

## RFP Questions and Clarifications Memorandum

**To:** Vendors Responding to RFP Number 4416 for the Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH)

**From:** David C. Johnson

**Date:** December 29, 2022

**Subject:** Responses to Questions Submitted and Clarifications to Specifications

**Contact Name:** Khelli Reed

**Contact Phone Number:** 601-432-8194

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### RFP Number 4416 is hereby amended as follows:

**1. Title page, INVITATION is modified as follows:**

INVITATION: Proposals, subject to the attached conditions, will be received at this office until ~~November 22, 2022~~ February 7, 2023 @ 3:00 p.m. Central time for the acquisition of the products/services described below for **Mississippi State Department of Health**.

**2. Title page, third box is modified as follows:**

PROPOSAL, SUBMITTED IN RESPONSE TO  
RFP NO. 4416  
due ~~November 22, 2022~~ February 7, 2023 @ 3:00 p.m.,  
ATTENTION: Khelli Reed

**3. Section VII Technical Specifications, Item 3 Project Schedule is amended as follows:**

Task	Date
Deadline for Questions Answered and Posted to ITS Web Site	<del>10/28/22</del> <u>12/29/22</u>
Open Proposals	<del>11/22/22</del> <u>02/07/23</u>
Evaluation of Proposals	<del>11/22/22</del> <u>02/07/23</u>
ITS Board Presentation	<del>01/19/23</del> <u>03/16/23</u>
Contract Negotiation	January — February = <u>March 2023</u>
Proposed Project Implementation Start-up	<del>03/01/23</del> <u>04/01/23</u>
Proposed Go-Live Deadline	<del>03/01/25</del> <u>04/01/25</u>

4. **Section VIII Cost Information Submission is being replaced with the attached Revised Cost Information Submission form.**

5. **Section VII Technical Specifications, Item 6.1.3 Scoring Methodology is being modified to read:**

For the evaluation of this RFP, the Evaluation Team will use the following categories and possible points:

<b>Category</b>	<b>Possible Points</b>
Non-Cost Categories:	
General: Statement of Understanding; Vendor Qualifications, Staffing Requirements	15
Functional Requirements; System Design; Implementation Requirements	30
Software Administration and Security; Support and Maintenance	20
<b>Total Non-Cost Points</b>	<b>65</b>
Cost Categories	
Lifecycle Costs	25
Change Order Rates	10
<b>Total Cost Points</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Maximum Possible Points</b>	<b>100</b>

6. **Section IV: Legal and Contractual Information, Item 7.2 being modified to read:**

Any provisions disclaiming implied warranties shall be null and void. ~~See Mississippi Code Annotated Sections 11-7-18 and 75-2-719(4).~~ The Vendor shall not disclaim the implied warranties of merchantability and fitness for a particular purpose.

7. **RFP Number 4416, Attachment A, Item 23 is being modified to read:**

Two (2) years in at least one jurisdiction is required. The Vendor shall demonstrate a minimum of ~~three (3)~~ two (2) years of prior experience and consistent use with the proposed system, with preference given to three or more years of prior experience and consistent use, including but not limited to:

- a. Vendor must have minimum of the ~~three (3)~~ two (2) Public Health IDSP projects with the proposed system in a large state, local, or territorial public health jurisdiction of similar scope, and complexity.
- ~~b. Prior installation and success of an integrated disease surveillance platform in a large state, local, or territorial public health jurisdiction which included reporting required CDC disease tracking information.~~
- c. EPI management of statewide public health programs
- d. Standards-based information trading between public health trading partners

- e. Surveillance system exchanges
- f. Private system exchanges
- g. CDS disease tracking systems
  - 1. Development/Configuration
  - 2. Implementation
  - 3. Ongoing operations
  - 4. Support and maintenance

**8. RFP Number 4416, Attachment A, Item 24 is being modified to read:**

The Vendor shall document ~~three (3)~~ two (2) years prior experience with the proposed system. ~~in at least three (3) large state, local or territorial public health jurisdictions.~~ Prior experience must describe meeting federal and state requirements that they identified and their timely incorporation into the system. Prior experience must include the project objectives, timelines, public health domains (e.g., epidemiology, tuberculosis, STD/HIV, etc.), and include relevant CDC examples if available. Prior experience should consider this RFP and provide a rationale of why the experience shows that the Vendor has the experience to implement this RFP's requirements.

**9. RFP Number 4416, Attachment A, Item 31.b is being modified to read:**

**MANDATORY:** Minimum of ~~three (3)~~ two (2) years of experience participating in a project related to a public health integrate disease surveillance system, with a large state, local, or territorial public health jurisdiction, project as a Business Analyst, Subject Matter Expert, Project Lead, Technical, or other similar role. Other roles proposed to meet this experience requirement will be approved at the sole discretion of MSDH. Vendor must describe how they will meet this requirement.

**10. RFP Number 4416, Attachment A, Item 32.a.1 is being modified to read:**

Minimum of ~~three (3)~~ two (2) years of experience as a technical architect or equivalent role, supporting the proposed system by integrating disease surveillance information technology into an existing public health infrastructure. Vendor must describe how they will meet this requirement.

**11. RFP Number 4416, Attachment A, Item 56.h.5 is being modified to read:**

The solution shall support uploading whole genome sequencing (WGS) and other disease sub types using HL7 or other standard formats. Discovery (JAD) will be required to determine specifics.

**12. RFP Number 4416, Attachment A, Item 89.d is being modified to read:**

All deliverables and plans described in ~~Section E~~ Section VII, Table 5 - Deliverables; and

**13. RFP Number 4416, Attachment A, Item 105 is being modified to read:**

The Vendor shall use a variety of training materials to include but not limited to Computer-Based Training (CBT) solutions, videos, Technical Administrative training, Program Administrative training, user training (train-the-trainer), update training manuals, quick reference guides, and system/version update training. MSDH is open for other training considerations proposed by the Vendor.

**14. RFP Number 4416, Attachment A, Item 137 is being modified to read:**

Scheduled Downtime: Agreed upon and scheduled downtime shall occur only between 1:00 a.m. and 4:00 a.m. Central Time. The Vendor shall be assessed a penalty of \$5,000.00 per instance of a failure to notify MSDH in writing forty-eight (48) hours in advance of a scheduled downtime. Solution downtime outside of the allowable downtime period shall be categorized as unscheduled downtime and is subject to a monetary penalty for each occurrence, as is outlined in Item ~~436~~ 135.

**15. RFP Number 4416, Attachment A, Item 141.a is being added:**

As long as Vendor's servers and networking equipment (switches, routers, etc.) adheres to all current security standards set by the IT community, NIST, state and federal laws and policies at the period of required update, the three year update requirement can be extended.

Vendor must include in their proposal a response to each amended requirement as listed above. Vendor must respond using the same terminology as provided in the original requirements.

The following questions were submitted to ITS and are being presented as they were submitted, except to remove any reference to a specific vendor. This information should assist you in formulating your response.

**Question 1:** RFP: Section II Proposal Submission Requirements, Item 9.3, page 7 – The RFP requires that each page of the proposal be numbered. Can Vendors exclude cover and title pages and divider sheets/tabs from this numbering requirement?

**Response:** **Yes, title pages and divider sheet/tabs can be excluded from the numbering requirement.**

**Question 2:** RFP: Section II Proposal Submission Requirements, Item 9.3, page 7 – The RFP requires that each page of the proposal be numbered. Vendors will be providing certain pre-existing documents (e.g., State forms, preliminary plans) that have their own page numbers not necessarily consistent with the overall proposal numbering. Please confirm that Vendors can submit these documents as-is.

**Response:** **Yes, Vendors can submit pre-existing documents having their own numbering system as-is.**

**Question 3:** RFP: Section II Proposal Submission Requirements, Item 9.4, page 7; Att. A: Section I.F Staffing Requirements, Item 27, page 10 – The RFP states that Vendors must respond to the sections and exhibits in the same order as the RFP. However, item 27 in Attachment A references the Vendor Narrative Experience document (RFP Attachment B). Please confirm that Vendors should include Attachment B as part of the response to Attachment A, item 27.

**Response:** **Yes, Vendors must include Attachment B as part of the response to Attachment A, Item 27.**

**Question 4:** RFP: Section II Proposal Submission Requirements, Item 9.11, page 7 – The RFP states that the “Vendor must fully respond to each requirement within the Technical Specifications by fully describing the manner and degree by which the proposal meets or exceeds requirements.” Please confirm this refers to RFP Attachment A and not RFP Section VII.

**Response:** **Yes, this requirement refers to the requirements in the Attachment A document. See Section VII, Item Number 3.1 in the RFP document.**

**Question 5:** RFP: Section III Vendor Information, Item 8, page 10 – The RFP states that ITS reserves the right to make multiple awards. Please explain how this would work.

**Response:** **A multi-award will only come into play if ITS determines that it is in the best interest of the State to make multiple awards to encompass one complete solution. The State does not anticipate making a multi-award for this RFP.**

**Question 6:** RFP: Section III Vendor Information, Item 12, page 10 – The RFP states that the “State will always take advantage of price decreases”. Please confirm that all price decreases are subject to mutual agreement of the parties.

**Response:** **Yes, price decreases are subject to mutual agreement of the parties.**

**Question 7:** RFP: Section III Vendor Information, Item 14, page 11 – Section III, item 14 of the RFP lists information about vendor personnel that must be provided/certified in the Vendor’s proposal. Please confirm that Vendors can provide this information as part of the staffing response in Attachment A, Section I, Subsection F.

**Response:** **Yes, Vendors can provide Vendor personnel information as part of the staffing response.**

**Question 8:** RFP: Section III Vendor Information, Item 14.4, page 11 – Would you be able to provide more detail on this requirement?

**Response:** **Vendors must represent and warrant that, to the extent applicable, it will ensure its compliance with the Mississippi Protection Act, Miss Code Ann. §§ 71-11-1 and 71-11-3. Prior to the award, the awarded Vendor must provide proof of employment eligibility of personnel proposed.**

**Question 9:** RFP: Section III Vendor Information, Item 18, page 12 – Regarding the section entitled “Rights Reserved to Use Existing Product Contracts”, please clarify how this would work and provide an example.

**Response:** **This would not apply to this RFP.**

**Question 10:** RFP: Section III Vendor Information, Item 19, page 12 – The RFP indicates that “the Vendor must include complete product/service information, including product pictorials and technical/descriptive literature relative to any product/service offered with the proposal.” Please confirm that Vendors can provide any brochures or literature as an appendix to their proposal.

**Response:** Yes, Vendors can provide brochures or literature as an appendix to their proposal.

**Question 11:** RFP: Section IV Legal and Contractual Information, Item 7.2, page 14 – Do the statutes referenced cover this particular contract?

**Response:** Item 7.2 has been modified. See Amendment 6 above.

**Question 12:** RFP: Section IV Legal and Contractual Information, Item 7.3, page 14 – Is the State willing to negotiate a reasonable limitation on liability for the Vendor?

**Response:** The Director of the Mississippi Department of Information Technology Services may only limit a vendor's liability to the extent it provides reasonable protection to the State of Mississippi pursuant to Miss. Code Ann. § 25-53-21(e).

**Question 13:** RFP: Section IV Legal and Contractual Information, Item 7.3, page 14 – Is the State willing to limit carveouts from any Vendor liability cap to infringement claims or Vendor's willful misconduct or gross negligence? In other words, will the State agree that any claims arising from Vendor's simple negligence would be covered by any liability cap?

**Response:** Section IV, Item 7.3 of this RFP describes the types of claims/damages that an awarded vendor will be liable to the State with no limitation. Except for those items provided in Section IV, Item 7.3, the vendor's liability may be limited by the ITS Executive Director, whether by liability cap or otherwise, to the extent that such limitation provides reasonable protection to the State.

**Question 14:** RFP: Section IV Legal and Contractual Information, Item 13, page 16 – Can Vendors propose alternate invoicing schedules?

**Response:** Yes, alternate invoicing schedules can be discussed. However, the payment of vendor invoices is subject to Mississippi law, including, but not limited to Miss. Code Ann. § 31-7-305

**Question 15:** RFP: Section IV Legal and Contractual Information, Item 18, page 17 – The RFP indicates that Vendors should include "copies of any agreements to be executed between the Vendor and any subcontractors" in the proposal. Please confirm Vendors can provide the teaming agreements in an appendix to the proposal.

**Response:** Yes. Please note that any Vendor providing a proposal to this RFP must be a validly organized business that is permitted to conduct business in the State of Mississippi. Further, in accordance with Section IV, Item 15 of this RFP the selected Vendor will be designated the prime contractor in the proposal, and as such, will be solely responsible to the State for all products/services offered in the proposal and for the fulfillment of the contract to the State, regardless of whether a component of the products or services are provided through a subcontractor or other form of partnership or joint venture or arrangement/agreement.

**Question 16:** RFP: Section IV Legal and Contractual Information, Item 28.1, page 19 – Will the State please confirm that the Vendor will not be required to pay license fees for the license of custom developed software that will be provided/offered by the Vendor to other states in accordance with Federal regulations?

**Response:** **Please see Section IV, Item 28.2 of this RFP regarding any license fees. Any licensing fees proposed pursuant to Item 28.2 are subject to limitations provided by applicable state of Mississippi and federal laws.**

**Question 17:** RFP: Section IV Legal and Contractual Information, Item 28.1, page 19 – Will the State please confirm that it will only own software that has been developed and paid for exclusively by the State? In other words, the State would not own software developed by the Vendor and paid for by the Vendor.

**Response:** **The State would not own software developed by the Vendor and paid for by the Vendor. Vendor must, as a part of the fee's paid, grant a right to the State to access and use the proposed system.**

**Question 18:** RFP: Section IV Legal and Contractual Information, Item 35, pages 20-21 – The RFP indicates that “if the “Officer in Bind of Company” should not be used for notification of public records requests, Vendor should provide the alternative contact information in response to this RFP item.” The RFP doesn't request responses to Section IV. Please confirm Vendors can provide an alternative point of contact, if appropriate, in an appendix to the proposal.

**Response:** **If an alternative contact for public records notifications is needed, please include them on Section I, Submission Cover Sheet.**

**Question 19:** RFP: Section VII Technical Specifications, Item 1, page 31 – Would the State consider responding to questions on a rolling basis or once a week versus waiting until the October 28, 2022 deadline for answers to be posted to your ITS Web Site?

**Response:** **No.**

**Question 20:** RFP: Section VII Technical Specifications, Item 1, page 31 – Will the State please consider an extension of the Proposal close date to December 13, 2022? The additional time will allow Respondents to digest the State's answers to bidder questions and appropriately apply information in proposal responses resulting in higher value-based solutions and services to the State of Mississippi.

**Response:** **See the revised Procurement Project Schedule above.**

**Question 21:** RFP: Section VII Technical Specifications, Items 6.1.3, 6.2.3, pages 33-34; Att. A: Section I.D, Statement of Understanding, pages 7-8 – The scoring rubrics include “Statement of Understanding,” indicating that it is worth 15 points (along with Vendor Qualifications and Staffing Requirements). However, the Statement of Understanding provided in Attachment A covers informational items, such as the Vendor Web Conference, and does not require a point-by-point response according to the instructions provided. Can the State please clarify what is being evaluated in the response to the Statement of Understanding.

**Response:** The reference to “Statement of Understanding” has been stricken from the General Non-Cost Category. See Amendment 5 above.

**Question 22:** RFP: Section VIII Cost Information Submission, pages 36-37 – Will the State consider a 60-day extension to the deadline for the RFP due date, due to the importance of the responses to clarifying questions and possible risk to the vendor and State in having inadequate time to refine the proposed solution to accommodate these clarification responses?

**Response:** See the revised Procurement Project Schedule above.

**Question 23:** RFP: Section VIII Cost Information Submission, page 36 – The first row under Vendor Deliverable column states “...as described in RFP 4280.” Can the state please clarify if this is intended as RFP number 4416?

**Response:** The reference to “4280” has been changed to 4416 in the Revised Cost Information Submission form. See the attached Revised Cost Information Submission form.

**Question 24:** RFP: Section VIII Cost Information Submission, page 37 – The Annual Costs Table lists “Annual Subscription and Hosting Fees.” Please confirm that the definition of “subscription” can include standard annual maintenance and support fees that are not directly tied to system license fees. In other words, the State is not mandating the vendor to provide annual license subscription fees to be paid (renewed) each year.

**Response:** Implementation costs are part of the base offering, before product acceptance and transition to annual maintenance. MSDH estimates implementation to take two years. Annual costs represent project/contract years three through five and should include all set, annual fees outside of change orders. Please use the Pricing Table for Optional Items and Change Order Rates for costs outside of fixed-rates for implementation base offering and deliverables and the annual maintenance/support/licensing fee.

**Question 25:** RFP: Exhibit A Standard Contract, Article 9.3, page 51 – With respect to SOC requirements, “Licensor shall maintain a hosting environment that undergoes examinations from an independent auditor in accordance with the American Institute of Certified Public Accounts SSAE 16 (i.e. SOC 1) and the AICPA Trust Services Principles Section 100a, Trust Services for Security, Availability, Processing Integrity, Confidentiality and Privacy (i.e. SOC 2).” Please confirm both SOC1 and SOC2 audits are required.

**Response:** Yes, both SOC1 and SOC2 audits are required.

**Question 26:** RFP: Exhibit A Standard Contract, Article 20, page 55 – Would the State be willing to limit the Hold Harmless provision to fault-based claims (i.e. claims relating to Licensor’s negligence or breach of contract)?

**Response:** Subject to and in accordance with the RFP’s requirements, a Vendor may provide exception to a term of the RFP in their proposal submission which



**may be considered in negotiations by ITS pursuant to Section IV, Item 14 of the RFP.**

**Question 27:** RFP: Exhibit A Standard Contract, Article 43, pages 60-61 – Will the State please confirm that Licensor’s confidential trade secret or financial information is not subject to public disclosure and may be redacted prior to posting, or other disclosure, of the Agreement?

**Response:** **Information/records furnished by a third party to ITS must be handled in accordance with the Mississippi Public Records Act. Records/information that are considered trade secret, confidential commercial, or financial information may be disclosed can only be made in accordance with the law, which includes but is not limited to Miss. Code Ann. § 25-61.**

**Question 28:** RFP: Exhibit A Standard Contract, Article 45.1, pages 61 – We would propose an open source application, EpiTrax, as the disease surveillance system. Would a GitLab repository be sufficient for escrow?

**Response:** **No, the GitLab repository is not sufficient for escrow.**

**Question 29:** RFP: Exhibit B Service Level Agreements, page 66 – Is the State willing to negotiate a reasonable monthly cap on liquidated damages that may be assessed against the Licensor?

**Response:** **Subject to and in accordance with the RFP’s requirements, a Vendor may provide exception to a term of the RFP in their proposal submission which may be considered in negotiations pursuant to Section IV, Item 14 of the RFP.**

**Question 30:** Att. A – Since many requirements in this RFP as written, are to be determined, it seems the state desires a “custom solution” built from the ground up and not a “COTS” (Commercial off the shelf) solution. Can the state confirm if this procurement is for a custom or COTS solution?

**Response:** **The State is expecting a modified COTS solution to minimize implementation time compared to a custom developed solution. Minor modifications may be required to maximize workflows and meet MSDH's federal, state, and agency requirements.**

**Question 31:** Att. A – Will MSDH consider new innovation and solution capabilities to evaluate against existing legacy solutions?

**Response:** **All Vendor proposals that meet the RFP qualifications will be evaluated and considered.**

**Question 32:** Att. A: Section I.C, General Overview and Background, page 3 – Has the State held vendor meetings or demonstrations of any EDSS solutions from any vendors?

**Response:** **No Vendor meetings or demonstrations have occurred related to the IDSP.**

**Question 33:** Att. A: Section I.C, General Overview and Background, page 3 –  
i. Does MDSH have an identified budget for this project?

ii. What is the total amount of budget allocation?

**Response:** A budget has not been established for this project. However, all State Agency budgets are considered public record and may be viewed at [www.transparency.ms.gov](http://www.transparency.ms.gov).

**Question 34:** Att. A: Section I.C, General Overview and Background, page 3 – Is it the intent of the state of MS to have a COTS (Commercial off the shelf) solution or have a custom system built by an experienced vendor?

**Response:** The State is expecting a modified COTS solution to minimize implementation time compared to a custom developed solution. Minor modifications may be required to maximize workflows and meet MSDH's federal, state, and agency requirements.

**Question 35:** Att. A: Section I.E, Vendor Qualifications, Items 23-24, pages 8-9 - Based on our market research, the requirements stated in #23 and #24 can only be met by two vendor solutions, each of which have demonstrated important limitations and constraints prior to, and during the COVID response. Is it MSDH's intent to limit competition to only these existing, broadly deployed, legacy solutions?

**Response:** Items 23 and 24 have been modified. See Amendments 7 and 8 above.

**Question 36:** Att. A: Section I.E, Vendor Qualifications, Items 23-24, page 8 - In section E Vendor Qualifications in Attachment A – The mandatory requirement is for a system that is running at a state or large jurisdiction for three years in the public health department with the integrated management of multiple diseases. Would the state consider similar experience along with proven functionality developed in the last three years? We are looking to the State to score that requirement on a scale instead of mandatory as we have a system that was developed for multiple years and finished in early 2020 which misses the three year cut off.

**Response:** Items 23 and 24 have been modified. See Amendments 7 and 8 above.

**Question 37:** Att. A: Section I.F, Staffing Plan, Item 35, page 14 – The RFP indicates that Vendors “shall submit a staffing plan...with the response to the RFP.” Please confirm that Vendors can provide the staffing plan in an appendix to the proposal.

**Response:** Yes. Vendors can provide the staffing plan in an appendix.

**Question 38:** Att. A: Section I.G, Hosting Requirements, Item 40, page 15 – The RFP states, “MSDH seeks a single host setting for all IDSP instances. Potential host settings to be considered are any cloud-based HIPAA certified facility that complies with Federal, State and local laws.” Please confirm the requirement is for a cloud-based, HIPAA-compliant facility, as HIPAA standard is not certifiable.

**Response:** MSDH is a HIPAA covered entity. The awarded vendor will be a business associate, sign a business associate agreement, and shall provide services in compliance with the HIPAA Privacy, Security and Breach Notification Rules.

**Question 39:** Att. A: Section I.G, Hosting Requirements, Item 41, page 15 – The RFP states: “MANDATORY: The Vendor shall be aware that under no circumstances shall any data, or equipment associated with this project reside outside the continental United States, nor shall any data, or equipment associated with this project be accessible to people outside the continental United States. Vendor must describe how this requirement will be met.” Please confirm that no one outside the continental United States can have access to production system and data.

**Response:** **Correct.**

**Question 40:** Att. A: Section II.G, Hosting Requirements, Item 46, page 16 – Can the State please confirm if the hosting environment needs to be a dedicated hosting solution? A Public Cloud solution such as AWS or Azure appears to not meet this requirement.

**Response:** **Yes, the hosting environment should be a dedicated hosting solution. MSDH is a HIPAA covered entity. The awarded Vendor will be a business associate, sign a business associate agreement, and shall provide services in compliance with the HIPAA Privacy, Security and Breach Notification Rules.**

**Question 41:** Att. A: Section II.G, Hosting Requirements, Item 53, page 16 – Is there a template for the technical operations plan, or can you provide the elements of what is required?

**Response:** **The Technical Operations Plan should include descriptions of all processes and procedures needed to meet the requirements listed in Section G: Hosting Environments.**

**Question 42:** Att. A: Section II.H, System Requirements, Item 54.a, page 16 - Please confirm that MSDH will provide credentialing and verification of the trading partners for data exchange.

**Response:** **MSDH does not utilize a formal process for credentialing and verifying trading partners; however, MSDH is open to having discussions geared towards approving trading partners in an efficient and accurate manner.**

**Question 43:** Att. A: Section II.H, System Requirements, Item 54.a.1, page 16 - Will MSDH continue to host Rhapsody or other integration engine for data exchange?

**Response:** **MSDH is open to having discussions that involve improving our data exchange solutions, design, and processes.**

**Question 44:** Att. A: Section II.H, System Requirements, Item 54.a.4, page 16 - Please clarify if the Vendor is expected to work directly with trading partners and/or external entities to resolve data issues.

**Response:** **Yes. The Vendor will have processes, staff to consistently monitor and notify the OCD program of any data issues, and if necessary, work directly with the trading partner and/or external entities to resolve.**

**Question 45:** Att. A: Section II.H, System Requirements, Item 55.a, page 18 - Can you please provide the number of reports per disease group (TB, STD/HIV and EPI) that are going out to CDC?

**Response:** **The tables in Attachment A, Section C – Item Numbers 14 and 15, list the total number of Cases and Reports by disease type.**

**Question 46:** Att. A: Section II.H, System Requirements, Item 55.a, page 18 - Can you please provide the number of reports per disease group (TB, STD/HIV and EPI) that are including in internal reporting to Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)?

**Response:** **HRSA has reporting requirements for the Ryan White Part B Program that currently totals 8 annual reports for the Ryan White Formula grant and 6 for the Ryan White Ending the HIV Epidemic grant.**

**Question 47:** Att. A: Section II.H, System Requirements, Item 55.a.6, page 18 - Will routing the files to CDC via PHINMS and/or by any other medium will be the State's responsibility or the Vendor's responsibility?

**Response:** **MSDH is expecting all electronic reporting to the CDC to be generated from the IDSP. The Vendor will be responsible for all CDC reporting from the IDSP.**

**Question 48:** Att. A: Section II.H, System Requirements, Item 56, page 20 - Please provide the file type(s) and anticipated size of whole genome files. Also, this requirement appears to be incomplete. *The solution shall support uploading whole genome sequencing (WGS) and other disease sub types using HL7 or other standard formats. Discovery (JAD) will be required to determine specific*

**Response:** **MSDH desires the ability to ingest Genome Sequencing data into the IDSP. Since a data standard does not exist, MSDH would expect a JAD session to determine the most reasonable manner to meet this requirement. Vendor should provide recommendations or solutions.**

**Item 56.h.5 has been modified. See Amendment 11 above.**

**Question 49:** Att. A: Section II.H, System Requirements, Item 56.n, page 21 - Please provide examples of "system lists" for MSDH workflows.

**Response:** **Refer to Item Numbers 56.n.3 and 56.n.4 for examples.**

**Question 50:** Att. A: Section II.H, System Requirements, Item 56.n.1, page 21 - Please elaborate on "every list supports a default format".

**Response:** **An example is a Person list could have a default format of: FN, LN, DOB, Address, Case ID, Disease Name, Event Date.**

**Question 51:** Att. A: Section II.H, System Requirements, Item 57, page 22 - Is MSDH requiring the login interface to be available to the public internet rather than be IP Address Restricted to a predefined range?

**Response:** The State requires secure access via public internet.

**Question 52:** Att. A: Section II.H, System Requirements, Item 57, page 22; Section II.I, Operational Requirements, Item 67, page 30 - The State's requirement to open the login interface to the public internet seems to conflict with NIST requirements. Please clarify.

**Response:** The State requires secure access via public internet. Additional information about NIST requirements can be found on this link.  
**NIST SP 800-44 Version 2, Guidelines on Securing Public Web Servers**  
<https://csrc.nist.gov/publications/detail/sp/800-44/version-2/final>

**Question 53:** Att. A: Section II.H, System Requirements, Item 58.a, page 24 - Can the MSDH please provide examples of "any other relevant systems as identified by MSDH."

**Response:** A "relevant system" would be defined as any system required to meet an RFP requirement. Examples could be eHARs, MIIX, EPIC, new births/deaths, CAREWare, etc. Others may be identified during the JAD.

**Question 54:** Att. A: Section II.H, System Requirements, Item 58.e, page 24 - For data sources integrated for use in the case management/investigation workflow, is the scope of the ingestion limited to clinical observations, lab tests and referred cases or does it include additional data sources?

**Response:** Additional data sources and the data that will be exchanged will be determined via JAD sessions as it is dependent upon proposed solution capabilities.

**Question 55:** Att. A: Section II.H, System Requirements, Item 59, page 25 - What skill levels will the workers have or can be expected to have? Is there an expectation that surveys can be created by users in a no-code method?

**Response:** MSDH expects the solution to support custom survey and form creation through the user interface in a no-code method for users with appropriate access to do so.

**Question 56:** Att. A: Section II.H, System Requirements, Item 60.a, 60.d, pages 27-28 - Item 60.d which states the Department's Azure AD server will be used for user name/pwd, seems to conflict with item 60 a.2 which states that user and account management standards including multi-factor must be included by the vendor? Please confirm the Department's AD server will be responsible for all user name/pwd and multi-factor while the vendor is responsible for enabling SSO on the application.

**Response:** MSDH requires solution to integrate with the MSDH Azure tenant for SSO. Third party multi-factor authentication solutions that are capable of integration are allowed but not required.

**Question 57:** Att. A: Section II.H, System Requirements, Item 60.a.1, pages 27 - Since the Department's Azure AD server will be used for SSO, it is typically also responsible for all role assignments as well. Item 60 Auditing/Security a.1 mentions the ability

for external facilities to register and manage their users. Is the State then requesting an interface built by the Vendor to submit new user requests and role assignments into the Departments Azure AD server?

**Response:** **MSDH requires comprehensive RBAC capabilities. External access to the solution shall be managed by the vendor in a standardized manner to meet HIPAA Privacy and Security rules.**

**Question 58:** Att. A: Section II.H, System Requirements, Item 61.a, page 28 - Please let us know the size of the data to be converted.

**Response:** **MSDH has not calculated the exact size of the data to be converted. Vendors can plan for migrating data from 2009 for all three primary systems (TB, STD/HIV, EPI) and use the tables on pages 5 and 7 in Attachment A to calculate an estimate. This will only be an estimate and not used contractually.**

**Question 59:** Att. A: Section II.H, System Requirements, Item 61.a, page 28 - How many legacy systems and various types of databases (e.g., Oracle, MySQL, SQLServer) are there?

**Response:** **Current systems are:  
ERS (TB) - SQL  
EPI - SQL  
STD / HIV - SQL**

**Question 60:** Att. A: Section II.H, System Requirements, Item 61.a, page 28 - Please provide more information on the multiple legacy data systems to be integrated into the system including system description, file size and type, diseases included in the system, number of files, and number of years to be included in the migration.

**Response:** **MSDH has not calculated the exact size of the data to be converted. Vendors can plan for migrating data from 2009 for all three primary systems (TB, STD/HIV, EPI) and use the tables on pages 5 and 7 in Attachment A to calculate an estimate. This will only be an estimate and not used contractually.**

**Question 61:** Att. A: Section II.H, System Requirements, Item 61.b, page 28 - In order to properly size the storage device to house all uploaded file formats (csv/word/jpg/pdf etc.), can the State provide current estimates on how much space this is taking today? Please provide total storage size and timeframe of files stored and used in the storage calculation. a. Is the State willing to document links within the Solution instead of the actual files to reduce storage costs? b. Is the State willing to reduce document retention for these additional files from the 7yr retention policy?

**Response:** **MSDH is unable to estimate storage size due to the current disparate systems.  
A. MSDH is unable to agree to this prior to reviewing a proposal.  
B. Retention policies are set by State and Federal law. Reduction in document retention for documents currently retained more than seven years is a possibility, but it is dependent upon document type and program**

**utilization and will be determined during implementation planning JAD sessions. It is also dependent on approval by the Department of Archives and History.**

**Question 62:** Att. A: Section II.I, Operational Requirements, Item 64, page 29 - Should this be 3 years or 5 years? The cost information section only asks for 3 years.

**Response:** **This is a five-year project. MSDH anticipates two years for implementation and three years of Maintenance and Operations.**

**Question 63:** Att. A: Section II.I, Operational Requirements, Item 73m-n, page 35 - The RFP notes that the Business Continuity Plan “must be included with the Vendor’s proposal response” and that the Disaster Recovery Plan “must be included with the Vendor’s proposal response.” Can the state please confirm that vendors can provide one combined Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery Plan? Please also confirm that Vendors can provide the plan as an appendix to the proposal.

**Response:** **Yes, the Business Continuity Plan and Disaster Recovery Plan required by the RFP can be combined and delivered as one document. Yes, the plan can be provided as an appendix to the proposal.**

**Question 64:** Att. A: Section II.I, Operational Requirements, Item 64, page 29 - The requirement reads: “The Vendor shall provide the projected cost analysis over a five (5)-year period for maintenance, enhancements, upgrades, and any associated licensing or data storage fees.” Can these projected costs be included in the Cost Information Submission?

**Response:** **The project costs must be included in the Cost Information Submission.**

**Question 65:** Att. A: Section II.I, Operational Requirements, Item 64, page 29 - Attachment A, item 64, asks Vendors to provide “the projected cost analysis over a five (5)-year period”. The Cost Information Submission form only allows for costs for three years. Can the State please confirm if 5 or 3 years is required? If 5 years is required, please provide an updated Cost Information Submission form. If only three years is required, please modify Attachment A, item 64.

**Response:** **MSDH estimates implementation of this project to take two years. Implementation costs are part of the base offering, before product acceptance and the transition to recurring annual maintenance. Annual costs represent project/contract years three though five and should include all known fixed, annual fees based on the technical specifications.**

**Question 66:** Att. A: Section IV.L, Project Management Requirements, Item 89.d, page 39 - The requirement references “all deliverables and plans described in Section E.” Section E of this document is Vendor Qualifications. Please confirm the reference should be to Deliverables in Section VII of Attachment E.

**Response:** **The reference should be Attachment A, Section VII, Table 5 – Deliverables. See Amendment 12 above.**

**Question 67:** Att. A: Section IV.N, Implementation Requirements, pages 40-41 - Please provide the number and type of users who require training.

**Response:** The number and type are dependent upon Vendor proposed training approach. Training plan and schedule shall be developed and finalized through Vendor collaboration with the MSDH project team. See Amendment 4 above.

**Question 68:** Att. A: Section VI.R, Service Level Agreements, Item 137, pages 46 - The requirement references unscheduled downtime monetary penalty in item 136. Please confirm the reference should be 135.

**Response:** Yes, the reference should be 135. See Amendment 14 above.

**Question 69:** Att. A: Section VI.R, Service Level Agreements, Item 141, pages 47 - The current commercial cloud provider equipment refresh timeframes are longer than three years. Would the State consider an industry-standard equipment refresh timeframe?

**Response:** Yes, the State would consider an industry-standard equipment refresh timeframe. See Amendment 15 above.

**Question 70:** Att. A: Section VI.R, Service Level Agreements, Item 146, pages 48 - Is the State looking for an active/active DR setup to minimize the Recovery Point Objective?

**Response:** Vendors must provide a Disaster Recovery Plan that supports the System availability requirements outlined in Attachment A, Section VI, Subsection R.

**Question 71:** Att. A: Section VII, Deliverables Table 5, Item 198, pages 55-56 - Based on our review of the deliverables table, some of the items listed in Deliverable #4 are process steps within relevant plan documents, rather than deliverables that can be developed before work on a project begins. Please confirm items in Deliverable #4 consist of plans as well as process steps that are discussed within the various plans.

**Response:** The process steps were inserted as an attempt to clarify the parent deliverable.

RFP responses are due February 7, 2023, at 3:00 p.m. (Central Time).

If you have any questions concerning the information above or if we can be of further assistance, please contact Khelli Reed at 601-432-8194 or via email at [Khelli.Reed@its.ms.gov](mailto:Khelli.Reed@its.ms.gov).

cc: ITS Project File Number 46072

Attachment: Revised Cost Information Submission