



RHTP: Rural Maternity Care System Analysis Questions and Answers

SEPTEMBER 1, 2026

General

Q1. Would MDH consider extending the deadline to allow for at least seven business days between receipt of answers to questions and the proposal submission date?

Due to the timelines of this funding, the deadlines will not be extended.

Deliverables and Tasks

Q2. What is the difference, if any, between task 2.4 “recommendations” and task 3 the “recommendation report”?

Task 2.4 is a set of preliminary recommendations. Deliverable 3.0 is assumed to be the final draft of these initial recommendations, edits being made as needed. These are distinctly different deliverables. Given the nature of a co-design process, this structure is intended to build in the opportunity to iterate over time, and it is expected there will be multiple rounds of recommendation drafting, revising and input starting at a preliminary set of ideas to the final draft recommendations that will be implemented in the pilot sites.

Q3. The deliverables in 2.4 and Task 3 seem to overlap. Can the state confirm that they are referring to the same deliverables? Similarly, Task 2.3 asks for “a co-designed project and summary of engagement process” which is required as part of the recommendation report. Can

the state clarify whether they are asking for a separate and distinct deliverable?

Task 2.4 is a set of preliminary recommendations. Deliverable 3.0 is assumed to be the final draft of these initial recommendations, edits being made as needed. These are distinctly different deliverables. Given the nature of a co-design process, this structure is intended to build in the opportunity to iterate over time, and it is expected there will be multiple rounds of recommendation drafting, revising and input starting at a preliminary set of ideas to the final draft recommendations that will be implemented in the pilot sites.

Q4. Should "3. Recommendations Report" be considered a 6th Task / Deliverable under Section 2, "2. Tasks and Deliverables"

Task 2.4 is a set of preliminary recommendations. Deliverable 3.0 is assumed to be the final draft of these initial recommendations, edits being made as needed. These are distinctly different deliverables. Given the nature of a co-design process, this structure is intended to build in the opportunity to iterate over time, and it is expected there will be multiple rounds of recommendation drafting, revising and input starting at a preliminary set of ideas to the final draft recommendations that will be implemented in the pilot sites.

Q5. Based on Section 2. Tasks and Deliverables, the Recommendation Report will be finalized by May 7, 2027. Does MDH then expect to choose pilot sites between May and September 2027?

MDH expected pilot sites to be selected between March – May, 2027.

Q6. Given the report is expected to be completed in early May 2027, what deliverables does MDH expect between then and contract end in September 2027?

The recommendations and subsequent report drafts are expected to inform the selection of pilot test sites and subsequent implementation of the work stemming from recommendations. MDH expects that following the report, vendors will continue to support the implementation of the proposed recommendations in participating in pilot sites.

Q7. What amount of time do you expect the vendor to work onsite?

The primary mechanism for meeting will be virtual. If onsite meetings are required to carry out the proposed scope of work, this should be clearly stated in the technical and cost proposals.

Q8. MDH's project check in calls are noted as virtual. Are the quarterly stakeholder and advisory group meetings expected to be in person, virtual, or a mix?

The primary mechanism for meeting will be virtual. If onsite meetings are required to carry out the proposed scope of work, this should be clearly stated in the technical and cost proposals.

Engagement Process

Q9. What is the purpose / goal of the engagement process / advisory group?

A31. Under task 2.3, the selected vendor will engage rural partners in the development of the project design and identification of research and framing questions and resulting recommendations. These partners will participate in co-designing the project and ensure that work products are representative of the intended recipient rural communities.

Q10. Does MDH already have potential participants in mind for the advisory group?

A32. MDH will provide input into the selection of advisory members and has a suggested list if needed.

Q11. What does MDH mean by “proposed framework that will be used to carry out and codesign the project”? Is MDH seeking a participatory framework for 1) designing and carrying out the data plan, 2) engaging the advisory group, or 3) designing a pilot?

The codesign process is expected to be the primary mechanism for engaging the rural hospitals, providers, Tribal Nations, etc. to ensure the recommendations created will be feasible, actionable and effective in making sustainable changes. They will be engaged throughout the process from development through implementation.

Q12. How frequently does MDH expect the advisory group to meet, or how many total meetings does MDH anticipate there will be?

The total number or frequency of meetings is up to vendor discretion.

Q13. MDH states that it will invite selected organizations and individuals to participate. Will MDH also provide contact information, coordinate outreach and scheduling, and follow up with nonresponsive participants,

or should responders include these activities in their proposed scope and budget?

Yes, MDH will provide a hands-on approach facilitating any relationships between any participating organization or individual participating in the pilot.

Pilot sites and technical assistance

Q14. 2.5 lists “meeting schedule with pilots sites established”. Can the state clarify what this means? Are we to schedule a meeting, create an ongoing meeting schedule between MDH and the pilot sites, or something else?

2.5 indicates the proposed frequency for how often pilot sites will be engaged during the project or how often sites will be asked to participate in, or otherwise provide feedback on any deliverables.

Q15. Regarding the Sept 2026 – Sept 2027 timeline, when does MDH expect to engage pilot sites?

MDH expected pilot sites to be selected between March – May, 2027.

Q16. Could you please clarify the scope, timing (dates/timeline) and expectations of TA to potential pilot sites, listed on page 8 item 2.5?

MDH expected pilot sites to be selected between March – May, 2027. Under task 2.5 the type of technical assistance will largely depend on the types of recommendations made. Technical assistance needs will vary depending on the site and the set of recommendations to support pilot design or readiness assessment. Technical assistance may be provided to both MDH or to pilot sites through the development of this work. Ongoing technical assistance (TA) to future pilot grantees should be proposed as an optional or a separately priced activity.

Q17. For Task 2.5, are you able to provide more detail on the scope of technical assistance to the pilot sites so we can get a better estimate of effort that would be needed for that piece?

Under task 2.5 the type of technical assistance will largely depend on the types of recommendations made. Technical assistance needs will vary depending on the site and the set of recommendations to support pilot design or readiness assessment. Technical assistance may be provided to pilot sites as they are selected and in the early establishment of their projects, refining the scope or intent of recommendations that are being piloted

and through the end of the contract period. Ongoing technical assistance is characterized as support to future pilot grantees that goes beyond the basic set-up of projects during the contract period and should be proposed as an optional or a separately priced activity.

Data and Methods

Q18. Section 2.3 references a proposed data plan and codesign process running on a roughly quarterly cadence from stakeholder engagement kickoff through the draft recommendations report (due March 31, 2027). Given the draft report deadline, does MDH anticipate a minimum number of advisory group meetings that must occur prior to the draft report submission, or is the pacing of engagement left to vendor discretion within the overall timeline?

Vendors are expected to support participation in the project by holding meetings with the full list of selected partners at least quarterly throughout the contract period. There is no minimum number of meetings need prior to the initial draft recommendations. Pacing of additional engagement efforts is left to vendor discretion within the overall timeline.

Q19. Can MDH identify the hospital financial, service-line cost, utilization, payer-mix, workforce, transfer, maternal-health, Medicaid claims, or other datasets it anticipates providing to the selected vendor? Please also identify any applicable data-use agreements, access limitations, or expected timelines for data availability.

Responses should address task 2.2 in the proposed approach by describing data the vendor expects to obtain from public sources, any data requests to be made of MDH or participating partners/pilot sites through other proprietary sources. Responses should clearly describe how this deliverable will be met in the technical portion of their submission.

Q20. How many rural hospitals, health systems, birth centers, clinics, Tribal health organizations, or other provider organizations should responders assume will be included in primary data collection, financial analysis, or site-specific modeling?

Responders should detail their approach to the provider/organizational types in Minnesota as part of their proposal. The number of facilities included in any proposed analysis and modeling would be under the vendor

discretion based on the methodology and data sources being proposed as part of the bid process. Responders should clearly describe their approach in the technical portion of the submission.

Q21. Should financial models and recommendations be developed at the statewide, regional, organization-specific, or service-model level, or should responders propose an appropriate combination based on available data?

Responders should describe their proposed approach to geographic, organization or service-model specifics in the submitted response based on the data and methodology being proposed as part of the bid. Responders should clearly describe their approach in the technical portion of the submission.

Q22. The RFP notes expected limitations in service-line-level financial, staffing, utilization, transfer, and payer-mix data, and asks vendors to propose mitigation strategies (Section 2.2). Does MDH have any existing data-sharing agreements, MOUs, or relationships with Minnesota hospitals and health systems that vendors could leverage to support voluntary data collection, or should vendors assume they will need to establish these relationships independently?

Responses should address task 2.2 in the proposed approach by describing data the vendor expects to obtain from public sources, any data requests to be made of MDH or participating partners/pilot sites through other proprietary sources. Responses should clearly describe how this deliverable will be met in the technical portion of their submission.

Q23. What hospital-level financial and utilization data, if any, will MDH provide directly to the selected vendor(s)?

Responses should address task 2.2 in the proposed approach by describing data the vendor expects to obtain from public sources, any data requests to be made of MDH or participating partners/pilot sites through other proprietary sources. Responses should clearly describe how this deliverable will be met.

Q24. How many hospitals or providers does MDH anticipate will participate in the analysis?

Responders should describe their proposed approach to the number of known birthing hospitals, non-birthing hospitals, birth centers, Tribal Nations or other providers in their response for how they will address the number of providers, hospitals and other volume in their analyses.

Q25. The RFP does not specify a definition of "rural" for purposes of this analysis. Does MDH intend to apply a specific definition (e.g., HRSA Federal Office of Rural Health Policy's non-metro/non-core county or RUCA-code methodology), or should vendors propose and justify their own definition as part of the technical approach?

MDH will apply the RUCA code methodology as the primary definition of rural.

Q26. What data does MDH expect to provide to the selected contractor, and how many hospitals, birth centers, or other sites does MDH expect to participate in primary data collection?

Responders should describe their proposed approach to the number of known birthing hospitals, non-birthing hospitals, birth centers, Tribal Nations or other providers in their response for how they will address numbers in their analyses. Responders should propose any data the vendor expects to obtain from public sources, any data requests to be made of MDH or requests to be made from participating partners/pilot sites through proprietary sources. Responses should clearly describe how this deliverable will be met.

Cost Proposal, Budget and Timeline

Q27. What is the maximum budget for this project?

It is expected that up to \$3 million will be available for the first budget period. Responders should include adequate information to demonstrate their ability to complete deliverables, including hourly rates and what is included in that hourly rate in Attachment C: Cost Proposal.

Q28. Per Table 1 in the Cost Proposal, the anticipated contract will be deliverable based. As such, can the State clarify why hourly rates are required in Table 2?

MDH is reviewing all aspects of proposed costs to ensure that responses align with the allowable costs and related caps of the award. Please refer to ATTACHMENT F: FEDERAL AWARD COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS in the RFP Attachments file.

Q29. Table 3 is referenced, but there is no corresponding table. Is Table 3 meant to be the Hourly Breakdown?

Table 3 is for a responder with additional projects, tasks or deliverables. Responders should separate additional tasks from the required items on the Cost Proposal. This must be clearly labeled as: Table 3. Additional tasks or services. Example tables were only provided for required components.

Q30. Budget: Are stipends for advisory members an allowable budget item?

MDH will provide any participation costs to advisory members through a separate source of RHTP funding.

Q31. Timeline: Based on the 12 month timeline, we assume 4 written progress reports in Dec 2026, March 2027, June 2027, and September 2027. Is that accurate?

Written progress reports will be due in December 2026, March 2027, June 2027 and September 2027. Deadlines will be finalized based on the date of contract execution.

Q32. Timeline: Under what circumstances will the contract be extended beyond September 2027?

Contracts will be extended if necessary to continue project progress and as funding permits.

Q33. Does the state have an estimates date of award we can use to inform our workplan response?

The estimated date of award is September 30, 2026.

Q34. May an individual or independently owned entity submit its own proposal as the prime responder while that same individual or entity is also included as a subcontractor, consultant, or team member in a separate proposal submitted by an unrelated organization?

2 CFR 200 does not prohibit an individual or entity from submitting a proposal as the prime responder while simultaneously being included as a subcontractor, consultant, or subrecipient in an unrelated organization's separate proposal. However, it is the policy of the State of Minnesota to avoid, mitigate, or neutralize organizational conflicts of interest. Any potential conflicts of interest should be clearly stated or risk being disqualified.

Q35. If such participation is permitted, must both responders disclose the individual's or entity's participation in the other proposal?

A responder should disclose all personnel that will be working on the project. Any potential conflicts of interest should be clearly stated or risk being disqualified.

Q36. Is it required that a perspective vendor provide details of the rate breakdown (salary, fringe, etc.) or may the perspective vendor indicate that rates are all inclusive?

Yes, the vendor must provide detailed breakdown of all rates proposed as described in the cost proposal.

Q37. Is MDH able to provide any more information about whether you had intended entity types for this grant, if this model would be considered competitive from what you know of the applicant pool right now, and a general budget range MDH had in mind? Any other info would be appreciated as well!

Eligible organizations are organizations that meet the described qualifications and can produce deliverables as described in the RFP. It is expected that \$3 million will be available for the first budget period.

Q38. Will funding for this engagement include federal dollars, state appropriations, one-time funds, or some combination?

This project is fully funded with federal grant dollars.

Q39. Attachment C, Cost Detail, requests cost information at a level that could be read as itemized hours and fringe benefits by deliverable. Would MDH accept a blended hourly rate methodology in place of individually itemized labor categories and fringe rates, provided deliverable-level total costs are still clearly presented?

Table 2 in the cost proposal requests that responders itemize all job titles that are anticipated to participate in the services resulting from this solicitation.

Q40. Does MDH anticipate providing stipends, travel reimbursement, interpretation, accessibility accommodations, or other participation

supports for patients, families, community representatives, Tribal partners, or advisory members? If so, will MDH fund these costs directly, or should responders include them in the cost proposal?

MDH will fund any costs for stipends or other advisory member participation directly to the recipient.

Q41. What is the anticipated contract start date, and will the March 31 and May 7 deliverable dates remain fixed if contract execution is delayed?

Final dates of all deliverables may be adjusted following selection and contract negotiation, depending on the timeframe in which these occur.

Q42. Should broader or ongoing technical assistance to future pilot grantees and full evaluation of funded pilots be excluded from the required cost proposal and presented only as separately priced optional activities?

Responder with additional projects, tasks or deliverables should separate additional tasks from the required items on the Cost Proposal. This must be clearly labeled as: Table 3. Additional tasks or services.

Proposed Approach

Q43. May responders organize the Proposed Approach (Section 4, 1.1) using an alternative narrative structure (e.g., organized by project phase) rather than by the numbered subsections 1.1.1–1.1.7, provided all required elements are clearly addressed and cross-referenced?

Responders are encouraged to follow the instructions outlined in the RFP to ensure that proposals are comparable between bidders. Clearly labeling required components is one possible way to demonstrate that required elements are included in the proposal.

Q44. 1.1.1, 1.1.2, and 1.1.3 suggest that the state is asking for the response to provide a deliverables/payment schedule. If this is the case, can the deliverables schedule be excluded from the page limit to allow an adequate level of detail?

All deliverables are included as part of the page limit.

Q45. The RFP includes the following, but it appears that some content is missing at the end of the first sentence. “Responders should address each task and deliverable one by one and. The proposal should indicate any tasks or roles that will be subcontracted, if applicable.”

On page Pg 12 of 19 the following sentence should read, “Responders should address each task and deliverable one by one.”

Q46. The requirement "Responders should address each task and deliverable one by one and. The proposal should indicate any tasks or roles that will be subcontracted, if applicable." is an incomplete statement. Can you provide the complete requirement?

On page Pg 12 of 19 the following sentence should read, “Responders should address each task and deliverable one by one.”

Q47. Can tables and graphics within the Proposed Approach vary from the 12 pt., double-spaced font requirement?

The proposed approach should be written in 12-point font and double spaced. Tables, charts, figures and graphics can be single spaced with size 10-point font.

Q48. Are there text size limitations (e.g., 10 pt font in tables) or spacing limits (single space vs. double spaced) for exhibits, figures, or tables?

Tables, charts, figures and graphics can be single spaced with size 10-point font. The table of contents does not count toward the page limit.

Q49. Do all facets of the proposal, including qualifications, need to adhere to the 12-point font and double-space requirement?

The technical proposal should be written in 12-point font and double spaced. Tables, charts, figures and graphics can be single spaced with size 10-point font. The table of contents does not count toward the page limit. Resumes do not count toward the page limit and therefore can be single spaced. Work samples do not count toward the page limit and therefore can be single spaced.

Q50. The proposal is required to be double-spaced and in 12 pt. font. May charts, tables, bulleted lists, graphics, headers/footers, and other non-

narrative text be in a smaller font and single-spaced as long as it is legible?

The technical proposal should be written in 12-point font and double spaced. Tables, charts, figures and graphics can be single spaced with size 10-point font. The table of contents does not count toward the page limit. Resumes do not count toward the page limit and therefore can be single spaced. Work samples do not count toward the page limit and therefore can be single spaced.

Q51. For the 15-page technical proposal limit, please confirm whether the table of contents counts toward the limit and whether the required 12-point font and double-spacing rules apply to tables, timelines, charts, and figure captions.

The technical proposal should be written in 12-point font and double spaced. Tables, charts, figures and graphics can be single spaced with size 10-point font. The table of contents does not count toward the page limit. Resumes do not count toward the page limit and therefore can be single spaced. Work samples do not count toward the page limit and therefore can be single spaced.

Q52. Are the optional tasks we propose part of the 15 pages?

Optional tasks should be separated from the items that are part of the required submission and must be clearly labeled. The State reserves the right to negotiate additional tasks within the scope of this solicitation with the highest scoring responder.

Q53. RFP Section 4, item 4, requires submission and State approval of "transaction documents" proposed for use under the resulting contract. Can the State clarify whether this term is intended to include contractor subcontracts, consultant agreements, and other agreements between the Contractor and third parties, or whether it is limited to documents executed between the State and Contractor in support of contract performance? If "transaction documents" includes subcontracts or consultant agreements between the Contractor and third parties, please clarify the purpose and scope of the State's review, including whether the State's review is limited to ensuring compliance with the State Contract, applicable flow-down requirements, and Minnesota law,

rather than approval of the Contractor's standard business terms and conditions.

Sample transaction documents may include but are not limited to sub-contracts, invoices templates, or other files as deemed pertinent based on the proposed scope of work. Sample Transaction Documents do not count toward the page limit. Sample transaction documents will not be scored as part of the evaluation process. Prior to award, a potential successful Responder may be requested to submit samples of any transaction documents proposed for use under the resulting contract.

Q54. Can the State provide additional context and detail on what is meant by Sample Transaction Documents?

Sample transaction documents may include but are not limited to sub-contracts, invoices templates, or other files as deemed pertinent based on the proposed scope of work. Sample Transaction Documents do not count toward the page limit. Sample transaction documents will not be scored as part of the evaluation process. Prior to award, a potential successful Responder will be requested to submit samples of any transaction documents proposed for use under the resulting contract.

Desired Qualifications and Work Samples

Q55. For the desired qualifications requiring (1) 2+ projects related to Minnesota healthcare and healthcare policy and (2) 2+ years of experience in maternal healthcare, will the State consider substantially similar experience performed for other state governments, Medicaid agencies, public health organizations, or healthcare systems, where the work addressed comparable healthcare policy and maternal health objectives?

Desired qualifications should represent projects related to Minnesota healthcare and healthcare policy and 2 or more years experience working on topics related to maternal health care. Responders should provide qualifications that demonstrate how they have worked on projects related to Minnesota health care and have experience in maternal health topics.

Q56. For Attachment E, does the recommendation that work samples be “limited to a two-page count” mean each sample may be up to two pages, or that all submitted samples together should total no more than two pages?

Each submitted work sample should be no more than two pages.

Q57. Attachment E states that responders should submit at least two work samples and advises selecting samples limited to two pages. May responders submit excerpts from longer work products, accompanied by a brief description of the complete engagement and the responder's role?

Smaller excerpts from longer work samples will be acceptable.

Q58. Work Samples: May redacted client deliverables be submitted as work samples?

Yes, redacted client deliverables are acceptable work samples as long as they are not so fully redacted they are illegible.

Q59. Work Samples: Can a single project provide multiple work sample excerpts (e.g., one excerpt demonstrating engagement facilitation and a separate excerpt from the same project demonstrating financial modeling)?

It is preferred that work samples are provided from separate projects. If samples are only available from the same project, it should be clearly noted that submitted samples are from the same work.

Q60. May the same individual's experience be used to help two different responding organizations satisfy the mandatory qualifications? If so, must that individual be an employee, or may the individual qualify as a subcontractor or consultant?

The minimum qualifications for each response submitted will be reviewed independently against that response. It is the responsibility of the bidder to clearly describe employees who are direct employees and sub-contractors within their proposals.

Q61. Please confirm that resumes/bios do not need to be double-space since they are excluded from the page limit.

Resumes and bios are excluded from the page limit and therefore do not need to be double spaced or adhere to font size limitations.

Miscellaneous

Q62. Is this structured as a traditional RHTP grant/RFP, or is Minnesota seeking feedback, information, or responses from organizations to help shape the analysis?

This request for proposals is seeking vendors who meet the qualifications and will be able to complete the work as outlined in the deliverables and tasks section. Through this work, Minnesota will be seeking engagement from the organizations selected as part of the engagement process to shape the analysis and subsequent recommendations developed, and then through the identified pilot sites who will implement recommendations.

Q63. Does MDH anticipate making one award or multiple awards? If multiple awards are made, does MDH expect the selected vendors to divide the scope, independently perform the full scope, or collaborate under MDH's direction?

MDH will make awards based on the highest scoring proposals. If multiple awards are made, the organizations will be expected to collaborate.

Q64. Will you use Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the evaluation and scoring of the submitted proposals? And if so, which AI tool(s) will you use?

MDH will not use AI in the evaluation and scoring of submitted proposals.

Q65. Will you conduct in-person oral evaluation of any finalists?

MDH will complete a review and discussion of technical proposals. Responders will not be asked to complete any oral presentations of their work.

Q66. Should the vendor coordinate with existing RHTP funded efforts already underway, such as the MN ROSE obstetric simulation program, the FM OB fellowship, or the maternal health ECHO network, or should this analysis be treated as independent of those efforts?

Responders will be asked to consider the full maternal health landscape of Minnesota but will focus on completing the deliverables outlined in the RFP.

Q67. Is there a vendor that MDH or DHS has already been working with on the subject of rural health and maternity care?

MDH has not contracted with a vendor to complete any maternal health specific assessment or financial analysis.

Q68. In addition to its complete proposal, is it acceptable for a bidder to submit a redacted version of their proposal from which confidential information (as defined by the State of Minnesota Freedom of Information Law) has been stricken?

The State of Minnesota is required to comply with the Government Data Practices Act. In the event of any Data Practices Act Request, the State would evaluate on a case-by-case basis evaluate whether the requested data meets state public/non-public policies.

Sample Contract and Federal Award Compliance

Q69. Section 8.2 of the Attachments states that federal funds may not pay any individual's salary above the current OPM Executive Level II rate. Since Attachment C's Cost Proposal requires hourly rates (Column C) and, if applicable, fully burdened rates (Column D) rather than annual salaries, please clarify: (a) whether the OPM cap should be applied as a pro-rated hourly-rate ceiling, and if so, using what standard hours-per-year assumption; and (b) whether the cap applies to the base hourly rate only, or also to the fully burdened rate inclusive of fringe and indirect costs.

The OPM salary cap applies to salaries.

Q70. Contract Terms- Subrecipient/Cost Principles: Is it permissible to request replacement language for Special Provisions, Sections 2.1 and 2.2 (Audit), limiting Contractor's audit obligations and confirming

Contractor is not subject to Single Audit requirements under 2 CFR Part 200 Subpart F?

To be considered, this and any other exception to standard terms must be noted in Attachment B to the proposal. MDH will consider all noted exceptions in the context of the full proposals to which they relate. MDH staff cannot make commitments to how it might respond in a hypothetical scenario that lacks this proper context. MDH can say at this time that the standard terms reflected in the sample agreement are largely required by statute. Those terms that are not statutorily required are, nonetheless, informed by these statutory requirements and are there to properly safeguard state resources, including the public funds it invests in these agreements. Because of this, MDH necessarily reserves the right to reject any proposed exception. In addition to consideration by MDH staff, all exceptions are further subject to additional layers of review including by the department of Administration and, sometimes, the Attorney General's Office. This is in addition to whatever process takes place on contractor's side when reviewing MDH's responses to its requests. These agreements are subject to rigid deadlines for their execution that must be met to receive the underlying federal funds for the projects to which they relate. This means that any exception, even if reasonable and properly identified in the proposal, has the potential to cause delays that might prevent the execution of a contract with the requesting responder before the expiration of the applicable deadlines.

Q71. Contract Terms- Subrecipient/Cost Principles: Is it permissible to request replacement language for Special Provisions, Section 2.3 (Cost Principles), confirming 2 CFR Part 200 Subpart E does not apply to a fixed-price contractor arrangement?

To be considered, this and any other exception to standard terms must be noted in Attachment B to the proposal. MDH will consider all noted exceptions in the context of the full proposals to which they relate. MDH staff cannot make commitments to how it might respond in a hypothetical scenario that lacks this proper context. MDH can say at this time that the standard terms reflected in the sample agreement are largely required by statute. Those terms that are not statutorily required are, nonetheless, informed by these statutory requirements and are there to properly safeguard state resources, including the public funds it invests in these agreements. Because of this, MDH necessarily reserves the right to reject any proposed exception. In addition to consideration by MDH staff, all exceptions are further subject to additional layers of review including by the department of Administration and, sometimes, the Attorney General's Office. This is in addition to whatever process takes place on contractor's side when reviewing MDH's responses to its requests. These agreements are subject to rigid deadlines for their execution that must be met to receive the underlying federal funds for the projects to which they relate. This means that any exception, even if reasonable and properly identified in the proposal, has the potential to cause delays that might prevent the execution of a contract with the requesting responder before the expiration of the applicable deadlines.

Q72. The Table of Contents on page 3 of the RFP lists Attachments A through E and does not list Attachment F. Attachment F contains no

signature or acknowledgment block, and Exhibit E of the Sample Contract is blank. Please confirm what form of acknowledgment or submission MDH expects for Attachment F.

Attachment F will be incorporated into the Contract as a sequentially lettered exhibit in the final contract document.

Q73. Sample Contract, Exhibit A, Supplement 1 imposes supply chain security accreditation, a FedRAMP Moderate provisional ATO, ISO 27001 certification, PCI DSS attestation, CJIS fingerprint background checks, IRS Publication 1075, OWASP secure coding, and continental-U.S. data center location with State on-site inspection rights. Will MDH confirm that Exhibit A, Supplement 1 is inapplicable to this analytic and advisory engagement and will not be incorporated into the resulting contract? If any portion is intended to apply, please identify which subsections.

To be considered, this and any other exception to standard terms must be noted in Attachment B to the proposal. MDH will consider all noted exceptions in the context of the full proposals to which they relate. MDH staff cannot make commitments to how it might respond in a hypothetical scenario that lacks this proper context. MDH can say at this time that the standard terms reflected in the sample agreement are largely required by statute. Those terms that are not statutorily required are, nonetheless, informed by these statutory requirements and are there to properly safeguard state resources, including the public funds it invests in these agreements. Because of this, MDH necessarily reserves the right to reject any proposed exception. In addition to consideration by MDH staff, all exceptions are further subject to additional layers of review including by the department of Administration and, sometimes, the Attorney General's Office. This is in addition to whatever process takes place on contractor's side when reviewing MDH's responses to its requests. These agreements are subject to rigid deadlines for their execution that must be met to receive the underlying federal funds for the projects to which they relate. This means that any exception, even if reasonable and properly identified in the proposal, has the potential to cause delays that might prevent the execution of a contract with the requesting responder before the expiration of the applicable deadlines.

Q74. Sample Contract- Other Items: The Indemnification clause (Sample Contract, Exhibit A, p. 5, section 5) defines "Indemnifying Party" to include "any third party that has a business relationship with the Contractor." Will MDH consider limiting the obligation to third-party

claims arising from the Contractor's negligence or willful misconduct, and limiting the defined party to the Contractor and its subcontractors?

To be considered, this and any other exception to standard terms must be noted in Attachment B to the proposal. MDH will consider all noted exceptions in the context of the full proposals to which they relate. MDH staff cannot make commitments to how it might respond in a hypothetical scenario that lacks this proper context. MDH can say at this time that the standard terms reflected in the sample agreement are largely required by statute. Those terms that are not statutorily required are, nonetheless, informed by these statutory requirements and are there to properly safeguard state resources, including the public funds it invests in these agreements. Because of this, MDH necessarily reserves the right to reject any proposed exception. In addition to consideration by MDH staff, all exceptions are further subject to additional layers of review including by the department of Administration and, sometimes, the Attorney General's Office. This is in addition to whatever process takes place on contractor's side when reviewing MDH's responses to its requests. These agreements are subject to rigid deadlines for their execution that must be met to receive the underlying federal funds for the projects to which they relate. This means that any exception, even if reasonable and properly identified in the proposal, has the potential to cause delays that might prevent the execution of a contract with the requesting responder before the expiration of the applicable deadlines.

Q75. Sample Contract- Other Items: Section 2, General Guidelines, requires that any use of AI to produce any component of the tasks and deliverables be disclosed to and approved by MDH before implementation. Will MDH clarify whether this extends to general-purpose enterprise productivity or document processing tools that do not generate analytic content, and what form of disclosure and approval MDH expects?

The use of AI to produce any component of the tasks and deliverables must be disclosed. The disclosure must be noted in Attachment B to the proposal.

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www.health.state.mn.us/facilities/ruralhealth
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