



Ohio Revised Code

Section 153.54 Bid guaranty to be filed with bid.

Effective: September 30, 2025

Legislation: House Bill 96

(A) Except with respect to a contract described in section 9.334 or 153.693 of the Revised Code, each person bidding for a contract with the state or any political subdivision, district, institution, or other agency thereof, excluding therefrom the department of transportation, for any public improvement shall file with the bid, a bid guaranty in the form of any of the following:

(1) A bond in accordance with division (B) of this section for the full amount of the bid;

(2) A certified check, cashier's check, or letter of credit pursuant to Chapter 1305. of the Revised Code, in accordance with division (C) of this section. Any such letter of credit is revocable only at the option of the beneficiary state, political subdivision, district, institution, or agency. The amount of the certified check, cashier's check, or letter of credit shall be equal to ten per cent of the bid;

(3) An electronic verification through an electronic verification and security system described in section 153.08 of the Revised Code, if the state or any political subdivision, district, institution, or other agency thereof accepts bids electronically pursuant to section 153.08 of the Revised Code.

(B) A bid guaranty filed pursuant to division (A)(1) of this section shall be conditioned to:

(1) Provide that, if the bid is accepted, the bidder, after the awarding or the recommendation for the award of the contract, whichever the contracting authority designates, will enter into a proper contract in accordance with the bid, plans, details, and specifications. If for any reason, other than as authorized by section 9.31 of the Revised Code or division (G) of this section, the bidder fails to enter into the contract, and the contracting authority awards the contract to the next lowest bidder, the bidder and the surety on the bidder's bond are liable to the state, political subdivision, district, institution, or agency for the difference between the bid and that of the next lowest bidder, or for a penal sum not to exceed ten per cent of the amount of the bond, whichever is less. If the state, political subdivision, district, institution, or agency does not award the contract to the next lowest bidder but resubmits the project for bidding, the bidder failing to enter into the contract and the



surety on the bidder's bond, except as provided in division (G) of this section, are liable to the state, political subdivision, district, institution, or agency for a penal sum not to exceed ten per cent of the amount of the bid or the costs in connection with the resubmission of printing new contract documents, required advertising, and printing and mailing notices to prospective bidders, whichever is less.

(2) Indemnify the state, political subdivision, district, institution, or agency against all damage suffered by failure to perform the contract according to its provisions and in accordance with the plans, details, and specifications therefor and to pay all lawful claims of subcontractors, material suppliers, and laborers for labor performed or material furnished in carrying forward, performing, or completing the contract; and agree and assent that this undertaking is for the benefit of any subcontractor, material supplier, or laborer having a just claim, as well as for the state, political subdivision, district, institution, or agency.

(C)(1) A bid guaranty filed pursuant to division (A)(2) of this section shall be conditioned to provide that if the bid is accepted, the bidder, after the awarding or the recommendation for the award of the contract, whichever the contracting authority designates, will enter into a proper contract in accordance with the bid, plans, details, specifications, and bills of material. If for any reason, other than as authorized by section 9.31 of the Revised Code or division (G) of this section, the bidder fails to enter into the contract, and the contracting authority awards the contract to the next lowest bidder, the bidder is liable to the state, political subdivision, district, institution, or agency for the difference between the bidder's bid and that of the next lowest bidder, or for a penal sum not to exceed ten per cent of the amount of the bid, whichever is less. If the state, political subdivision, district, institution, or agency does not award the contract to the next lowest bidder but resubmits the project for bidding, the bidder failing to enter into the contract, except as provided in division (G) of this section, is liable to the state, political subdivision, district, institution, or agency for a penal sum not to exceed ten per cent of the amount of the bid or the costs in connection with the resubmission, of printing new contract documents, required advertising, and printing and mailing notices to prospective bidders, whichever is less.

If the bidder enters into the contract, the bidder, at the time the contract is entered to, shall file a bond for the amount of the contract to indemnify the state, political subdivision, district, institution, or agency against all damage suffered by failure to perform the contract according to its provisions and



in accordance with the plans, details, and specifications and to pay all lawful claims of subcontractors, material suppliers, and laborers for labor performed or material furnished in carrying forward, performing, or completing the contract; and agree and assent that this undertaking is for the benefit of any subcontractor, material supplier, or laborer having a just claim, as well as for the state, political subdivision, district, institution, or agency.

(2) A construction manager who enters into a contract pursuant to sections 9.33 to 9.333 of the Revised Code, if required by the public authority at the time the construction manager enters into the contract, shall file a letter of credit pursuant to Chapter 1305. of the Revised Code, bond, certified check, or cashier's check, for the value of the construction management contract to indemnify the state, political subdivision, district, institution, or agency against all damage suffered by the construction manager's failure to perform the contract according to its provisions, and shall agree and assent that this undertaking is for the benefit of the state, political subdivision, district, institution, or agency. A letter of credit provided by the construction manager is revocable only at the option of the beneficiary state, political subdivision, district, institution, or agency.

(D) Where the state, political subdivision, district, institution, or agency accepts a bid but the bidder fails or refuses to enter into a proper contract in accordance with the bid, plans, details, and specifications within ten days after the awarding of the contract, the bidder and the surety on any bond, except as provided in division (G) of this section, are liable for the amount of the difference between the bidder's bid and that of the next lowest bidder, but not in excess of the liability specified in division (B)(1) or (C) of this section. Where the state, political subdivision, district, institution, or agency then awards the bid to such next lowest bidder and such next lowest bidder also fails or refuses to enter into a proper contract in accordance with the bid, plans, details, and specifications within ten days after the awarding of the contract, the liability of such next lowest bidder, except as provided in division (G) of this section, is the amount of the difference between the bids of such next lowest bidder and the third lowest bidder, but not in excess of the liability specified in division (B)(1) or (C) of this section. Liability on account of an award to any lowest bidder beyond the third lowest bidder shall be determined in like manner.

(E) Notwithstanding division (C) of this section, where the state, political subdivision, district, institution, or agency resubmits the project for bidding, each bidder whose bid was accepted but who failed or refused to enter into a proper contract, except as provided in division (G) of this section, is



liable for an equal share of a penal sum in connection with the resubmission, of printing new contract documents, required advertising, and printing and mailing notices to prospective bidders, but no bidder's liability shall exceed the amount of the bidder's bid guaranty.

(F) All bid guaranties filed pursuant to this section shall be payable to the state, political subdivision, district, institution, or agency, be for the benefit of the state, political subdivision, district, institution, or agency or any person having a right of action thereon, and be deposited with, and held by, the board, officer, or agent contracting on behalf of the state, political subdivision, district, institution, or agency. All bonds filed pursuant to this section shall be issued by a surety company authorized to do business in this state as surety approved by the board, officer, or agent awarding the contract on behalf of the state, political subdivision, district, institution, or agency.

(G) A bidder for a contract with the state or any political subdivision, district, institution, or other agency thereof, excluding therefrom the Ohio department of transportation, for a public improvement costing less than one-half million dollars may withdraw the bid from consideration if the bidder's bid for some other contract with the state or any political subdivision, district, institution, or other agency thereof, excluding therefrom the department of transportation, for the public improvement costing less than one-half million dollars has already been accepted, if the bidder certifies in good faith that the total amount of all the bidder's current contracts is less than one-half million dollars, and if the surety certifies in good faith that the bidder is unable to perform the subsequent contract because to do so would exceed the bidder's bonding capacity. If a bid is withdrawn under authority of this division, the contracting authority may award the contract to the next lowest bidder or reject all bids and resubmit the project for bidding, and neither the bidder nor the surety on the bidder's bond are liable for the difference between the bidder's bid and that of the next lowest bidder, for a penal sum, or for the costs of printing new contract documents, required advertising, and printing and mailing notices to prospective bidders.

(H) Bid guaranties filed pursuant to division (A) of this section shall be returned to all unsuccessful bidders immediately after the contract is executed. The bid guaranty filed pursuant to division (A)(2) of this section shall be returned to the successful bidder upon filing of the bond required in division (C) of this section.

(I) For the purposes of this section and sections 153.56, 153.57, and 153.571 of the Revised Code,



"public improvement," "subcontractor," "material supplier," "laborer," and "materials" have the same meanings as in section 1311.25 of the Revised Code.