

**Targeted HIV Testing and Linkage to Medical Care
Questions and Answers
RFP#: HIV/TESTLINK-0475.1
Posted 9-7-11**

QUESTION	RESPONSE
<p>#1 For what type of location are we to use Form D? Is it just for places where we contract for services – which is not allowed? Is it for any “clinic” site we use or refer people to? Is it for each outreach location which could be many and change frequently?</p>	<p>#1 Form D should be used to list the locations where services are provided. For some entities that do outreach within the community and provide services off-site, the contractor may then choose to only list the primary business location where the organization’s central office is located.</p>
<p>#2 The instructions on page 20 say that there can be no subcontracts. I just want to check to be sure that is true since a subcontract with a Black gay organization would be very advantageous to our agency and their organization.</p>	<p>#2 Subcontracting is not permitted under this competitive request for proposal.</p>
<p>#3</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If a group wants to form a collaborative, how should it be structured so as not to be considered a subcontract (prohibited on page 20)? 2. Does the restriction on subcontracting exclude being a fiscal agent for a collaborative? 3. If an organization is funded for Expanded Testing, would requesting funding under this RFP be considered a duplication of services? 4. If so, is it still a duplication of Expanded Testing efforts if we are funding different staff positions? 	<p>#3</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All work must be performed directly by the Contractor. The Contractor may propose the idea of a collaborative; however, final approval for any collaborative will come from DSHS. 2. If a collaborative were proposed and approved by DSHS, the Contractor could function as a fiscal agent. However, final approval for any collaborative will come from DSHS. 3. This would be considered a duplication of services if the organization is already targeting a population they wish to target under this RFP. 4. The targeted population would have to be different in order for it not to be considered a duplication of services.

<p>#4</p> <p>We are reviewing the referenced RFP and in reading section C. Use of Funds number 4) duplicate services already available to the priority populations and sub-populations, we have a question. We are providing protocol based counseling/testing, CRCS (Comprehensive Risk Counseling Services) and piloting social networking strategies funded by a separate DSHS HIV Prevention Grant to targeted high risk populations. Can we respond to this new RFP to expand the above services and to develop and implement a new condom distribution plan, or would this be considered duplication of services?</p>	<p>#4</p> <p>This RFP calls for more focused testing efforts, enhanced linkage services, and integrated condom distribution that exceeds the requirements of any other DSHS HIV prevention contract. An existing DSHS HIV prevention contractor would be eligible to apply for this RFP.</p>
<p>#5</p> <p>The proposal states that the project is specific to Bexar, Dallas, Tarrant and Travis counties. Are no other counties considered?</p>	<p>#5</p> <p>This project is specific to the counties listed in the RFP (Bexar, Dallas, Tarrant, and Travis). There are no plans at this time to expand this project into any other Texas counties.</p>
<p>#6</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is a letter of intent required if so by when? 2. Can we apply as a lead agency and still subcontract with someone else? 3. Is there someone helping with application development? 4. Is there an average award amount expected? 5. Is there a requirement for a specific amount of the work to be done in house? 	<p>#6</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A letter of intent is not required. 2. Subcontracting is not permitted under this competitive request for proposal. 3. DSHS staff can answer questions regarding the competitive request for proposal using the process listed on page 12 of the solicitation document. However, respondents should use their own resources for application development specific to the respondent. 4. Award amounts will be determined upon final review of the competitive response. 5. As subcontracting is not allowed under the terms of this competitive request for proposal, all work must be completed by the respondent.

<p>#7 My question concerns Form J. Tarrant County Public Health currently has existing DSHS contracts; is it required to submit Section J with the RFP?</p>	<p>#7 All forms listed in the competitive RFP must be completed and submitted with the Respondent's application</p>
<p>#8 The introduction section in the instructions packet stipulates that the project's funding will be available to a total of 10 contracts specifically within the Dallas, Bexar, Tarrant and Travis counties. However, is this RFP also applicable for contracts within the vicinity of Harris County, Texas? Our agency meets the eligibility requirements mentioned in the packet and we also offer HIV/STD testing and referral to other services to the target population which is mentioned in the RFP. If we are not eligible based on the county we serve, could you please kindly inform us whether a similar RFP is currently available for Harris County?</p>	<p>#8 This RFP is specific to the counties listed in the solicitation document (Bexar, Dallas, Tarrant, and Travis). There are no plans in the foreseeable future to expand this project outside of these identified counties.</p>
<p>#9</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We already have a testing program in our prevention education department. Would you like to see the sources of income for that program? 2. On Form M (Performance Measures), objective A demands that 75% of clients testing for HIV will receive results. Are these "results" the ones from the preliminary screening test that we run (OraQuick advance rapid HIV test), or are they the results of the confirmatory Western blot test? 3. Does the budgeting system require us to spend the money through reimbursements, or through a draw down system? 	<p>#9</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This information is not required; however, it may be provided as an appendix document with the application submitted. 2. This performance measure includes all results regardless of the testing technology. If an agency uses rapid HIV tests and confirms those results through a Western blot, the result from the confirmatory test need to be delivered. 3. Reimbursements are based on actual costs incurred. Contractors will submit a monthly voucher provided by DSHS to request reimbursement each month.

#10

1. For many of the forms in the body of the grant, the instruction on the bottom of the page reads: "a maximum of ___ additional pages may be attached if necessary." Does that simply mean that each of those sections can reach a maximum of the pages listed, or is it that number plus one, for the question page? The word "additional" is a little unclear to us. Also, are we permitted to add an appendix of documents that runs outside those page limits (letters of support, our HIV risk assessment, confidentiality agreement, etc)?
2. The document clearly states that we can not make cash payments to recipients of service. We are interested in implementing a Social Networking recruitment plan, as recommended by the CDC, which involves giving incentives of local gift cards to recruiters, and the high- risk people within their network that they bring in for testing. Will this be allowed within the grant?. If it is not allowed, is it something we could use the exceptions form to get around?
3. When writing our Work Plan (Form N) and I am confused about questions 1 and 3. The first question asks us to outline all our recruitment strategies, and the third question asked to describe our plan to use multiple strategies and efforts to recruit MSMs. After a detailed report of our recruitment strategies in the first question, I am not sure what to write for the third one. They seem to be asking for exactly the same thing. Please, if you can, clarify what you are looking for?

#10

1. Respondents must ensure their responses stay within the maximum number of pages allowed for that form. The respondent can use the remaining space of the existing form's page plus the listed number of additional pages allowed for their response. An appendix is permitted to include any requested supplemental materials, forms, etc. The appendix may not be used to continue narrative answers to the questions listed on the given form.
2. Tangible reinforcements (also referred to as incentives i.e. gift cards, t-shirts, etc.) are allowable costs and may be budgeted as part of this RFP.
3. Question #3 is essentially a subset of question 1. Of the recruitment strategies outlined in question 1, which of those will be used to focus efforts on men who have sex with men (MSM)?

#11

1. Is subcontracting of services allowable for this funding request?
2. Form D requests all of the contract services locations or clinic sites for the respondent's organization. Does this include exact outreach locations and venues where testing and condom distribution will be conducted?
3. Are bisexual men and their female partners part of the target population in addition to men who have sex with men?
4. Is there a specific or general target number or percentage of the total people who will be tested that is expected to be men who have sex with men?

#11

1. As subcontracting is not allowed under the terms of this competitive request for proposal. All work must be completed by the respondent.
2. Form D should be used to list the locations where services are provided. For some entities that do outreach within the community and provide services off-site, the contractor may then choose to only list the primary business location where the organization's central office is located.
3. Bisexual men are included in the men who have sex with men definition. If a female partner is determined to be high-risk, then it's appropriate to provide an HIV test to her under this project.
4. No specific number or percentage is defined in the RFP. Under this project, emphasis must be placed on men who have sex with men. This should result in a significant majority of tests being directed towards this population.