

Iowa Department of Public Health
ADPER
**Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Hospital
Preparedness Program Grants**

Healthcare Coalition Preparedness

Request For Proposal # 58813023

Interim Written Question and Response Document

**Round 1: Written Questions and Responses for questions submitted through
June 24, 2013**

Posted July 1, 2013

Q1. In Section 1.12 Costs of Proposal Preparation, it states that “IDPH is not responsible for any costs incurred by the applicant which are related to the preparation or submission of the proposal or any other activities undertaken by the applicant related in any way to this RFP.” Does this mean we cannot bill our time writing this grant application to our grant? If we’re unable to bill it to our grant, can this cost to the agency be used as in-kind towards our 10% match?

A 1. The direct cost of preparing this proposal may not be charged to the FY12-13 or FY 13-14 grants as either Core or Match. Per federal guidance, proposal preparation costs are to be treated as indirect costs. The FY 13-14 contract extension expense workbook to be available on July 1, 2013 will allow for the inclusion of indirect costs. See Section 3.05 (5) of the RFP for further clarification of indirect costs

Q2. In section 1.06 D it says to “insert your agency name” in the title of the PDF document. But, the example used has the coalition name in the title. Do you want the agency/applicant name or the coalition name in the document title?

A 2. The name of the coalition should be used if the coalition has a name. If the coalition is not named, use the name of the RFP applicant that will serve as the fiscal agent.

Q3. In section 3.02, Key Personnel for this Proposal, it says” “include the number of staff, their roles, and their expertise and experience in providing these types of services”. The table in Attachment A does not include space for this information (beyond name and email address). How should this additional information be submitted

A 3. Supply the information as directed in Attachment A. Additional information may be requested after an award is made.

Q4. Is there a limit as to how much funding can go to the Fiscal Agent for their responsibilities

A 4. The maximum indirect costs rate is 15% unless otherwise approved by IDPH. See Section 3.05 (5) of the RFP for further clarification of indirect costs. The fiscal agent may also receive reimbursement for direct costs. All direct costs will be determined by an approval process at the discretion of the established coalition and governing rules.

Q5. Section 1.04 the fiscal agent of the coalition is designated to be the Contract holder/administrator. Therefore, it is my understanding that attachments will be completed using the fiscal entity legal information (Fed Tax ID #, W-9).

A 5. Yes, that is correct.

Q6. Are the key Personnel for the proposal (Attachment A) – Executive Director/CEO, Program Administrator/Director/Coordinator, and Fiscal Contact/CFO those of the Fiscal Agent only (not reflective of the Coalition)?

A 6. The Executive Director/CEO and Fiscal Contact/CFO must be directly affiliated with the RFP applicant that will serve as the fiscal agent. The program administrator/director/coordinator is not required to be employed by the fiscal agent but must have an agreement/contract for work services with the fiscal agent. One individual cannot be funded with preparedness dollars in excess of 1 FTE. See Appendix 1-Special Conditions Article XI.

Q7. The Business Organization Form (Attachment F) will be that of the Fiscal Agent since the Coalition is not a legal entity?

A 7. Yes, the Business Organization Form should be reflective of the RFP Applicant that will serve as the fiscal agent.

Q8. Is the Action Plan the same thing as the 5 Year Exercise Plan, or is that a separate document?

A 8. The Action Plan is required for the RFP submission. The Action Plan is not the same as the Five-Year Training and Exercise Plan. The Five-Year Training and Exercise Plan is a contractually required report for successful applicants once awarded.

Q9. The RFP is clearly due August 5. Are the Action Plan and Five year exercise plan both considered part of the RFP and also due August 5? (I ask because the Five year Training and Exercise is due no later than August 15, according to the 3 month extension contract).

A 9. See question 8. The Five-Year Training and Exercise Plan that is due no later than August 15, 2013 is required in the contract extension and is not required for this RFP.

Q10. We have discussed aligning exercises with EMA, however, he is in the middle of his 5 year exercise plan. Does the Health Care Coalition Plan need to have its own separate 5 year exercise plan?

A 10. The Five-Year Training and Exercise Plan is not a required submission for the RFP application, See question 8. Exercises identified on the template may be completed in conjunction with the EMA provided HPP and PHEP exercise requirements are met. Additional information will be provided following a successful award.

Q11. If a Healthcare Coalition wants to hire a person to assist with planning and exercising, does that proposal have to be bid out or just need approval by IDPH?

A 11. Identifying plans for additional staff is not a required submission for the RFP. All successful applicants will be contractually obligated to follow IDPH General Conditions and follow local policies regarding hiring and contracting of staff.

Q12. If a Coalition decides that they need to purchase an item to help demonstrate a capability is there an Authorized Equipment List for each Capability?

A 12. Identifying plans for equipment purchases is not a required submission for the RFP. Additional information will be provided following a successful award.

Q13. Are there specific approved trainings aligned with Capabilities (except as those identified in the Capabilities Document).

A 13. Identifying plans for training is not a required submission for the RFP. Additional information will be provided following a successful award.

Q14. Assuming funds are available is there an opportunity to receive an early draw down of funds based on a proposal – Or will funds only be available after a deliverable is completed?

A 14. Funds awarded under this RFP will be paid out on a reimbursement basis. Therefore, approved costs will be paid as they are incurred and invoiced subject to provisions in Appendix I.

Q15. Is there a standard process for several separate coalitions to combine funds to meet an objective or procure an item that could be utilized by multiple entities?

A 15. There is no standard process to combine funds between individual coalitions. If coalitions need to combine funds to meet objectives or procure materials, the coalitions should consider consolidating. There is an established process to consolidate coalitions. Additional information will be provided following a successful award.

Q16. If a coalition procures an item, are there requirements as to who will be the custodian of that item?

A 16. Identifying plans for procurement and custody of purchased items is not a required submission for the RFP. The individual coalitions will determine how resources will be procured and managed. All successful applicants will be contractually obligated to follow IDPH General Conditions. Additional information will be provided following a successful award.

Q17. Is there a standard for using funds to assist in sustaining basic needs? i.e. an agency has used preparedness funds to sustain 20% of the cost of updating computer systems or 20% of the cost of the administrators 24/7 cell phone in the past-is this an allowable cost?

A 17. The coalition may determine how funds are dispersed to sustain coalition member activities for approved expenditures.

Q18. In the workplan excel spreadsheet, does “Mercy Hospital” refer to Mercy in Oelwein? If not, what option should our coalition select?

A 18. In the workplan excel spreadsheet (Action Plan), *Mercy Hospital* identifies Mercy Iowa City. The hospital located in Oelwein is identified as *Mercy Hospital of Franciscan Sisters* in the drop-down list.

Q19. In the workplan excel spreadsheet, does the language for “develop written policies” mean that a multi-county coalition must develop new policies for the coalition as a whole? Or, if each agency in the coalition already has written policies established, does this satisfy the requirement?

A 19. Determining processes for coalition policy writing is not a required submission for the RFP. IDPH will provide plan checklists and tools to assist coalitions in meeting the basic requirements of the capabilities. Additional information will be provided following a successful award

Q20. In section 2.01 Description of Work and Services for HPP it indicates that the applicant must select a minimum of 2 capabilities each year to demonstrate. Can our coalition select three capabilities to demonstrate in year two; and then continue to sustain them while working towards only one additional capability in year three? (As long as we are able to demonstrate all 8 by the end of the project period).

A 20. Additional capabilities may be built or sustained, but the coalitions will be required to demonstrate a minimum of 2 HPP capabilities each year.

Q21. In the excel workplan, we are required to work towards two capabilities in year one; can our coalition also bill for activities to build and sustain capacity for capabilities that will be demonstrated during years 2-4?

A 21. Yes, funds may be used to build or sustain all capabilities in all years.

Q22. Section 1, General Issues, 1.03, Eligibility Requirements: Please clarify – our coalition is a three county coalition and one hospital has agreed to take on the fiscal duties, so that hospital would be considered the eligible applicant? Is that who will be considered the business organization authorized to do business in Iowa, or should the multi-county organization take steps to become a business organization?

A 22. Yes, in this scenario the hospital is the RFP eligible applicant and will serve as the Fiscal Agent. For the purpose of this RFP, the Fiscal Agent is the business organization. The coalition may take steps to create a formal legal organization at their own discretion.

Q23. Section 1, General Issues, 1.05, Available funds: The minimum amount of funding available is populated in Attachment D. Can more be requested? Is there a limit? Our coalition includes the Meskwaki Settlement. They used to have a contract with IDPH for preparedness. Do they have separate funding this year or no funding? How do we include that funding in our proposal?

A 23. Funding identified in Attachment D should be the dollar amount used for budgeting purposes. Additional funding cannot be requested through the RFP. Additional funding may be awarded to successful applicants based on the results of the RFP and the availability of additional funds. The Meskwaki Settlement funds will be negotiated separately from the RFP. This funding amount is not included in the RFP.

Q24. Section 1, General Issues, 1.12, Costs of Preparation: Costs of preparing the proposal is the responsibility of the applicant. Can coalition members bill the costs related to preparation, etc. to the current PHEP & HPP contract & extension?

A 24. See Question 1.

Q25. Section 3, Proposal Format & Content, 3.02 Content, Key Personnel: Is key personnel only personnel from the fiscal entity? Can a multi-county coalition name a person from each county to fulfill the executive director and program admin roles?

A 25. See Question 6.

Q26. Section 3, Proposal Format & Content, 3.03, Budget: Are fiscal agent costs determined by the coalition? How should that be budgeted? Should those expenses be included in the 15% indirect/administrative costs or budgeted as a salary expense?

A 26. The maximum indirect costs rate is 15% unless otherwise approved by IDPH. See Section 3.05 (5) of the RFP for further clarification of indirect costs. The fiscal agent may receive reimbursement for direct costs. All IDPH approved direct costs will be determined through an approval process at the discretion of the established coalition and governing rules.

Q27. Section 3, Proposal Format & Content, 3.04, Business Organization Information: Will all coalition members have access to SharePoint as they already do or will it only be the fiscal agency? Will a new MOU need to be filed? For the question— is the answer to this question no because this coalition is newly formed and has not held a previous contract or is it yes because all entities involved in the new coalition have been involved and have held contracts?

A 27. An RFP applicant with an executed a SharePoint MOU with IDPH will have access to the Preparedness Coalition documentation. A new SharePoint MOU will be executed only if the RFP applicant does not currently have a SharePoint account. The question “does the agency currently hold a contract with IDPH?” Refers to the agency completing the RFP application that will serve as the Fiscal Agent.

Q28. Who should sign the RFP and the new contract once awarded? Should it be the chair of the coalition, the fiscal agency staff, and executive director from key personnel or other?

A 28. The RFP applicant that will serve as the Fiscal Agent will sign the RFP and the successful awardee contract will be signed according to the applicants SharePoint MOU.

Q29. Is it correct that the RFP is for Coalition Activities? The grant seems to indicate that the coalition can apply for funding for either PHEP funds or HPP funds or funding for both. The way it was originally presented, I had the impression that the coalition had to apply for funding from both sources. Does the coalition have the option to apply for PHEP or HPP funding for only PHEP funds or HPP funds – or must they apply for both to demonstrate a true coalition?

A 29. Healthcare coalitions may apply for both HPP and PHEP funding or just PHEP funding or just HPP funding. See section 2.01 of the RFP.

Q30. Within in section 3.02 Proposal Content of the RFP in the Key personnel for this proposal section it states to, "include the number of staff, their roles, and their expertise and experience in providing these types of services. Proved evidence for any necessary applicable professional licenses required by law by listing the license number associated with the professional personnel." The key personnel chart included in this RFP only asks title, name and e-mail address, and does not have columns for experience or applicable professional licenses. If this information is to be included where would you like it?

A 30. See Question 3.

Q31. Regarding Section 3.02, A, Bullet #4 “Describe the executive, management, technical, and professional staff who would perform duties related to this project. Include the number of staff, their roles, and their expertise and experience in providing these types of services. Provide evidence for any necessary applicable professional licenses required by law by listing the license number associated with the professional personnel.” This verbiage includes more information than is asked for in the table in Attachment A. It also sounds as if you want more staff members named than the three listed in the table. Do you want all staff who will be completing the services and where do you want this information placed?

A 31. See Question 3.

Q32. Will changes be allowed to the workplans/budget during the FY and if so, what will be the process for obtaining changes? (for instance want to add a capability to build/sustain).

A 32. Flexibility will be allowed during the program and project period.

Q33. Will real life events that are documented by HSEEP AAR be acceptable for demonstration of a capability?

A 33. Exercise planning is not a required submission for the RFP. Additional information will be provided following a successful award.

Q34. Regarding Section 3.04 Business Organization Information, specific to the Business Organization Information Form, Audited Financial Statement, do 3 consecutive, previous, and separate FY audited statements need to be submitted and what previous 3 year periods are acceptable?

A 34. If the fiscal agent is currently an IDPH contractor and audits are currently on file, the three years of audited statements are not required to be included with the RFP submission. If the fiscal agent is not currently an IDPH contract holder, the last three fiscal years of released audited statements are required to be submitted with the RFP submission. If there are questions if the audits are currently on file with IDPH please contact Lori Dinville, Finance Bureau at Lori.Dinville@idph.iowa.gov or 515-281-6733 to verify if audits are on file.

Q35. Is the 5-Year Exercise and Training Plan that is required by Mar. 31, 2014 the same plan that is required to be submitted for our FY13 Contract?

A 35. The Five-Year Training and Exercise Plan is not a required submission for the RFP application. See question 8 and question 9. Additional information will be provided following a successful award.

Q36. For demonstration/completion of PH and Hospital Capabilities, will each and every function and resource element be required as listed in Appendix IV, Public Health Preparedness Capabilities document and Appendix V, Healthcare Preparedness Capabilities document?

A 36. Coalitions will be required to meet performance and program measures. IDPH is developing checklists and templates for each capability to assist coalitions. Additional information will be provided following a successful award.

Q37. When a coalition consists of multiple PHEP or multiple HHP partners, will each partnering agency have individual budget tabs to track and report expenses?

A 37. There will be one workbook for the coalition fiscal agent to track all the coalition's funding. The workbook will allow for the HPP and PHEP funding to be tracked separately.

Q38. Is the budget breakdown for salary/fringe, equipment, and other line items predetermined, as shown in the Expense Book draft?

A 38. The dollar amounts shown in the expense book draft are for illustrative purposes only. The categorical items are standard.

Round 2: Written Questions and Responses for questions submitted through July 8, 2013

Posted July 15, 2013

Q39. Timeline Status, rows 29-33 – How can I accurately give a budget when I have no idea how I am going to spend the funding? Is it good enough to make a guestimate? Am I held to the budget OR can I reallocate as needed?

A 39. Yes, budget using your best estimate. Changes greater than 10% in any line item require IDPH approval.

Q40. Boone County Hospital shall act as the fiscal agent for the Coalition completing the RFP. Since Boone County Hospital already is using SharePoint, do we have to complete the Attachment E form?

A 40. Per the RFP: If applicant is not a current contractor with IDPH, include a completed W-9 form.

Q41. Indirect Rate – I do not understand this at all. Is this match? How is this different than Personnel time?

A 41. Indirect is not match or personnel time. It is a cost category that the applicant may elect to utilize.

Per the RFP:

If the applicant plans to charge administrative or indirect costs, this must be identified in the proposal. If the applicant charges indirect costs, a copy of the current, signed federally approved indirect cost rate agreement must be submitted with the proposal. Applicants may charge an Indirect Rate in accordance with their federally approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement. IDPH reserves the right to negotiate the application of the Indirect Rate per individual contract.

In the absence of a federally approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement, the applicant may charge an Administrative Cost not to exceed a maximum rate of 15% of the total amount applied for. Administrative costs are those that are incurred for common or joint objectives, and therefore cannot be identified readily and specifically with a sponsored program, but are nevertheless necessary to the operations of the organization. For example, the costs of operating and maintaining facilities, depreciation and administrative salaries are generally treated as indirect/administrative costs. A cost may not be allocated to this grant as an indirect cost, if any other cost incurred for the same purpose, in like circumstances, has been assigned to this grant as a direct cost. The applicant shall maintain documentation to support the administrative cost allocation. IDPH reserves the right to request the documentation at any time.

Q42. On the Instructions Tab of Attachment D Action Plan.XLS, section III. b. i. It indicates: "In cell **A5** (shaded yellow) enter a narrative outlining the actions to be taken in FY 13-14 for this capability..." When I downloaded a copy of the Action Plan - the shaded yellow cell is **A6** - not **A5**. **A5** is also mentioned again later in the instructions under i. - 1. "If all functions/priority resource elements have been marked as 'Complete' the applicant will be instructed to confirm in row 5 yellow shaded field) that this capability was through an exercise at the community/coalition level after July 1, 2012...." and again mentioned under ii. - "If the capability was chosen for build/sustain in FY 13-14, applicant must compete a narrative in cell **A5** only." I believe the instructions are referring to **A6** in these two places as well - as **A5** is not shaded yellow and will not allow you to enter narrative.

A 42. All references to A5 should refer to A6.

Q43. An additional question on the Instructions Tab of Attachment D Action Plan.XLS. section III. Individual Capability Tabs,1. "If all functions/priority resource elements have been marked as 'Complete', the applicant will be instructed to confirm in row 5 (yellow shaded field) that this capability was through an exercise at the community level after July 1, 2012. " Does this mean if a PH Agency, demonstrated completion of one of the capabilities as required during PHEP FY 11-12, which would have been demonstrated before July 1, 2012 - that they will have to select another future year where this capability will need to be re-demonstrated sometime between now and end of FY 16-17?

A 43. Yes, the coalition must meet the demonstration of the capabilities.

Q44. Just for verification, if the fiscal agent for the coalition is a public health agency, they need to apply as the County's Board of Health, because in section 1.03 it lists the eligible applicants to be: coalitions, hospitals, local boards of health, etc.

A 44. Yes, that is correct.

Q45. In most grant applications, there is an allocation spreadsheet or specific guidance as to the dollars available. There was no spreadsheet, and I did not see guidance in the packet. How do we determine the amount available for our coalition?

A45 . The amount of available funding is calculated on partners identified on the Budget Tab of the Action Plan. Refer to the Action Plan Instruction Tab Section II "Budget Tab" instructions.