

## RFP #17846

New York State Department of Health  
Division of Chronic Disease Prevention  
Bureau of Chronic Disease Evaluation and Research  
Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)

### QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

May 31, 2018

All questions are stated as received in the Bureau of Chronic Disease Evaluation and Research (BCDER) by the deadline.

The responses to questions included herein are the official responses by the Department to questions posted by potential applicants and are hereby incorporated into the RFP#17846 issued on May 4, 2018. In the event of any conflict between the RFP and these responses, the requirements or information contained in these responses will prevail.

#### 2.1 Introductory Background

Q1. What is the current contract value?

DOH Response: The 2018 Expanded Survey data collection funding is:  
State: \$2,374,880.06  
HRI: \$345,421.00

Q2. What is the landline, cell phone, and asthma cost per interview for 2018?

DOH Response: DOH is unable to share the landline, cell phone, and asthma cost per interview for 2018.

Information regarding the costs per interview may be requested under the Freedom of Information Law (FOIL). To submit a FOIL request, please write to the Department's Records Officer at [FOIL@health.ny.gov](mailto:FOIL@health.ny.gov).

Additional information regarding the FOIL process is available online at <http://www.health.ny.gov/regulations/foil/>.

Q3. What was the landline completes per hour in 2017?

DOH Response: DOH does not have this information.

Q4. What was the cell phone completes per hour in 2017?

DOH Response: DOH does not have this information.

Q5. What might be the reasons that the New York DOH is considering new data collectors for this project? Is the incumbent data collector for current year or for the past years in the consideration list for proposal?

DOH Response: RFP# 17846 is being solicited as the current contract expires 12/31/18. Any vendor that meets the bidder's qualifications to propose, RFP Section 3.0, is eligible to submit a proposal.

#### **4.0 Scope of Work**

Q6. Per 4.1.1.5 on page 7, what volume should be expected with regards to questionnaire development and testing?

DOH Response: The volume is up to five (5) test questions annually at the end of each calendar year prior to their inclusion in the subsequent year's questionnaire. See Attachment J: State/HRI Contract Period and Activities.

Q7. Per 4.2.5, on page 9, we assume that the positions mentioned could be held in a prime contractor facility within the Continental U.S. and not necessarily in the call center facility?

DOH Response: See Amendment #1, 1. The project management and the senior statistician roles are not required to be at the call center.

#### **5.0 Administrative Information**

Q8. For RFP - *5.18 Encouraging Use of New York Businesses in Contract Performance*-Does it have significance in your evaluation if we are not a New York state company?

DOH Response: Any vendor that meets the bidder's qualifications to propose, RFP Section 3.0, is eligible to submit a proposal. Specific evaluation criteria will not be released.

Q9. For RFP - *5.19 Diversity Practice Questionnaire* - Does the status of WBE for a company provide a preferential consideration in being selected as the data collector? If we are WBE, do we need to be a New York WBE in order to be considered?

DOH Response: See Section 8.0 Method of Award, 8.1 General Information, 5<sup>th</sup> paragraph, "In the event of a tie, the determining factors for award, in descending order, will be: (1) lowest cost and (2) proposed percentage of MWBE participation."

A WBE per New York State Executive Law Article 15-A, would need to be a New York State Certified WBE.

Q10. 5.5 Minority & Woman-Owned Business Enterprise Requirements, Business Participation Opportunities for MWBEs: What percent of the current contract for the 2018 survey year is given to a Minority Owned Sub-Contractor and what percent of current contract for the 2018 survey year is given to a Women Owned Subcontractor?

DOH Response: The current vendor was granted a waiver based on their specific waiver request and has a 0% MWBE participation goal.

Q11. 5.5 Minority & Women-owned Business Enterprise Requirements, Business Participation Opportunities for MWBEs: If applicable, what tasks are the minority and women-owned subcontractors responsible for during the 2018 survey year?

DOH Response: See response to question #10.

Q12. Per 5.9, on page 16-17, subcontracting is allowed, but the last paragraph indicates that subcontracting is not allowed for certain positions, including interviewers. Can you please clarify?

DOH Response: See Amendment #1, 2. Section 5.0 Administrative Information.

## 6.0 Proposal Content

Q13. Per 6.1, item G References, the instructions for the Administrative proposal indicate that 3 organizations are requested, but in Attachment 9 only 2 references are indicated. Can you please clarify this discrepancy?

DOH Response: Attachment 9 has been updated to reflect that references for three (3) organizations are requested.

Q14. 6.3 Cost Proposal, 1. Annual BRFSS & 2. Expanded BRFSS: What percentage of partial completes (DISPCODE=1200) may be counted toward the total number of completed interviews for invoicing?

DOH Response: NYS follows CDC's guidance in Attachment E, BRFSS Data Collection Protocol, page 10, "Survey Protocol, 7." that the "percentage of partial completes is not greater than 10% of the number of completes."

See Section 5.4 Payment, page 13, second paragraph, “A completed interview is defined according to the standards of the American Association for Public Opinion Research and reflects an interview in which the selected respondent has been asked all questions up to and including the demographic questions which will be used for weighting.

A targeted number of completed interviews for landline and cell phone is established by DOH/HRI prior to the start of the data collection for the year. The contractor will be paid the price bid per completed interview for each survey type and phone type up to the targeted number.”

Q15. Organizational Capacity and Staffing, D.2.6: The RFP states that the senior statistician will be onsite in the Call Center. What percent of the senior statistician’s time needs to be spent onsite at the call center?

DOH Response: See Amendment #1, 1. Section 4.2 Organizational and Staffing Requirements and 3. Section 6.0 Proposal Content.

## **8.0 Method of Award**

Q16. For RFP - 8.1 General Information -SAM.gov: If we are not currently registered there, must we register in order to be considered for the contract? Is there specific requirement we need to complete in order to be certified on SAM in order to provide a bid for this contract?

DOH Response: Bidders are not required to be registered with SAM.gov prior to submitting a bid for this RFP. The winning bidder will be required to register with SAM.gov prior to entering into the HRI contract. HRI will not execute a contract with an entity that is not registered with SAM.gov or if their SAM.gov registration identifies any exclusions or current federal debt. See Amendment #1, 4. Section 8.0 Method of Award, 8.1 General Information and 5. Section 9.0 Terms and Conditions of HRI Contract.

## **Attachments**

Q17. The RFP details the requirement of Attachments 1-9 being completed and submitted, but they are not on the website. Can you please provide copies of those Attachments?

DOH Response: Attachments 1-9 are hyperlinked on page 31 of the RFP and can be located here: <https://www.health.ny.gov/funding/forms/>

## **Attachment C, Section A - Annual Survey Deliverables**

Q18. The RFP requires the submission of a cost per interview for each year of the 5-year contract. With the continual decline in response rates it is unknown at this time the level of effort required to conduct landline and cell phone interviews five years out. Will there be the opportunity to modify the contract and cost per interview if a significant decline continues?

**DOH Response:** The unit price bid is a determining factor in the award and therefore, cannot be modified in future years. It is the responsibility of the bidders to consider their industry knowledge and any applicable variances when determining their unit pricing for each survey type and each survey year.

Q19. If the CDC changes the BRFSS methodology or protocol during the five-year period, will there be the opportunity to modify the contract?

**DOH Response:** A change in the scope of work, due to a substantial revision to the CDC BRFSS methodology would require an amendment to the existing contract. The amendment and cost proposal will be subject to price justification and approval by the NYSDOH and the New York State Office of the State Comptroller.

## **Attachment E**

Q20. The protocol does not include situations where Internet surveys or online panel sample may be used to maximize collection of responses. But the New York RFP indicates such possibilities. We'd like to confirm that Internet surveys and online panel sample may in fact be considered and used as supplemental approaches to boost response rate. If so, are there any additional guidelines on how sampling needs to be done for Internet surveys?

**DOH Response:** Due to reduced response rates to telephone surveys in recent years, we anticipate that the CDC may test and/or implement alternative methodologies for the BRFSS. Formal guidance for this has not yet been issued or incorporated into the CDC protocol. In anticipation of this possibility, per section D.1.8, p. 24:

**“Describe your organization’s capacity to administer the BRFSS using alternative data collection modes, including mail, web, cell phone app, redirected in-bound calling. If relevant, describe your organization’s experience utilizing alternative methods to collect survey data for other state clients. If the bidder does not have experience with BRFSS, describe related experience with surveys of similar scope and size.”**

Q21. Is weekend dialing to include Sundays or can weekly quotas be spread throughout 6 days?

DOH Response: The weekend calling does include Sundays. Calling is to be conducted in accordance with Attachment E, BRFSS Data Collection Protocol, pages 7 – 8 and 147.

Q22. Does all sample have to be resolved? (Dialed with 15 maximum attempts regardless of how many completes are obtained?)

DOH Response: All sample should be fully resolved, per CDC guidance in the BRFSS Data Collection Protocol (Attachment E). Per CDC guidance, this requires a minimum of 15 attempts per landline telephones and 8 attempts per cell phones. Some situations differ; see Appendix B of the BRFSS Data Collection Protocol (Attachment E) for “Number of Attempts” and “Callback Rules” for various disposition codes.

Q23. What software is the survey pre-programmed in? i.e. CFMC, Survox?

DOH Response: The CDC programs the core and optional modules from the BRFSS questionnaire using Ci3 WinCATI.