



# Ryan White Services Bidding Conference Q & A

## RFP Bidders Conference: October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024

1. **Q:** If an agency has a subrecipient, does the agency include them in their original diversity table?
  - a. If you are bidding as a subrecipient and have a subcontractor, meaning embedding another agency within your service delivery model or expanding locations, then yes.
  - b. If you are bidding as a fiscal agent, due to the \$500,000 operating budget, and the other agency has a separate service delivery model then you do not.
2. **Q:** Is the formatting requirement the same for budgets or is a template provided?
  - a. A template example is provided.
3. **\*\*Q:** Is section H 10 pages regardless of the number of services applied?
  - a. No. Section H is 10 pages for one service. If you are applying for multiple services, each additional service can add another 5 pages to section H.
4. **\*\*Q:** To clarify, if you are bidding for one service, then Section H should have 10 pages and the maximum number of pages for the report must be 25 pages. If there is an additional service, then that service will add 5 pages to section H. This means that the total amount of pages will go up by 5 pages. For example, if you bid three additional services, each of those additional services adds 5 more pages per service to Section H. If two more services are added, then the total page number is 35. If three more services are added, then the total number of pages is 40 and so on and so forth.
  - a. Yes, that is correct.
5. **Q:** Do you have templates for program agreements, letters of support, or contracts?
  - a. Yes, program agreements and annual documents are part of the contracts provided within the RFP. Budget templates are also provided within the RFP. We do not provide letters of support examples.
6. **Q:** If an agency is expanding its program to additional sites, does the agency address that in a single proposal?
  - a. Yes, you should give a detailed explanation of the program throughout the application and within the applicable sections address the expansion of the program in the narrative and budget.
7. **Q:** If an agency is not located within the 10 counties but supports clients residing within the Boston EMA, can they apply for Part A Funds?
  - a. Yes, the agency can still apply for Part A Funds as long as they support clients who reside within the Boston EMA.
8. **Q:** If there are roles that may cross between services, do the roles budgeted need to be separated or put into one?
  - a. Yes, it should be separated across the budgets to equal 1 FTE. As a reminder, one staff member cannot be more than 1 FTE across the budgets in submission.

## RFP Bidders Conference: October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024

1. **\*\*Q:** Will BPHC honor (indirect) rate change from 10 to 15%?
  - a. Yes, we will adjust our rate allowances per federal legislation.



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2. **\*\*Q:** Should one PDF be submitted inclusive of every aspect of the proposal or multiple PDFs for narrative, attachments, etc.?
  - a. Yes, one PDF should include the narrative and attachments. As per the instructions, a supplemental budget in Excel format may be sent in addition and separately.
3. **Q:** For the program linkage table, is it only HIV linkages or all types of linkages?
  - a. Specific linkages that are listed in the chart are HIV linkages and HIV-related linkages.
4. **Q:** If an agency provides DPH-funded medical case management, can it apply for the funding to serve additional clients to provide current clients with supplemental services such as access to food, housing, emergency financial assistance, etc.?
  - a. Yes, they may.
5. **Q:** If agencies are currently importing, do they still have to complete the data importing form?
  - a. Yes, if agencies are currently using the importing module and would like to retain it, and if agencies would like to obtain the importing module, then they need to submit the form.
6. **Q:** Is the data importing form for if we currently use an EMR system and want it connected to E2Boston?
  - a. Yes, in completing this form and if BPHC determines the agency is eligible, we will facilitate a conversation with the RDE developers to build an importing module for the EMR, if capable.
7. **Q:** In Section II, Page 10, item 4 under service delivery it says, “bidding for new service.” Would this pertain to service agencies that were not funded in the last RFP?
  - a. Yes, if the agency is requesting funding for additional services that were not previously funded, it would be considered bidding for a new service.
8. **Q:** Is EmpowerDP a database that is supported by the data transfer system?
  - a. Specific EMR capabilities will be determined by the RDE developers.
9. **Q:** If an agency is currently importing data, what would change? Is the data importing system a different process than what is being used currently?
  - a. It wouldn't be a different process; it would simply improve data quality.

## RFP Bidders Conference: October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024

1. **Q:** On page 7 of the RFP part II there is a request for "service population tables" with the template being on page 27 for each proposed service. However, on the checklist on page 2 under “tables” there is no designation for us to label this document and therefore attach this required table. Should agencies then add it as a "table 6" and title it "service populations"?
  - a. To clarify, page 27 provides a template for the Annual Scope of Work's service category for the project number of Part and/or MAI clients. The Service Population tables relate to Tables 1 and 2 Organization Diversity Tables, in which templates were provided. Please label them Table 1 and 2 respectively.
2. **\*\*Q:** On page 13 of the RFP part II agencies are asked for an indirect/fringe rate but there is no attachment number for this on the checklist on page 2 under attachments. How should it be labeled since it is a required document?



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- a. You would attach the indirect/fringe rate with whichever narrative requests the document in that order.
3. **Q:** Is there a penalty for not submitting the data importing request?
  - a. No, there isn't a penalty since it is optional. If you are currently importing and wish to keep this access, please be sure to complete this portion.
4. **Q:** On page 4 of the RFP, agencies are asked to list Ryan White's funding amounts in both columns. One column for "Ryan White amount requested" and another column for "Ryan White MAI Amount Requested." How do agencies know what to place in the MAI column? Is this something that should get a designated post-award based on the number of minorities served?
  - a. This is something you have to fill out with the RFP. The RFP is meant to be a way for agencies to bid for a certain amount for specific service categories. The table in Section I page 7, shows the total for service categories for both Part A and MAI. Additionally, within Section I, there are HRSA service descriptions that provide how much Part A and MAI are allocated for the service category. Based on that, your agency can review how much you would like to bid for out of that allotment. The demographics table is also used for reviewers to be able to assess whether your agency qualifies for MAI funding.
5. **Q:** Which Adobe version should be used to send out the application?
  - a. As long as applications are in PDF form, they will be accepted regardless of Adobe version.
6. **Q:** What is the memory capacity for the BPHC server?
  - a. The storage capacity for BPHC email attachments is 150 MB.
7. **\*\*Q:** On page 19 of the RFP, agencies are asked to fill out "Table 1: Organization Diversity Table for Board and Staff" which has columns for "Professional Staff" as well as "Paid Staff." What does this mean?
  - a. This is in general up to organizations to decide based on who works at that particular agency. If you need clarification, you should speak it over with HR. Paid staff are people working directly with the services.
8. **Q:** Should an agency apply for all BPHC services identified or an array of just a few of the services?
  - a. You should apply for any services within your service delivery model. You do not have to apply for every service and only services you note within the proposal will be considered. Please see Question 16 below for more information.
9. **Q:** What is the best way to answer the narrative questions for things that an agency has or does but is not requesting BPHC funding/support for through this RFP? How should agencies respond to questions not funded by Part A for the service category, e.g., staffing?
  - a. The primary objective of each narrative section is to fully discuss the Part A service in reference to BPHC funding. Any other HIV-related funding and activities that supplement service delivery can be added after.
  - b. If there are other staff that will be working in collaboration with Part A staff, clients, or services, but will not be funded, then you would describe them as "in-kind" support.



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10. **Q:** Will exceptions be made for agencies that are prohibited from using E2Boston by another funded contract?
  - a. Please note this within your application. We will review and/or be determined post-RFP and can be discussed afterward.
11. **Q:** If an agency is not an MA and is not applying for funds for staff, does the agency need to fill out the Part 7 affidavit?
  - a. Yes, an agency must still fill out the form even if they are not located within the city of Boston. This is a BPHC requirement.
12. **Q:** Can an agency that has previously bid request more funding in this application?
  - a. Yes, you can request more funding.
13. **\*\*Q:** Attachment 16 in the RFP says it does not need a signature, but the presentation says that a signature must be provided. Can this be clarified?
  - a. The presentation has been generalized for the slide, so still be sure to review each individual program attachment to make sure you address all the requirements within the RFP application itself. If a signature, an initial, a field entry, or a paragraph is required, you must make sure you address it and follow closely along the application requirements themselves.
14. **\*\*Q:** Are questions part of the page limit?
  - a. No, they are not, but please do not copy the questions into the narrative. Please label the questions within using section headings such as (1.A) for example rather than the entirety of the question.
15. **Q:** Are Core services required to be applied for in order to be able to apply for support services?
  - a. No, they are not required. You may apply for Core services or Support Services or both.
16. **Q:** If an agency is funded for a core service under another part of Ryan White Services, can that agency apply for services under Ryan White Part A?
  - a. Yes, you may apply for multiple core services across funding streams (Medical Nutrition Therapy, Oral Health Care, A/HDAP). However, if you are funded for Ryan White Part A Medical Case Management, you may not be able to eligible for the same service in Massachusetts in another funding stream. This includes having funding from the Massachusetts State Department.
  - b. The Ryan White Services team will not provide counsel on which funding stream your agency should primarily bid for case management services.
  - c. All other HIV-related funding should be outlined within the respective section in the application. BPHC will work with our State counterpart to ensure there is no duplication of services in the EMA.
17. **\*\*Q:** How does an agency apply to be a trainer?
  - a. If you wish to apply to be an agency that supports Case Management or Psychosocial Support Training, the bidding agency will bid for the respective category and the service delivery model would be training services.



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## RFP Bidders Q & A: November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024

1. **Q:** If applying for both MAI and Part A, do agencies need to specify which funding streams apply to each budget item?
  - a. Yes, when completing the budgets for the application please be sure to appropriately label the budget with the Funding stream (Part A or MAI) and the service category.
2. **Q:** Is it possible to be partially funded (e.g. to be funded in some but not all service categories and/or at the full levels we apply for)
  - a. You may apply for as many service categories as you wish, and for however much per category, however, when reviewing the RFP please be specific in your proposals as the reviewers will take all into consideration in order to make their recommendation for funding allocation and service distribution.
3. **\*\*Q:** Are agencies permitted to request more than the planning council allocates for a service?
  - a. Yes you are allowed to request more, but please note depending on the full award from HRSA, and the quality of the application submitted, we might not be able to accommodate the request and may need to adjust based on availability.
4. **Q:** Are “current clients” the last year, last month, currently enrolled?
  - a. Current clients are the clients you have serviced in the past year.
5. **\*\*Q:** How should agencies report clients and/or staff with unreported gender/ethnicity and fit gender into the categories?
  - a. Since we have to align our demographic tables with HRSA’s, there is some unalignment with the categories. We understand that it might not equal 100%, and we recommend adding categories as applicable (other, etc.) to equal 100% or adjusting the provided categories as needed. We will review all information provided in the demographics table and narrative jointly to ensure we have a full understanding of the demographic makeup of the organization.
6. **Q:** If agencies don’t collect certain demographic data for our non-HIV programs, should they leave these sections blank or exclude them from reporting?
  - a. Please leave it blank, however, in the narrative wherever applicable please describe efforts to collect comprehensive data.
7. **Q:** Is it allowable to add personnel costs to MAI EFA and/or Part A EFA?
  - a. Yes, it is allowable.
8. **Q:** For signatures, can agencies use electronic signatures for signed pages? Can agencies use DocuSign?
  - a. You can use electronic, and yes you may use DocuSign.
9. **Q:** When the document is submitted, will agencies get confirmation?
  - a. Yes, you will receive a confirmation.
10. **Q:** For other race and ethnicity groups, can you group in other?
  - a. Please make sure to follow the application instructions to complete the other demographics table. If the information isn’t available, please follow Q 5 and 6 above.
11. **\*\*Q:** Do agencies enter info directly into the application that is provided?



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- a. Please make a separate document to write your narrative and label the prompts with the section and the number. That style is up to you, but we just want to make sure that you aren't copying the question in because it takes up space and we want to make sure you have the full-page limit rather than have some of the page limit taken by the questions.
12. **Q:** For section H, question 4, please explain what the question means when it asks for an explanation on how bidding for a new service will help currently funded services.
- a. As an example: If your agency is currently funded for case management and emergency financial assistance, and would like to provide medical transportation (MT) as a service for this grant cycle, that would be considered a new service to your organization and service delivery model. Please explain how MT will supplement your service delivery and what measures you would have in place in order to make sure the service does well.
13. **Q:** If there are no changes to bidding services and/or no history of bidding for services, does the question still need to be answered?
- a. You should answer to the best of your ability. Use the space to highlight changes made over time to successfully implement an HIV service delivery model, and be as detailed as possible.

### RFP Bidders Q & A: November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024

1. **\*\*Q:** Does the checklist need to be submitted with the application?
- a. Yes, and signed. As a reminder, this piece is a confirmation of items in submission and does not count toward application points or page limits. We apologize for the inconsistent messaging on this piece from previous sessions.
2. **\*\*Q:** Is there a cap/maximum on how much money you can request?
- a. Your agency may bid for as much per service category as the agency deems necessary and applicable to the service delivery model. Please review Q & A session 1, Question 3 for additional insight.
3. **Q:** Do we eliminate checkboxes with the questions?
- a. When you are writing your narrative, please highlight that you have **(attached)** a document within the submission. You may also incorporate the checkboxes from the original RFP and mark the check box in that section in the narrative.
4. **Q:** Is there any special documentation agencies need to include if they are charging occupancy for their food bank above the line?
- a. We will ask for an occupancy breakdown by square foot.
5. **Q:** If an agency does not use/need all the pages in one section, can those unused pages be applied to another section that would then exceed the second section's limit but stay within 25-page limit?
- a. Yes.

### RFP Bidders Q & A: November 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024

1. **Q:** If you are the fiscal agent as opposed to a fiscal contractor, should you write that in the RFP?



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- a. Yes, please be explicit within your application about whom is your agent and within the applicable documentation as well.
2. **Q:** Regarding the annual scope of work, if an agency is applying to multiple service categories, there are two service categories, do agencies copy and paste everything into the annual scope of work except the section two CQM?
  - a. There are three sections (3-5) where you would copy, paste, and complete the information *for each* service category. The goals and CQM (sections 1 and 2) will be for the whole program. Please write in as many goals as applicable for the service categories.
3. **Q:** Regarding the annual scope of work, can an agency add rows to the table to include an additional goal?
  - a. Yes.
4. **Q:** For an agency that requires a fiscal agent, which attachments are required by the fiscal agent only? Are they the legal and financial attachments?
  - a. Please provide a budget specific to your agency, and note on the budget your fiscal agent. Additionally, if their fiscal agent is responsible for contracting, invoicing, etc please provide that list in writing in the applicable sections. Please note every fiscal agent/ subcontractor relationship is unique so please collaborate closely on a consensus prior to submission and be sure to sign the appropriate documentation (noted in Section I of the RFP)
5. **Q:** Do you want cover pages and abstracts for every service you are applying for?
  - a. No, we would like one overall cover and abstract for the entirety of the RFP application
6. **Q:** Do we need resumes with job descriptions?
  - b. Yes, we need resumes and job descriptions for each service category applying for. In this session, it was incorrectly stated that this was not required and **it is required**. We apologize for the inconsistent messaging on this piece.
7. **Q:** Are letters of support required for non-collaborative proposals?
  - a. They are only required for collaborative proposals.
8. **Q:** Regarding the annual scope of work, Are the responses for the CQM and budget narratives required to be entered in the text boxes?
  - a. No, it is not required. You can enter manually as long as it fits the requirements and answers completely.
9. **Q:** In Section D: Staffing description questions 5 and 6 are for medical case management and nonmedical case management. Would we answer them if we are not applying for MCM or NMCM?
  - a. No, you would mark not applicable.
10. **Q:** In the Section II Application, there are misnumbered pages mixed into the document which is confusing. Are there other pages missing?
  - a. Unfortunately, the pages were misnumbered during processing. We have confirmed that nothing is missing from the RFP whatsoever and only the numbers themselves that are incorrect.
11. **Q:** For the organization diversity table – can current clients, and total agency clients include non-PLWHA clients and PLWHA who are not Ryan White Part A clients?



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- a. Yes, **total** agency clients include those who are not living with HIV/AIDS and accessing care at the organization, that is correct. Please refer to the instructions above the Organization table in Section II.
12. **Q:** Can we submit the document in a zip folder with tables and attachments separate from the narrative portion?
  - a. Please follow preparation guidelines and submit everything in **One PDF**.
13. **Q:** What is an audit of the indirect rate?
  - a. It is a negotiated rate for programs provided federally. Annually, the program would undergo a fiscal audit that confirms your financial paperwork, and that document is confirmed for a certain period. This document will come from the fiscal department of the agency.
14. **Q:** In the guidance on page 24, section 1 goal setting, the bottom request is on communication/reporting. Would that pertain to the monthly invoices, entering data into e2boston, sharing survey results with the community advisory board, etc.?
  - a. If it is a typical activity or requirement of the program, then it wouldn't be considered a project goal, however, if there are efforts on how you will be improving on that activity or create a deliverable concerning one of the typical activities, then that can be incorporated into the goal setting.