**STATE OF MAINE**

**Department of Public Safety**

*Bureau of Emergency Medical Services*



**RFA# 202412213**

**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 Due** | *All questions must be received by the RFA Coordinator identified above by:*  **Date:** January 16, 2025, no later than 11:59 p.m., local time |
| **Application Submission Deadline** | *Applications must be received by the Office of State Procurement Services by:*  **Submission Deadline:** February 10, 2025, no later than 11:59 p.m., local time.  *Applications must be submitted electronically to:* [Proposals@maine.gov](mailto:Proposals@maine.gov) |

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Page** |
|  |  |
| **RFA DEFINITIONS/ACRONYMS** | **3** |
|  |  |
| **PART I OVERVIEW OF THE GRANT OPPORTUNITY** | **4** |
| 1. PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND |  |
| 1. GENERAL PROVISIONS |  |
| 1. ELIGIBILITY TO SUBMIT BIDS |  |
| 1. AWARDS |  |
| 1. APPEAL OF CONTRACT AWARDS |  |
| 1. APPLICABLE LEGISLATION |  |
|  |  |
| **PART II ACTIVITIES AND REQUIREMENTS** | **7** |
|  |  |
| **PART III KEY PROCESS EVENTS** | **8** |
| 1. INFORMATIONAL SESSION |  |
| 1. SUBMISSION OF QUESTIONS |  |
| 1. AMENDMENTS |  |
| 1. APPLICATION SUBMISSION |  |
|  |  |
| **PART IV APPLICATION EVALUATION AND SELECTION** | **10** |
| 1. EVALUATION PROCESS – GENERAL INFORMATION |  |
| 1. SCORING PROCESS |  |
| 1. SCORING WEIGHTS |  |
| 1. SELECTION AND AWARD |  |
| 1. CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION AND CONDITIONS |  |
|  |  |
| **PART V APPLICATION FORM** | **12** |
|  |  |
| **APPENDIX A** – SUBMITTED QUESTIONS FORM | **13** |

**RFA TERMS/ACRONYMS with DEFINITIONS**

The following terms and acronyms, as referenced in the RFA, 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. |

**PART I OVERVIEW OF THE GRANT OPPORTUNITY**

## Purpose and Background

The State of Maine Department of Public Safety (Department), through the Maine Bureau of Emergency Medical Services (MEMS) is seeking 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 10 award recipients.

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

The Department intends to provide support and resources to grant recipients, including but not limited to providing a Q&A summary by January 27, 2025.

## 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. Issuance of the RFA does not commit the Department to issue an award or to pay expenses incurred by an Applicant in the preparation of a response to the RFA. This includes attendance at personal interviews or other meetings, where applicable.
3. All applications must adhere to the instructions and format requirements outlined in the RFA and all written supplements and amendments (such as the Summary of Questions and Answers), issued by the Department. Applications are to follow the format and respond to all questions and instructions specified in Part III of the RFA.
4. Applicants will take careful note that in evaluating an application submitted in response to this RFA, the Department will consider materials provided in the application, information obtained through interviews/presentations (if any), and internal Departmental information of previous contract history with the Applicant (if any). The Department also reserves the right to consider other reliable references and publicly available information in evaluating the Applicant’s experience and capabilities.
5. The application must be signed by a person authorized to legally bind the Applicant and must contain a statement that the proposal and the pricing contained therein will remain valid and binding for a period of 180 days from the date and time of the bid opening.
6. The RFA and the awarded Applicant’s proposal, including all appendices or attachments, will be the basis for the final contract, as determined by the Department.
7. Following announcement of an award decision, 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.).
8. The Department, at its sole discretion, reserves the right to recognize and waive minor informalities and irregularities found in applications received in response to the RFA.
9. 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. Agencies may apply collaboratively with other agencies. If this is the case Appendix A should be completed by the lead agency and all other agency partners must sign Appendix B.
  2. Services that apply as a group may request up to an additional $50,000 for regional projects. This could include QA/QI projects, educational projects or collaborative planning. This funding must support at minimum 2 additional zip codes in addition to the lead agency's primary service area. Preference will be given to those who have broad projects in rural environments.
  3. 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. If applying in a group, the lead service will need to have a community paramedicine designation prior to disbursement of funds. Depending on the scope of work, one or all services involved may require community paramedicine designations.
  4. Services may not submit more than one application per EMS agency. Only one application will be reviewed **per** agency.
  5. Services that applied for RFA#202301013 and RFA#202306130 are eligible for this RFA. However, if your agency spent less than 75% of previous funds awarded please speak to why you were unable to spend the funds and how you would ensure funds will be spent this round.

## Awards

The Department anticipates making multiple awards with a maximum of 10 awards as a result of the RFA process. Prospective Maine EMS agencies may request up to $125,000 per agency. Applications with the highest scoring will receive awards in descending order.

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.

1. **Appeal of Contract Awards**

Any person aggrieved by the award decision that results from this Request for Applications may appeal the decision to the Director of the Bureau of General Services in the manner prescribed in 5 MRSA § 1825-E and 18-554 Code of Maine Rules, Chapter 120 (found here: [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 contract award.

**PART II ACTIVITIES AND REQUIREMENTS**

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1. **Required Activities**
   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 community paramedicine 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.
2. **Allowable Use of Funds** 
   1. Staff salaries, wages, and fringe benefits specific to Community Paramedicine
   2. Educational and promotional materials
   3. Education of community leaders, health care professionals and decision-makers
   4. Convening interested groups
   5. Participant incentives
   6. Program-related telephone and mailing costs
   7. Printing
   8. Office supplies
   9. Travel in compliance with the general services administration rates
3. **Non-Allowable Use of Funds**
   1. To supplant funds from federal or State sources
   2. To support or engage in any effort to participate in political activities or lobbying
   3. Payment of non-program related debts, fines or penalties
   4. Contributions to a contingency fund
   5. Interest or other financial payments
   6. Any expenditure that may create a conflict of interest or a perception of impropriety
4. **Reporting Requirements**
   1. 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.

**PART III KEY PROCESS EVENTS**

## Submission of Questions

* 1. **General Instructions:** It is the responsibility of all Applicants and other interested parties to examine the entire RFA and to seek clarification, in writing, if they do not understand any information or instructions.
     1. Applicants and other interested parties should use **Appendix A** (Submitted Questions Form) for submission of questions. The form is to be submitted as a WORD document.
     2. Questions must be submitted, by e-mail, and received by the RFA Coordinator identified on the cover page of the RFA as soon as possible but no later than the date and time specified on the RFA cover page.
     3. Submitted Questions must include the RFA Number and Title in the subject line of the e-mail. The Department assumes no liability for assuring accurate/complete/on time e-mail transmission and receipt.
  2. **Question & Answer Summary:** Responses to all questions will be compiled in writing and posted on the State’s Office of State 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.

## Amendments

All amendments released in regard to this RFA will be posted on the Office of State 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 amendments. Only those amendments posted on this website are considered binding.

## Application Submission

* 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.
     1. Any 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.

1. **Delivery Instructions:** Applications must be submitted electronically to the State of Maine Office of State Procurement Services at [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.

Application submission e-mails that are successfully received by the [proposals@maine.gov](mailto:proposals@maine.gov) inbox will receive an automatic reply stating as such.

* 1. E-mails containing links to file sharing sites or online file repositories will not be accepted as submissions. Only e-mail application submissions that have the requested files attached will be accepted.
  2. Encrypted e-mails received which require opening attachments and logging into a proprietary system will not be accepted as submissions. It is the Applicant’s responsibility to check with its organization’s information technology team to ensure that security settings will not encrypt its application submission.
  3. 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 as described above.
  4. Applicants are to insert the following into the subject line of their e-mail submission: “**RFA# 202412213 Application Submission – [Applicant’s Name]**”.

1. **Submission Contents**
2. Application submissions must include the Applicant’s completed **Application Form** (found in Part V of the RFA) and all required information and attachments as stated in the form.
3. The Application Form must be submitted as a single, typed, PDF file.
4. Applicants are not to provide additional attachments beyond those specified in the RFA or Application Form for the purpose of extending their response. Materials not requested will not be considered part of the application and will not be evaluated.

**PART IV APPLICATION EVALUATION AND SELECTION**

1. **Evaluation Process – General Information**
   1. An evaluation team, composed of qualified reviewers, will judge the merits of the proposals received in accordance with the criteria defined in the RFA.
   2. Officials responsible for making decisions on the award selection will ensure that the selection process accords equal opportunity and appropriate consideration to all who are capable of meeting the specifications. The goals of the evaluation process are to ensure fairness and objectivity in review of the applications and to ensure that all contracts are awarded to the Applicants that provide the best value to the State of Maine.
   3. The Department reserves the right to communicate and/or schedule interviews/presentations with Applicants, if needed, to obtain clarification of information contained in the applications received. The Department may revise the scores assigned in the initial evaluation to reflect those communications and/or interviews/presentations. Changes to applications, including updating or adding information, will not be permitted during any interview/presentation process and, therefore, Applicants must submit proposals that present their rates and other requested information as clearly and completely as possible.
   4. Failure to respond to all questions and instructions throughout the RFA may result in the application being disqualified as non-responsive or receiving a reduced score. The Department, and its evaluation team, has sole discretion to determine whether a variance from the RFA specifications will result either in disqualification or reduction in scoring of a proposal.
2. **Scoring Process:** The evaluation team will use a consensus approach to evaluate and score all sections listed below. Members of the review team will not score those sections individually but, instead, will arrive at a consensus as to assignment of points for each of those sections.
3. **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.

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| **Scoring Criteria** | **Points Available** |
| Eligibility | Pass/Fail |
| Community Rurality | 20 |
| Health Disparities | 20 |
| Qualifications and Experience | 10 |
| Proposed Project | 20 |
| Budget and Performance and Outcome Metrics | 30 |
| **Total Points** | **100 points** |

1. **Selection and Award**
   1. Notification of conditional award selection or non-selection will be made in writing by the Department.
   2. Issuance of this RFA in no way constitutes a commitment by the State to award a contract, to pay costs incurred in the preparation of a response to the RFA, or to pay costs incurred in procuring or contracting for services, supplies, physical space, personnel, or any other costs incurred by the Applicant.
   3. The Department reserves the right to reject any and all applications or to make multiple awards.
2. **Contract Administration and Conditions**
   1. The awarded Applicants will be required to execute a State of Maine Service Contract with the appropriate riders as determined by the issuing Department.
   2. Allocation of funds is final upon successful negotiation and execution of the contract, subject to the review and approval of the State Procurement Review Committee. Contracts are not considered fully executed and valid until approved by the State Procurement Review Committee and funds are encumbered. No contract will be approved based on an RFP which has an effective date less than fourteen (14) calendar days after award notification to Applicants. (Referenced in the regulations of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, [Chapter 110, § 3(B)(i)](https://www.maine.gov/dafs/bbm/procurementservices/policies-procedures/chapter-110)). This provision means that a contract cannot be effective until at least 14 calendar days after award notification.
   3. Following the award, a Contract Administrator from the Department will be appointed to assist with the development and administration of the contract and to act as administrator during the entire contract period. Department staff will be available after the award to consult with the awarded Applicants in the finalization of the contract.
   4. In providing services and performing under the contract, the awarded Applicant must act as an independent contractor and not as an agent of the State of Maine.

**PART V APPLICATION FORM**

## Applicants must use the Application Form embedded below to submit their application in response to this RFA.

## The Application Form may be obtained in a Word (.docx) format by double clicking on the document icon below.

[](https://stateofmaine-my.sharepoint.com/personal/soliana_o_goldrich_maine_gov/Documents/Documents/RFA" \l " 202412213 Application.docx)

**APPENDIX A SUBMITTED QUESTIONS FORM**

This form should be used by Applicants when submitting written questions to the RFA Coordinator.

If a question is not related to any section of the RFA, enter “N/A” under the RFA Section & Page Number. Add additional rows as necessary. Submit this document in WORD format, not PDF.

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| **Organization Name:** |  |

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| **RFA Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
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