

COUNTY OF ALAMEDA PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT (ACPHD)

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS to RFP No. ACPHD-CM&P-1010 for **Community/Public Health Dept. Services— Nurse Registries**

Summary of Q&A Submitted
Bidders Conferences held on **October 10 and October 11, 2023**

NOTICE TO BIDDERS

THIS COUNTY OF ALAMEDA, PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT QUESTIONS & ANSWERS (Q&A) DOCUMENT HAS BEEN ELECTRONICALLY ISSUED TO POTENTIAL BIDDERS VIA E-MAIL BASED ON THE BIDDERS CONFERENCE SIGN-IN SHEETS OR FROM OTHER SOURCES. THIS Q&A DOCUMENT WILL ALSO BE POSTED ON THE GENERAL SERVICES AGENCY (GSA) CONTRACTING OPPORTUNITIES WEBSITE LOCATED AT [HTTPS://WWW.ACGOV.ORG/GSA_APP/GSA/PURCHASING/BID_CONTENT/CONTRACTOPPORTUNITIES.JSP](https://www.acgov.org/gsa_app/gsa/purchasing/bid_content/contractopportunities.jsp)

Scope of Work Questions

Q1: Is this a supplemental bid only for emergency situations? How often will the vendors who are awarded this bid receive job requests? How long will these assignments last on average?

A1: This bid is not only for emergency situations, but it is based on the need to fill nurse staffing shortages at any given point in time. Since we are unable to predict staffing shortages, we will not be able to answer how often we will need to request staffing, or the average length of the assignment.

Q2: Is this a re-compete RFP? If yes, could you please share the name of Current Suppliers (who are currently providing services to Agency)?

A2: The previous nurse registry RFP No. 901615 and resulting contracts ended June 2023. This is a new procurement.

Q3: Why is ACPHD going out to bid at this time?

A3: The previous nurse registry RFP No. 901615 and resulting contracts ended June 2023. This is a new procurement.

Q4: Is this a single award or multiple award contract? If it is a multi-award contract, can you please confirm the total number of vendors to be awarded this contract?

A4: There can be more than one contract awarded but we do not know what the total number will be. (Reference RFP I., A. INTENT, p. 5 of 45)

Q5: RFP p. 5, Statement of Work, A. Intent: Please clarify how needs for contractors will be distributed to vendors post-award?

Q5: The requests for nurse staffing will be communicated to all awarded Contractors by email which will include the level of nurse or nurses needed, the number of nurses, a brief description of the assignment, and an estimate of assignment length.

Q6: RFP p. 5, Statement of Work, B. Scope: Please can ACPHD provide the following information around usage:

- Historical usage by labor category
- Contracted staff hours by year
- Total spend by year
- Current budget for this program
- Anticipated volume of contract staff
- Typical workday hours for each labor category
- Average length of assignment

A6: This bid is not only for emergency situations, but it is based on the need to fill nurse staffing shortages at any given point in time. Since we are unable to predict staffing shortages, we will not be able to “provide information around usage”, how often we will need the requested staffing, or the average length of the assignment.

Q7: RFP p. 22, Section F. DELIVERABLES/REPORTS: Please may the County specify the kind of involvement it expects from the vendors – is this a vendor staffing program or a broader vendor involved community based program where vendors not only help with staffing but also with program development?

Q7: Yes, it is a vendor staffing program.

Q8: Could you provide more details regarding the challenges anticipated by ACPHD considering the RFP's scope, particularly with regards to disease outbreaks, emergency response measures, mass vaccination efforts, and addressing staffing gaps? Additionally, if there's any historical data available that sheds light on the extent and scale of these challenges, it would greatly assist us in better understanding the RFP's size and scope.

A8: During disease outbreaks, emergency response measures or large-scale vaccination efforts, the volume of work may increase beyond the capacity of the department at which time nursing staff may be needed to augment our response. Additional nurses may also be needed during seasonal vaccination operations to augment existing staff (e.g. during flu season) or short-term staffing gaps. Disease outbreaks and pandemics are unpredictable, and the scope of each response varies based on the infectious agent and impact on the population.

Q9: What is the estimated spend expected for this contract?

A9: This is dependent on the nurse staffing needs. This bid is not only for emergency situations, but it is based on the need to fill nurse staffing shortages at any given point in time. Since we are unable to predict staffing shortages, we do not have “an estimated spend expected for this contract” as we will not be able to answer how often we will need to request staffing, or the average length of the assignment.

Q10: What will be the estimated annual budget for this project?

A10: There is no estimated annual budget for this project. This is a new procurement.

Q11: What are the number of openings expected per skillset (e.g., LVN, RN, NP)?

A11: This is dependent on the nurse staffing needs. This bid is not only for emergency situations, but it is based on the need to fill nurse staffing shortages at any given point in time. Since we are unable to predict staffing shortages,

we will not be able to provide “the number of openings expected per skillset”, how often we will need to request staffing, or the average length of the assignment.

Q12: How many positions are currently unfilled?

Q12: The need for registry staff is not dependent on position vacancies. This bid is not only for emergency situations, but it is based on the need to fill nurse staffing shortages at any given point in time. Since we are unable to predict staffing shortages, we will not be able to answer how often we will need to request staffing, or the average length of the assignment.

Q13: Is Alameda County interested in technology to manage your temporary labor or permanent staff?

Q13: No.

Q14: What kind of technology (e.g., VMS, HRIS and/or timekeeping) do you currently use?

A14: The Contractor(s) will be responsible for reporting their staff's time and attendance with verification/approval by designated County program supervisors before any invoices are paid.

Q15: RFP p. 39: What time & attendance software does the County use (for example Kronos)?

A15: The Contractor(s) will be responsible for reporting their staff's time and attendance with verification/approval by designated County program supervisors before any invoices are paid.

Q16: RFP p. 8, E. Specific Requirements, 2 (6): Will the county provide transportation to the nurses?

A16: County may provide transportation in instances where a County employee may have checked out a County vehicle to transport nurses to sites, but not in all cases. The expectation is for nurses to provide their own transportation. (Reference Exhibit A – Bid Response Packet, BID/BUDGET FORM, p. 9 of 18).

Q17: Will ACPHD pay for travel between sites?

A17: No. (Reference Exhibit A – Bid Response Packet, BID/BUDGET FORM, p. 9 of 18).

Q18: How many locations will the provider be servicing?

Q18: Unknown.

Q19: Is it ACPHD's expectation that vendors will assist in community health program development, or is the County looking solely for a staffing partner?

Q19: This is a vendor staffing program and is intended to meet immediate nurse staffing needs during disease outbreaks, emergency response measures, mass vaccination efforts and/or to address staffing gaps.

Q20: Regarding Implementation: Please confirm you are just looking for our general placement process vs crisis placement.

A20: The general placement process is fine; however, the Bidder must be able to provide additional nurse staffing to meet any surge capacity needs. (Reference RFP I., B. SCOPE, p. 5 of 45).

Q21: Is there an incumbent provider for these services? If yes, please provide name of all incumbent providers and their pricing for the services outlines in the RFP.

A21 : The previous nurse registry RFP No. 901615 and resulting contracts ended June 2023. This is a new procurement.

Q22: How can the new vendor enhance customer satisfaction?

A22: Quickly responding to requests for nurse staffing with nurses willing to work with any population in need of services that includes our homeless populations, incarcerated persons, those with mental health challenges, and any other group with high rates of racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, and/or health disparities.

Q23: Can the ACPHD confirm whether there are any anticipated requirements in the near future on the given job titles?

A23: We do not anticipate requiring any additional job classifications than those identified in the RFP.

Q24: Kindly provide number of staff working under current contract on tier-based job titles: Tier 1 – Licensed Vocational Nurse (LVN), Tier 2 – Registered Nurse (RN I, RN II, RN III), Tier 3 – Registered Nurse (RN IV), Tier 4 – Nurse Practitioner (NP).

A24: The previous nurse registry RFP No. 901615 and resulting contracts ended June 2023. This is a new procurement. Providing this information is not part of the RFP process. The County initiates a new RFP when a contract period ends in order to solicit new proposals that align with current salaries and benefits. The County competitive RFP process allows interested vendors to submit a bid based on the intent, scope and background of the RFP.

Q25: RFP p. 16, Tier 2 – RN III Lead Nurse Coordinator – y: “Develops and updates clinical guidance, materials, protocols, workflows, procedures, and presentations, and shares information with Community Vaccination Unit staff. Completes appropriate documents as part of a disaster response when needed.” “Develop, implement, and evaluate trainings for all clinical staff.” Will these tasks be done under the County’s Medical Supervision?

A25: Yes.

Q26: RFP p. 17, Tier 2 – RN III Lead Nurse Coordinator – cc: “Acts as POD Clinical Group Lead.” What does the County mean by this?

A26: Points of Dispensing (PODs) are small or large community-based sites where medications or vaccinations are administered for residents as a prevention effort during public health emergencies. Responsibilities of a Tier 2 – Registered Nurse (RN III Lead Nurse/Coordinator) include acting as POD Group Clinical Lead whose duties include, for example: Assisting in the clinical oversight of vaccination operations, including points of dispensing (POD), home vaccination, and other vaccination settings (e.g., schools, homeless shelters, or correctional facilities). Providing vaccine coordination (including cold chain, vaccine management, vaccine administration, and post-vaccination observation responsibilities) at PODs, home vaccination, and other vaccination settings. Participating in vaccination planning and meetings. (Reference RFP Section I. F. 2. p. 15 & 16 of 45)

Q27: RFP p. 36 Pricing: What is the current bill rate per hour you are paying each position specified? What billing overtime hours be allowed?

A27: The previous nurse registry RFP No. 901615 and resulting contracts ended June 2023. Contractor(s) will determine their bill rate per hour for each position specified. (Reference RFP Section—Exhibit A - Bid Response Packet, p. 9 of 18 regarding overtime).

Q28: RFP p. 36 Pricing: Will there be any unbilled orientation?

A28: No. All nurses are required to complete relevant training and competencies prior to commencing in their assigned role. ACPHD role specific training is paid time.

Q29: Please provide additional information regarding the support staff/administrative services required. Will we be required to schedule nurses from other firms as well as ours?

A29: Please reference RFP sections I. T. PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS and I. U. ACCOUNT MANAGER/SUPPORT STAFF, pp. 40-41 of 45. No, Contractor will not be required to schedule nurses from other firms.

Q30: As per Page 55, Point 2 “Description of Experience”, please elaborate the request/ evidence should the vendor attach to answer the questions such as: Evidence of supportive services and/or collaborations, Programs located in, trusted by, and deeply connected to, communities with significant populations of traditionally underserved racial or ethnic groups etc.?

A30: The County is requesting Bidder to provide a description of previous experience of nursing staff who have provided services to community groups most impacted by racial and ethnic disparities in health care. For example, has the Bidder hired nurses with lived experience with the same issues faced by underserved communities the county provides services to; has the bidder hired nurses who have worked in programs located in, trusted by, and deeply connected to, communities with significant populations of traditionally underserved racial or ethnic groups; have hired nurses worked during hours that best serve the community (very early, very late, weekends); provide examples of nurses who have experience/evidence of client supportive services. (Reference section in RFP, Exhibit A – Bid Response Packet, Additional Program Requirements, 2. Description of Experience, (a)-(f), p. 8 of 18).

Q31: Regarding Program Requirements: Please confirm what constitutes as an example of staffing services that effectively meet the needs of groups most impacted by racial and ethnic disparities. Are you looking for case studies? Client names?

A31: Working with groups with ethnic and racial disparities such as performing case management services, assisting individuals accessing supportive services (resources), and including accommodations for language and/or culturally differences. (Reference Exhibit A- Bid Response Packet, Additional Program Requirements, 2. Description of Experience, (c), p. 8 of 18).

Q32: Regarding Budget Detail: We provide all-inclusive rates for our nurses and do not charge additional fees. Is this sufficient information for this section?

A32: Yes. (Reference Exhibit A – Bid Response Packet, BID/BUDGET section p. 9 of 18). “ACPHD will not be responsible for any additional expenses incurred by the registry, including overtime, transportation and/or parking expenses. The cost quoted must include all taxes (excluding sales and use tax) and all other charges. The price quoted will be the maximum cost the County will pay for the term of any contract resulting from this RFP.”

Q33: Referring to Page 9, in "Bid/Budget Form," could you please provide clarification regarding what the ACPHD expects from vendors in terms of an electronic scheduling system, especially when they are asked to provide hourly rates for "Dedicated nurse scheduling (if requested)"? Additionally, it would be helpful to know the number of Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs) that the County has projected for the job title Dedicated nurse scheduling, and the specific locations where these services will be needed.

A33: A specific ‘electronic scheduling system’ is not required, however, the ability to schedule nurses for their assignment(s) is required. Vendor must provide the County access to that same system or process. Reference RFP section I. T. PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS, p. 40 of 45 and I. U. ACCOUNT MANAGER/SUPPORT STAFF, pp. 40-41 of 45. This bid is not only for emergency situations, but it is based on the need to fill nurse staffing shortages at any given point in time. Since we are unable to predict staffing shortages, we will not be able to answer how often we will need to request staffing or the average length of the assignment.

Q34: Regarding Description of Proposed Services: This section references Section E where the job descriptions of the nurses are given. Please confirm you would like us to answer as the staffing firm providing the services vs the nurses we will staff within your facilities. Will we still be considered if we do not offer Nurse Scheduling Software? (***Bidder must be responsive and flexible in meeting surge/emergent needs, permit the County unexpected cancellations/terminations of requested staff, provide immediate notifications to the County of staff cancellations or changes, and to provide and maintain a robust and accessible electronic scheduling system.***)

A34: A specific ‘Nurse Scheduling Software’ is not required, however, the ability to schedule nurses for their assignment(s) is required. Vendor must provide the County access to that same system or process. Please answer from the Contractor/Agency perspective.

Q35: As per Pg. 29, Section C, “Accessible electronic scheduling system”, could you please elaborate what ACPHD is seeking from the vendor in the scheduling system.

A35: Specific 'accessible electronic scheduling system' is not required, however, the ability to schedule nurses for their assignment(s) is required that provides the County access to that same system or process. A specific 'accessible electronic scheduling system' is not required, however, the ability to schedule nurses for their assignment(s) is required. Vendor must provide the County access to that same system or process.

Q36: Kindly clarify if we need to provide any goods, materials, or equipment?

A36: No. With respect to N95 mask fitting, the County would provide to the Contractor, the types of masks and sizes available and the Contractor would need to ensure that the nurses are fit tested accordingly. The Contractor would then inform the County of the N95 type and size for nurses assigned. The County may provide laptops, office supplies, and any other equipment needed for the assignment.

Q37: The ACPHD has only requested pricing for FY 1. Please confirm if the awarded vendors will be requested to revise the pricing for subsequent years or has the ACPHD set a percentage as per the staffing considerations and market scenarios?

A37: The County intends to award one or more three-year contract(s) (with the option to renew for up to an additional two years) (Reference RFP Section I., A. p. 5 of 45). Reasonable price increases or decreases for subsequent contract terms may be negotiated between Contractor and County after completion of the initial term. (Reference RFP Section I., O., 3. p 37 of 45). The price quoted will be the maximum cost the County will pay for the term of any contract resulting from this RFP (Reference RFP Exhibit A- Bid Response Packet, p. 9 of 18).

Bid Process/Submission Questions

Q1: Is the conference today the same as it will be tomorrow, or do we need to attend both?

A1: Attendance at the Bidders Conference(s) is highly recommended but is not mandatory. Bidders Conferences #1 and #2 contain the same information. (Reference RFP Section I. G. 7. p. 26 of 45)

Q2: With the page limitation, is there a desired font size and page margins?

A2: There is no specific mention of a desired font size and page margins, so you may use your discretion for legibility.

Q3: Can you please confirm whether we have the flexibility to include two additional pages for addressing the questions on the form following the section titled "BIDDER MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS"?

A3: The maximum length of the response is 2 pages for Bidder Minimum Qualifications (Reference RFP Section – Exhibit A - Bid Response Packet, p. 7 of 18)

Q4: RFP p. 18, Section E. Endorsements and Conditions: With the exception of Professional Liability as indicated in pg. 18 of the Bid Response Packet under Section E. Endorsement and Conditions, Line 1, please confirm whether the County requires an endorsement of additional insurance for each of the following: Commercial or Business Automobile Liability, Worker's Compensation and Employer's Liability?

A4: Certificate C-2C with EO is the County of Alameda Minimum Insurance Requirements for this RFP (Reference RFP Section – Exhibit A - Bid Response Packet, p. 18 of 18).

Q5: With the exception of Professional Liability as indicated in pg. 18 of the Bid Response Packet under Section E. Endorsement and Conditions, Line 1, please confirm whether the County requires an endorsement of additional insurance for each of the following: Commercial or Business Automobile Liability, Worker's Compensation and Employer's Liability?

A5: Certificate C-2C with EO is the County of Alameda Minimum Insurance Requirements for this RFP (Reference RFP Section – Exhibit A - Bid Response Packet, p. 18 of 18).

Q6: Will the County consider a proposal whereby the Contractor does not agree to signing of the Business Associate Agreement, if the Contractor has provided sufficient reasoning for its non-classification as a Business Associate?

A6: Contractor(s) for this RFP would be deemed as HIPAA Business Associate(s) and thereby must execute the HIPAA Business Associate Agreement upon entering into contract(s) with Alameda County Public Health Department.

Q7: RFP p. 40: Any HCAO or county ordinances that will be in place?

A7: . The RFP does not reference HCAO, so the ask is not clear. Future County ordinances are not predictable.

Q8: Will the County consider language that provides for 'mutual termination for convenience'?

A8: . This may be a point of discussion in the contract negotiation process.