

Competitive Bid
Disability and Preparedness Expert Consultant
Proposal Due Date: 12/17/21 5:00 p.m. ET

I. Summary Information

Purpose: To identify a contractor that specializes in disability and preparedness topics, especially as it relates to preparedness planning.

Proposal Due Date and Time: 12/15/2021 5:00 pm EST

Selection Announcement Date: 12/22/2021 5:00 pm EST

Maximum Funding Amount: \$75,000

Estimated Period of Performance and Final Report Date: 1/10/2022 – 7/31/2022

Eligibility: All contractors in good standing with ASTHO are eligible to apply.

ASTHO Points of Contact: Disability and Preparedness Project Staff, specialists@astho.org

II. Description of RFP

Purpose

The Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO), in conjunction with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), is seeking the services of a highly qualified contractor with expertise on disability and preparedness topics to provide support to ASTHO’s disability and preparedness specialists, and the jurisdictions that they serve. The selected contractor should have a deep understanding of the field of public health preparedness, including familiarity with evaluating and updating Emergency Operations Plans (EOP) to ensure that they comprehensively include people with access and function needs. Under this contract, the contractor will coordinate with ASTHO to lead jurisdictions through a review and update of their EOPs and offer technical assistance on various other projects.

Background

COVID-19 has both created and spotlighted many barriers to health equity for people with disabilities. Research supports that people with disabilities are more likely to have conditions that are associated with COVID-19 severity and mortality and a higher rate of case fatality. ASTHO and CDC are committed to addressing the needs of people with disabilities throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Through a cooperative agreement with CDC, ASTHO has placed one full-time equivalent disability and preparedness specialist in 20 jurisdictions to ensure that the needs of people with disabilities are met in emergency preparedness planning and exercises.

As part of this project, ASTHO will assist the 20 jurisdictions with disability and preparedness specialists as they evaluate their existing state and territorial preparedness plans (e.g., EOPs) to ensure that people with disabilities are adequately included in emergency responses. ASTHO requires the expertise of an experienced facilitator to support the review and consultation of EOPs. The contractor will need to possess subject matter expertise on emergency preparedness plans, the needs of people living with disabilities in emergencies, meeting facilitation, and engagement techniques.

Additionally, the contractor will provide technical support on additional disability and preparedness related questions and topics that are generated through the project.

Project activities

The selected disability and preparedness expert consultant will complete the following project activities throughout the execution of their contract:

A. Participate in biweekly or monthly check-in calls with ASTHO program staff.

The selected contractor will participate in monthly meetings with ASTHO staff to ensure that ASTHO staff are kept apprised of project advancements, and that the contractor can receive pertinent updates. These meetings will provide a regular opportunity for the contractor and ASTHO staff to have general discussions about the overall project and session content, and to address any new issues, questions, or requirements that might arise.

B. Develop a facilitation guide for updating EOPs.

The selected contractor will develop or modify an existing facilitation guide to host conversations with individual jurisdictions on updating their health agency preparedness plans. This facilitation guide will be comprehensive and should cover the purpose of the discussion, structure of the review, participant goals, and outcomes.

C. Present to disability and preparedness specialists on updating EOPs.

The hired facilitator will be responsible for hosting a large session with all disability and preparedness specialists to discuss topics related to updating EOPs (e.g., the overall process, gaining leadership buy-in, etc.). The contractor will work in coordination with ASTHO to ensure that the presentation is comprehensive and meets project needs.

D. Host individual sessions with up to 20 different jurisdictions to review and discuss potential updates to EOP to include people living with disabilities.

The contractor will act as the lead facilitator/presenter in up to 20 individualized conversations with jurisdictions that are participating in the disability and preparedness specialists program. States will select other outside partners that they would like to participate in the discussion. The contractor will support the jurisdiction and offer recommendations as to who should be involved in the conversation.

F. Produce up to two capacity building products on the EOP review process.

The contractor will be responsible for contributing to up to two capacity building products, focusing on the EOP review process.

E. Offer additional technical assistance to disability and preparedness specialists, as required.

The contractor will support ASTHO to answer additional requests for technical assistance from specialists on the topics of preparedness and disability.

Expected Outcomes/Expectations and Deliverables

It is expected that the hired contractor will facilitate one large presentation with all disability and preparedness specialists and will host up to 20 individualized sessions that result in Emergency Operations Plans (EOPs) that are more inclusive of people living with disabilities.

Inclusion of Health Equity

ASTHO is committed to the promotion of health equity and the elimination of health inequities. Health inequities are reflected by disproportionately high rates of disease, premature death, and a lower quality of life. Health inequities are avoidable and state, federal, and locally funded activities play a key role in helping to solve this problem. Applicants are encouraged to address health inequities within the context of proposed activities.

Technical Support/Technical Assistance

ASTHO is available to provide information to the grantee at no additional cost. ASTHO will provide any necessary technical support during the exercises (e.g., Zoom).

Availability of Funds

ASTHO intends to award one (1) contractor a grant of up to \$75,000 for the activities described in this RFP. The project duration will be from 1/10/2022 – 7/31/2022. All applications must be received by 5pm EST on December 15, 2021.

Selected applicant will be notified by December 22, 2021. Awards will be made through a fixed-price agreement.

Evaluators

ASTHO staff will evaluate proposals under this RFP. Staff involved in review include Disability and Preparedness Project Staff, specialists@astho.org.

III. Requirements for Financial Award

Allowable Expenses

Funds may not be used for equipment purchases. Per HHS requirements, funds awarded under this RFP are prohibited from being used to pay the direct salary of an individual at a rate more than the federal Executive Schedule Level II (currently \$199,300).

Required Grant Activities to be Covered by Award

- Host conversations with up to 20 different jurisdictions to review and discuss potential updates to EOP to include people living with disabilities.
- Travel to 20 jurisdictions for the EOP review may be required under this award, depending on the status of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Produce products to report on the preparedness plan review process.

Period of Performance

The contract is scheduled to begin 1/10/2022 – 7/31/2022.

Reporting Requirements

Monthly calls with ASTHO staff. Final deliverables will be due 7/31/2022.

IV. Required Proposal Content and Selection Criteria

Proposals must include the following content areas and meet the following criteria. Proposals should not exceed 5 pages in length, excluding CVs and budget, and should be single-spaced in an 11-point font.

- A. Cover Letter (10 points):** Include the names of the lead programmatic and fiscal/contractual contacts (name, address, e-mail, telephone number). Not to exceed one page but does not count toward the proposal page limit.
- B. Proposed Approach (20 points):** Provide a brief outline of the approach and strategy to accomplishing the requested project activities. Detail a work plan which includes activities, timeline, goals, and milestones to achieve the deliverables and meet the expectations noted above.
- C. Prior Experience and Performance (20 points):** Describe experience and quality of performance on recent work completed with similar scope. Include information about familiarity with and understanding of the topic. Describe ability to represent ASTHO well in interactions with state and territorial health agency staff and other governmental, private sector, and/or non-profit stakeholders.
- D. Organization/Individual Capacity (10 points):** Include information about the company and address ability and capacity to perform the services required within the specified timeframe. Describe staff qualifications and provide a CV for key personnel/staff lead.
- E. Budget & Budget Narrative (10 points):** Provide a detailed fixed price per deliverable budget, including detailed projected costs for the completion of the project. The fixed price budget should include a cost break-down per task and a proposed payment schedule. Maximum award is \$25,000. Attachment A outlines the general format in which the budget should be presented. Applicants may use Attachment A as a template or simply as a guide to inform development of the project budget. A budget narrative must accompany the budget and indicate the costs associated with each proposed activity.
- F. Response to ASTHO Contract Terms and Conditions (10 points):** ASTHO and selected applicant(s) will enter into a fixed price per deliverable agreement. A copy of ASTHO's general contract terms and conditions is available in **Attachment B. Review the terms and conditions with your contracts officer or legal team and confirm that if selected, you will enter into this agreement; or identify and include any proposed changes to the terms with your proposal application.** ASTHO reserves the right to accept or decline any proposed changes to the terms and conditions. Significant proposed changes, which could affect the agreement's timely execution, may impact your selection as a successful applicant.
- G. Inclusion of Health Equity (10 points):** Throughout the proposal, incorporate the following: (1) describe the extent to which health disparities are evident within the health focus of the application, (2) identify specific group(s) which experience a disproportionate burden of the health condition,

and (3) demonstrate how proposed activities address health inequities (this also includes identifying social and/or environmental conditions which are the root causes of health disparities). The root causes of health inequities are sometimes referred to as social determinants of health. All information regarding health inequities must be supported with data.

- H. References (10 points):** Attach at least one example of recent (within the last three years) work completed of similar scope and three current references we may contact.

V. Submission Information

Application Procedure

ASTHO must receive applications by 5:00pm EDT, December 15, 2021. Please submit an electronic copy of the application to Disability and Preparedness Project Staff at specialists@astho.org with the subject line “Disability and Preparedness Expert Consultant Bid.” Incomplete applications or applications received after the deadline will not be considered.

Applicant Questions and Guidance

ASTHO will support interested applicants to offer guidance and address specific questions about the competitive bid. Interested parties may contact ASTHO Disability and Preparedness Project Staff at specialists@astho.org.

Disclaimer Notice:

This competitive bid is not binding on ASTHO, nor does it constitute a contractual offer. Without limiting the foregoing, ASTHO reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to reject any or all proposals; to modify, supplement, or cancel the competitive bid; to waive any deviation from the competitive bid; to negotiate regarding any proposal; and to negotiate final terms and conditions that may differ from those stated in the competitive bid. Under no circumstances shall ASTHO be liable for any costs incurred by any person in connection with the preparation and submission of a response to this competitive bid.