

**Mass Vaccination Project Management and Consulting Services RFP
Prospective Vendor Questions and Answers**

Background Information

1. **Question** – How many registered healthcare workers are in Illinois?

Answer – This information is not necessary to provide a bid on this RFP.

2. **Question** – How many EMS, police officers, Firefighters, Ambulance workers, etc. (ideally by region)?

Answer – This information is not necessary to provide a bid on this RFP.

3. **Question** – What is the estimated number of people of all ages with comorbidities?

Answer – This information is not necessary to provide a bid on this RFP.

4. **Question** – What is the estimated number of older adults in congregate/crowded settings (long term care facility residents)?

Answer – This information is not necessary to provide a bid on this RFP.

5. **Question** – What is the estimated number of essential workers?

Answer – This information is not necessary to provide a bid on this RFP.

6. **Question** – Do providers need epinephrine on hand, if so, where will the supply come from?

Answer – This information is not necessary to provide a bid on this RFP.

7. **Question** – What date is anticipated for initial allotment of vaccines? And what quantity?

Answer – Per the CDC, the State is preparing to review vaccine allotments once the EUA with the FDA is approved. Exact allotments will be known closer to distribution once EUA approval occurs.

8. **Question** – Can Illinois National Guard be used to provide supplementary support for immunization?

Answer – Illinois National Guard (ING) can be utilized, if the state SNS plan is activated.

9. **Question** – Are there any ancillary government agencies ready to provide workers and or volunteers for immunization efforts?

Answer – The State is working to identify alternate sources for staffing needs.

10. Question – Are there tribal lands in State of Illinois that needs to be vaccinated?

Answer – No.

11. Question – How does the State plan to provide the necessary workforce to conduct vaccinations from a Public Health standpoint? Will it be the responsibility of the selected vendor for this solicitation to provide the necessary workforce?

Answer – Staff will be conducted at the local jurisdictional level. The state is working to identify possible contingency needs. No, the selected vendor will not need to provide the necessary workforce.

12. Question – Do you have any projected volumes for the vaccinations outside of the those expected for long term care and healthcare facilities?

Answer – The goal of the State, per CDC recommendations, is to potentially provide the opportunity for vaccination of up to 80% of the population.

13. Question – What supplies and equipment is the State expected to provide vs what the selected vendor will be required to provide?

Answer – The vendor needs to only provide the supplies and equipment they will need to perform the duties outlined in the RFP, i.e., a computer, phone and any software that is deemed necessary by the vendor to fulfil the duties outlined in the RFP.

14. Question – Will the necessary workforce be provided/procured by the State via the selected vendor or at the county or individual agency level, such as IL DHS?

Answer – No. Recommendations may be made, such as the need for workforce support, but providing the staff is not in the context of this RFP.

15. Question – Can the State please provide detail on which tools are available for COVID-19 reporting?

Answer – The State is utilizing software that will aggregate information pertaining to vaccinations and ensures reporting to the Federal government. The vendor will be responsible for any software that they deem necessary to accomplish the tasks in this RFP.

16. Question – Can the State elaborate around the use of tools for this project? What tools or what areas of scope is the State expecting the vendor to provide tools?

Answer – The vendor needs to only provide the supplies and equipment they will need to perform the duties outlined in the RFP, i.e., a computer, phone and any software that is deemed necessary by the vendor to fulfil the duties outlined in the RFP.

17. Question – Are there any existing tools the State expects the vendor to use and for what purpose?

Answer – No.

18. Question – Can the State release additional information on their existing vaccine distribution strategy in addition to the IDPH CDC plan already available and IDPH's marketing plan?

Answer – No. The current version of the plan can be found [here](#).

19. Question – "Vendor will liaison between the Governor's Office, IDPH and other state agencies to ensure coordination of activities regarding COVID-19 mass vaccination planning." What COVID related governance structure currently exists?

Answer – There is an Incident Command System (ICS) structure within IDPH and within IEMA. The response is a unified command between both agencies' directors, who report to the Governor.

20. Question – Will this plan work in concert with or supersede the current State of Illinois Mass Vaccination Plan submitted to the CDC on October 16, 2020?

Answer – The plan is continually updated to stay in line with evolving information provided from the CDC. The current version of the plan can be found [here](#).

21. Question – Are provider enrollment activities for Phase 1 of the vaccine rollout currently under way?

Answer – Yes.

22. Question – Are there existing designated storage depots (interim store houses not related to provider vaccine storage) to receive vaccinations shipment? If so, are there existing warehouse management systems to receive, manage and distribute vaccines?

Answer – Yes.

23. Question – Are there existing dataflows to VaccineFinder for State inventories? If so, where does the information originate i.e., providers/logistics systems, or does I-Care provide directly?

Answer – ICARE manages the vaccine inventory in the state.

24. Question – Are there procedures in place to escalate bad lot information and trace inventories after a determination that multiple adverse effects are related to a lot rather than a specific patient reaction?

Answer – Yes.

25. Question – What training resources/modalities does the State currently use for administering vaccines either flu or pediatric?

Answer – CDC training materials are used.

26. Question – What State managed social media properties are expected to be utilized for general public communications?

Answer – All IDPH social media.

27. Question – Can you provide more detail on the scope of work for the project management RFP (e.g. roles and responsibilities)? What kind of reporting and/or metrics are identified as essential to the project?

Answer – Metrics to assess the overall status of the project, identify gaps and milestones, measure success and overall progress.

Services

1. Question – In the Scope of Work #6, page 2: "Provide oversight of the Mass Vaccination Marketing Plan":

- A. Who is responsible for the development of this marketing plan**
- B. Has it been developed already?**
- C. If so, can I have access to it now?**

Answer – Who is responsible for the development of this marketing plan? IDPH Communications team, in concert with the Governor's Office and other relevant state agencies.

Has it been developed already? – No.

If so, can I have access to it now? – N/A.

2. Question – Should a vendor that is a manufacturer of a solution for tracking and managing mass testing and mass vaccination systems, actual on-the-ground tools to operate a state mass vaccination system, respond to this RFP?

Answer – No.

3. **Question – In the Scope of Work #3, page 2: "Develop and Implement a comprehensive management plan for strategy relating to COVID-19 mass vaccination in Illinois", is vendor responsible for the actual transportation and delivery of the vaccine to partner agencies, or to simply provide oversight and accountability for disbursement of the vaccines?**

Answer – No. Actual transportation and delivery of vaccine is not in the context of this RFP.

4. **Question – Does the vendor need to create the marketing plan, coordinate the media buys (if applicable), PSA script for radio, as well as the budget or simply have oversight on the mass vaccination marketing plan that would be provided by IDPH/Governor's Office?**

Answer – The vendor should provide recommendations and structure of the marketing plan but is not responsible for the execution.

5. **Question – Do the vendor need to create a public facing website which includes all the providers that sign up?**

Answer – No.

6. **Question – Do the vendor need to have a call center or does IDPH have a hotline to answer questions from Illinois residents/providers?**

Answer – A hotline is in place and maintained by IDPH.

7. **Question – Is the State expecting vendors to propose supporting analytics and other tools to help to implement marketing plans and collect data on progress and effectiveness of vaccine distributions?**

Answer – The State is open to recommendations by the vendor. However, the vendor should provide all software that is necessary to fulfil the requirements of this RFP.

8. **Question – Please confirm the State is responsible for any vaccine related training for key groups, such as distributors and administrators and record keeping and tracking of progress against these areas.**

Answer – Yes.

9. **Question – Will the State expect the vendor to manage and direct any marketing to deal with retail, pharmacies or other private locations, e.g. vaccination programs with 3rd parties. Will the vendor will be responsible or will the 3rd party?**

Answer – The vendor should provide recommendations and structure of the marketing plan but is not responsible for the execution.

10. Question – There seems to be some ambiguity between the Project Management activity and the role of the logistics team. Can you further define the role for respondents to assist in defining the scope? For example, would logistics or this role include a Nurse Advice Line to support delivery.

Answer – The context of this RFP is to provide overall strategic high-level project management. Logistics in this context would be any need that is necessary to fulfil the requirements of this RFP.

11. Question – Is notification of citizen on second vaccine and checking for adverse events in scope?

Answer – No.

12. Question – Will the selected vendor be expected to provide any logistical resources pertaining to the movement or cold storage of the vaccines?

Answer – No.

13. Question – Will the selected vendor provide a marketing firm to help focus and disseminate the mass vaccination plan or will the state provide an inhouse marketing team?

Answer – The vendor should provide recommendations and structure of the marketing plan but is not responsible for the execution.

14. Question – Will the vendor be required to lead, manage, or oversee any State of Illinois employees and employee equivalents to execute the scope of work?

Answer – No.

15. Question – According to the Mass Vaccination Planning Guide 2.0, a statewide hotline to address questions should be established. Will this contractor be required to facilitate the establishment of this hotline or will the current 1-800-889-3931 or email DPH.SICK@ILLINOIS.GOV hotline be expanded for Mass Vaccination updates and inbound questions from providers and patients?

Answer – No, the hotline is already established and maintained by IDPH.

16. Question – Is there an existing agency or vendor contracted to conduct outbound follow up calls?

Answer – No.

17. Question – Is the vendor solely responsible for planning, strategy, managing, and oversight, or will responsibilities include selection and on-boarding of related vendors, physical distribution of the vaccine, creating the marketing plan, etc.?

Answer – The vendor is responsible for high level planning, strategy, managing and oversight of the requirements set forth in the RFP.

18. Question – Does IDPH expect the vendor to collect and analyze data to support the rollout plan? If so, what data will be readily available?

Answer – Yes. Data on provider registrations, vaccine allotments and other relevant data will be available.

19. Question – Would the scope of work include registering/enrolling providers?

Answer – No.

20. Question – Will the vendor partner be responsible for hosting and maintaining any technical infrastructure created as a component of this project?

Answer – No.

Technology

1. Question – In addition to requiring the CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Program Provider Agreement for providers to administer the vaccine, what existing credentialing processes exist for bringing on new providers? Will multiple jurisdictional providers that enroll directly through the CDC to administer vaccinations be required to provide additional information to I-Care?

Answer – Any entity wanting to be a COVID-19 vaccine provider in Illinois must enroll in ICARE.

2. Question – How is vaccine administration data stored in I-Care? What database technologies are used? Where do the platforms physically reside?

Answer – This information is not necessary to provide a bid on this RFP.

3. Question – Has the State ever sent out large lists emails or SMS text messages to lists of patients, either from internally sourced lists or in conjunction with provider patient lists?

Answer – This information is not necessary to provide a bid on this RFP.

4. Question – What web internet properties/sites does the State intend to use as a main vehicle for the vaccination process?

Answer – This information is not necessary to provide a bid on this RFP.

5. **Question** – Is there existing IVR (interactive voice response) systems in place that can be used for transmission vaccination information and or reminders?

Answer – This information is not necessary to provide a bid on this RFP.

6. **Question** – While HL7 is the default immunization record integration technology for IISs, are their other technologies currently in use?

Answer – This information is not necessary to provide a bid on this RFP.

7. **Question** – What is the current status of in-bound and out-bound IIS integrations with CDC?

Answer – This information is not necessary to provide a bid on this RFP.

8. **Question** – Does the State have any existing mobile/smart phone/tablet based platforms that can modified and used for the general public or vaccine administration?

Answer – Yes.

9. **Question** – Does the State, through data reporting from internal IISs, have access to geo-coding and mapping of critical patient populations?

Answer – Yes.

10. **Question** – How many health care provider sites are registered and enrolled in the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) Immunization Division vaccine distribution system and/or Illinois Comprehensive Automated Immunization Registry Exchange (ICARE)?

Answer – This information is not necessary to provide a bid on this RFP.

11. **Question** – What data use agreements are in place for allowing providers to access state IIS or connecting to CDC IZ gateway(s)?

Answer – This information is not necessary to provide a bid on this RFP.

12. **Question** – Is there an existing process that defines IIS data access for temporary clinics PODs, etc.?

Answer – This information is not necessary to provide a bid on this RFP.

13. Question – Will patient data needed for vaccination registration and enrollment be generated via IIS are or will providers be required for initial patient communication? Will providers be required to share patient lists to prevent dual efforts?

Answer – This information is not necessary to provide a bid on this RFP.

14. Question – Is there a need to integrate with I-CARE for vaccination records?

Answer – No.

15. Question – Will there be data integrations required with McKesson regarding logistics? Are there current integrations in place?

Answer – Not required.

16. Question – Has the State been involved in identifying and evaluating digital data loggers DDLs for monitoring temperatures of vaccines in storage?

Answer – This information is not necessary to provide a bid on this RFP.

17. Question – Will the EMTrack Vaccine module as part of the Juvare system be used for patient scheduling? Will data integration with EMtrack be needed to offer other avenues for electronic patient scheduling?

Answer – Yes, this is one method in which this will be conducted.

18. Question – In reporting to VAERS, are the HHS web site and paper forms still the preferred way of reporting adverse effects? How do adverse effects get integrated into the State IIS?

Answer – This information is not necessary to provide a bid on this RFP.

19. Question – What internal mechanisms indicate that a transaction needs to be sent to another jurisdiction's IIS?

Answer – This information is not necessary to provide a bid on this RFP.

20. Question – Is there a plan to monitor adverse effects through existing health record and claims-based systems? If so, are their systems in place today that facilitate this reporting?

Answer – This information is not necessary to provide a bid on this RFP.

21. Question – For POD sites, what electronic mechanisms will be utilized to receive patient vaccine data? Will these sites be required to utilize I-Care protocols via HL7?

Answer – This information is not necessary to provide a bid on this RFP.

22. Question – Per the ICARE website, patients can opt out of the ICARE registry. Is that still the case during COVID-19 mass vaccination? If so, how will tracking of these patients be handled?

Answer – This information is not necessary to provide a bid on this RFP.

23. Question – When data flows to other jurisdiction’s IIS systems, what is the process? Are all transactions of propagated using HL7 protocol? If not, what other integrations technologies are used?

Answer – This information is not necessary to provide a bid on this RFP.

24. Question – Does ICARE document demographics data?

Answer – This information is not necessary to provide a bid on this RFP.

25. Question – Does ICARE need assistance in enrollment of providers or will ICARE manage enrollment by itself?

Answer – Enrollment of providers is already being addressed.

26. Question – What technology solution or solutions will the State use for vaccine management, to manage provider registration and enrollment, vaccine allocation, etc.?

Answer – ICARE.

27. Question – What technology solution or solutions will the State use to track new COVID cases and ongoing contract tracing efforts?

Answer – This information is not necessary to provide a bid on this RFP.

28. Question – Related to the scope, please describe the desired technology that the vendor should provide to support the project plan?

Answer – The vendor should propose technology to be used to support project management.

29. Question – Should/can the vendor propose a technology solution to assist the rollout, or is that something the winning vendor will help select?

Answer – The vendor should propose technology to be used to support project management only.

30. Question – Can you provide details on the existing technology infrastructure (if any) we will be integrating with as a part of the project, e.g., project management software, EHRs, Vaccination tracking/registry databases?

Answer – ICARE and EMTrack Mass Vaccination Module are being utilized. There is no project management software currently being utilized.

31. Question – Will the vendor partner maintain the relationship between any additional software or technology required for project execution?

Answer – The vendor should provide and utilize software/technology to support project management activities only.

Stakeholders

1. Question – In the Scope of Work #4, page 2: "*Lead strategy and coordinate closely with the Logistics Mass Vaccination Planning Committee and vendors*", exactly who is this committee comprised of, from which agencies and who are the vendors that will be involved in the Logistics Mass Vaccination Planning Committee?

Answer – An RFP is currently posted for a vendor. That group will be working within the Vaccination Planning Section within the IDPH ICS Organizational Chart.

2. Question – In the Scope of Work #13, page 3: "*Manage an interagency workgroup with partners integral to the COVID-19 mass vaccination operations to ensure the effective coordination and communication between these entities is necessary.*", what Human Capital and/or other resources will these agencies be providing to the interagency workgroup?

Answer – Subject Matter Expertise to inform planning.

3. Question – What role will individual county health departments play in the State's plan for Mass Vaccination?

Answer – Each local jurisdiction is responsible for a local plan that is in line with the State plan.

4. Question – In item A13, the RFP lists the management of an interagency workgroup as part of the scope of work including referencing multiple state agencies. Will the agencies listed, as well as other agencies and vendors as deemed necessary, have staff dedicated to the vaccination efforts as part of their assigned duties and as such be required to fully participate in workgroups, meetings, calls and other activities deemed necessary by the Project Manager?

Answer – Yes.

Staffing

1. Question – What is the minimum FTE for the strategist for consulting services?

Answer – Allocation of time is dependent on the vendors recommendations to adequately accomplish and fulfil the requirements of this RFP.

2. Question – What is the minimum FTE for project management services?

Answer – Allocation of time is dependent on the vendors recommendations to adequately accomplish and fulfil the requirements of this RFP.

3. Question – Is there a set number of staff the State is expecting from the vendor to support this project?

Answer – Staff requirements is dependent on the vendors judgment to adequately accomplish and fulfil the requirements of this RFP.

4. Question – Are there any qualifications for the staff the State is seeking or is it up to the vendor to propose staff as they see fit?

Answer – The qualifications described in the RFP set out the requested qualifications and experience of the vendor.

BEP Goal

1. Question – The BEP goal listed is 4% for minorities, women, and persons with disabilities. Do Veteran Owned Businesses count toward the 4%? Would you consider emailing out an addendum with a list of VOSBs that includes contact information?

Answer – The State of Illinois' BEP and VOSB programs are different and when a solicitation under the procurement code is issued, a separate BEP and VOSB goal can be established. However, this solicitation is under the emergency declaration and exempt from the procurement code and only a BEP goal has been established. A listing of State of Illinois certified VOSB vendors can be found by going to the "BEP and/or VBP Certification Directory" option on the <https://cms.diversitycompliance.com/> website link.

2. Question – How does a BEP company obtain a list of the prime contractors that may bid on this RFP?

Answer – This RFP was emailed to all vendors registered in the Illinois Procurement Gateway (IPG) under NIGP Code 91878 – Medical Consulting. A list of those vendors can be found by searching the IPG Registered Vendor Directory on the <https://ipg.vendorreg.com/> website link under NIGP Code 91878. In addition, included as part of the RFP packet is Attachment B which lists all certified Illinois BEP vendors under NIGP Code 91878. However, it should also be noted

that this solicitation is also posted on the IDPH COVID website whereby other prospective vendors may bid on this opportunity outside of the email distribution.

- 3. Question – In the *Business Enterprise for Minorities, Women, and Persons with Disabilities Act Participation and Utilization Plan, Page 5: "Vendor submissions should include all BEP target information through a Utilization Plan."*, is there a specific Utilization Plan Template that you would like respondents to follow?**

Answer – The link to the Utilization Plan that must be used is as follows:

<https://www2.illinois.gov/cpo/general/documents/bep%20utilization%20plan%20v.14.1.pdf>

- 4. Question – Do you require BEP Utilization forms?**

Answer – Yes.

- 5. Question – Will you expand BEP referrals to other NAICS codes?**

Answer – No. The codes used are specific to the services required. A listing of State of Illinois certified BEP vendors can be found by going to the “BEP and/or VBP Certification Directory” option on the <https://cms.diversitycompliance.com/> website link.

Budget

- 1. Question – Can you advise what type of contract you anticipate for this RFP? In other words, fixed price, cost plus fixed fee, time and materials?**

Answer – Fixed price.

- 2. Question – What is the budget?**

Answer – This information is not necessary to provide a bid on this RFP.

- 3. Question – Is there a ceiling on the dollar value of this contract?**

Answer – This information is not necessary to provide a bid on this RFP.

- 4. Question – Due to the likelihood of the amount of services to increase over the duration of the contract, can the State please share the budget that has been allocated for this project?**

Answer – This information is not necessary to provide a bid on this RFP.

- 5. Question – Would the State consider a time and materials contract approach with a rate card and a “not to exceed” project budget. We believe this type of contract approach would allow**

more flexibility for the State to scale the team up and down as necessary throughout the engagement – this will be particularly beneficial as there are key unknown elements of the work (e.g., timing and scale of Vaccine availability, specific supply chain considerations, level of engagement of other governmental entities and/or nonprofits, etc.).

Answer – The budget template provided asks for a fixed price.

6. Question – How should the pricing for this response be structured and submitted?

Answer – See Attachment A.

7. Question – For budget, will the State accept a time and materials based proposal?

Answer – The budget template provided asks for a fixed price

8. Question – Has a not to exceed budget been set for this project? If so, will you please share the amount?

Answer – No.

Contract Award

1. Question – In the *Responsiveness Elements*, Page 5:

- A. What is the total number of points attainable for this RFP?**
- B. How many points are the maximum assigned to each Mandatory Element?**
- C. What is the minimum required points to be considered?**
- D. How will the Technical Response be weighted?**
- E. How will the Budget Response be weighted?**

Answer – This information is not necessary to provide a bid on this RFP.

2. Question – Is the State considering multiple entities for award? Would you consider a Mass Vaccination Partner from the bid responses?

Answer – No.

3. Question – Do you require Forms A or Offer Forms?

Answer – Form A must be completed.

Other

1. Question – What will be the work location, based on the current situation?

Answer – The vendor may work virtually but may be required to be present in various locations throughout the State, which is dependent on the requirements of the project.

2. **Question** – "Vendor will hold briefings with the Governor, Governor's Office staff, and IDPH leadership initially on at least a weekly basis. Some of these briefings will be held in person in Chicago and some will be held virtually." Is there any expectation the vendor will need to travel to any other cities than Chicago?

Answer – Yes, Springfield.

3. **Question** – Is there an incumbent firm? If yes please advise contact information.

Answer – No.

4. **Question** – What methods and data will determine a shift in allocations from high risk and general public during the vaccination drive? Will re-allocation methods be needed as vaccination data is analyzed after first phase of vaccinations?

Answer – This information is not necessary to provide a bid on this RFP.

5. **Question** – Is the State able to provide additional detail on the size, breadth, and depth of the team currently focused on this work? Any information on gaps in capacity, skillset, background, etc. would be helpful as we are putting together our proposed team.

Answer – This information is not necessary to provide a bid on this RFP.

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

Answer – The State will extend the submission deadline to November 24, 2020.

7. **Question** – Will the state extend the due date to at least Tuesday 11/24 to give vendors more time to make any changes based on the State's answers to questions?

Answer – Yes.

8. **Question** – We are a vendor that meets the standards defined for respondents. Is an extension for response to this solicitation an option?

Answer – See answers to questions above.

9. **Question** – Can the solicitation due date be extended two weeks?

Answer – No.

10. Question – Would the Government consider granting an extension of the due date for this solicitation until November 23rd?

Answer – We will agree to an extension of this due date until November 24.

11. Question – What additional provider credentialing challenges are anticipated? What percentage of the total vaccination provider list will require new signups for COVID vaccine administration?

Answer – This information is not necessary to provide a bid on this RFP.

12. Question – Will the vendor be required to access Personally Identifiable Information (PII) or Protected Health Information (PHI) to execute the scope of work?

Answer – No.

13. Question – Are there any key milestones or estimated timelines that need to be taken into account in the vendor's implementation plan?

Answer – The vaccine EUA timeline is being carefully tracked by the State team and the vendor should be tracking this information as well.

14. Question – Could you please confirm that the State of Illinois will not relinquish management or control of any State of Illinois employees, staff, contractors, etc. to the awarded vendor upon delivery of the services outlined in the RFP.

Answer – Confirmed.

15. Question – Is there a vaccine allocation tool available? Will we be granted access to use this tool?

Answer – ICARE will be utilized for allocation. Data will be available as needed.

16. Question – Does IDPH have Vaccine Provider Support Specialist and does IDPH need additional support specialists?

Answer – This information is not necessary to provide a bid on this RFP.

17. Question – For the timeline of the key dates of the scope of work, is there an expected vaccine availability date that should be used (which would of course be subject to change)?

Answer – This information will be provided once the vendor is engaged. It is expected vaccine will be available some time in December 2020.

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

Answer – This information is not necessary to provide a bid on this RFP.

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

Answer – Standard quality management and project management guidelines are expected.