

**State of Louisiana
Department of Health & Hospitals
Office of Public Health**

**Request For Information (RFI)
For
STD/HIV SURVEILLANCE, PREVENTION,
AND CARE PROGRAMS**

May 2015

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Confidentiality

The designation of certain information as trade secrets and/or privileged, confidential, or proprietary information shall only apply to the technical portions of your response to this Request for Information. *Any response to this request marked as copyrighted or marked as privileged, confidential, or proprietary in its entirety is subject to rejection without further consideration or recourse based on the professional opinions of Department of Health & Hospitals (DHH) legal staff.*

Respondents should bear in mind that while trade secrets and other proprietary information submitted in conjunction with this RFI may not be subject to public disclosure, ***the submitting party must claim protections at the time of submission.*** The following guidelines provide accurate instructions to mark adequately certain information as privileged, confidential, or proprietary.

- The respondent must clearly designate the part of the response that contains a trade secret and/or privileged or confidential proprietary information as “confidential” in order to claim protection, if any, from disclosure. The respondent shall mark the cover sheet of the response with the following legend, specifying the section(s) of the response sought to be restricted in accordance with the conditions of the legend:

“The data contained in pages_____of this response have been submitted in confidence and contain trade secrets and/or privileged or confidential information, and such data shall only be disclosed for evaluation purposes. This restriction does not limit the State of Louisiana’s right to use or disclose data obtained from any source, including the proposer, without restrictions.”

- Further, to protect such data, respondents should identify and mark each page containing such data as “CONFIDENTIAL.” A watermark or footnote delineating each page containing such data as “confidential” will satisfy this requirement.

Respondents must be prepared to defend the reasons why material should be held as confidential. If another respondent or entity seeks to review copies of a respondent’s confidential data, DHH will notify the owner of the asserted data of the request. If the owner of the asserted data does not want the information disclosed, it must take legal action as necessary to restrain DHH from releasing information DHH believes to be public record.

If the response contains confidential information, the respondent should submit a redacted copy of the response. Without the submission of a redacted copy, DHH may consider the entire response to be public record. When submitting the redacted copy, it should be clearly marked on the cover as a “REDACTED COPY.” The redacted copy should also state which sections or information have been removed.”

Introduction

About the Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH)

Mission

The mission of the Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH) 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 and Hospitals is dedicated to fulfilling its mission through direct provision of quality services, the development and stimulation of services of others, and the utilization of available resources in the most effective manner. The Office of the Secretary is responsible for establishing policy and administering operations, programs, and affairs.

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

DHH, in addition to encompassing the program offices, has an administrative office known as the Office of the Secretary, a financial office known as the Office of Management and Finance, 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, the Department of Health and Hospitals 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 Program, located within the Office of Public Health (OPH), is responsible for coordinating the state's response to the STD and HIV epidemics. The program conducts activities to: 1) provide medical and social services to persons living with HIV infection and AIDS, 2) provide clinical services and treatment to persons infected with syphilis, chlamydia and/or gonorrhea, 3) prevent new cases of STD and HIV infection, and 4) collect data and compile, analyze and distribute information about the progression of the HIV epidemic in the state.

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

Purpose of the RFI

The Louisiana Department of Health & Hospitals, Office of Public Health issues this Request for Information (RFI) with the intent to determine interested and qualified vendors for providing the following activities related to the prevention of STD and HIV infections, the provision of services for HIV-infected persons, as well as clinical services and treatment for persons infected with syphilis, chlamydia and/or gonorrhea, and to monitor the STD and HIV epidemics over time.

This document describes the basic components of the required staffing and requests information regarding a provider's thoughts, interest and ability to meet the expectations of DHH. 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 Program.

Specific expectations and requirements will be outlined in a request for proposal (RFP). The contract awarded as a result of an RFP, if issued, will be in effect for three years.

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 Program:

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

Currently, the majority of the STD/HIV Program staff is domiciled in New Orleans. Below are the program components that will be supported by the services provided by the contractor.

Requirements:

1. Community-Based Organization Monitoring, 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 15 community-based organizations (CBOs) conducting publicly funded STD/HIV prevention 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 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 Program.

3. STD/HIV Partner Services. The contractor shall be responsible for managing the DHH Office of Public Health's STD/HIV Program's Partner Services database, conducting partner services of confirmed HIV and primary and secondary syphilis cases, and providing technical assistance and training to Disease Intervention Specialists who conduct partner services.
4. Core Surveillance (Case Ascertainment). This component of the program represents the active statewide system for reporting individual cases of syphilis, gonorrhea, Chlamydia, HIV, and AIDS, 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, 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 and HIV/AIDS surveillance activities. The primary activities of this component include:
 - Active solicitation and investigation of all potential cases of STDs and 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
 - Laboratory surveillance, including the maintenance of electronic reporting to facilitate active reporting from public, private, and national laboratories
 - 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 and HIV/AIDS reporting systems
 - Development and dissemination of reports and provision of epidemiologic technical assistance to facilitate appropriate use of surveillance data in program planning and evaluation activities
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:
 - Perinatal Surveillance, an ongoing project that encompasses CDC protocols and local initiatives to monitor the epidemic among HIV-infected pregnant women and their infants
 - The National HIV Behavioral Surveillance project which examines behaviors that place people at risk for HIV

- HIV Incidence projects which include ongoing and developing protocols to assess rates of new infections
 - The Viral Resistance Surveillance project which includes protocols to assess the extent of viral resistance in persons with HIV infection
6. HIV Care and Treatment Support: Through funding received from HRSA, the STD/HIV Program 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. 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.
7. The Program Operations Technical Assistance component provides financial, administrative, and operational support to all STD/HIV 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 Program.

Security of HIV/AIDS 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 STD/HIV Program Administrative Director and be consistent with the CDC requirements for security and confidentiality of data. All contracted personnel must adhere to 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	Special Projects Supervisor	1.0	1
	Wellness Center Coordinator	1.0	3
	Regional Prev. Coordinator	1.0	3
	Adolescent Health Coordinator	1.0	2
	HIV Testing Counselor	3.0	3
	HIV Testing Lab Tech	3.0	3
Training and Communications Support	Quality Assurance Specialist	1.0	2
	STD/HIV Training Specialist	2.0	2
Partner Services	Field Operations Manager	1.0	2
	Program Monitor	1.0	3
	Internet Partner Svcs Coord	.50	3
	Disease Intervention Specialist	3.0	3
Core STD/HIV Surveillance/Information Exchange	Field Epid. Supervisor	1.0	2
	Field Epidemiologist	5.0	4
	Laboratory Surveillance	1.0	3
	Information Sys. Developer	3.0	3
	Electronic Data Manager	5.0	3
	Network Support	2.0	3
Supplemental Surveillance and Emerging Protocols	Perinatal Surv Supervisor	1.0	2
	Surveillance Data Manager	1.0	2
	Data Assistant/Interviewer	1.0	3
	Interviewers	4.0	3
	Lead Data Entry	3.0	4
	Data Entry Staff	5.0	5
Care and Treatment Support and Linkages	Special Projects Coordinator	2.0	3
	Corrections Specialist	2.0	3
	Linkage to Care Coordinators	5.0	4
	Treatment Benefits Supervisor	1.0	3
	Treatment Benefits Specialist	6.0	4
Program Operations Technical Assistance	Business Operations Coord	1.0	3
	Operations Supply Coord	1.0	3
	Office Manager	1.0	3
	Clerical Support/Receptionist	4.0	2

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

RFI Response

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

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

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>
DHH	<i>Department of Health and Hospitals</i>
HIV	<i>Human Immunodeficiency Virus</i>
HOPWA	<i>Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS</i>
HRSA	<i>Health Resources and Services Administration</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 Proposal</i>
SHP	<i>STD/HIV Program</i>
STD	<i>Sexually Transmitted Disease</i>

Proposer Inquiries

The Department will consider written inquiries regarding the RFI before the date specified in the Schedule of Events. To be considered, inquiries and requests for clarification of the content of this RFI must be received via email by the date specified

in the Schedule of Events. Any and all questions directed to the RFI coordinator will be deemed to require an official response by the date specified in the Schedule of Events.

Action taken as a result of verbal discussion shall not be binding on the Department. Only written communication and clarification from the RFI Coordinator shall be considered binding.

RFI Procedure

Companies interested in providing information on their ability to perform the requested services for DHH, please submit an electronic Microsoft Word copy of your response to the contact listed below. All organizations who have the interest and capacity to fulfill the activities specified in this RFI should respond **no later than 4:00 P.M. (Central Time) on May 26, 2015.**

How to Deliver the Response:

In response to this Request For Information, please send a Microsoft Word-formatted response via email to the RFI Coordinator, Tsegaye Assefa, tsegaye.assefa@la.gov. Please direct questions regarding this Request for Information via email to Tsegaye Assefa, Business Manager, tsegaye.assefa@la.gov

Timeframe:

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.

May 12, 2015	RFI distributed to potentially interested parties: http://new.dhh.louisiana.gov/index.cfm/newsroom/category/47 http://wwwprd1.doa.louisiana.gov/OSP/LaPAC/pubMain.cfm
May 15, 2015	Deadline for RFI questions
May 19, 2015	Responses to questions posted by DHH/OBH http://new.dhh.louisiana.gov/index.cfm/newsroom/category/47 http://wwwprd1.doa.louisiana.gov/OSP/LaPAC/pubMain.cfm
May 26, 2015	Last day for submission of responses to RFI