**STATE OF MAINE REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

**RFP AMENDMENT # 1 AND**

**RFP SUBMITTED QUESTIONS & ANSWERS SUMMARY**

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| **RFP NUMBER AND TITLE:** | RFP#202503035 Maternal and Child Health Needs Assessment and Consultation |
| **RFP ISSUED BY:** | Department of Health and Human Services Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention |
| **AMENDMENT AND SUBMITTED QUESTIONS DUE DATE:** | March 31, 2025, no later than 11:59 p.m., local time |
| **QUESTION & ANSWER SUMMARY ISSUED:** | April 7, 2025 |
| **PROPOSALS DUE DATE:** | April 16, 2025, no later than 11:59 p.m., local time. |
| **PROPOSALS DUE TO:** | Proposals@maine.gov |
| **Unless specifically addressed below, all other provisions and clauses of the RFP remain unchanged.** |
| **DESCRIPTION OF CHANGES IN RFP:**1. Part IV, Section IV, 1.a. is revised.
2. **Appendix G** Cost Form is revised.
 |
| **REVISED LANGUAGE IN RFP:**1. *Part IV, Section IV, 1.a. is amended to read:*
	* 1. Bidders must submit a cost proposal that covers the period starting 7/1/2025 and ending on 6/30/2030.
	1. ***Appendix G*** *Cost Form is replaced in its entirety.*

Bidders must submit a cost proposal that includes the cost necessary for the Bidder to fully comply with the contract terms, conditions, and RFP requirements. The Total Cost on Schedule 1 will be used to score the cost proposal as defined in Part V, B.3. of the RFP.**The revised Cost Proposal form may be obtained in an Excel (.xlsx) format by double clicking on the document icon below.** |

**Provided below are submitted written questions received and the Department’s answer.**

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| **1** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | Is there a contractor currently supporting this work? |
| **Answer** |
| Yes. |

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| **2** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | If there is a current contractor, are they likely to continue supporting this work? |
| **Answer** |
| The current contract is expected to perform services through 6/30/2025.  |

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| **3** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Appendix G,Page 26 | Is there a maximum contract value or an annual maximum value for this work? |
| **Answer** |
| The Department declines to answer.  |

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| **4** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | Are you willing to share a budget range for this project? |
| **Answer** |
| The Department declines to answer.  |

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| **5** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | Would you be open to separating the work into two distinct phases: Community Engagement (for the first two years) and the Needs Assessment? |
| **Answer** |
| The Department expects the awarded Bidder to support continuous efforts outlined in Part II, A. General Requirements for the duration of the 5-year procurement. Needs Assessment Requirements outline in Part II, B. of the RFP are expected to begin by July 2028 with the Needs Assessment Results due by January 2030. |

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| **6** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | Should we budget for the needs assessment in first 2 years? |
| **Answer** |
| Bidders must submit a 5-year Cost Form, refer to the amended Cost Form at the beginning of this document. The Cost Form must align with the deliverables outlined in the RFP, refer to the response to question 5 of this document.  |

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| **7** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, C,Page 9 | Do all staff need to meet the minimum staffing requirements (Section C) apply to team, or each individual on the team? |
| **Answer** |
| The awarded Bidder must ensure staff providing services under this RFP collectively meet the minimum staffing requirements. |

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| **8** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | Has the state of Maine used contractors in the past to conduct a similar needs assessment? If the answer is yes, who was the vendor? |
| **Answer** |
| The current vendor is Altarum Institute. |

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| **9** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, A,Page 8 | Apart from the annual Title V Maternal and Child Health Block Grant Site visit, are there any other expectations of on-site/in person meetings? |
| **Answer** |
| During the needs assessment process (July 2028 to January 2030) the awarded Bidder will be expected to be available in Augusta, Maine for in person meetings depending on the needs assessment process that is created. |

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| **10** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, A.1.c, Page 8 | Can the bi-monthly educational opportunities take place via a virtual meeting platform? |
| **Answer** |
| The Department expects the bi-monthly (every other month) educational opportunities to be virtual. |

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| **11** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, A, Page 8 | Can you articulate the level of engagement and role of state staff to complete reports for HRSA? Based on previous experience, we have found this to be very time intensive and want to understand the role of the state compared to the vendor. |
| **Answer** |
| The awarded Bidder, along with the Department’s Epidemiology Team, are responsible for a bulk of the work necessary to complete the report/application to HRSA. The Department writes the narratives and future plans, and the awarded Bidder assists in collecting and collating the pieces along with the Department’s Epidemiology Team. |

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| **12** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, A.3, Page 8 | Will the bidder work with State Title V staff to support existing performance monitoring activities? |
| **Answer** |
| Yes. |

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| **13** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, A.3. Page 9 | To assist with developing a staffing plan, could the State provide additional details on the division of work and roles related to performance monitoring and reporting processes for the bidder in comparison with State Title V staff? |
| **Answer** |
| The awarded Bidder will be required to work with Department staff to get narratives about what work has been done for the performance measures of the previous year and also help write the plans for the future year. The monitoring of the performance is done by the Department’s Epidemiology Team. Department Title V staff oversee this process and review everything that is drafted, but are not directly involved. |

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| **14** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, D.1., Pages 10-11 | To assist with developing a staffing plan, could the State provide additional details on the division of work and roles related to development of each reporting component, including writing narrative components, development of performance measures, data collection and analysis, and fiscal reporting? |
| **Answer** |
|  It is at the Bidder’s discretion to propose a staffing plan that aligns with RFP requirements. |

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| **15** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part IV.,Section IV,Page 15 | Do you have an anticipated budget for this project or budget range you can share? |
| **Answer** |
| The Department declines to answer. |

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| **16** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part IV., Section IVPage 15 | How will payments be structured for this contract (e.g., time and materials, fixed price, deliverable-based payment)? |
| **Answer** |
| Time and materials. Refer to the amended budget at the beginning of this document. |

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| **17** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Appendix C Qualifications and Experience Form: Page 22 | Can we include experience of staff that pre-dates their time with the bidder? |
| **Answer** |
| Yes, providing the staffing meets the requirements of Part II C. Staffing Requirements. |

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| **18** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | Does the Department have any insights into the anticipated direction of the Fall 2025 changes noted in the RFP, specifically regarding the shifting priorities of the MCH Block Grant? Also, how might these changes impact facilitation and consultation needs under this contract? |
| **Answer** |
| The shifting of MCH Block Grant priorities will not impact the facilitation and consultation needs for this RFP. |

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| **19** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | The Department notes anticipation of a single award. Is there an anticipated budget range or any cost parameters that should be considered for the initial period of performance and the two renewal periods? |
| **Answer** |
| The Department declines to answer.  |

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| **20** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, 2,e.,Page 8,  | The RFP notes that the contractor will host virtual meetings through their own platform(s). Are there security or accessibility requirements that the Department mandates? |
| **Answer** |
| No. If an attendee of the Domain Leads and Partners Meetings require an accommodation, the awarded Bidder is responsible for providing accommodations. |

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| **21** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, 1.b.iii,Page 9 | The contract includes supporting the Department in obtaining IRB approval or exemptions. Does the Department have a standing IRB process? Or does the contractor need to identify and coordinate an external IRB review? |
| **Answer** |
| The awarded Bidder will be required to identify and coordinate an external Institutional Review Board (IRB) review, if necessary. |

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| **22** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Table 2Page 10 | What year is the next MCH Block Grant application due? |
| **Answer** |
| The MCH Block Grant report/application is due annually on July 15th.  |

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| **23** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Table 2Page 10 | Is the expectation that for June 2026 and June 2027 that one report will be due in one year and one application will be due in the other year? |
| **Answer** |
| No, the annual report and application are both due each year by June 30th. |

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| **24** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part IV, Section IV,Page 15 | What kind of budget type will this contract be (e.g., firm fixed, time and materials, other)? |
| **Answer** |
| Refer to the answer to question 16 of this document. |

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| **25** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part IV, Section IV, 1.a.Page 15 | Section IV Cost Proposal indicates to only submit a cost proposal for the period of performance of 7/1/25-6/30/27. 1. If the needs assessment results are not expected until January 2030 (page 10 Table 2), when will the contractor begin on the activities listed on page 8 B. Needs Assessment Requirements?
2. If so, which items other than the planning meetings are expected to be completed within the 7/1/25-6/30/27?
 |
| **Answer** |
| 1. Refer to the answer to question 5 of this document.
2. Expected activities to occur under Part II, A. General Requirements include the bi-monthly (every other month) group meetings (development of the agenda, facilitation, etc.), monthly meetings with the Department, ongoing tracking of the work done by Department staff and technical assistance on drafting narratives for the report and future plans for the application.
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| **26** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | Should the contractor budget for issuing participation incentives for the needs assessment? If so, how much should we budget for survey participants and what amount for listening session participants? |
| **Answer** |
| It is at the Bidder’s discretion. |

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| **27** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | Will the awarded contractor have access to existing engagement data, such as past listening sessions, survey results, or feedback on previous needs assessments?  |
| **Answer** |
| Yes. |

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| **28** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | 1. Given that the needs assessment is due in 2030, are there any key milestones or checkpoints leading up to the 2030 deadline?
2. Will the awarded contractor be supporting the Department in balancing ongoing MCH priority work with the groundwork for the assessment?
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| **Answer** |
| 1. In 2028 the awarded Bidder will begin outlining the needs assessment process and then begin implementing it. That plan will dictate the checkpoints for the project.
2. Yes.
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| **29** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | Is there an incumbent for this work, and if so, who is it? |
| **Answer** |
| Refer to the answer to question 8 of this document. |

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| **30** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, B,Page 9 | The RFP states that the selected vendor will be responsible for organizing and scheduling Listening Sessions and priority setting sessions. Will the vendor also be responsible for facilitating these sessions? |
| **Answer** |
| Yes. |

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| **31** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, B,Page 9 | Will the Department provide facilities for the Listening Sessions? Or will the selected vendor be responsible for locating and covering the costs for off-site facilities? |
| **Answer** |
| The awarded Bidder will be responsible for locating and covering costs for an off-site facilitate. The Department has the ability to assist in finding free facilities. |

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| **32** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, B,Page 9 | For the constituent surveys, which constituent groups does the Department plan to survey (Department staff, MCH stakeholders, pregnant women, mothers, providers, etc.)? |
| **Answer** |
| Any and all interested parties related to maternal and child health. |

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| **33** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, B,Page 9 | How many different constituent surveys should the vendor plan to conduct annually |
| **Answer** |
| Typically, the constituent survey is conducted during the needs assessment phase which is currently July 2028 to January 2030. It is at the Bidder’s discretion to propose how many survey will be conducted. |

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| **34** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, B,Page 9 | Does the Department anticipate needing to translate the constituent surveys into different languages? |
| **Answer** |
| Yes. |

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| **35** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, B,Page 9 | Will the Department or other stakeholders provide contact lists for potential participants in the constituent surveys and Listening Sessions? |
| **Answer** |
| Yes. |

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| **36** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, B,Page 9 | 1. What is the role of the epidemiology team?
2. Will they support any of the listed Needs Assessment data collection efforts (constituent surveys, Listening Sessions, secondary research)?
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| **Answer** |
| 1. The Department’s Epidemiology Team helps to create work plans with Department staff to ensure there are usable performance measures. They also interpret data provided by HRSA and other sources as well as create public facing documents to communicate the data.
2. Yes. The Department’s Epidemiology Team will provide support/input on pieces of the needs assessment and lead anything data related.
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| **37** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | What is the anticipated budget to perform this work? |
| **Answer** |
| The Department declines to answer.  |

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| **38** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part IV, Section IV, Page 15 | Can you please confirm that the Cost Proposal should only be completed for the initial period of the project (Period of Performance 7/1/2025 - 6/30/2027)? |
| **Answer** |
| Refer to the amended Cost Form at the beginning of this document. |

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| **39** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part IV, Section IV, Page 15 | We anticipate the work to cost less in the initial 2 years, but to increase as the needs assessment cycle renews. Should we price the first two years without consideration for increase costs in the renewal years? |
| **Answer** |
| Refer to the amended Cost Form at the beginning of this document. |

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| **40** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part IV, Section IV, Page 15 | Can you please confirm the contract type (e.g. Fixed Price or T&M)? |
| **Answer** |
| Refer to the answer to question 16 of this document. |

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| **41** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part IV, Proposal Submission Requirements, Page 13 | May we include resumes of staff being bid on this proposal? |
| **Answer** |
| No, Bidders are not to provide additional attachments beyond those specified in the RFP for the purpose of extending their response. Additional materials not requested will not be considered part of the proposal and will not be evaluated. |

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| **42** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part IV,Section IV, Page 15 | How will contractor costs be determined for supporting the project for the remaining period of performance following the initial period of performance starting 7/1/2025 and ending on 6/30/2027? |
| **Answer** |
| Refer to the amended Cost Form at the beginning of this document. |

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| **43** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part IV,Section IV, Page 15 | Would the State anticipate that the budgets for the two renewal periods be higher than what is submitted for the budget of the initial period of performance starting 7/1/2025 and ending on 6/30/2027? |
| **Answer** |
| It is at the Bidder’s discretion. Bidders must submit a Cost Form for the 5-year procurement, refer to the amended Cost Form at the beginning of this document. |

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| **44** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, A,Page 8 | Could the State specify the extent of effort for Task #4? Would this task primarily involve technical assistance for evaluation planning and dissemination or would the bidder be asked to carry out evaluation and dissemination activities? |
| **Answer** |
| The awarded Bidder is expected to provide consultation and advice around the four (4) subcategories outline in Part II, A.4. of the RFP. The Department will perform the dissemination of the Action Plans and the Department’s Epidemiology Team will perform the necessary evaluations. |

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| **45** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | Does the Department maintain a preferred vendors list for this work? |
| **Answer** |
| No, all interested parties are invited to respond to this RFP. |

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| **46** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | Are there any small business requirements or preferences for this procurement? |
| **Answer** |
| No, all interested parties are invited to respond to this RFP. |

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| **47** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | Are costs related to community or stakeholder participation (e.g., listening sessions,) such as incentives, interpretation/translation services, or in-state travel, considered allowable under this award? |
| **Answer** |
| Yes. |

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| **48** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | We did not see guidance on formatting such as word counts, page limits, font size, or spacing. Could you confirm if there are any such requirements? We understand the request to be succinct. |
| **Answer** |
| The RFP does not require any specific word counts, page limits, font size, or spacing. Refer to the RFP requirements in Part III, C. Proposal Submission. |

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| **49** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | 1. We did not see a budget ceiling or award amount specified. Can you share either a total funding amount or an expected level of effort (e.g., staff hours or FTEs) for this work?
2. Any caps in indirect rates?
 |
| **Answer** |
| 1. The Department declines to answer.
2. It is at the Bidder’s discretion.
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| **50** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | 1. Is there a current contractor performing this work?
2. If so, will their deliverables, systems, or other materials be made available to ensure continuity?
 |
| **Answer** |
| 1. Refer to the answer to question 8 of this document.
2. Yes.
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