



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

Title: COVID-19 Community Testing

Funding: American Rescue Plan Act

Baltimore City Health Department, Division of Population
Health and Disease Prevention

Release Date: February 6, 2023

Bidders Conference: February 13, 2023 at 1pm

Letter of Intent: February 23, 2023

Application Due: March 15, 2023 by 5:00pm EST

Anticipated Award Notification: May 1, 2023

Anticipated Contract Start: July 1, 2023

I. Introduction

Baltimore City Health Department is the recipient of both American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding and, in part, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) funding to support its response to the COVID-19 emergency.

The focus of this request for proposals (RFP) is to obtain professional services to support Baltimore City Health Department's (BCHD's) effort to increase access to testing. Specifically, BCHD is seeking a third-party vendor to provide community COVID-19 testing services. This includes options for community-based walk-up sites and/or drive through sites.

II. Award

BCHD is prepared to award up to \$1,700,000 to a vendor for the period July 01, 2023 - December 31, 2024 to provide community COVID testing services.

This **project will be 18 months in duration**, contingent upon available funding. The initial implementation period will start July 1, 2023 and end December 31, 2024. Progress reports and annual program plans must be submitted and are subject to approval for funding renewal.

NOTE: BCHD reserves the right to negotiate awards based on project plans, documented performance, and recommended program reviews.

III. Applicant Eligibility

BCHD will consider proposals from any of the following:

The following organizations are eligible to apply for these funds:

- Organizations that provide evidence of substantial experience providing clinical and professional services as outlined in the scope of work AND
- Have a physical site within Baltimore City by July 1, 2023 AND
- Are in good standing with Maryland State Department of Assessment and Taxation
- Organizations should provide documentation of partnership with a high complexity lab that has appropriate approvals to perform COVID-19 testing, including licensure to perform COVID-19 PCR or NAAT testing for Maryland, and is in receipt of a valid and current Maryland permit number for COVID PCR testing. The lab also needs to be compliance with reporting requirements to MDH for all COVID-19 test results.
- Organizations should provide documentation of an ordering provider for COVID-19 PCR tests. The ordering provider must have a current license to practice medicine in the state of Maryland. Provide their first and last name, and Maryland license number.

IV. Scope of Work

A description of the services being requested by the Health Department is provided below. BCHD is requesting a set of baseline services, referred to as “Baseline” with the potential to increase the number, capacity, and/or hours of testing sites based on demand and evolving epidemiology of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Schedules and testing volumes

This RFP includes three levels of service requested by BCHD:

1. Baseline – services requested for the timeframe of the contract
2. Medium Demand – services that will be requested if demand and/or epidemiology increases beyond baseline levels
3. High Demand – services that will be requested if demand and/or epidemiology increases further

The vendor will work with BCHD to determine if testing sites will be walk-up, drive through, or a combination of the two.

BCHD will determine if the level of services to be provided will be baseline, medium, or high demand. Requirements for each are outlined in the chart below.

Community Testing Sites

	Baseline	Medium Demand	High Demand
# of sites	1 testing clinic daily, 5-7 days per week	1 testing clinic daily 5-7 days per week	2 testing clinics daily 5-7 days per week
Minimum Testing Capacity	25 patients per hour	50 patients per hour	100 patients per hour
Minimum hours of operation (excluding set up and breakdown)	3 hours per clinic	4 hours per clinic	7 hours per clinic

Weeknights and weekends	At least 2 weeknights (testing available until 7pm) and 1 weekend clinic	At least 2 weeknights (testing available until 7pm) and at least 1 weekend clinic	At least 2 weeknights and at least 1 weekend clinic
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Locations

Site selection:

- Most locations will be determined by BCHD and communicated to the vendor. Locations will be determined in partnership between the vendor and BCHD.
- The vendor should assist BCHD in identifying new testing sites throughout the length of the contract.
- BCHD will have final decision-making authority over the location of the testing sites, to ensure equitable geographic distribution and service to vulnerable and at-risk groups.
- BCHD will initiate the initial formal reach out to partners regarding shared space for testing sites.
- All testing sites must be approved by BCHD prior to being finalized.

A site visit performed by BCHD and the vendor is required prior to initiation of testing at any location.

Currently testing is anticipated to be performed at the same site weekly, with up to 5-7 sites per week (see scheduling information below for more details.) BCHD may request transition to different sites based on testing volumes, input from the public, partner willingness, or other reasons. Vendors should have the flexible to transition to 'event based' testing 1-2 times per week, if the health department receives requests from partners to perform COVID testing at high-volume community events (health fairs, events, etc.)

For testing locations that are outdoors, vendor should provide all equipment for outdoor testing locations (i.e. tents/trailers/vans/etc.) (Discussed in more detail below.)

For testing located indoors, vendor should include evaluation of indoor air for safety of COVID testing, including evaluation by individuals who are a certified industrial hygienist, infection control practitioner, environmental engineer, or similarly trained individual, who has the knowledge to assess if indoor space meets current CDC, OSHA, USEPA, MDH, ASHRAE (American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air-Conditioning Engineers), or AIHA (American Industrial Hygiene Association) guidance.

COVID-19 test sites should be ADA compliant, and accessible to those with disabilities.

COVID-19 testing site staff, registration and consent materials, and results should be available in Spanish. Resources should be available for patients who speak other languages besides English and Spanish.

Traffic Control

- For drive through testing sites, vendor will supply staff and materials for traffic control on the testing site. This includes cones and other materials for identifying lanes for traffic, as well as staff to assist with traffic flow. The quantity of materials and staff may need to be increased in medium and high demand settings.

Communications and promotion

- The vendor will promote testing clinics with signage during the testing event.
- The vendor will provide fliers and other promotional material advertising the testing schedule to partners.
- The vendor will work with BCHD to determine a distribution plan for fliers and other promotional materials, to raise awareness about the COVID-19 testing locations and schedule. The primary role of promotion of the clinic schedule lies with the vendor.
- BCHD will maintain responsibility for promoting the testing clinic schedule on BCHD's website and social media.
- Ideally communications material is provided by the vendor in Spanish as well as English. However, this is not required.

Materials for testing

- The vendor will provide all equipment and materials needed for a community testing clinic. This may include but is not limited to:
 - Van, Winnebago, or other transportation for supplies
 - Generators
 - Tables, chairs
 - Tent canopies, trailers, or kiosk stations
 - Heaters or fans/A/C for temperature control and comfort of staff
 - All office supplies (papers, clipboards, pens, etc.)
 - Computers, printers, barcode scanners, wi-fi, cell phones, etc. needed for testing registration and processing.
 - Coolers to store lab samples after swab collection
 - Porta potties and hand washing stations for staff, if not provided by the partner location
- Responsible for disposal of waste from testing sites, including "red bag" medical waste.
- If any equipment is left at a testing site after the testing event, it is the vendor's responsibility to ensure it is properly stored and secured and provide security if needed.

Staffing

All staff will be provided by the vendor. This includes but may not be limited to:

- Registration staff
- Staff to swab patients and/or observe patient self-swabs*

- *If patients are asked to self-swab, staff should still be available to swab patients who are not comfortable or not able to swab themselves, including children and infants, if parents/guardians choose not to swab them
- Staff who are observing patients perform swabs will meet current Maryland requirements on level of licensure needed to observe a COVID-19 swab (nasal or pharyngeal) being collected. Staff will be adequately trained and evaluated by the vendor prior to participating in a COVID-19 testing clinic and receive regular (at least monthly) evaluation to ensure proper technique is used. Staff who swab patients will meet current Maryland requirements on the level of licensure needed to collect a COVID-19 swab (nasal or pharyngeal). Staff will be adequately trained and evaluated by the vendor prior to participating in a COVID-19 testing clinic and receive regular (at least monthly) evaluation to ensure proper technique is used.
- The vendor is responsible for all managerial oversight of staff, including hiring, scheduling, training, discipline, and ongoing evaluation to ensure quality assurance.

Registration and Lab Requisitions

- Vendor will provide an online registration and lab requisition system.
- Community testing sites must have the option for on-site registration.
- There can also be an option for appointments, but community testing sites must be 'no appointment needed.'
- The registration and requisition form process must follow all state and national regulations regarding laboratory and COVID-19 testing.
- The vendor must share with BCHD the required and optional registration variables, including screen shots and/or a demonstration of the registration process.
 - A patient's email may be requested but must not be required for testing services or receiving lab results.
 - Social security number may be requested but must not be required for testing services or receiving lab results.
 - Identification should not be required for testing services or receiving lab results.
- BCHD prefers that the registration process be as short as possible, while still meeting federal and state requirements
- Registration material should be provided in Spanish as well as English.

Ordering Provider

- The vendor must provide an ordering provider, who provides a standing order for all COVID-19 tests conducted by the vendor.
- The ordering provider must be licensed to practice medicine in the State of Maryland, and COVID-19 testing must fall within their scope of practice.
- Provide the current Medical license number and first and last name of the ordering provider.

Laboratory Services

- The vendor must partner with a laboratory which performs COVID-19 PCR or NAAT testing.
- The laboratory must provide COVID-19 PCR or NAAT testing on an EUA approved platform
- The laboratory must have an active COVID-19 Maryland Permit number for PCR testing.
- The laboratory must comply with MDH lab reporting regulations, including having ELR capacity to report positive and negative COVID-19 test results to MDH daily
- The vendor must provide courier services from testing sites to lab. Courier services must be provided on the same day as laboratory testing.
- During periods of low and medium demand, 24-hour turnaround time is required. It is understandable that turnaround times may increase in periods of high demand and are dependent on multiple factors outside the control of the vendor and lab. However, the vendor and associated lab are expected to take reasonable measures to ensure the shortest possible turnaround time.

Resulting

- Vendor must provide an online portal for patients to check their test results.
- Patients must receive an email notification when their results are available.
- It is requested but not required that patients receive a text result, if selected by the patient, when their results are available.
- It is requested, but not required, that vendor call patients who test positive for COVID-19, in a timely manner when the result is available. For example, if test results are available prior to 11 PM, patients are called the same day. Results available from 11 PM through 6 AM can be called back after 6 AM. Calling of results should be available 7 days a week, and ideally would include holidays.
- Vendor must also have a mechanism to identify patients who are not able to check results via an online portal and call those patients with results.
- Patients must be provided with a phone number they can call if they are waiting for test results.
- Vendor must provide a daily list of individualized test results to BCHD. A BAA will be developed between BCHD and the vendor to allow for sharing of test level data.
- Vendor must provide a weekly report of number tested, patient demographics and percent positive at each testing location

Coordination with BCHD

- The vendor agrees to weekly calls with BCHD to coordinate testing activities.
- Vendors agree to discuss cancellation of testing sites (due to weather or other reasons) with BCHD and coordinate cancellation with the BCHD communications team and the testing partner site.

V. How to Apply

Applicants will begin by submitting a Letter of Intent as described below. BCHD will review the materials and screen the applicants for eligibility to determine who will be invited to submit a full proposal as described below. Full grant applications will be due to the BCHD on March 15, 2023, by 5:00 PM. Applicants will be notified about the status of their application by May 1, 2023.

Step 1: Letter of Intent Applicants must submit a Letter of Intent for the proposal to be considered. Applicants should use the template in Attachment 2. Letters of Intent for COVID-19 testing must be sent via email on February 23rd by 5:00 PM to Adena Greenbaum at adena.greenbaum@baltimorecity.gov. In the subject line of the email, please state your organization's name and COVID Testing. *A hard copy of the Letter of Intent is not necessary.*

The Letter of Intent submission must use the template found in Attachment 1.

Step 2: Submission of Proposals Applicants invited to submit a grant proposal should follow the application and proposal guidelines detailed below. **Grant proposals are due by email by 5:00 PM on March 15, 2023.**

Electronic versions of applications for COVID-19 Testing should be emailed to Adena Greenbaum at adena.greenbaum@baltimorecity.gov. In the subject line of the email, please put your organization's name and COVID Testing

Applications must include the following items for full consideration:

(1) Transmittal letter: This email from the applicant organization must specify the title of the application, the applicant organization, the project director, and the funding requested.

(2) Authorized signature: The cover sheet of the budget form (Attachment 4 B tab 432 A) should be completed and signed by the chief executive officer or the individual responsible for conducting the affairs of the applicant organization and legally authorized to execute contracts on behalf of the applicant organization.

(3) Application:

Applications should be well-written, clear, and concise. Applications may not exceed 10 pages single-spaced on standard 8 ½" x 11" paper with one-inch margins and using 12-point Times New Roman or Arial font. Tables and charts may use a 10-point font or larger. All pages of the application must be numbered. The budget and budget justification are not included in the maximum 10-page limit. The appendices specified in the guidelines below are excluded from the 10-page limit.

The proposal should be structured using these topic headings: Table of contents (not included in the 10-page limit)

- I. Organizational Background and Capacity
- II. Principles and Values
- III. Service Delivery

- IV. Staffing Plan
- V. Evaluation and Quality Assurance
- VI. Proposed Budget
- VII. Appendices (not included in the 10-page limit)
 - A. Mandatory appendices:
 - 1. List of officers and Board of Directors or other governing body
 - 2. Organizational Chart
 - 3. Résumés of key personnel
 - 4. Most recent financial audit
 - 5. Copies of all relevant licenses and certifications
 - 6. Certificate of Good Standing from the Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation
 - 7. A copy of a current Maryland Permit number for COVID-19 PCR or NAAT testing
 - 8. A copy of national certification of lab compliance (i.e. CLIA/CAP, etc.)
 - 9. Provide three references and describe how these contacts are familiar with the bidder's organization and the nature of the work performed.
 - 10. Provide a list of any legal actions taken against your organization, including lawsuits, injunctions, or court orders within the past 5 years.
 - 11. Provide documentation of relationship with a laboratory that performs COVID PCR or NAAT testing

Appendices should be limited to only the material necessary to support the application.

- 1.) Organizational Background and Capacity
 - a. Provide an overview of your organization, including how long it has operated, and how long it has performed the specific services in this scope. Provide the website address or a statement that the organization has no website.
 - b. Describe your organization's experience providing clinical services such as those outlined in this proposal, meeting contractual deliverables, and your capacity to meet all of the requirements of this project. Please include if your organization has provided similar services to local or state health departments.
 - c. Describe the facilities owned and/or operated by the organization.
 - d. If your organization has a board, identify its members (can be a website that identifies board members)
 - e. A copy of a current Maryland Permit number for COVID-19 PCR or NAAT testing
 - f. A copy of national certification of lab compliance (i.e. CLIA/CAP, etc.)
 - g. Provide the name and medical license number of the ordering provider, licensed in the state of Maryland to practice medicine.
- 2.) Principles and Values
 - a. Describe how your organization's current practices ensure services are delivered in a culturally and linguistically competent manner.

- b. Describe how you will integrate principles of equity and anti-stigma into this work.
- 3.) Service Delivery
- a. Describe your organization's plan to provide all services outlined in the Scope of Work section of this RFP.
 - b. Describe the major steps or actions and timeframe in carrying out the project. List key actions or steps in the implementation of the project. Describe the process and timeframe for reaching these benchmarks.
 - c. Provide a timeline for accomplishing milestones and deliverables.
 - d. Describe registration and resulting capacity and systems
 - e. Describe courier services, laboratory services, and turnaround time capacity
- 4.) Staffing Plan
- a. Describe your proposed staffing plan. Attach an organizational chart that shows how staff will be organized and managed.
 - b. Describe your organization's practices to retain staff and provide the turnover rate of staff in your organization over the past two years.
 - c. Identify the project director and describe his/her level of responsibility within the applicant organization, qualifications to lead the project, and the role in carrying out the project. Identify any other essential staff, their roles in the project, and their relevant qualifications. Provide resumes as an appendix to the application (no more than 2 pages/individual).
- 5.) Evaluation and Quality Assurance
- a. Describe how your organization obtains and incorporates feedback from clients and other stakeholders into the development, implementation, operation, and improvement of program services.
 - b. Describe what data you will collect, analyze, and use to improve services through this project. Discuss planned analysis techniques. Discuss the capacity of the organization to collect and report data metrics and quantifiable outcomes.
- 6.) Proposed Budget
- a. Provide a detailed budget for delivery of the scope of work, including personnel and operating and administrative costs, using the BCHD 432 budget packet.
 - b. For the purpose of this proposal, please submit a budget narrative for the following time period (July 1, 2023- June 30, 2024). Bidders are required to submit a detailed itemized budget.
 - i. Include descriptions for each of the following budget costs:
 - 1. Personnel
List all personnel whose salaries will be paid in whole or in part by the fiscal agent contract funding. For each position, provide job title, employee name, brief description of duties and responsibilities related to the contract, annual salary, percentage of time to be devoted to and paid under the contract, and amount to be charged to the contract.
 - 2. Fringe Benefits

Provide the aggregate amount of fringe benefits for personnel and include a breakdown of the benefits covered by this amount.

3. Travel

All travel must directly benefit the work supported by this contract. List all travel anticipated to occur during the performance period. Be specific about who will travel and anticipated timeline.

4. Supplies

5. Indirect Costs

10 percent (%) is the maximum allowable indirect cost.

6. Other Resources

Provide information about current relevant sources of financial or material support for your organization.

- ii. Budget narrative/justification and completed budget form BCHD 432 budget packet. Applicants must include a line-item budget narrative detailing the purpose of each budget expenditure.

Questions from Applicants: Please email questions to adena.greenbaum@baltimorecity.gov by noon on February 10, 2023. Questions will be included during the public Zoom call on February 13, 2023 at 1pm. Following the public conference call and after all questions are received by BCHD, staff will circulate a master question and answer document and post this document on BCHD's website.

Applicants are advised that the authorized contact for all matters related to this RFP is Dr. Adena Greenbaum.

VI. Proposal Evaluation Criteria

The application will be scored out of 100 points and will be weighted in the following manner (note, not including all elements of the proposal, exceeding page limits, or not following instructions, will be considered non-responsive on the part of the applicant and will result in elimination from the process):

- I. Organizational Background and Capacity (20 points)
- II. Principles and Values (5 points)
- III. Service Delivery (35 points)
- IV. Staffing Plan (10 points)
- V. Evaluation and Quality Assurance (20 points)
- VI. Proposed Budget (10 points)
- VII. Appendices (not included in the 10-page limit) (While not included in the point count, missing appendices or too many appendices may result in the applicant being considered as non-responsive.)

The application will be deemed responsive if the applicant(s) responds to and meets all of the requirements of the RFP. Applicants may be invited for interviews to discuss the proposal elements in more detail at the discretion of the selection committee. BCHD reserves the right to cancel this RFP and solicit new proposals if, in BCHD's sole judgment, the best interests of BCHD will be served by doing so. The selection

committee will evaluate each application and use the following for scoring components for each submission:

- Applications will be screened and reviewed for eligibility by BCHD staff before advancing to the next phase of the application process.
- After initial screening, applications will be reviewed by a panel of reviewers.
- Awardees are not guaranteed the full amount for which they apply.
- Anticipated Award notification date for applicants is May 1, 2023.
- Right of Rejection. BCHD reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to reject any and all applications.

PLEASE NOTE:

- (1) Failure to include all elements of the application, exceeding page limits, or not following instructions will cause the application to be considered non-responsive to the RFA and will result in its disqualification.**
- (2) Applicants should review the contract Attachment 3 in detail. Concerns on contract language should be addressed immediately with BCHD PRIOR to submitting an application.**
- (3) We expect vendors to begin work July 1, 2023. Contracts will need to be signed by this time. Vendors will be expected to respond within 2 business days to any email related to the administration of the award throughout the project period. Failure to respond promptly may compromise funding.**

VII. Availability of Funds

- All awards are subject to the availability of appropriated funds and any modifications or additional requirements that may be imposed by city policies and/or regulations.
- Modifications or additional requirements may be imposed by city policies and/or regulations.
- Funding for this project is limited to \$1,700,000 over an 18-month period with work expected to begin no later than July 1, 2023.

VIII. Attachments to the RFA

1. LOI Template
2. Budget Templates
 - a. BCHD Budget Form Instructions
 - b. BCHD 432 A-I Budget Form
 - c. BCHD Budget Narrative Form 433
- 3. Example Contract - Applicants are expected to review language and share any concerns on language with BCHD PRIOR to submitting a grant application.**