

Department of Public Health
COVID-19 Vaccine Delivery Assurance Program
Request for Proposal

DUE: January 8, 2021 5:00 p.m. CST via Email

Background

The State of Illinois is seeking to partner with well-established commercial pharmacies to administer COVID-19 vaccine provided by the State and to serve on the forefront of the COVID-19 mass vaccination campaign.

The State is seeking vendor proposals to assist with COVID-19 vaccine immunization services delivered within local communities throughout the State of Illinois. The immunization of Illinois residents with a safe and effective COVID-19 vaccine is a critical component of the strategy to reduce COVID-19 related illness, hospitalizations, and deaths and to help restore societal functioning. The success of Illinois' COVID-19 mass vaccination activities rely also on the organization, task management and data collection of the planning and operations efforts. Adherence to timelines, budgets and data integrity are key.

The State is soliciting proposals from private sector pharmacies that have an existing model for providing end-to-end management of the COVID-19 vaccination process throughout the State, excluding the City of Chicago. Services would include, but are not limited to, cold chain management, on-site vaccinations, fulfillment of reporting requirements, and facilitation of safe vaccination of the patient population. These additional access points will reduce the burden on local health departments, federally qualified healthcare centers, and other local not-for-profit healthcare agencies that do not have their own pharmacies or the specialized equipment and supplies required for storing and administering the vaccine. The selected vendor may bill an administration fee but must follow federal CMS rules as applicable. No one may be turned away due to lack of insurance.

While the State of Illinois will provide the initial supply of vaccine, should the vaccine become commercially available, vendor(s) will be asked to secure the vaccine directly.

The State will evaluate proposals and make awards for the State of Illinois for all-inclusive mass vaccination services. An award will be made to vendors that can fulfill all services referenced in the scope of work indicated below. Partial awards will not be considered. However, vendors may engage subcontractors to perform part or all services. If subcontractors will be engaged, vendors must include a complete list of subcontractors, their addresses, and a description of the work each subcontractor will be performing in the proposal.

The vendor(s) selected will be expected to utilize the most recent IDPH Illinois COVID-19 Mass Vaccination Planning Guide, provide services consistent with the protocols listed in the most recent Guide, and adjust operations and vaccination priorities based on updates from the CDC and the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). The vendor(s) should have a robust pharmaceutical chain with multiple satellite locations in urban and rural areas throughout the State of Illinois.

The vendor(s) selected will be expected to provide these services for the term of the contract, which is anticipated to be one year from contract execution. The contract may be extended by mutual agreement between both parties.

The State will provide the most current version of the Illinois COVID-19 Mass Vaccination Planning Guide within 24 hours of each update. The State will provide a minimum of one IDPH staff member available for consultation with the vendors, the vendors' staff, and the vendors' subcontractors regarding the administration of the vaccine.

Vendor(s) must provide sufficient staffing of healthcare providers licensed or authorized by law in the State of Illinois with a Scope of Practice/approved Expanded Scope of Practice to deliver the vaccines to meet surge demands. All services are to be provided under continuous and direct supervision by the vendor, and will administer COVID vaccine using only information, documentation, training, and directions provided or directed by IDPH.

Vendor(s) will submit daily updates in I-CARE, its successor or other data systems, which reflect the most current number of patients who have received their first dose, number of clients who have received their second dose, vaccine on hand and vaccine administered; and documentation of quality assurance checks in a format provided by IDPH. The vendors must capture various data elements in I-CARE or its successor through an Electronic Medical Record (EMR). Data elements include but are not limited to patient demographics, vaccine administered code set (CVX), lot number, vaccine expiration date, precautions and contraindications, and additional data requirements set by the CDC and the State.

Vendor(s) must provide all equipment and supplies including ultra-cold storage or other approved storage as required by the vaccine manufacturer for effective mass vaccination administration in anticipation of, or in response to, vaccine and patient volume at vendor's expense. Any equipment acquired by the vendor for use under the contract will remain property of the vendor.

Key Dates

December 22, 2020	RFP released
December 28, 2020	All questions from prospective vendors due via email to Ashley.E.Dorworth@illinois.gov not later than 5:00 p.m. CST
January 4, 2021	Answers to questions from prospective vendors released and posted at the following link: http://dph.illinois.gov/rfp/vaccine-delivery-assurance-program
January 8, 2021	Submissions due via email to Ashley.E.Dorworth@illinois.gov not later than 5:00 p.m. CST
January 15, 2021 (estimated)	Contract award
January 29, 2021 (estimated)	Start Date

Directions

The State is seeking proposals from interested vendor(s) to assist with COVID vaccine immunization services delivered throughout the State of Illinois, excluding the City of Chicago.

The proposals must be submitted as two separate documents. The first document will include the vendor's response as to how it will deliver the services required and cannot include any pricing information. The pricing information must be presented on the attached budget template (see Attachment A). Each document will be evaluated separately. Proposals must include:

- Name of vendor, vendor's address and contact person, including work phone, cell phone, and email address.
- Operational plan (not to exceed ten pages total) that describes the vendor's proposal for each of the functions described in the Scope of Work stated below.
- Timeline (not to exceed two pages) that includes being fully operational by January 18, 2021.
- Plan for data collection, tracking, and weekly submission of all required datapoints to the State. All data must be in Excel, exportable to Excel, or otherwise transferrable to the State in an agreed-upon format.
- Plan for hiring and training vendor's staff on the foundational and evolving requirements of the various COVID-19 vaccines as they become available.
- References, which shall include the company names and company representative's contact information (name, title, email and phone number) for three entities for whom the vendor has provided the same or similar services described in this RFP and of equal or greater vaccination capacity.
- Proposed pricing (submitted separately on the attached budget template).

Proposals must be submitted via email no later than 5:00 p.m. CST on January 8, 2020 to:

Ashley Dorworth
 Illinois Department of Public Health
 Office of Preparedness and Response
Ashley.E.Dorworth@illinois.gov

The State reserves the right to award to the vendor(s) that have the best overall proposal within the State's timelines and to issue supplemental solicitations as warranted. The State may award to the most responsive and responsible respondent whose proposal best meets the criteria listed below.

Scope of Work

The State seeks to award contracts for state-wide mass vaccination administrators with locations in multiple urban and rural areas within the State of Illinois. The State seeks proposals that include all of the following mass vaccination operations:

MANDATORY ELEMENTS

- 1) Vendor must have existing locations throughout the State of Illinois.
- 2) A system already in place for scheduling, registration, administering, tracking, providing follow up, as well as reminding and securing an appointment for a second dose, with documentation of administration, for each client serviced.
- 3) A method and process for reporting adverse reactions in the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS).
- 4) Vendor must have the ability to integrate with/transfer Electronic Medical Record data to I-CARE.
- 5) Vendor must have ability to report required vaccination data (approximately 20 data fields submitted via an HL7 message, including patient demographic information such as name, DOB, race, ethnicity, address, sex, occupation, etc. I-CARE is also able to capture and store

detailed vaccine administration information such as CVX, lot number, vaccine expiration date, precautions and contraindications, and additional data requirements set forth by the CDC or the State, including race and ethnicity during the COVID-19 vaccination campaign) to the local and state level jurisdiction every 24 hours.

REGISTRATIONS

- 1) Vendor must have an approved registration in I-CARE upon award.
- 2) Vendor must be approved or have applied for approval by IDPH as a COVID-19 pandemic vaccination provider upon award.

PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

Vendor must include in their operational plan how they will:

- 1) Subcontract with local pharmacies in areas where they do not have a corporate presence.
- 2) Remain in direct communication with IDPH appointee on a weekly basis.
- 3) Follow evolving IDPH guidance.
- 4) Follow the most recent version of the Illinois COVID-19 Mass Vaccination Plan.
- 5) Collaborate with the LHD to ensure vaccination priorities are aligned with the State response. This includes following the protocol for prioritization of clients receiving vaccine based on specified criteria and phase of mass vaccination campaign.
- 6) Have the ability to secure sufficient quantities of vaccine-associated supplies (e.g., syringes, needles, personal protective equipment, specialized storage equipment) in a timely manner and maintain a steady supply stream.
- 7) Have the ability to ensure equipment and systems are in place for dictated cold chain integrity storage of vaccine depending on vaccination type. CDC guidelines shall be adhered to, as well as any and all information provided by the vaccine manufacturer in the vaccine insert (e.g., Pfizer to minus 80c, Moderna to minus 20c) upon execution of the contract.
- 8) Adhere to all applicable Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) COVID-19 requirements.
- 9) Schedule, staff, and coordinate vendor-operated pre-existing locations in the State.
- 10) Provide immunization services at third party locations as designated by the State or as requested by said third parties. Immunization services may be required at facilities housing persons with special needs. Vendor shall ensure that its staff are appropriately trained and qualified to administer vaccines in all circumstances.
- 11) Ensure adequate staffing of healthcare providers licensed or authorized by law in the State of Illinois with a Scope of Practice (see from <https://www.idfpr.com> for details)/approved Expanded Scope of Practice (see Attachment B: Dental Scope Proclamation; Attachment C: Pharmacists.Techs Scope Proclamation; Attachment D: EMS Vaccination Admin Plans) to deliver the vaccines, including surge staffing for vendor-operated pre-existing locations in the State.
- 12) Schedule and coordinate vaccination dates at vendor's pharmacies.
- 13) Demonstrate their understanding of COVID-19 mass vaccination planning and operations needs in Illinois and their ability to effectively provide planning, logistical operations, quality control, staffing, tools and resources necessary for success.

EXPERIENCE

Vendor must minimally provide details of its seasonal flu immunization program that demonstrates its experience providing successful administration, project tracking and quality control services where immunization of a subset of or the entire population of a state was intended. Details of additional immunization programs that involve a vaccine that requires at least one additional dose within a specified timeframe are desirable.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

- 1) Vendor shall designate a Project Manager who shall be the primary contact person designated by vendor for oversight of the resulting agreement and communications related to same.
- 2) **BUSINESS ENTERPRISE FOR MINORITIES, WOMEN, AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES ACT PARTICIPATION AND UTILIZATION PLAN:** This solicitation request contains a goal to include businesses owned and controlled by minorities, women, and persons with disabilities. There is a Business Enterprise Program (BEP) target goal of 4% of the total anticipated award amount. All questions regarding the subcontracting goal must be submitted by December 21, 2020 to Ashley.E.Dorworth@illinois.gov with the other questions associated with this solicitation. Vendor submissions should include all BEP target information through a Utilization Plan (see Attachment E). Failure to submit a Utilization Plan shall render the offer non-responsive. Businesses include in Utilization Plans as meeting BEP requirements as prime vendors or subcontractors must be certified by the Department of Central Management Services as BEP vendors. Go to <https://www2.illinois.gov/cms/business/sell2/bep/Pages/default.aspx> for complete requirements for BEP certification. Vendors may visit <https://cms.diversitycompliance.com/> to search for certified BEP vendors. The NIGP codes used to calculate the Business Enterprise Goal are 948-07 Administration Services, 948-43 Health Information Services, 948-72 Pharmaceutical Services, and 948-92 Vaccination Program Services. This is not an all-encompassing list of vendors that may be used as subcontractors to fulfill this goal. If the vendor has a potential subcontracting opportunity for goods or services that would be considered applicable to this contract, the vendor may use that subcontractor to fulfill the BEP goal, assuming that the subcontractor is BEP certified with the State of Illinois.
- 3) Vendor must demonstrate that they will follow best practices related to vaccine administration.
- 4) Vendor must accept that information provided regarding COVID-19 mass vaccination operations will evolve over time as IDPH guidance is updated.
- 5) The proposal must also include the vendor's current insurance coverage plan applicable to the proposed operations and continuing operational management of all proposed deliverables for this contract during the contract period. The insurance coverage must meet the State's standard contract terms shown in Attachment F.
- 6) Prevailing Wage Rates shall apply.
- 7) Vendor's proposed pricing shall be inclusive of all costs including but not limited to salaries, supplies, equipment, PPE, travel (e.g., transportation, lodging, meals), facility, and system costs (see Attachment A: Budget Template).

Selection of Vendor

The State determines how well the vendor meets the responsiveness requirements. The State ranks proposals, without consideration of price, from best to least qualified using a point ranking system (unless otherwise specified) as an aid in conducting the evaluation. Respondents who

receive fewer than the minimum required points will not be considered for price evaluation and award.

If the State does not consider the price to be fair and reasonable and negotiations fail to meet an acceptable price, the State reserves the right to cancel the award and take appropriate action to meet the needs of the State. The State determines whether the price is fair and reasonable by considering the proposal, including the vendor’s qualifications, the vendor’s reputation, all prices submitted, other known prices, the project budget, and other relevant factors.

The chart below describes the elements of responsiveness that IDPH will evaluate in the Vendors’ proposals (see Attachment G).

Proposal Specification Checklist Table: Please indicate, utilizing the table below, the section and page number where the requested information is located in your proposal. Respondent must complete this Proposal Specification Checklist Table provided as Attachment G to identify how their proposal meets the requirements of the solicitation.	
<u>Mandatory Element</u> Vendor must have existing locations throughout the State of Illinois, where vaccination of patients can occur.	Where, in the vendor’s response, is their ability to meet these mandatory elements discussed?
	Section Page(s)
<u>Mandatory Element</u> Vendor must have a system already in place for scheduling, registration, administering, tracking, providing follow up, as well as reminding and securing an appointment for the second dose, with documentation of administration, for each client serviced.	Where, in the vendor’s response, is their ability to meet these mandatory elements discussed?
	Section Page(s)
<u>Mandatory Element</u> Vendor must have a method for reporting and tracking adverse events in VAERS.	Where, in the vendor’s response, is their ability to meet these mandatory elements discussed?
	Section Page(s)
<u>Mandatory Element</u> Vendor must have the ability to integrate with/transfer Electronic Medical Record (EMR) data to I-CARE.	Where, in the vendor’s response, is their ability to meet these mandatory elements discussed?
	Section Page(s)

<p><u>Mandatory Element</u></p> <p>Vendor must have the ability to report required vaccination data (approximately 20 data fields submitted via an HL7 message, including patient demographic information such as name, DOB, race, ethnicity, address, sex, occupation, etc. I-CARE is also able to capture and store detailed vaccine administration information such as CVX, lot number, vaccine expiration date, precautions and contraindications, and additional data requirements set forth by the CDC or the State, including race and ethnicity during the COVID-19 vaccination campaign) to the local, state, and federal jurisdictions every 24 hours.</p>		<p>Where, in the vendor’s response, is their ability to meet these mandatory elements discussed?</p> <p>Section</p> <p>Page(s)</p>
<p><u>Mandatory Element</u></p> <p>Vendor must provide 3 references with complete contact information</p>		<p>Where, in the vendor’s response, is their ability to meet these mandatory elements discussed?</p> <p>Section</p> <p>Page(s)</p>
<p><u>Responsive Category</u> <i>Location in RFP</i></p>	<p><u>Program Specifications</u></p>	<p><u>Vendor’s Proposal Page Reference</u></p>
<p>REGISTRATIONS</p>	<p>Vendor must have an approved registration in I-CARE upon award.</p>	<p>Section</p> <p>Page(s)</p>
	<p>Vendor must be approved or have applied for approval by IDPH as a COVID-19 pandemic vaccination provider upon award.</p>	<p>Section</p> <p>Page(s)</p>
<p>PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION</p>	<p>Subcontract with local pharmacies in areas where they do not have a corporate presence.</p>	<p>Section</p> <p>Page(s)</p>
	<p>Remain in direct communication with IDPH appointee on a weekly basis.</p>	<p>Section</p> <p>Page(s)</p>

	Follow evolving IDPH guidance.	Section Page(s)
	Follow the most recent version of the Illinois COVID-19 Mass Vaccination Plan.	Section Page(s)
	Collaborate with the LHD to ensure vaccination priorities are aligned with the State response. This includes following the protocol for prioritization of clients receiving vaccine based on specified criteria and phase of mass vaccination campaign.	Section Page(s)
	Have the ability to secure sufficient quantities of vaccine-associated supplies (e.g., syringes, needles, personal protective equipment) in a timely manner and maintain a steady supply stream.	Section Page(s)
	Have the ability to ensure equipment and systems are in place to ensure dictated cold chain integrity storage of vaccine depending on vaccination type. CDC guidelines shall be adhered to, as well as any and all information provided by the vaccine manufacturer in the vaccine insert (e.g., Pfizer to minus 80c, Moderna to minus 20c) upon execution of the contract.	Section Page(s)

	Adhere to all applicable Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) COVID-19 requirements.	Section Page(s)
	Schedule, staff, and coordinate vendor-operated pre-existing locations in the State.	Section Page(s)
	Provide immunization services at third party locations as designated by the State or as requested by said third parties. Immunization services may be required at facilities housing persons with special needs. Vendor shall ensure that its staff are appropriately trained and qualified to administer vaccines in all circumstances.	
	Ensure adequate staffing of healthcare providers licensed or authorized by law in the State of Illinois with a Scope of Practice/approved Expanded Scope of Practice to deliver the vaccines, including surge staffing for vendor-operated pre-existing locations in the State.	Section Page(s)
	Schedule and coordinate vaccination dates at vendor's pharmacies.	Section Page(s)
	Demonstrate their understanding of COVID-19 mass vaccination planning and operations needs in Illinois and their ability to effectively	Section Page(s)

	provide planning, logistical operations, quality control, staffing, tools, and resources necessary for success.	
EXPERIENCE	Vendor must minimally provide details of its seasonal flu immunization program that demonstrates its experience providing successful administration, project tracking and quality control services where immunization of a subset of or the entire population of a state was intended. Details of additional immunization programs that involve a vaccine that requires at least one additional dose within a specified timeframe are desirable.	Section Page(s)
ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS	Vendor shall designate a Project Manager who shall be the primary contact person designated by vendor for oversight of the resulting agreement and communications related to same.	Section Page(s)
	Business Enterprise for Minorities, Women, and Persons with Disabilities Act Participation and Utilization Plan.	Section Page(s)
	Vendor must demonstrate that they will follow best practices related to vaccine administration.	Section Page(s)
	Vendor must accept that information provided regarding COVID-19 mass vaccination operations will evolve over time as IDPH guidance is updated.	Section Page(s)
	Vendor's current insurance coverage plan applicable to	Section

	the proposed operations and continuing operational management of all proposed deliverables for this contract during the contract period.	Page(s)
	Proposed Pricing. Vendor's proposed pricing shall be inclusive of all costs including but not limited to salaries, supplies, equipment, PPE, travel (e.g., transportation, lodging, meals), facility, and system costs. Prevailing wages apply.	Separate Attachment
	Inclusion of Proposal Specification Checklist Table	Separate attachment
GENERAL INFORMATION	Complete contact information of vendor to include name of vendor, vendor's address and contact person, including work phone, cell phone, and e-mail address	Section Page(s)