

Contact Tracing Communications and Marketing Campaign RFP
Prospective Respondent Questions

BEP Related Questions

1. Question - My company is certified in the BEP and we produce video and still photography for many Illinois State agencies. I was wondering if there might be any plans to create a potential BEP supplier list where we could register our interest in organizations who might be responding to this RFP and who may be looking for BEP suppliers? I believe I have seen the State do this before, so I just wanted to see if there was one this time.

Answer - It is the discretion of the vendor awarded the contract as to who it hires as subcontractors.

2. Question - We're a CMS certified BEP vendor and have been approached by a couple of potential partners about being a subcontractor. Can we be submitted on more than one response?

Answer - Yes

3. Question - The scope of this project is much larger than our staff capacity right now but are wondering if you are collecting a list of BEP vendors who could subcontract under a prime vendor.

Answer - It is the discretion of the vendor awarded the contract as to who it hires as subcontractors.

4. Question - Would a certified woman-owned business partner in Ohio count towards the BEP goals of the program?

Answer - If the business is an Illinois certified BEP vendor.

5. Question - Are any of the firms listed on the BEP vendor list planning to submit an RFP response for the full project themselves?

Answer - At this time, IDPH does not know what vendors are planning to submit an RFP, as the close date is July 3, 2020, at 5:00 pm.

6. Question - Must the Prime Contractor be BEP certified?

Answer - The Prime contractor may be BEP certified. The BEP goal of this contract is either 4% of the total anticipated award amount or 15% of the proposed labor costs, whichever one is greater.

7. Question - What do the attachments mean? Are we obligated to use the folks listed for services? I do not understand.

Answer - The Attachment A is a Budget Template to help vendors set a budget. The requirements of the RFP need to be met; this Attachment A is a tool to help in preparing a proposal. Attachment B is a listing of Illinois BEP certified vendors in the NGIP codes that are applicable to this RFP.

8. Question - Is there a Utilization Form?

Answer - The BEP Utilization Plan Form can be found on the following website link:

<https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/cpo-he/Documents/Utilization%20Plan%20Version%2020.0%20Final%201.10.2020-1.pdf>

9. Question - Based on the scope of service there is no minority owned firm that has the in-house capabilities to address all of the components of the project. With that being said, this project is designed to exclude minorities from participating as a prime, which I resent. Especially, being that this is a campaign to address Covid-19, which has hit Black and Latino communities hardest, specifically in Illinois. I'm sure some majority firm will get the contract, hire minority subcontractors and profit greatly but this is also a proven recipe for failure when looking to reach the Black and Latino communities.

Answer - The RFP was not written to exclude any business, especially minority-, woman-, veteran- or person with a disability-owned businesses. The RFP does not require the prime vendor be capable of fulfilling all of its components without sub-contracting. As the RFP states, sub-contracting is allowed. As such, a minority-owned firm need not have in-house capabilities to address all of the project's requirements.

Budget and Payment Questions

1. Question - What is the expected budget allocation for media buy?

Answer - Per Page 2 of the RFP, vendors should assume a total project budget of \$1.8 million and present their proposed allocation on the budget template.

2. Question - What is some idea of your budget for the work to be done? As I am sure you can appreciate, responding without some idea of the budgeted amount is not ideal.

Answer - Per Page 2 of the RFP, vendors should assume a total project budget of \$1.8 million and present their proposed allocation on the budget template.

3. Question - "This is solely for comparison purposes and not a guarantee of the contract budget" When does the IDPH expect to have a budget allocated for this project?

Answer - This refers to the final budget allocation for the contract, which will be negotiated with the selected vendor.

4. Question - Do you anticipate that \$1,000,000 of the \$1,800,000 budget would go toward the media buy?

Answer - Per Page 2 of the RFP, vendors should assume a total project budget of \$1.8 million and present their proposed allocation on the budget template.

5. Question - Is the budget of \$1.8 for the first 6 month contract only? Will there be an opportunity to increase the budget as needed for subsequent 6 month renewals up to the maximum of 18 months?

Answer - The \$1.8 million budget should be assumed to be for the initial six-month term.

6. Question - Is there a mandated spend amount to be allocated for paid media buys against the planned \$1.8MM total budget?

Answer - No, there is no mandated amount.

7. Question - Paid Media Coverage: Should we have paid media coverage in 100% of the state's counties or skew the buy delivery to the highest SVI counties, if we can't do both with available paid media budget?

Answer - Per Page 1 of the RFP: "The State expects that the selected vendor will prioritize marketing to minority communities within counties with high SVI scores on the minority index [>0.90] in its proposal..."

8. Question - Is there other federal funding set aside for the Contact Tracing Communications and Marketing initiative?

Answer - \$1.8 million is currently the only available funding.

9. Question - Will IDPH pay invoices for out-of-pocket charges directly (e.g., media buys, printing, production, etc.) or through the selected vendor?

Answer - All expenses related to fulfillment of this contract should be billed to IDPH by the vendor.

10. Question - Is there an expected percentage breakdown of out-of-pocket expenses (media buys, printing, production, etc.) compared to professional service fees for the selected vendor?

Answer - No, please present your proposed costs on the budget template.

11. Question - Can major expenses, such as advertising buys, be direct billed to IDPH for payment? If not, and the vendor is expected to front the cost to purchase ads, how quickly will the vendor be reimbursed?

Answer - All expenses related to this contract should be billed to IDPH by the vendor. This may be negotiated in the contract. While COVID-19 payments are prioritized, we cannot guarantee payment dates.

12. Question - Assuming monthly invoices, what is the State's terms of payment of vendor invoices for fees and expenses from date of receipt of invoice by State, e.g. 30 days from date of receipt?

Answer - This may be negotiated in the contract. While COVID-19 payments are prioritized, we cannot guarantee payment dates.

13. Question - Budget: Please clarify what "weighted cost" means on the budget template (Exhibit A).

Answer - The weighted cost will be used for proposal comparison purposes only.

Submission Questions

1. Question - When is the proposal due? The email cover note states July 2, but the RFP document states July 3.

Answer - The proposal close date is July 3, 2020, at 5:00 pm.

2. Question - Please confirm that the final acceptable deliverable would be the attached media placement as well as a proposal in Powerpoint form. Typically, do you have a preference with receiving proposals presented as a word/pdf written document vs Powerpoint presentation?

Answer - The RFP does not stipulate how the vendor is to submit its proposal.

3. Question - Are there any specifications for proposal format and content?

- What is the preferred file type?
- Is there a minimum length?
- Is there a desired font/font size?
- Can we submit creative examples or other assets as attachments or should they be embedded in the proposal itself?

- Can we provide links to online content?
- Can we utilize a third-party content hosting site (like Dropbox) to provide creative examples?

Answer - The RFP does not stipulate how the vendor is to submit its proposal.

4. Question - Are there any specifications for proposal format and content?

Answer - The RFP states what each proposal should include.

5. Question - Should we format our RFP response using the charts on pp. 14-16 as a guide?

Answer - The charts on page 14-16 states the elements of responsiveness that the State will evaluate.

6. Question - Do you require a specific staffing plan with resumes/related experience of vendor employees who will work on the campaign? If not, can we include one?

Answer - The RFP states that each proposal shall have a "detailed narrative that explains the vendor's policies and practices on diversity and inclusion, as well as policies and practices for employing staff and subcontractors from communities most impacted by COVID-19." Each vendor shall determine who that is responded to in its proposal.

Technology Service Questions

1. Question - On page 3 of the RFP, you reference one of the services to be provided by the vendor as "technology services." Can you please explain what you mean by this?

Answer - Technology services related to additional forms of advertising other than social media, television, and radio.

2. Question - Do any of the IDPH supported technology systems include cellular app based programs?

Answer - No.

3. Question - Is the vendor responsible for technological support — i.e., a contact tracing website, app, or other information hub?

Answer - The vendor will not be responsible for providing technologic support.

4. Question - What is the state defining as "technology services"?

Answer - Technology services related to additional forms of advertising other than social media, television, and radio.

5. Question - Can you please explain the role of technology and technology-based tools in the Illinois contact tracing program? We know there was talk of a mobile app offered to COVID-positive individuals. What all personal data be collected?

Answer - Case investigation, contact tracing, and contact follow-up and monitoring will need to be linked with timely testing, clinical services, and agile data management systems to facilitate real-time electronic transmission of laboratory and case data for public health action. This will be made more efficient by employing modern technology to decrease data upload and transmission and foster timely communication between Contact Tracers and cases/contacts. This will be a case management tool and NOT a proximity app with tracking capabilities.

Vendor Selection and Award Questions

1. Question - How many vendors will be awarded?

Answer - The proposal close date is July 3, 2020 at 5:00 pm. After all the proposals are received and evaluated the State will have an idea of how many contracts will be awarded.

2. Question - Will the award be based on the lowest cost bidder?

Answer - The contract will be awarded to the proposal that is the most advantageous to the State.

3. Question - Will preference be given to vendors based in Illinois?

Answer - The contract will be awarded to the proposal that is the most advantageous to the State. Preference is not given to Illinois based vendors.

4. Question - Is there a preference for in-state bidders?

Answer - The contract will be awarded to the proposal that is the most advantageous to the State. Preference is not given to Illinois based vendors.

5. Question - What is the start date and length of this campaign?

Answer - Per the RFP, proposals "should account for an initial contract term for six months, renewable thereafter for periods not to exceed six months, for a total possible duration of 18 months. Proposals shall account for an immediate commencement of the communications campaign upon contract execution."

6. Question - What will determine the decision around extending the program and additional 6-month period and how far in advance will that decision be made?

Answer - An extension will be determined by where the state is in the COVID-19 response and will be decided in month 5 of the 6 month contract.

Prime vs Subcontractor Questions

1. Question - It appears the RFP is looking for a "one-stop-shop" vendor to implement all of the components of this RFP. That said, our organization can easily assist in developing a branding and outreach marketing creative campaign comprised of radio, TV, and social media *creative*, as well as disseminate the messaging via our association's PEP (Public Education Partnership) program. Is there an opportunity to bid for certain components of the RFP or, as alluded to above, is the successful vendor one who can provide all components of the RFP?

Answer - The contract will be awarded to the vendor whose proposal meets the requirements of the RFP and is most advantageous to the State.

2. Question - My company does project management services and we could partner with the selected company to deliver a successful project. Please let me know if we can apply for the project management portion and please continue to keep us in mind and your mailing list.

Answer - Please continue to check IDPH's website for further IFBs or RFPs.

3. Question - My firm is not ideal for being the lead respondent, but we would be a very valuable subcontractor to enhance the services provided by another firm.

Answer - It is the discretion of the vendor awarded the contract as to who it hires as subcontractors.

4. Question - Would IDPH be open to a prime who has led a campaign with an operational budget near \$1,000,000 working with a subcontractor that has led campaigns exceeded \$1,000,000?

Answer - The RFP states that the vendor “must have experience and must provide evidence that it has led campaigns where the operational budget was or exceeded \$1,000,000.”

5. Question - The RFP mentioned that partial awards will not be considered, however, I wanted to see if there is a formal process in place for consideration by whatever company is selected for the bid? Or, is that entirely at the bid winners discretion?

Answer - It is the discretion of the vendor awarded the contract as to who it hires as subcontractors.

6. Question - Is it permissible for two companies to join forces to service this contract to meet the requirement of having serviced a \$1,000,000 client operational budget?

Answer - The RFP states that the vendor “must have experience and must provide evidence that it has led campaigns where the operational budget was or exceeded \$1,000,000.”

Miscellaneous Questions

1. Question - Who is the incumbent agency if there is one? If there is an agency who you have worked with previously, how satisfied were you with their results?

Answer - IDPH does not have an incumbent agency doing this work.

2. Question - Is there an incumbent firm that has been engaged in the All Illinois campaign and other COVID-19 communications campaign?

Answer - IDPH does not have an incumbent agency doing this work.

3. Question - Will there be background information or research insights provided by the IDPH regarding various communities, that can inform the development of responsive, engaging communication strategies? Am trying to get an idea of what will be provided and facilitated, or what might be need to be created and discovered, in terms of identifying a communities’ strengths, concerns, etc., and ultimately to have what is needed to inform all levels of implementation.

Answer - You will be given access to the Health Disparities Dashboard that shows a breakdown of communities.

4. Question - Will campaign creative be supplied, or must it be allocated in the budget?

Answer - It should be allocated in the budget.

5. Question - What’s the typical amount of time needed for creative and legal review?

Answer – Approximately 2 days.

6. Question - On page 8, you state that “Illinois Contact Tracing Collaborative branding should connect to IDPH’s and the State’s existing media campaign for COVID-19 response activities.”

Answer - Is there an existing brand guide for that campaign? Yes, The All In Illinois Campaign, will be shared with the selected vendor.

7. Question - "Drive Illinois-focused efforts that will complement, but not duplicate, the advertising and marketing campaigns led by other stakeholders" What other stakeholders will be advertising at this time?

Answer - Most likely Local Health Departments, the City of Chicago, other municipalities, potentially the CDC.

8. Question - Please clarify that trusted messengers are community influencers or hyper local advocates that we would train and mobilize to help spread the campaign message through the campaign to key HTR groups.

Answer - Local leaders of community or faith-based organizations.

9. Question - Are there any existing relationships with philanthropic entities in Illinois that are already vetted and approved as a possible partner in this space?

Answer - Yes, IDPH's Center for Minority Health Services will connect the selected vendor with current community partners and grantees.

10. Question - What would be the potential involvement or investment of time from the brand team as it relates to social community management and engagement? Are these aspects of the campaign covered by the social administrators within IDPH?

Answer - Vendor will handle 100% of the social community management and engagement.

11. Can you provide more specific details on exactly how a resident participates in contact tracing? How are they being reached today and what steps must they go through to be part of the system?

Answer - We have established an COVID-19 Interest Form on the IDPH website where residents interested in being contact tracers can respond to select demographic and experience questions with an attached CV. The LHDs are aware of this Interest Form and upon request, are sent the candidates entered from that county/region for review and consideration for interview and potential hiring. In addition, residents may contact their specific LHD HR and each may independently have their own hiring mechanisms for contact information.

12. Question - Is the vendor responsible for coordinating with other cities in Illinois and municipalities as part of the broader state-based campaign? Or do you anticipate these cities and municipalities will have their own approach to advertising?

Answer - If municipalities have advertising for contact tracing, it would be their own approach.

13. Question - Is the State of Illinois looking at best practices from other states or countries? If so, which ones?

Answer - We have engaged Partners in Health, a global nonprofit active in scaling up Massachusetts Contact Tracing program, to provide Illinois with Technical Assistance. In addition, we have participated in CDC coordinated Regional 5 conference calls on which we share experiences with neighboring Great Lake states.

14. Question - Is the vendor responsible for coordinating outreach through community organizations or does the State have other plans for that?

Answer - Each LHD will determine their plans for outreach and that may involve engagement with community organizations. In those cases, it will be important for standardized messaging and avoiding duplicity that the vendor at minimum, interphases with those additional partners.

15. Question - What will participants be required to do and what should they expect as part of their participation in contact tracing?

Answer - Contact Tracers: will be a mixed blend of staff including Community Health Workers (CHW), retired healthcare personnel, students, and other community members who will receive training on investigating COVID in Illinois' communities and report to Case Investigators. The adopted ASTHO training curriculum includes an Illinois-specific surveillance module and will ensure the same information is being given to all staff. Contact tracers will enroll cases and contacts through a digital platform, with phone calls, emails, text and visits as determined by each LHD and the requirement for engagement for each case. Contact Tracers may help with connecting quarantined individuals with necessary services, such as food banks, mental health services, medications, and alternate housing. Contact tracers should expect to understand patient confidentiality, including the ability to conduct interviews without violating confidentiality (e.g., to those who might overhear their conversations). They should have excellent and sensitive interpersonal, cultural sensitivity and competence, and interviewing skills such that they can build and maintain trust with patients and contacts.

Individuals who test positive for SARS-CoV-2 will be interviewed by a case investigator, who will ask about where they have been and who they have been in contact with during the time they have been infectious. A contact tracer, who may or may not be the same person as the case investigator, will then reach out to those who have been exposed and provide them with the information they need. They will also check in with them regularly to see if they have developed symptoms or tested positive, which would in turn spur an additional case investigation.

16. Question - Are there insights you can share relative to the pilot programs that were announced in mid-May, specifically St. Clair and Lake Counties? Do we know the percentage of positive-tested individuals who agreed to contact tracing?

Answer - These process of accurately and completely collecting these data is being refined. Both St. Clair and Lake Counties were engaged in contact tracing prior to the pilot program and they are in the process of increasing the capacity of their contact tracing programs. The exact percentage of individuals testing positive who accurately report the contacts they have had during the time they may have exposed others changes daily. It is a challenge, but most cases report at least one contact.

17. Question - Will Illinois counties deploy their contact tracing programs on a rolling basis or all at once? At the launch of this contract, what percentage of Illinois counties will be actively deploying their contact tracing programs? We know Cook County is a focus. Is there an expected date for when all counties will be up and running?

Answer - Important to state that all LHD are currently conducting contact tracing. The goal of the current program is to upscale activities over baseline. We are using a phased-in approach to rollout contact tracing in Illinois. We will start with two counties (Lake and St. Clair) as pilots. The intent is that in-field testing of the Minimally Viable Product of the newly implemented technologic platform, will provide early user acceptability information and allow us to address potential issues before it is disseminated broadly. Another 12 + 12 LHDs have been identified for rolling entry to the program. Simultaneously, grants submitted to IDPH for Contact Tracing by the LHD is undergoing rapid review and each LHD will come online as soon as their grant is approved.

18. Question - Is IDPH expecting to see any initial creative slogans in the bidder's response?

Answer - No.

19. Question - Can you prioritize the languages that are most important? Perhaps the top five in terms of importance.

Answer - English, Spanish, Polish, Chinese, French. Other languages to consider include Arabic, Bermese, Farsi, and Bengali.

20. Question - Based on the pre-campaign deliverables and timeline, when does IDPH plan for the campaign to launch in the marketplace as that will have a direct impact on the media budget?

Answer - Launch of campaign should be two weeks after vendor is approved.

21. Question - Does IDPH already have community-based partners in all 102 counties that can be utilized and reinforced with additional partners?

Answer - IDPH has traditionally worked with local health departments across the state, who have in turn worked with local partners in their jurisdictions.

22. Question - What other government agencies and what private/community organizations are implementing contact tracing campaigns/efforts?

Answer - No other governmental agencies are involved with contact tracing except at the local level within our decentralized public health system. LHDs may elect to sub-contract with external partners to provide certain services which will strengthen their efforts and in accordance with regulations.

23. Question - How would we be expected to collaborate with other local, federal and regional agencies regarding their contact tracing efforts?

Answer - IDPH follows CDC guidance so any new recommendations from CDC and IDPH that change the messaging would need to be incorporated into the messaging campaign.

24. Question - Is it possible that an agency supporting another government entity on contact tracing communications efforts could also be awarded this contract?

Answer - This RFP will not be awarded to another State agency.

25. Question - What existing marketing assets does the State of Illinois and the Illinois Contact Tracing Collaborative have available at the awardee's disposal to support this communications and marketing initiative?

Answer - Social media channels and public facing website.

26. Question - What size is the internal IDPH team that will be working on this program and how many decision makers are there for approving things like the plan, messaging, etc.?

Answer – Between 5 and 6 team members.

27. Question - In campaign management (p. 4), are those meetings expected to be in person or virtual or a combination of both?

Answer - The meetings may take place either via: video conferencing; in person; or a combination of both.

28. Question - When will contact tracing begin in earnest and is there an expected "busy season" for that work?

Answer - Contact Tracing efforts have been in high gear since the start of the pandemic and case rates exceeded local capacity. To address this need, the goal of the current program is to be rapidly responsive to current staffing requirements, provide support services and resources necessary to allow prompt diagnosis and adherence to recommended isolation or quarantine orders. So, the LHDs have been in a "perpetual busy season" which is not expected to end until an effective vaccine/treatment is available with continued adherence to non-pharmaceutical interventions.

29. Question - How often would you like to see reports/results for review?

Answer – Daily.