

**20PSX0080: DPH Answers to Questions received by DPH
6/9/2020**

1. Is there a maximum budget amount planned for this contract?

Answer: Payment schedules and budget amounts will be negotiated with the selected vendor.

2. If the state experiences a significant resurgence of COVID-19 in the fall/winter, will additional funds be made available?

Answer: Contact tracing volume will be related to the infection rate in the state and will likely be related to increased exposure. We anticipate needing 700 new contact tracers and there must be capacity to scale up to 1,000 if the need arises.

3. Please describe in detail the function of the CRCs. Will the CRCs be employees of the service organizations? What is the state agency managing them?

Answer: The selection and oversight of the community resource coordinators is the responsibility of a different state agency. The successful applicant will need to ensure communication between the established community resource coordinators and contact tracers, e.g. referrals and confirmation of engagement by the community resource coordinator.

4. Describe the coordination needed with the local Departments of Health. Are all Departments of Health taking part?

Answer: The successful applicant will be responsible for coordinating with all local health jurisdictions in Connecticut to ensure statewide coverage for contact tracing. The successful applicant will need to ensure communication between the 64 established local health departments/districts. Please provide your recommendations for providing this statewide coverage.

5. How do you envision the division of the different types of calls? Once a contact tracer has the original 40-min interview, will that same contact tracer be the one to follow up with the same case?

Answer: There will be no unsolicited calls. The calls that might be managed will be as follows:

- *Call initiated by a contact tracer to initiate initial interview with identified cases and contacts*
- *Call initiated by a contact tracer for each day a person is asked to self-quarantine or self-isolate*
- *Call initiated by resident returning call received from Contact Tracer*
- *Call initiated by resident engaged in contact tracing to provide more information or with questions*

NOTE: The State of Connecticut is procuring a cloud based VOIP phone system that would allow for a central number number to both send and receive calls and distribute incoming calls regionally. While the successful applicant to this RFP would need to work within the system they would not need to develop. Please provide your recommendations for managing calls and staff.

6. How many volunteers have already been identified and how many are working on contact tracing? Who are they supervised by?

Answer: We would like to onboard the 700 contact tracers as quickly as possible. There are 600 registered users in the ContaCT system. These are comprised of existing staff and volunteers of state and local health departments.

7. Given likelihood of contacts into NY, MA, and RI -- should we plan for calls extending beyond CT? What has been the process of reporting to other states so far? In the press it's been mentioned that CT may join forces with NY and NJ or other states. Has any progress been made for that?

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Answer: It is the intention of DPH to partner with one qualified, responsible proposer that meet the specifications and requirements in order to best meet the contact tracing staffing demands of the COVID-19 pandemic and accommodate, in whole, tracing efforts throughout the State. It's possible some contacts of Connecticut cases may reside outside the state.

8. Will all contact tracers be working from home? If not all, will we need to set up office space for some to work out of? Or, can they be hosted by the agencies with the Community Resource Coordinators?

Answer: There is no physical plant for contact tracers to work.

9. What is the information that will be gathered from each responder?

Answer: At peak volume, in one week there could be up to 40,000 cases and contacts that would require initial and monitoring contacts. Up to 50-60% are expected to opt into email or text communications. This would be accomplished through the electronic ContaCT system.

10. Will the data about each COVID-positive case only come from the State DPH?

Answer: The ContaCT system is the documentation system of record.

11. Do you expect the vendor to utilize other technology tools such as SMS (texting), email, direct mail, on a regular basis, to provide information and raise awareness prior to phone outreach?

Answer: Cases and contacts may not be available, and some may opt out and refuse to receive monitoring by a Contact Tracer. Please include recommendations on how you propose to address.

12. Under performance metrics, you mention quarterly surveys from samples of impacted residents to measure quality of customer service. Can we use a survey tool like SurveyMonkey?

Answer: We are looking for the successful candidate to stand up one team to explicitly do contact tracing. Please include recommendations for how to ensure quality improvement.

13. How many total hours of calls do you envision?

Answer: Contact Tracers are expected to be scheduled from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. seven days per week.

14. Will we be doing contact tracing inside other institutions such as nursing homes, prisons, etc.?

Answer: We don't anticipate the need for contact tracing to occur in these settings.

15. For individuals who choose not to respond to electronic/telephonic communications, do you envision any in-person outreach to them?

Answer: Please see response to question #11.

16. Will DPH be conducting a public education campaign to raise awareness, or do you want the contractor to build that into the proposal? Can a contractor propose using promotional media engagement as a way to attract people to the job as contact tracers?

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Answer: this solicitation is focused on conducting contact tracing. Please share your recommendations for recruitment of volunteers and staff.

17. Will the Department of Public Health be developing promotional materials such as videos, advertising, social media, etc. or is that the responsibility of the vendor?

Answer: Please see response to question #16.

18. What is the average number of contacts per infected individual based on the first wave of COVID-19?

Answer: Contact tracing volume will be related to the infection rate in the state and will likely be related to increased exposure.

19. Under performance metrics, you request the average time for each contact tracer to notify relevant parties following identified case. Who is the relevant party? Is it DPH? CRCs? Local public health departments?

Answer: COVID-19 positive cases and contacts will require initial and monitoring contacts. Up to 50-60% are expected to opt into email or text communications. This would be accomplished through the electronic ContaCT system. Those cases and contacts not utilizing the email and/or text communications will require telephone contact to ensure they are complying with public health guidance and to monitor symptoms.

20. Can you expand on the qualifications expected of contact tracers? Are college degrees imperative? Are there any equivalent qualifications?

Answer: DPH will be providing preferred skills for all contact tracers. Minimum requirements are a college degree (associate or higher) or active enrollment in a college program with a healthcare focus.

21. Will you require background checks be conducted for contact tracers?

Answer: DPH has no requirements for background checks, drug screening or fingerprinting.

22. Do you have any documentation on the ContaCT platform that you can share to familiarize ourselves with it? Is there a mobile-friendly version of the software?

Answer: Training materials are in development and will be provided to the successful applicant.

23. Has there been any exploration of which devices should be purchased for contract tracers and what technical support will be available?

Answer: Applicants should have experience working with enterprise web-based systems and telephony solutions. The ContaCT system and the telephony system in development will be provided by the state of Connecticut along with training. We expect Contact Tracers to be outfitted with laptop technology and adequate internet access to access ContaCT and use Voice over IP (VoIP) telephony.

24. What are the specifications required for devices used by the contact tracers (security, virus protection, Windows 10, etc.)?

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Answer: Please see response to question #23.