/coresWeb/publicHome.do>

### **Document Retention, Production of Records, and Audits**

Pursuant to 47 C.F.R. § 54.516, the Service Providers have the following obligations with respect to document retention, production of records and audits:

The Service Providers shall retain documents related to the delivery of discounted telecommunications and other supported services for at least 10 years after the last day of the delivery of discounted services. Any other document that demonstrates compliance with the statutory or regulatory requirements for the schools and libraries mechanism shall be retained as well. Comprehensive information about document retention requirements is found in the FCC’s Fifth Report and Order (FCC 04-190).

The Service Providers shall produce such records at the request of any representative (including any auditor) appointed by a state education department, the Administrator, the FCC or any local, state or federal agency with jurisdiction over the entity.

The Service Providers shall be subject to audits and other investigations to evaluate their compliance with the statutory and regulatory requirements for the schools and libraries universal service support program including those requirements pertaining to what services and products are purchased, what services and products are delivered,

and how services and products are being used. MGRL must provide written consent before a Service Provider releases information to the auditor, reviewer, or other representative.

The Service Provider shall assume responsibility for its subcontractors' compliance with the FCC requirements on document retention, production of records, and auditing.

### **Lowest Corresponding Price**

Pursuant to 47 C.F.R. § 54.511, Service Providers shall not submit bids for or charge the Middle Georgia Regional Library a price above the lowest corresponding price for supported services, unless the FCC, with respect to interstate services or the state commission with respect to intrastate services, finds that the lowest corresponding price is not compensatory. Promotional rates offered by a Service Provider for a period of more than 90 days must be included among the comparable rates upon which the lowest corresponding price is determined.

### **Pricing Transparency**

Pursuant to the FCC's E-rate Modernization Order (FCC14-99) released July 23, 2014, the Commission provided notice to all Service Providers that the receipt of E-rate support will be conditioned on disclosure of pricing information beginning in Funding Year 2015. The Commission states in the Order that contracts executed after the effective date of the Report and Order may not contain restrictions barring publication of purchasing price data, and that any such restrictions shall have no effect.

### **Contract Period**

It is anticipated that the contract resulting from this RFP will be for a period of 3 years from July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2027 with the possibility of two (2) One-year extensions solely at the discretion of the Middle Georgia Regional Library.

### **Timing and Delivery of Service**

The internet services shall commence at 12:00:01 a.m. on July 1, 2024.



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## **Contract Terms & Conditions**

The following Terms & Conditions are to be included in contract resulting from this RFP:

- Middle Georgia Regional Library will not sign a non-negotiated vendor contract.
- Services added during the course of the contract must be coterminous with the proposed contract.
- MGRL reserves the right to change a Service Provider if there is a legitimate reason to do so.
- The Service Provider will include all fees in the proposal.
- A contract resulting from this RFP will require Service Provider Invoicing (SPI).
- Time is of the essence in the Proposed Contract.

Should the Service Provider, its principals, agents or employees act in violation of the FCC's policy regarding gifts, and should MGRL be denied funding on a funding request or be subject to a commitment adjustment as a result of the aforementioned action, the Service Provider shall be liable for liquidated damages in the amount of MGRL's discounted portion on each of the funding requests so denied.

The Service Provider shall comply with all applicable FCC rules, Orders, and guidance which govern the E-rate program. Notwithstanding any other remedies at law or equity, in the event the Service Provider acts or fails to act in such a way that causes MGRL to lose E-rate funding, the Service Provider shall be liable to MGRL for the amount of denied, reduced or adjusted funding. Additionally, the Service Provider shall be liable to MGRL for legal or consulting fees MGRL incurs to: ensure compliance with the E-rate program; to respond to the FCC or USAC directives; and/or to pursue an appeal.

## **General Conditions**

This RFP is not a contract offer. Acceptance of a proposal neither commits the Middle Georgia Regional Library to award a contract to any vendor, even if all requirements stated in this RFP are not met, nor limits the library's rights to negotiate in the library's best interests. The Middle Georgia Regional Library reserves the right to contract with a vendor or vendors for reasons other than just price.

It is important that the vendor understand that this Internet Access Proposal has been submitted on Middle Georgia Regional Library E-rate applications which, if approved, will entitle us to approximately 50%-90% discount through the Universal Service Fund.

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## **Right of Rejection**

The Middle Georgia Regional Library reserves the right to accept or reject any or all responses to this RFP and to enter into discussion and/or negotiations with one or more qualified vendors at the same time, if such actions are in the best interest of the Middle Georgia Regional Library. Middle Georgia Regional Library reserves the right to reject any or all proposals or parts thereof, as deemed to be in the best interest of the Library.

Failure to answer any questions in this RFP may subject the proposal to disqualification. Failure to meet qualifications and requirements will not necessarily subject a proposal to disqualification.

## **Cost of Proposals**

Expenses incurred in the preparation of proposals to this RFP are the sole responsibility of the vendor.

## **PROPOSAL DELIVERY**

### **Proposal Submission**

Proposals should be submitted in a sealed envelope addressed to the following by mail, delivery service, or hand delivery, no later than **4PM, DECEMBER 29, 2023**. Proposals must be received at the Middle Georgia Regional Library Administrative Office by this date and time. No faxed or emailed copies will be accepted.

Send Proposals to:

**Jennifer Lautzenheiser  
Middle Georgia Regional Library  
Care of: Hetal Vyas  
1180 Washington Ave  
Macon, GA 31201**

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### **QUESTIONS**

All questions pertaining to this RFP must be submitted in writing by email to [vyash@biblib.org](mailto:vyash@biblib.org), subject: **INTERNET RFP**.

Questions and answers will be posted to the MGRL webpage at <https://biblib.org/information/news/rfps.php>

All questions will be answered in a timely manner. It is the vendor's responsibility to check the above link for any new or updated information.

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### **Evaluation Criteria**

Middle Georgia Regional Library will be evaluating and weighing the following criteria when considering the various Internet Access proposals. These standards are listed in descending order of importance.

<b>Evaluation Criteria</b>	<b>Weight</b>
Cost of eligible services	40%
Administrative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to provide full implementation of Internet service by July 1, 2024.</li> <li>• Turnkey process with minimal disruption of library services</li> <li>• Clear and detailed line item billing</li> <li>• Ability and willingness to adhere to Contract Terms &amp; Conditions</li> <li>• Ability and willingness to do SPI invoicing</li> </ul>	25%
Ability to meet technical requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Sufficient &amp; reliable bandwidth for library needs</li> <li>● Managed network equipment &amp; services</li> <li>● Static IP address allocation</li> <li>● Basic or advanced firewall and CIPA compliant filter</li> </ul>	15%
Past Performance (experience) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Experience with libraries and schools preferred</li> <li>● E-rate expertise required</li> </ul>	10%
Support and Maintenance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prompt phone response</li> <li>• Prompt on-site assistance when appropriate</li> <li>● Proactive monitoring</li> <li>● Direct access to Network Operations Center</li> <li>● Portal or dashboard for usage reports</li> </ul>	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

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## **QUALIFICATIONS OF BIDDERS**

The Middle Georgia Regional Library may make such investigation as they deem necessary to determine the ability of bidder to perform the work. MGRL reserves the right to reject any proposal if investigation of such bidder fails to satisfy the MGRL that such bidder is properly qualified to carry out the obligations of the contract, and to complete the work contemplated therein.

Bidders may be required to submit the names and addresses of the officers or principals of the Corporation, firm or partnership submitting a proposal. Failure to comply could result in the rejection of such proposal as non-responsive.

All bidders must be prepared to present suitable evidence of their financial standing.

MGRL has the right to reject any and all proposals from any bidder that is in or contemplates bankruptcy of any chapter or nature. Said bidder must notify the Middle Georgia Regional Library in writing of any existing condition or knowledge of same.

No verbal instructions or information to bidders will be binding. The specifications will be considered clear and complete unless written attention is called to any apparent discrepancies or incompleteness thereof, before the opening of proposals. Should any written inquires be received by MGRL, these inquiries will be answered in the form of addendum and posted for access by all providers.

The submission of a proposal will be considered as conclusive evidence of complete examination by a bidder of all instructions, specifications, and addenda.

A Proposal Form - Signature Page is provided in these specifications. This form must be used in submitting a proposal, and all pages of the form must be completely filled out, and the whole signed by the bidder.

No proposal may be withdrawn later than 4:00 PM on the day of the opening of proposals. No modifications of any proposals will be allowed after the same is sealed and delivered to MGRL, however, a bidder may withdraw a proposal before 4:00 PM on the day of the opening of proposals and submit another proposal before the closing date and time. A bidder may submit as many proposals as they desire.

## **FORM OF CONTRACT**

The successful bidder will be required to execute a written contract with MGRL within ten (10) business days after acceptance of proposal. It is expressly understood and agreed by the bidders that the contractual obligations of MGRL to the bidders are

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effective only 1) after the execution of a contract or contracts signed by all parties and 2) E-rate funding is secured from the School and Libraries Division of the Universal Service Fund.

### **SPECIFICATIONS**

These specifications are intended to cover the furnishing of all materials and the performance of all work that may be required or necessary for the complete performance of the contract, and the bidder will be required to do all things that may be necessary to fully complete the work within the purview of these specifications.

Equipment and/or material to be furnished shall meet with the approval of the Head of Information Technology Services or designated representative.

All equipment and/or material shall conform to the requirements of these specifications, and any equipment and/or material condemned by the Head of Information Technology Services as not meeting these specifications shall at once be removed and replaced with acceptable equipment.

### **ADDITIONS OR DEDUCTIONS**

MGRL shall have the right, without invalidating this RFP or any and/or all contracts, to make additions to or deductions from the work covered by these specifications, and in case such deductions or additions are made, an equitable adjustment of the addition to or deduction in cost shall be made between MGRL and the bidder, as shown in a written amendment to the contract.

### **PROTECTION BY BIDDER**

The bidder agrees to indemnify and hold harmless MGRL and their representatives from all suits or actions of every nature and description brought against them or any of them, on account of the use of patented or copyrighted appliances, materials, products or processes, and from all legal expenses and costs of suits regarding the same.

The bidder shall obey all Federal, State, County, and City laws or ordinances in any way pertaining to the work, and shall obtain all permits that may be necessary for its performance if required. (a) That in the hiring of employees for the performance of such contract, no bidder, sub-contractor, nor any person acting on behalf of such bidder or sub-contractor shall by reason of race, creed or color discriminate against any citizen of the United States who is qualified and able to perform the work to which the employment relates; (b) Nor shall they in any manner discriminate against or intimidate

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any employees hired for the performance of the work on account of race, creed or color. House Bill 87, Section 3, E-verify Form.

The bidder shall not assign, transfer, convey, sublet or otherwise dispose of the contract or any part thereof to anyone without the written consent of MGRL.

### **GENERAL CLAUSES**

#### **RESERVATIONS**

MGRL reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and also reserves the right to waive any informality in the proposals received.

Any bidder who has demonstrated poor performance during either a current or previous agreement with MGRL may be considered as an unqualified source and their proposal may be rejected. MGRL reserves the right to exercise this option as is deemed proper and/or necessary.

#### **PROPOSAL FORM**

Attached to these specifications is "Proposal Form-Signature Page" which must be completely filled out and signed by each bidder and included in their RFP submission.

All proposals must be sealed, marked, and delivered in accordance with the instructions in this RFP. Proposals will be opened and read by MGRL administrative staff, Head of Information Technology Services, and the Library Financial Manager within three weeks of receipt of bids. Recommendations will be made and the Library Director may award a contract or contracts as MGRL deems appropriate.

Proposals will be opened and read by MGRL administrative staff on **January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024**.

#### **EXEMPTION FROM GEORGIA SALES TAXES**

The Middle Georgia Regional Library is exempt from Georgia State Sales Tax. Net prices as shown in the proposal shall exclude said State tax amounts. Bidders shall inform all prospective subcontractors and suppliers from whom they expect to obtain services or supplies of the tax exempt status of the Middle Georgia Regional Library. Following a contract award, an exemption certificate will be furnished by the Middle Georgia Regional Library.

**FORM FOR PROPOSAL SUBMITTAL**

**STATEMENT OF VENDOR'S QUALIFICATION**

To accompany proposals submitted for Internet Access for the Middle Georgia Regional Library.

Name of Vendor's Firm: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Company Representative: \_\_\_\_\_

Business Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

When Organized? \_\_\_\_\_

Where Organized? \_\_\_\_\_

Partnership \_\_\_\_\_ Corporation \_\_\_\_\_

Vendor must provide a Service Provider Information Number assigned by the Schools and Libraries Division (SLD):

SPIN Number: \_\_\_\_\_

How many years have you been engaged in this business under the present firm name?

\_\_\_\_\_

Please attach to this statement at least five references, including: (name, address, title, phone number and brief description of work performed, including dates of work).

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

Firm Name: \_\_\_\_\_

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_



**PROPOSAL FORM - SIGNATURE PAGE**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

TO: Middle Georgia Regional Library

This proposal is submitted in accordance with your RFP inviting proposals to be received for the project identified as "Internet Access." Having carefully examined the RFP, all instructions, specifications, all addenda, and being familiar with the various conditions affecting the work, the undersigned, hereby agrees to furnish all material, perform all labor, and do all else necessary to complete the work in strict accordance with the specifications for price as contained herein.

In the event this proposal is accepted the undersigned is hereby bound to commence and complete all of the work included under this contract in such time and such manner as designated for the various items the bidder has contracted to supply or perform.

In submitting this proposal, it is understood that the unrestricted right is reserved by the Middle Georgia Regional Library in making the award to reject any and all proposals or parts thereof, or to waive any informalities or technicalities in said proposals.

The undersigned hereby certifies that this proposal is genuine and made in the interest or in behalf of any person, firm or corporation not herein named; that the undersigned has not directly or indirectly induced or solicited any bidder to refrain from submitting proposals, and that the undersigned has not, in any manner, sought by collusion to secure for himself an advantage over any other bidder.

**TOTAL AMOUNT PROPOSAL OPTION:**

Evidence of a Performance Bond is required if your company is selected:

\_\_\_\_ I will provide a Performance Bond from

Bonding Company \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Agent \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Or I will provide an equal form of surety, which is acceptable to MGRL.

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Bidder **MUST** provide Federal EIN: \_\_\_\_\_

And E-rate SPIN: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Print Name)

**Proposal must be signed for Consideration:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)