



Louisiana Department of Health
Office of Public Health
STD/HIV/Hepatitis Program

Request for Information (RFI)

For

**STD/HIV/Hepatitis SURVEILLANCE, PREVENTION, AND
CARE PROGRAM SERVICES**

RFI # (3000017303)

RFI due date/time: Friday, July 23, 2021 11:59 PM (CT)

NOTE: This Request for Information (RFI) is solely for information and planning purposes and does not constitute a solicitation. This information will be reviewed and discussed by the state agency and may result in the advertisement of a formal and competitive Request for Proposal for any or all of the services included in the RFI.

Only information which is in the nature of legitimate trade secrets or non-published financial data may be deemed proprietary or confidential. Any material within a response to this RFI identified as such must be clearly marked and will be handled in accordance with the Louisiana Public Records Act R.S. 44:1-44 and applicable rules and regulations. Any response marked as confidential or proprietary in its entirety may be rejected without further consideration or recourse.

**Release Date:
Friday, June 11, 2021**

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1 GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1 Background

Mission

The mission of the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) is to protect and promote health and to ensure access to medical, preventive, and rehabilitative services for all citizens of the State of Louisiana. The Department of Health is dedicated to fulfilling its mission through direct provision of quality services, the development and stimulation of services to others, and the utilization of available resources in the most effective manner. The Office of the Secretary (OS) is responsible for establishing policy and administering operations, programs, and affairs for LDH.

LDH is comprised of the Medical Vendor Administration (Medicaid), the Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD), the Office of Behavioral Health (OBH), the Office of Aging and Adult Services (OAAS), and the Office of Public Health (OPH). Under the general supervision of the Secretary, these principal offices perform the primary functions and duties assigned to LDH.

LDH, in addition to encompassing the program offices, has an administrative office known as the Office of the Secretary (OS), a financial office known as the Office of Management and Finance (OMF), and various bureaus and boards. The Office of the Secretary is responsible for establishing policy and administering operations, programs, and affairs.

Vision/ Goal

In order to fulfill its mission, LDH intends to provide quality services, protect and promote health, develop and stimulate services by others and utilize available resources in the most effective manner.

Statement of Need

The STD/HIV/Hepatitis Program, located within the Office of Public Health (OPH), is responsible for coordinating the state's response to the STD, HIV, and Hepatitis epidemics. The program conducts activities to: 1) assure medical and social services are available to persons living with HIV and Hepatitis C, 2) provide clinical services and treatment to persons infected with syphilis, chlamydia and/or gonorrhea, 3) prevent new cases of STD, viral hepatitis, and HIV infection, and 4) collect data and compile, analyze and distribute information about the progression of the STD, HIV and Hepatitis epidemics in the State.

LDH is seeking a private sector company interested in contracting with LDH to provide qualified staff such as epidemiologists, data managers, program coordinators, disease intervention specialists, HIV/STD/Hepatitis counselors, benefits specialists, peer navigators, capacity building specialists/trainers, information systems developers, business accountants, and clerical/administrative staff who will provide necessary services to support the STD/HIV/Hepatitis Program and services.

1.2 Purpose of RFI

This RFI is issued for the purpose of gathering information and cost information from qualified companies, individuals, etc. who show a demonstrated capacity to provide the following activities related to the prevention of STD, HIV and Hepatitis infections, the provision of medical and social services, as well as clinical services and treatment for persons affected by STDs, HIV and/or Hepatitis, and for monitoring those epidemics over time.

This document describes the basic components of required service staffing and requests information regarding a provider's interest, experience, and ability to meet the expectations of LDH. The RFI will be used to identify one or more providers to conduct management, coordination, technical assistance and training, and data management and analysis activities that support the STD/HIV/Hepatitis Program.

LDH anticipates issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) at a later date, which would include more specific expectations and requirements. The contract awarded as a result of an RFP, if issued, would have a term of three years with the possibility of extending for two an additional two (2) 12-month periods.

1.3 Project Overview

Scope

The scope of work indicated by this Request for Information is to determine interested and qualified vendors for providing the following support to the Louisiana OPH STD/HIV/Hepatitis Program:

- Management
- Operational
- Database Support
- Surveillance
- Fiscal
- Program Evaluation
- Care and Treatment

Currently, the majority of staff supported by this contract will report to the OPH SHHP central office in New Orleans and as such the majority of staff should be domiciled in the New Orleans area. Below are the program components that will be supported by the services provided by the contractor.

- **Requirements:**
 1. Community-Based Organization Management, Technical Assistance, Data Management and Evaluation of Implemented Prevention Interventions and Services.
This component provides monitoring, coordination, technical assistance and data management for activities of approximately 25 community-based organizations

(CBOs) conducting publicly-funded prevention of infectious diseases programs and approximately 15 organizations providing Ryan White Part B and Housing Opportunities for People With AIDS (HOPWA) services.

2. The Training and Communications Support component is responsible for conducting training and capacity building to assist community-based organizations, health units, and medical providers to conduct prevention interventions, including HIV testing. In addition, it maintains the statewide STD/HIV/Hepatitis Resource Library, produces program newsletters, and distributes educational materials and supplies to clinics, community-based organizations and other appropriate service providers for the STD/HIV/Hepatitis Program.

3. HIV/Syphilis Partner Services (HSPS) and Internet Partner Services (IPS), known collectively as Partner Services.

The contractor shall be responsible for managing the LDH Office of Public Health's STD/HIV/Hepatitis Program's Partner Services database, coordinating follow-up on identified partners of confirmed cases of infectious diseases (e.g., HIV, syphilis, TB), and providing technical assistance and training to Disease Intervention Specialists (DIS) who conduct partner services and coordinate follow-up on identified partners of confirmed HIV, syphilis, and TB cases.

4. Core Disease Surveillance (Case Ascertainment, Laboratory Surveillance, Matching with Other Data Sources).

This component represents an active statewide system for reporting individual cases of infectious diseases, including syphilis, gonorrhea, chlamydia, HIV, AIDS, and Viral Hepatitis, as required by Louisiana state law. In this system, contracted Surveillance staff solicits reports from medical providers and other mandated reporters for persons with syphilis, gonorrhea, chlamydia, viral hepatitis, or HIV/AIDS, and contacts providers whenever necessary to gather data as required by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) protocols for STD, viral hepatitis, and HIV/AIDS surveillance activities. The primary activities of this component include:

- Active solicitation and investigation of all potential cases of HIV/AIDS by field epidemiologists, covering all public health regions, including ascertainment of risk and assessment of progression to AIDS and death for confirmed cases;
- Collection of all potential cases of syphilis, chlamydia and gonorrhea, covering all public health regions;
- Case management services for women diagnosed with syphilis during pregnancy;
- Interview and chart abstraction of all persons diagnosed with acute hepatitis B and acute hepatitis C in the state;
- Laboratory surveillance, including the maintenance of electronic reporting to facilitate active reporting from public, private, and national laboratories;
- Health information exchange, including the Louisiana Public Health Information Exchange (LaPHIE), electronic health records and STARLIMS; meaningful use; collaboration/matching to other public health data sources (e.g., Medicaid);
- Data verification with other public health and provider databases to maximize complete reporting and ascertain rates of co-infections;

- Program evaluation activities to ensure compliance with CDC's required standards for the timeliness, accuracy, and completeness of STD, Hepatitis and HIV/AIDS reporting systems;
- Dissemination of reports and provision of epidemiologic technical assistance to facilitate appropriate use of surveillance data in program planning and evaluation activities;
- Perinatal HIV Surveillance, an ongoing project that encompasses CDC protocols and local initiatives to monitor the epidemic among HIV-infected pregnant women and their infants;
- Congenital Syphilis surveillance, an ongoing effort that uses CDC protocols and local initiatives to monitor the epidemic among women with syphilis diagnoses and their infants; and
- The Molecular HIV Surveillance project which includes protocols to collect genotype laboratory results to assess the extent of viral resistance in persons with HIV infection.

5. Supplemental Surveillance and Emerging Protocols.

The CDC frequently releases announcements for jurisdictions to apply for funds to support supplemental surveillance activities or studies. These awards may be short-term or ongoing. Emerging protocols include activities which are likely to involve, or become a part of, core surveillance activities. Current activities include:

- National HIV Behavioral Surveillance Project, an ongoing effort to recruit and interview persons in targeted high-risk populations.

6. STD/HIV Care and Treatment Support and Prevention with Positives.

The STD/HIV Hepatitis Program, with funds received from HRSA, is responsible for supporting and enhancing mechanisms that increase access to medical care for persons living with HIV (PLWH) in Louisiana. Programmatic and administrative support is necessary to ensure that medical and social service systems are efficiently and effectively operating to improve linkage to needed care and treatment, and support positive health outcomes. Likewise, provision of services to assess eligibility for and enrollment into programs supporting medication and health care access, such as those under the Louisiana Health Access Program (LA HAP), is essential. The coordination of needs assessments and community planning activities, as well as collaboration with other service providers are crucial in the overall development, implementation, and improvement of these systems to assure that the service needs of low income persons living with HIV infection are addressed in a high quality, cost efficient and comprehensive manner.

- The STD/HIV/Hepatitis Program supports STD/HIV Case Management services for women of childbearing age who are diagnosed with syphilis and HIV, with priority given to pregnant women. Case management services include support accessing transportation services, housing assistance and engagement in prenatal care, WIC, and other supportive programs. These case managers also assist with outreach efforts for PrEP and HIV prevention.

7. The Program Operations Technical Assistance component provides financial, administrative, and operational support to all STD/HIV/Hepatitis Program components to meet the program goals and the requirements of federal and state funding agencies.

The contractor must conduct all program components that are described above. In addition, all activities of the contractor must be planned and conducted in close collaboration and coordination with the STD/HIV/Hepatitis Program.

Security of HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis and STD related data is imperative to the success of the program. The contractor must have a written confidentiality and data security policy that adheres to CDC and State requirements. These policies must be approved by the Director of the STD/HIV/Hepatitis Program and be consistent with LDH and CDC requirements for security and confidentiality of data. All contracted personnel must comply with these policies.

Required Staffing Based on Current Staffing Resources

Program	Personnel	FTE	Qualifications*
CBO Management, Technical Assistance, Data Mgmt, and Evaluation of Implemented Prevention Interventions	Regional Prevention Coordinator (move to LSU)	1.0	3
	Adolescent Health Coordinator	1.0	2
	Tele-PrEP Coordinator	1.0	3
	TelePrEP Navigator	2.0	3
	HIV Testing Counselors	3.0	3
	EIC RN EKL	1.0	2
	HCV Program Monitor	1.0	3
	Community Mobilization Supv	1.0	2
	TB Program Monitor/Case Manager	1.0	2
	Community Health & Outreach Supervisor	1.0	2
	Rapid Test Navigator	1.0	2
	Lead Community Health Worker	1.0	3
	Community Health Workers	4.0	5
	Data Mgmt – Data Analyst Supervisor	1.0	1
	Data Mgmt – Data Analyst	1.0	2
	Data Mgmt – Data Manager	3.0	3
	Data Mgmt – Lead Data Entry Specialist	1.0	4
Data Mgmt – Data Entry Specialist	4.0	5	
Training and Communications Support	Health Equity Specialist	1.0	3
	Health Promotions Coord	1.0	2
	Capacity Building Specialist	2.0	2
	Website Content and Social Marketing Coordinator	1.0	2
	Community Engagement Specialist	1.0	3
	Marketing Supervisor	1.0	2
	Community Mobilization Supervisor	1.0	2
Partner Services	Lead Field Operations Specialist	1.0	2

	Field Operations Specialist	1.0	3
	Disease Intervention Specialists	1.0	3
Core STD/HIV Surveillance/Information Exchange	Field Epidemiologists	5.0	2
	Surveillance – Data Managers	4.0	2
	Surveillance – Data Analyst Supervisors	4.0	1
	Surveillance - Data Entry Specialists	3.0	5
	Surveillance – Hepatitis Field Investigator	1.0	3
	Health System Manager	1.0	1
	Information Systems Developer	5.0	3
	Interoperability Supervisor	1.0	2
	Systems Analyst	1.0	3
	Technical Support	3.0	3
	ELR Coordinator	1.0	3
	ICCR Coordinator	1.0	3
	TB Epidemiologist	1.0	2
Care and Treatment Support and Linkages	Special Projects Supervisors	2.0	1
	Health Models/ Program Monitor	1.0	2
	Linkage To Care Coordinators	10.0	2
	Perinatal Case Manager	5.0	2
	ADAP Client Services Specialist Supervisor	1.0	2
	ADAP Client Services Specialists	5.0	3
	Corrections Specialist	2.0	3
	Corrections Coordinator	1.0	4
Mobile Phlebotomist	4.0	5	
Program Operations Technical Assistance	Contract/Invoicing Specialist	1.0	3
	Operations Supply Coordinator	1.0	3
	Office Manager	1.0	3
	Clerical Support/Receptionist (SHHP Central Office)	3.0	4
	Clerical Support/Admin Coord) (STD Clinics)	3.0	4
	Human Resources Specialist	0.67	4

***Qualifications:**

- 1 = Master’s degree required, minimum of 3 years’ experience in public health setting
- 2 = Bachelor’s degree required, Master’s degree preferred, minimum of 3 years’ experience in public health setting
- 3 = Bachelor’s degree required, minimum of 3 years’ related experience
- 4 = High school or equivalent required, Bachelor’s degree preferred, minimum of 3 years related experience
- 5 = High school or equivalent required, minimum of 3 years’ related experience

2. ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

2.1 RFI Coordinator

Requests for copies of the RFI must be directed to the RFI Coordinator listed below:

Capucinca Harris-Roberts, RFP Coordinator
Louisiana Department of Health, Office of Public Health
STD/HIV/Hepatitis Program
1450 Poydras Street, Suite 2136
New Orleans, LA 70112
Email Address: Capucinca.Harris-Roberts@la.gov

Companies interested in providing information on their ability to perform the requested services for LDH, please submit an electronic Microsoft Word copy of your response to the contact listed above. All organizations who have the interest and capacity to fulfill the activities specified in this RFI should respond **no later than 11:59 P.M. (Central Time) on July 30, 2021.**

2.2 Schedule of Events

In response to this Request for Information, please send a Microsoft Word-formatted response via email to the RFI Coordinator, Capucinca Harris-Roberts, Program Monitor, at Capucinca.harris-roberts@la.gov. Please direct questions regarding this Request for Information via email to Capucinca Harris-Roberts, Program Monitor, at Capucinca.harris-roberts@la.gov. Any and all questions directed to the RFP Coordinator will be deemed to require an official response and a copy of all questions and answers will be posted by the date specified in the Schedule of Events to the following web link:

<http://wwwcfprd.doa.louisiana.gov/OSP/LaPAC/pubMain.cfm>

May also be posted at:

<http://new.ldh.louisiana.gov/index.cfm/newsroom/category/47>

The following table designates the target dates for the request for Information (RFI) process. Please note that this RFI does not constitute a solicitation of offers from private providers or other entities. The dates listed below are target dates and subject to change without notification.

Schedule of Events	
Friday, June 11, 2021	RFI distributed to potentially interested parties http://www.ldh.la.gov/index.cfm/newsroom/category/46 https://wwwcfprd.doa.louisiana.gov/osp/lapac/pubMain.cfm
Friday, June 18, 2021	Deadline for Receipt of RFI Questions
Friday, July 2, 2021	Responses to questions posted by LDH http://www.ldh.la.gov/index.cfm/newsroom/category/46 https://wwwcfprd.doa.louisiana.gov/osp/lapac/pubMain.cfm
Friday, July 23, 2021	Last day for submission of responses to RFI

LDH reserves the right to deviate from this Schedule of Events.

2.3 Response Content

2.3.1 Executive Summary

This section should serve to introduce the scope of the response. It should include administrative information including, at a minimum, responder's contact name and phone number, email address and any other pertinent contact information. This section should also include a summary of the responder's qualifications and ability and willingness to comply with the State's requirements.

2.3.2 Corporate Background and Experience

The responder should give a brief description of the company including a brief history, corporate structure and organization and number of years in business. Responders should also describe their experience with projects of this type with other states or corporate/governmental entities of comparable size and diversity.

2.3.3 Approach and Methodology

The responder should provide approach and methodology recommended to accomplish the scope of services described. Best practices garnered from previous experience with this scope of services should be described. Provide a list of issues/concerns that were not taken into consideration in the Scope of Services described herein that you think is important for the agency to consider. Provide alternative solutions for accomplishing the project objectives, if applicable, and any other additional pertinent information.

2.3.4 Cost Estimate

Although not required, vendors may submit general pricing structures as described below. This Request for Information (RFI) is for planning purposes only, and should not be construed as a Request for Proposals (RFP). This is not a solicitation for offers.

Provide an estimate of total cost (inclusive of travel and all project expenses). For information purposes, provide the total estimated number of hours, by classification, for project staff, the billing rate by classification, and an estimated percentage of the effort that will be completed by a subcontractor (if applicable).

Companies interested in responding to this RFI must submit a capability statement that details the ability to meet the statement of need. The following information is required in the response:

- Date of Submission
- Name of Organization
- Mailing Address
- Contact Information
- Qualifications and Availability of Personnel

- Understanding of the Project Scope/Work Plan
- Respondents should provide references who can attest to the proposer’s professional qualifications, as well as the quality of programming the proposer has provided
- Signature of Authorized Representative
- Additional materials may be included as attachments and must be clearly labeled as such

Abbreviations and Terminology

AIDS	<i>Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome</i>
CBO	<i>Community Based Organization</i>
CDC	<i>Centers for Disease Control and Prevention</i>
HIV	<i>Human Immunodeficiency Virus</i>
HOPWA	<i>Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS</i>
HRSA	<i>Health Resources and Services Administration</i>
LDH	<i>Louisiana Department of Health</i>
OPH	<i>Office of Public Health</i>
PLWH	<i>Person(s) Living with HIV/AIDS</i>
RFI	<i>Request for Information</i>
RFP	<i>Request for Proposals</i>
SHHP	<i>STD/HIV/Hepatitis Program</i>
STD	<i>Sexually Transmitted Disease</i>

2.4 Response Instructions

2.4.1. Response Submittal

Responders interested in providing information requested by this RFI must submit responses containing the information specified no later than the deadline for response to RFI as stated in the Schedule of Events.

The State requests that you submit one full Microsoft Word-formatted version to the RFI Coordinator by the means and at the email address specified.

2.5 Additional Instructions and Notifications to Responders

2.5.1 RFI Addenda/Cancellation

The State reserves the right to revise any part of the RFI by issuing an addendum to the RFI at any time. Issuance of this RFI, or subsequent addendum, (if any) does not constitute a commitment by the State to issue an RFP or any other process resulting in award of a

contract of any type or form. In addition, the State may cancel this informal process at any time, without penalty.

2.5.2 Ownership of Response

The materials submitted in response to this request shall become the property of the State.

2.5.3 Cost of Preparation

The State shall not be liable for any costs incurred by responders associated with developing the response, preparing for discussions (if any) or any other costs, incurred by the responder associated with this RFI.