

**Mass Vaccination Planning, Logistical Operations & Quality Improvement Services RFP
Prospective Vendor Questions and Answers**

Background

1. **Question – For the list below, please indicate if these processes exist, have been re-evaluated for COVID-19, and require review by the service provider.**
 - a. **Logistics operations approach**
 - b. **Inventory management**
 - c. **Provider Enrollment Process**
 - d. **Vaccine administration and adverse event reporting**
 - e. **Returns management for disposition of administered vaccines, waste**
 - f. **Key planning and guidance documents aside from the COVID-19 mass vaccination plan for CDC**

Answer –

- a. **Logistics operations approach** – There is a plan in place for operations. The logistics referred to within this RFP is related to planning, project and milestone tracking (project management software), quality assurance, monitoring, gap/threat analysis and providing meeting support.
- b. **Inventory management** – Process in place for COVID-19, nothing further needed from vendor in this regard.
- c. **Provider Enrollment Process** – Process in place for COVID-19, nothing further needed from vendor in this regard.
- d. **Vaccine administration and adverse event reporting** – Vaccine administration will be tracked via mass vaccination software. Adverse event reporting will occur per normal operating procedure.
- e. **Returns management for disposition of administered vaccines, waste** – Planning is occurring in this regard. The model the state is utilizing is created to prevent possible waste and need for redistribution.
- f. **Key planning and guidance documents aside from the COVID-19 mass vaccination plan for CDC** – The state has a Mass Vaccination Plan that has been reviewed by the CDC. For the context of this RFP, milestones within the plan will be identified, monitored, assigned to key stakeholders and assessed for quality assurance and completeness.

2. **Question – Related to the Mass Vaccination Project Management Team:**
 - a. **Please describe the existing Mass Vaccination Project Management team structure.**
 - b. **What is the chain-of-command the provider/vendor team would report through?**
 - c. **Please elaborate existing reporting and meeting cadence (frequency/duration) that the service providers need to participate in.**

Answer –

- a. **Please describe the existing Mass Vaccination Project Management team structure** – The Mass Vaccination Planning Group is housed within the Mass Vaccination Section of the IDPH Incident Command Structure (ICS). The section is led by senior managers within IDPH's Office of Health Protection and supported by IDPH's Office of Preparedness and Response. The team described

within this RFP will work with their team in the Mass Vaccination Section reporting to the Mass Vaccination Section Chief and will provide reports and briefings up to the Director of IDPH who reports up to the Governor’s Office.

- b. **What is the chain-of-command the provider/vendor team would report through?** – The vendor would report to the Mass Vaccination Section Chief, who reports to IDPH ICS Command Staff such as the Deputy Incident Commander, Incident Commander and/or the Director of IDPH.
- c. **Please elaborate existing reporting and meeting cadence (frequency/duration) that the service providers needs to participate in** – Upon award, the vendor should evaluate current practice and set the “meeting cadence” moving forward. We expect a more rigorous schedule than the current cadence to be put in place by the vendor. The current cadence includes Mass Vaccination Planning Group meetings twice a week, and additional stakeholder/core group meetings as needed.

3. Question – How many healthcare providers (MD, DO, RPh, RN, FNP, PA, LPN, EMT-P, and EMT-I) are in the State?

Answer – Pre-hospital License Count

- ECRN - Emergency Communications Registered Nurse: 5,430
- EMD - Emergency Medical Dispatcher: 3,494
- EMT-B - Emergency Medical Technician Basic/Coal Miner: 19,806
- EMT-I/ AEMT - Emergency Medical Technician Intermediate: 554
- EMT-P/Paramedic - Emergency Medical Technician Paramedic: 15,678
- EMR - Emergency Medical Responder/FR: 15,420
- Provisional FR: 132
- LI - Lead Instructor: 1,684
- PHRN – Pre-Hospital Registered Nurse: 553
- TNS - Trauma Nurse Specialist: 3,009

Total Active Licensed Personnel: 65,760

High Risk Healthcare Workers: Approximately 77,309

4. Question – How many registered healthcare organizations are in the State?

Answer – Acute Care Hospitals are approximately 184, Specialty Hospitals approximately 30.

5. Question – How many frontline workers are in the State?

Answer – Other first responders not identified in questions #3 and #4 above, approximately 4,889

6. Question – Is the State’s plan to address the vaccination planning using the established COVID-19 regions?

Answer – IDPH is utilizing 11 Public Health COVID-19 regions. A map can be found [here](#).

- 7. Question – Who will be handling the physical distribution of the vaccine? Will this be through IEMA?**

Answer – This depends on the cold storage requirements of the vaccine. Those vaccines not requiring an Ultra Cold -80c supply chain, will be shipped directly from the manufacturer to the vaccine provider. For vaccine requiring an Ultra Cold -80c supply chain, this vaccine will be distributed by the State via a centralized to regional approach.

- 8. Question – Is there target percentage of the population of the needs to be vaccinated? If yes, we will be responsible for reaching that number? If yes, by what date?**

Answer – The target percentage of the population to be vaccinated is 80% according to CDC guidelines. The vendor is not responsible for vaccinating the population, but rather assisting with the planning necessary to meet the goal by tracking the project and milestones, performing gap/threat analysis and performing quality assurance/improvement.

Services

- 1. Question – If a vendor doesn't offer planning and quality improvement services, but can offer a location for vaccinations, is this something IDPH would be interested in?**

Answer – Vaccination locations is not what is being sought through this RFP. The context of this RFP is planning, project and milestone tracking (project management software), quality assurance, monitoring, gap/threat analysis and providing meeting support.

- 2. Question – Given that we don't know when a vaccine will actually be ready and whether this is one vaccine or several, does IDPH have guidance on preparing an accurate budget? Should we develop a budget based on some assumptions?**

Answer – The budget should be related to the planning, project and milestone tracking (project management software), quality assurance, monitoring, gap/threat analysis and providing meeting support to the project and is not dependent on when vaccine arrives. Guidance would be that activities identified in the RFP would commence immediately and proceed through the fiscal year.

- 3. Question – To what degree is the Logistical Operations Bidder/Contractor expected to organize the actual resources needed for mass vaccination. For example, is the bidder expected to contract with subcontractors to provide cold chain storage or only to provide project management in tracking that the cold chain storage contract is proceeding? Or as another example, the SOW lists "addressing barriers in underserved communities" as a component. Does this mean that the bidder/contractor would actually devise and execute a solution such as public service campaign? Or just provide project management support for implementation of solutions that have been determined by the Mass Vaccination Project Management Team?**

Answer – The vendor is not expected to contract with subcontractors to provide cold chain storage or anything similar. The vendor is expected to provide assistance with planning, project and milestone tracking (project management software), quality assurance, monitoring, gap/threat analysis and providing meeting support.

4. **Question** – **How can transportation services be beneficial in the vaccine distribution such as a bus company?**

Answer – Transportation services is not a part of this RFP.

5. **Question** – **Do you know what type of trailer you will need to haul this and how many trucks you estimate? Do you want an outside carrier or will this be in house?**

Answer – Transportation services is not a part of this RFP.

6. **Question** – **Please confirm that the State will have/has a methodology to generate and distribute the allocation list to CDC and to prioritize the equitable distribution of vaccines to the critical populations. If not, is the expectation that the vendor will create the methodology?**

Answer – Yes.

7. **Question** – **Is the objective for the service provider to review the current system for its ability to meet the CDCs requirements and ability scale to handle COVID19 vaccination?**

Answer – No. The vendor is needed to provide assistance with planning, project and milestone tracking (project management software), quality assurance, monitoring, gap/threat analysis and providing meeting support.

8. **Question** – **If additional tools, software, and services recommended by the vendor as part of the technology assessment are required, will the selected vendor be precluded from providing those additional tools, software, and services?**

Answer – No.

9. **Question** – **Does "Ensure incorporation of all key components needed for successful COVID-19 mass vaccination planning, logistical operations and quality improvement services..." mean that we are reporting on the progress of these areas? If not, please elaborate.**

Answer – The vendor is needed to provide assistance with planning, project and milestone tracking (project management software), quality assurance, monitoring, gap/threat analysis and providing meeting support.

- 10. Question – Will the project team be responsible for the following?**
- a. Creating reports and information required for CDC vaccine administration tracking**
 - b. Defining the reporting metrics**
 - c. Designing the reporting dashboards**
 - d. Creating the reporting analytics environment**

Answer –

- a. Creating reports and information required for CDC vaccine administration tracking – No.**
- b. Defining the reporting metrics – Assisting with defining.**
- c. Designing the reporting dashboards – No.**
- d. Creating the reporting analytics environment – No.**

- 11. Question – Please confirm that the only tools the vendor is expected to bring is related to the oversight and reporting and that the State will be responsible for all core logistics and vaccination systems.**

Answer – Correct.

- 12. Question – For the recommended tools, is part of the expectations for the vendor to create detailed requirements for the systems?**

Answer – No.

- 13. Question – Can you clarify “assessing current administration capabilities”?**

Answer – Determining if additional staffing and resources are needed within the IDPH for all necessary activities including planning and task completion. This function will be part of the gap/threat analysis.

- 14. Question – Will vendor be expected to create and implement a public relations campaign for the public to get vaccinated? If yes, is there a not to exceed budget that we should use in our bid?**

Answer – No.

- 15. Question – Will vendor be expected to manage and track COVID-19 vaccine ordering and inventories?**

Answer – No.

- 16. Question – Will vendor be responsible for sending out the Second Dose reminders to the public? If no, will be responsible to report on the sending of these reminders to the public?**

Answer – No, the vendor will not be responsible for sending out the Second Dose reminders to the public. Yes, the vendor will be responsible to report on the sending of these reminders to the public via metrics/statistics in briefings/reports.

17. Question – Will vendor need to assist in the Vaccination Provider Enrollment process? If yes, what are we to perform?

Answer – Not assist in the enrolling of providers but tracking the number/type/location of providers enrolled and assigning and tracking any tasks to staff determined necessary to ensure an adequate number/type and location of providers is reached.

Technology

1. Question – If analytics tools are required for reporting, can it be hosted in the state Azure environment?

Answer – No.

2. Question – Are there current tools used for the following and if so, what are they?

- a. Vaccine management system
- b. Vaccine prioritization and distribution analysis & modeling
- c. Analytics environment/tools
- d. Project management software
- e. Emergency management response system
- f. Inventory management system

Answer –

- a. Vaccine management system – ICARE.
- b. Vaccine prioritization and distribution analysis & modeling – Tiberius.
- c. Analytics environment/tools – Not needed for this RFP.
- d. Project management software – No.
- e. Emergency management response system – WebEOC.
- f. Inventory management system - Not needed for this RFP.

3. Question – Do system interfaces exist for?

- a. Logistics vendors for visibility into shipping information and in-transit inventory
- b. Distribution centers for visibility into inventory and temperature storage information
- c. Providers to register, enter and review allocations for vaccines

Answer –

- a. Logistics vendors for visibility into shipping information and in-transit inventory – For vaccine distributed via a state centralized model, the shipments will be tracked through a Warehouse Management System (WMS). For those vaccines shipped direct, they will be monitored by the manufacturers shipping software.
- b. Distribution centers for visibility into inventory and temperature storage information - For vaccine distributed via a state centralized model, the shipments will be tracked

through a Warehouse Management System (WMS). For those vaccines shipped direct, they will be monitored by the manufacturers shipping software.

- c. **Providers to register, enter and review allocations for vaccines** – Yes, this is through I-CARE.

4. Question – Are we to use CDC’s reporting software, i.e., IMATS, VTrckS, VaccineFinder?

Answer – No. The vendor will work with staff that use those systems and provide assistance with planning, project and milestone tracking (project management software), quality assurance, monitoring, gap/threat analysis and providing meeting support.

5. Question – Under scope of work, 8, item J, Immunization Information Systems (IIS) requirements, can you please explain what is expected from the vendor to provide to that system?

Answer – The vendor will not be expected to work in those systems, but rather work with staff that work in those systems and provide assistance with planning, project and milestone tracking (project management software), quality assurance, monitoring, gap/threat analysis and providing meeting support.

6. Question – What is the estimate time frame to complete a data use agreement to enable metric and programmatic reporting?

Answer – A Business Associate Agreement (BAA) can be executed depending on the context.

7. Question – Does the State have a preferred project management software tool?

Answer – No.

8. Question – Will vendor be required to sign the Data Use Agreement (DUA) with Association of Public Health?

Answer – No.

9. Question – Will vendor be given access to State computer programs as deemed necessary to fulfill this mission?

Answer – Yes, as deemed necessary by IDPH.

Staffing

1. Question – The RFP requires a 4-person team. Is that 4 FTEs of human resources or specifically 4 people? Can the proposal provide more than 4 FTEs if the SOW appears too broad for 4 FTEs or is the budget predicated on a 4 FTE team?

Answer – 4 FTEs of resources.

2. **Question – Does the person located in Springfield need to be a full-time position?**

Answer – Each member of the 4-person team will work full-time on the project.

3. **Question – Do all team members have to have the background in emergency management, etc., as explained on page 4. C. 1a?**

Answer – Yes.

4. **Question – Will the vendor get access to utilize ING and other state personnel to assist with this project?**

Answer – No.

Meetings/Calls

1. **Question – Describe the current frequency of COVID-19 mass immunization planning and operations meetings/calls and typical stakeholders.**

Answer – Upon award, the vendor should evaluate current practice and help set the “meeting cadence” moving forward.

2. **Question – Who at IDPH is providing oversight to the Logistical Operations bidder? Who would participate in the daily calls?**

Answer – The Mass Vaccination Section Chief and the Mass Vaccination Deputy Section Chief. The Mass Vaccination Section Reports to the Command Staff who are the Incident Commander, Deputy Incident Command and/or the Director.

Stakeholders

1. **Question – What authority will the bidder/contractor have to engage stakeholders? For example, the SOW requires an assessment of current vaccine administration capabilities which will require input from local HDs and others. Describe how IDPH will support the bidder/contractor for executing these types of tasks.**

Answer – The vendor will be operating under the authority of the Mass Vaccination Section Chief, within the ICS structure of the IDPH COVID-19 response.

2. **Question – Please define the “Mass Vaccination Project Management team and vendors.” Who are these individuals?**

Answer – An [RFP](#) has been issued for Statewide COVID-19 Mass Vaccination Project Management and Consulting Services, which is for high level strategic oversight/support. Whereas for the context of this RFP, the vendor will provide assistance with planning, project and milestone tracking (project management software), quality assurance, monitoring, gap/threat analysis and providing meeting support. The vendor team selected for this RFP will be embedded with the Mass Vaccination Section of the IDPH ICS structure.

- 3. Question – Will vendor be responsible for working with the private sector to track and trace their vaccinations? If yes, will vendor be given authorization from the State to require those in the private sector, to work with us, i.e., share information with us, i.e., Walgreens, CVS, doctor offices, etc.?**

Answer – No.

Other

- 1. Question – Could you please provide any licenses, permits, or registrations required to work on this project?**

Answer – None.

- 2. Question – Would being the successful bidder on this RFP preclude a vendor from bidding on future procurements for vaccine administration?**

Answer – No.

- 3. Question – Does the price to be quoted on the pricing sheet include the optional 6 months (2) extensions?**

Answer – No.

- 4. Question – Has the State already identified and registered its initial healthcare providers for the first batch of vaccine distribution?**

Answer – The State has enrolled some COVID-19 vaccine providers and is continuing to actively enroll additional providers.

- 5. Question – Will the project team be required to handle personally identifiable information?**

Answer – No.

- 6. Question – Are there limitations on subcontracting?**

Answer – No. As long as subcontracts meet the criteria within the RFP.

7. Question – How does the State propose to pay those performing the vaccinations?

Answer – The vendor will not give vaccinations. The context of this RFP is to provide assistance with planning, project and milestone tracking (project management software), quality assurance, monitoring, gap/threat analysis and providing meeting support for Mass Vaccination Planning for the state. The vendor will be embedded with the Mass Vaccination Section of the IDPH ICS structure.

8. Question – Does the contract include the price of the vaccine?

Answer – No. The vendor will not purchase vaccine. The context of this RFP is to provide assistance with planning, project and milestone tracking (project management software), quality assurance, monitoring, gap/threat analysis and providing meeting support for Mass Vaccination Planning for the State. The vendor will be embedded with the Mass Vaccination Section of the IDPH ICS structure.

9. Question – Should we assume federal guidelines will establish the priority of vaccination?

Answer – Review the State’s [DRAFT Mass Vaccination Planning Guide](#) for vaccine prioritization information. This document will be continuously reviewed and updated as new information is made available.

10. Question – Would you consider contracts based regionally versus one Statewide?

Answer – No.

11. Question – Should we include vaccination of children in this proposal?

Answer – The most current version of the CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Program Interim Playbook for Jurisdiction Operations does not currently include vaccination of the pediatric population but will be updated as new information becomes available and planning in Illinois should be in alignment.

12. Question – Will IDPH continue/extend the contract for courier services to support mass vaccination?

Answer – Not as a part of this RFP.

13. Question – Will IDPH continue/extend the contract for call center support?

Answer – Not as a part of this RFP.

14. Question – Are we to follow the CDC’s COVID 19 Vaccination Program Interim Playbook for Jurisdiction Operations guidelines?

Answer – Yes.

- 15. Question – Is the vendor going to be required to update the Operation Warp Speed (OWS) Tiberius platform for CDC?**

Answer – No.

- 16. Question – Under C, additional requirements, item b. The locations in Springfield and Chicago, are these at the IDPH offices, and we will be assigned office space, with access to phones, printers, restrooms, etc.**

Answer – The vendor will have the ability to work from their lodgings or offices within these cities. When requested to report to IDPH buildings for meetings/briefings/planning, they will be provided with temporary office space with access to phones, printers and restrooms.

- 17. Question – Will vendor and its employees be covered for liability under the Declaration Under the Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness Act (PREP Act) for Medical Countermeasures Against COVID-19 Act?**

Answer – DPH will continue to monitor the guidance issued by DHHS regarding covered entities as it may apply to contractors and subcontractors. For more information, see <https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/advisory-opinion-20-04-hhs-ogc-public-readiness-emergency-preparedness-act.pdf>. The advisory opinion explains liability protections for program planners that engage in COVID-19 response work under the PREP Act.

- 18. Question – Will vendor be required/expected to work in the IZ Gateway programs and IZ Gateway Share program?**

Answer – No. The vendor will work on planning aspects with staff that work in these programs.

- 19. Question – Will vendor be granted authorized partner status with IDPH so other organizations can share information with us?**

Answer – Yes.

- 20. Question – Will vendor have access to the State vendor agreements if vendor has to make purchases for this program, i.e., UPS, etc.?**

Answer – No.

- 21. Question – Is the vendor expected to perform the physical distribution of the vaccine? If yes, what are the space requirements, type of storage, i.e., cold storage, and delivery requirement, i.e., and to whom will this be distributed to, RHCC, etc.**

Answer – No. The context of this RFP is to provide assistance with planning, project and milestone tracking (project management software), quality assurance, monitoring, gap/threat analysis and providing meeting support for Mass Vaccination Planning for the State. The vendor will be embedded with the Mass Vaccination Section of the IDPH ICS structure.

22. Question – Is there another initiative that provides a Digital Portal for citizen engagement on vaccination?

Answer – The State is utilizing a mass vaccination solution that will have a portal that will handle registrations for vaccination.

23. Question – Are there any CDC or State quality management or reporting guidelines that you can share with us?

Answer – General quality management standards for project management and tracking.

24. Question – Is there any flexibility in your timeline for submission?

Answer – The new submission deadline is Monday, November 23, 2020.