**STATE OF MAINE**

**Department of Public Safety**



**RFA# 202301013**

**Healthcare Disparities Funding for Community Paramedicine**

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| **RFA Coordinator** | All communication regarding the RFA must be made through the RFA Coordinator identified below.  **Name:** Soliana Goldrich **Title:** Community Paramedicine Coordinator  **Contact Information:** [Soliana.O.Goldrich@maine.gov](mailto:Soliana.O.Goldrich@maine.gov) |
| **Submitted Questions** | *All questions must be received by the RFA Coordinator identified above by:*  **Date:** February 20, 2023, no later than 11:59 p.m., local time and must include **“RFA# 202301013 Question”** in the subject line of the e-mail. |
| **Application Submission Period** | *Applications must be received by the Division of Procurement Services by:*  **Submission Deadline:** March 8, 2023, no later than 11:59 p.m., local time.  *Applications must be submitted electronically to the following address:*  **Electronic (e-mail) Submission Address:** [Proposals@maine.gov](mailto:Proposals@maine.gov)  and must include **“RFA# 202301013 Application Submission”** in the subject line of the e-mail. |

# **RFA TERMS/ACRONYMS with DEFINITIONS**

The following terms and acronyms, as referenced in the RFA, shall have the meanings indicated below:

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| **Term/Acronym** | **Definition** |
| **Accredited** | Officially recognized or authorized as conforming with set standards set by the accrediting body. |
| **CP** | Community Paramedicine |
| **Department** | Department of Public Safety |
| **EMS** | Emergency Medical Services |
| **Health Disparities** | Refers to differences in health outcomes and their determinants among segments of the population as defined by social, demographic, environmental, or geographic category according to the U.S. CDC. |
| **HDG** | Health Disparities Grant |
| **MEMS** | Maine Bureau of Emergency Medical Services |
| **RFA** | Request for Application |
| **Rural** | As defined by Human Resources & Services Administration (HRSA), [Rural Health Grants Eligibility Analyzer](https://data.hrsa.gov/tools/rural-health). |
| **State** | State of Maine |
| **Underserved Populations** | Refers to populations sharing a particular characteristic, as well as geographic communities, that have been systematically denied a full opportunity to participate in aspects of economic, social, and civic life. Populations can include but are not limited to: African American, Latino, and Indigenous and Native American persons, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and other persons of color; members of religious minorities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQIA+) persons; persons with disabilities; persons who live in rural  communities; and persons otherwise adversely impacted by persistent poverty or inequality according to the Executive Order On Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government, January 20, 2021. |

# **Details and Instructions**

## Application Purpose and Background

The State of Maine Department of Public Safety (Department), through the Maine Bureau of Emergency Medical Services (MEMS) seeks applications for grant projects under the Health Disparities Grant. The Health Disparities Grant (HDG) Program provided funding to address health disparities, including those from COVID-19, and advance health equity. The grant focuses on a reduction in health disparities, improving and increasing healthcare resources offered by EMS to underserved populations and people living in rural communities. It also focuses on improving capacity and services to prevent and control COVID-19 infection (or transmission) among populations at higher risk that are underserved, including rural communities. These sub-grant funds are meant to support EMS agencies in initiating and/or expanding community paramedicine services, with a focus on rural areas. All recipient services will be required to expand capacity to be able to provide COVID-19 testing.

Funding for the Maine EMS Health Disparities Sub-grant is provided through the Health Disparities Grant and an MOU between the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Maine CDC), Office of MaineCare Services (OMS) and Maine EMS. This round of Service Provider Grants has allocated $1,000,000 with a maximum of 20 award recipients.

This document provides instructions for submitting proposals, the procedure, and criteria by which the successful Applicants(s) will be selected, and the contractual terms which will govern the relationship between the State of Maine and the successful Applicant(s).

The Department intends to provide support and resources to grant recipients, including but not limited to providing a Q&A summary by February 28, 2023.

## General Provisions

1. From the time this RFA is issued until award notification is made, all contact with the State regarding this RFA must be made through the RFA Coordinator identified on the cover page of this RFA. No other person/State employee is empowered to make binding statements regarding this RFA. Violation of this provision may lead to disqualification from the application process, at the State’s discretion.
2. The Applicant shall take careful note that in evaluating its application submitted in response to this RFA the Department will consider materials provided in the application and internal Departmental information of previous contract history, if any, with the Applicant. The Department also reserves the right to consider other reliable references and publicly available information in evaluating the Applicant’s experience and capabilities.
3. All submissions in response to this RFA will be public records, available for public inspection pursuant to the State of Maine Freedom of Access Act (FOAA) ([1 M.R.S. § 401](http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/statutes/1/title1sec401.html) et seq.).
4. All applicable laws, whether or not herein contained, shall be included by this reference. It shall be the Applicant’s responsibility to determine the applicability and requirements of any such laws and to abide by them.

## Eligibility to Submit Applications

In order to be considered for Grant funding under this application process, Applicants must be/provide:

* 1. Eligible organizations include all Maine EMS agencies including non-transporting and ground ambulance services and services that are municipally based, volunteer based, and non-profit services.
  2. Services must either have an existing community paramedicine designation or have started the application process for a community paramedicine designation. Services will need to have received a community paramedicine designation prior to disbursement of funds.

## Number of Awards

The Department anticipates making multiple awards with a maximum of 20 awards as a result of the RFA process.

Prospective Maine EMS agencies may request up to $60,000 per agency. To encourage applicants to prioritize communities that are more rural and have greater health disparities, service providers may request an additional $2,500 for each community with higher levels of rurality identified as a zip code with a population of less than 200 people per square mile according to the [most recent census data](https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US/PST045221). The request for additional monies can go up to a maximum of $25,000. With additional monies the maximum award for any agency would be $85,000.

To achieve an equitable geographic distribution of regional provider investments, the State’s intent is to select at least one (1) Group from each of the current six (6) Maine EMS regions during the grant cycle. Any EMS agency requesting funds should specify which region they serve in the application. The six regions are defined as:

1) Southern

2) Tri-County

3) Kennebec Valley

4) Northeast

5) Aroostook

6) Midcoast

Any person aggrieved by the award decision that results from the RFA may appeal the decision to the Director of the Bureau of General Services in the manner prescribed in [5 M.R.S.A. § 1825-E](http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/statutes/5/title5sec1825-E.html) and [18-554 Code of Maine Rules Chapter 120](https://www.maine.gov/dafs/bbm/procurementservices/policies-procedures/chapter-120).  The appeal must be in writing and filed with the Director of the Bureau of General Services, 9 State House Station, Augusta, Maine, 04333-0009 within 15 calendar days of receipt of notification of conditional contract award.

## Contract Terms

The Department anticipates issuing awards for a contract period beginning as early as April 1, 2023 and ending no later than June 30, 2024. Contract periods may vary based on the time each application is received and scored by the Department and the Department’s ability to fully executed each contract. The Department does not anticipate the availability of additional funding after this period.

Awarded Applicants will initially receive funding for up to a 15-month period. Awarded Applicants performance will be evaluated quarterly. If an awarded Applicant is not making adequate progress towards the required Performance Metrics their contract may be terminated at the discretion of the Department. If an agency does not have an active designation at the time of the application, they will be required to complete the application and receive the community paramedicine designation prior to disbursement of the funds.

# **Activities and Requirements**

## Grants

1. Desired outcomes from the Maine EMS Health Disparities Sub-Grants are a reduction in health disparities, improvement and increase of healthcare resources offered by EMS to underserved populations and people living in rural communities as well as improved capacity of services to prevent and control COVID-19 infection (or transmission) among populations at higher risk that are underserved, including rural communities. These funds should support agencies with initial program start up costs or overall program improvement.
2. All funded Applicants will be required to provide quarterly updates, project deliverables, and a brief project case study that communicates lessons learned.

## Application Components

A complete and scoreable application for funding will include the following components. Specific descriptions of each component are included in the application.

1. **General Information/Service Provider and Group Eligibility**

Applicants must complete the following documents as part of their application.

* Application Cover Page & General Assurances, see Appendix A
* Debarment, Performance and Non-Collusion Certification, see Appendix B
* Agency eligibility
  + Applicants must be an eligible entity. Grant recipient must be a Maine EMS agency with a community paramedicine designation or be working towards a CP designation.

1. **Community Rurality**

Rurality will be determined by the following components, see chart below:

* 1. Is the agency in an area that is determined eligible for rural health grants by HRSA [Rural Health Grants Eligibility Analyzer](https://data.hrsa.gov/tools/rural-health)? Provide a list of the zip codes you provide service to. If you have a zip code within your service area that is eligible you will receive full points.
  2. Discuss how your service area is affected by rurality. Does rurality effect service overall? If so, how?

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| **Component** | **Grading Criteria for Community Rurality** | **Points eligible** |
| A | If there is a HRSA eligible zip code that is served, the agency will receive 10 points.  If there is not a HRSA eligible zip code served the agency will receive 0 points. | 10 |
| B | Does the discussion include:   * Rurality’s effect on overall community health (5pts) * Rurality’s effect on access to healthcare (5pts) | 10 |

1. **Health Disparities[[1]](#footnote-2)**

Identify what health disparities exist within your community as well as any underserved populations[[2]](#footnote-3). Please provide evidence (e.g., statistics, reports, rurality data, etc.) to illustrate how said population is underserved or experiencing health disparities. Demonstrate how your CP program will support in the reduction of health disparities. How does your plan improve and/or increase healthcare resources for underserved populations?

1. **Capacity, Expertise, and Previous Experience**

Applicants must demonstrate required capacity and expertise, as well as relevant previous experience.

1. **Scope of Work**

Demonstrate how the Applicant will achieve outcomes including: reducing health disparities, improving, and increasing healthcare resources offered by EMS to underserved populations and people living in rural communities as well as improving capacity and services to prevent and control COVID-19 infection (or transmission) among populations at higher risk that are underserved, including rural communities.

The scope should also indicate how these funds will support in the initiation or expansion of community paramedicine resources in rural or underserved areas.

1. **Budget Proposal**

* Applicants shall provide a Budget Narrative and Budget Form detailing the cost of the grant and where specific funds will be allocated.
* Up to $60,000 per EMS agency; up to an additional $2,500 for each Maine community with high levels of rurality equal to a population of less than 200 people per square mile identified by zip code at a maximum of an additional $25,000. These values can be found on the [US Census Data website](https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US/PST045221); however, there may be some zip codes that it is unavailable. In those situations, it will be necessary to perform the manual calculation. To do so, take the population estimates from the most recent US Census data for each of the zip codes that will be served by your program, then divide the population estimate for each zip code by the respective land area in square miles (e.g., Zip Code 1 (04XXX): 1,350 people/200 sq. miles=6.75 persons per square mile). In this example, the program would be eligible for an additional $2,500 based on the population density calculation of 6.75 persons per square mile.
* All budgeted costs should conform to the federal government’s four cost principles, including but not limited to, necessary, reasonable, allocable, and consistently treated.
* Budget proposal should include sustainability model for the program. For example: if funding is used towards salary what will provide the salary long-term?

1. **Performance/Outcome Metrics**
   * Establish and track performance/outcome metrics.
   * Ensure quarterly narrative, metrics, and financial reports are prepared and submitted to the Department as outlined in the resulting contract.
   * Provide a minimum of two (2) success stories for publication and promotion by the Department through social media, printed stories, annual report to the legislature, or other forms of publication quarterly.

## Reports

Awarded Applicants will be required to adhere to all Department reporting requirements outlined in the contract resulting from this RFA process. Specific reporting requirements will be determined during contract negotiations.

# **Key Process Events**

1. **Submitting Questions about the Request for Applications**

Any questions must be submitted by e-mail and received by the RFA Coordinator identified on the cover page of this RFA, as soon as possible but no later than the date and time specified on the RFA cover page. Submitted Questions must include the subject line: “RFA# 202301013 Questions”. The Department assumes no liability for assuring accurate/complete/on time e-mail transmission and receipt.

**Question & Answer Summary:** Responses to all questions will be compiled in writing and posted on the Division of Procurement Services [Grant RFPs and RFAs](https://www.maine.gov/dafs/bbm/procurementservices/vendors/grants) website. It is the responsibility of all interested parties to go to this website to obtain a copy of the Question & Answer Summary. Only those answers issued in writing on this website will be considered binding.

1. **Amendments to the Request for Applications**

All amendments (if any) released in regard to this Request for Applications will be posted on the Division of Procurement Services Grant RFPs and RFAs website. It is the responsibility of all interested parties to go to this website to obtain amendments. Only those amendments posted on this website are considered binding.

## Submitting an Application

1. **Applications Due:** Applications must be received no later than 11:59 p.m. local time, on the date listed on the cover page of the RFA. E-mails containing original application submissions, or any additional or revised application files, received after the 11:59 p.m. deadline will be rejected without exception.

At the Department’s discretion, this RFA may be reopened to fund additional applicants who meet the requirements of the RFA.

1. **Submission Instructions:** Applications are to be submitted electronically to the State of Maine Division of Procurement services, via e-mail, to [proposals@maine.gov](mailto:proposals@maine.gov).
   1. Only applications received by e-mail will be considered. The Department assumes no liability for assuring accurate/complete e-mail transmission and receipt.
   2. E-mails containing links to file sharing sites or online file repositories will not be accepted as submissions. Only e-mail applications that have the actual requested files attached will be accepted.
   3. Encrypted e-mails received which require opening attachments and logging into a proprietary system will not be accepted as submissions. Please check with your organizations Information Technology team to ensure your security settings will not encrypt your proposal submission.
   4. File size limits are 25MB per e-mail. Applicants may submit files across multiple e-mails, as necessary, due to file size concerns. All e-mails and files must be received by the due date and time listed above.
   5. Applicants are to insert the following into the subject line of their e-mail submission: “**RFA# 202301013 Application Submission – [Applicant’s Name]**”.
   6. Applications are to be submitted as a single, typed, PDF file and must include all related documents identified on the application specific to each category.

# **Application Evaluation and Selection**

1. **Scoring Weights:** The score will be based on a 100-point scale and will measure the degree to which each application meets the following criteria. Only complete applications will be considered for award.

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| **Scoring Criteria** | **Points Available** |
| Part I – General Information/Service Provider and Group Eligibility | Pass/Fail |
| Part II – Community Rurality | 20 |
| Part III – Health Disparities | 20 |
| Part IV – Capacity, Expertise and Previous Experience | 10 |
| Part V – Scope of Work | 20 |
| Part VI – Budget Proposal | 15 |
| Part VII – Performance/Outcome Metrics | 15 |
| **Total Points** | **100 Points** |

1. **Scoring Process:** The grant review team(s) will use a consensus approach to evaluate and score all sections listed above. Members of the review team will not score those sections individually but, instead, will arrive at a consensus as to the assignment of points for each of those sections.
2. **Selection and Award:** Notification of selection or non-selection will be made in writing by the Department. Issuance of this RFA in no way constitutes a commitment by the State of Maine to award a contract, or to pay costs incurred in the preparation of a response to this request, or to pay costs incurred in procuring or contracting for services, supplies, physical space, personnel, or any other costs incurred by the Applicant.

The Department will consider all application funding requests on a case-by-case basis. The Department reserves the right to approve or deny any funding requests including approval of an application at an amount lower than requested by the Applicant. Applications will be funded in descending order by category, highest to lowest score, subject to funding availability.

**APPENDIX A**

**RFA# 202301013**

**Maine EMS Health Disparities Sub-Grant**

# **GRANT FUNDING APPLICATION – COVER PAGE**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Applicant’s Organization Name:** | |  | | | |
| **Chief Executive - Name/Title:** | |  | | | |
| **Tel:** |  | | **E-mail:** | |  |
| **Headquarters Street Address:** | |  | | | |
| **Headquarters City/State/Zip:** | |  | | | |
| ***(Provide information requested below if different from above)*** | | | | | |
| **Lead Point of Contact for Application - Name/Title:** | | | |  | |
| **Tel:** |  | | **E-mail:** | |  |
| **Headquarters Street Address:** | |  | | | |
| **Headquarters City/State/Zip:** | |  | | | |

* This Application and the pricing structure contained herein will remain firm for a period of one hundred eighty (180) days from the date and time of the bid opening.
* No personnel currently employed by the Department or any other State agency participated, either directly or indirectly, in any activities relating to the preparation of the Applicant’s Application.
* No attempt has been made, or will be made, by the Applicant to induce any other person or firm to submit or not to submit an application.
* The above-named organization is the legal entity entering into the resulting contract with the Department should they be awarded the contract.
* The undersigned is authorized to enter contractual obligations on behalf of the above-named organization.

*To the best of my knowledge, all information provided in the enclosed application, both programmatic and financial, is complete and accurate at the time of submission.*

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| **Name (Print):** | **Title:** |
| **Authorized Signature:** | **Date:** |

**APPENDIX B**

**RFA# 202301013**

**Maine EMS Health Disparities Sub-Grant**

# **DEBARMENT, PERFORMANCE and NON-COLLUSION CERTIFICATION**

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| **Bidder’s Organization Name:** |  |

*By signing this document, I certify to the best of my knowledge and belief that the aforementioned organization, its principals and any subcontractors named in this proposal:*

1. *Are not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, and declared ineligible or voluntarily excluded from bidding or working on contracts issued by any governmental agency.*
2. *Have not within three years of submitting the proposal for this contract been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against them for:*
   1. *Fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a federal, state, or local government transaction or contract.*
   2. *Violating Federal or State antitrust statutes or committing embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, or receiving stolen property.*
3. *Are not presently indicted for or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity (Federal, State, or Local) with commission of any of the offenses enumerated in paragraph (b) of this certification.*
4. *Have not within a three (3) year period preceding this proposal had one or more federal, state, or local government transactions terminated for cause or default*.
5. *Have not entered into a prior understanding, agreement, or connection with any corporation, firm, or person submitting a response for the same materials, supplies, equipment, or services and this proposal is in all respects fair and without collusion or fraud. The above-mentioned entities understand and agree that collusive bidding is a violation of state and federal law and can result in fines, prison sentences, and civil damage awards.*

**Failure to provide this certification will result in the disqualification of the Applicant’s Application.**

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| Name (Print): | Title: |
| Authorized Signature: | Date: |

1. **Health Disparities** refers to differences in health outcomes and their determinants among segments of the population as defined by social, demographic, environmental, or geographic category. (Source US CDC) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. **Underserved communities** refers to populations sharing a particular characteristic, as well as

   geographic communities, that have been systematically denied a full opportunity to participate in

   aspects of economic, social, and civic life. Populations can include but are not limited to: African

   American, Latino, and Indigenous and Native American persons, Asian Americans and Pacific

   Islanders and other persons of color; members of religious minorities; lesbian, gay, bisexual,

   transgender, and queer (LGBTQIA+) persons; persons with disabilities; persons who live in rural

   communities; and persons otherwise adversely impacted by persistent poverty or

   inequality (Definition modified from the *Executive Order On Advancing Racial Equity and*

   *Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government, January 20, 2021)*. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)