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COOK COUNTY HEALTH (CCH)

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) # H20-0032

TITLE: Pharmacy Staff IV Sterile Products Quality Assurance Program.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION: Cook County and Health System seeks proposals from qualified and experienced Pharmacy Staff IV Sterile Products Quality Assurance service providers to assess and plan for financial impact of risk.

DATE ISSUED: November 10, 2020

VENDOR QUESTIONS DUE DATE: November 19, 2020 by 2:00 p.m. (CT)

RESPONSE/PROPOSAL DUE DATE: December 11, 2020 by 2:00 p.m. (CT)

Responses to this proposal shall be delivered after 8:00 AM (CST) but no later than 2:00 PM (CST) to:

Cook County Health
C/O John H. Stroger, Jr. Hospital of Cook County
1969 West Ogden Ave., Lower Level Room # 250A
Chicago, IL 60612
Attention: Supply Chain Management Department

Please note that it takes approximately 20 minutes to pass security and walk to room 250A. Delivery of proposals must include the **Proposal Acknowledgement Form** included at the end of this document.

PREPROPOSAL CONFERENCE AND MANDATORY SITE VISIT: None

The RFP and related Addenda will be posted on the <http://www.cookcountyhealth.org> website under the "Doing Business with CCH" tab.

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1. Background

The Cook County Health and Hospitals System (“CCH” or “System”) is a unit within Cook County government. The CCH provides a full continuum of health care services through its seven operating entities, referred to as System Affiliates. System Affiliates provide a broad range of services from specialty and primary care to emergency, acute, outpatient, rehabilitation and preventative care. CCH services are offered without regard to a patient’s economic status or ability to pay.

The System operates John H. Stroger, Jr. Hospital of Cook County, which is a tertiary, acute care hospital and Provident Hospital of Cook County, a community acute care hospital. The System also operates: 1. the Ambulatory and Community Health Network, a system of sixteen (16) clinics offering primary care services in medically underserved areas and schools; 2. the Cook County Department of Public Health, the certified local public health department for most parts of suburban Cook County, which provides limited clinical services, as well as communicable disease control, environmental health and prevention and education services; 3. Cermak Health Services of Cook County, a health facility operated within the confines of the Cook County Department of Corrections which provides health screening, primary and specialty care for detainees; 4. Ruth M. Rothstein Core Center, a comprehensive care center for HIV and other infectious diseases; and 5. Oak Forest Health Center of Cook County. The System is continuing to work on their strategic plan moving forward which includes CountyCare. This is a Medicaid health plan for low-income adults established under the Affordable Care Act. CountyCare is expanding its eligible membership population to children, seniors, and persons with disabilities. CCH will continuously undergo the transformation of its services to continue service excellence for its patients.

2. About CountyCare

In 2013, CCH launched CountyCare, a demonstration project through a Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) 1115 Waiver granted to the state of Illinois Medicaid agency to early enroll eligible low income Cook County adults (ACA adults) into a Medicaid managed care program. In July 2014, CountyCare transitioned from the federal Waiver authority and subsequently became a Medicaid managed care plan under the State’s County Managed Care Community Network (County MCCN) rules. This transition allowed for County Care’s to expand beyond the newly eligible ACA adult population to include traditional Medicaid populations in Family Health Plans (FHP) and Seniors and Persons with Disabilities (SPD) coverage.

CCH receives a capitated per member per month rate for every enrollee in its health plan. Many of the members we have enrolled have long been our patients whose costs were previously part of our uncompensated care expenses. The ACA, through CountyCare, has significantly reduced CCH’s reliance on local taxpayers. CountyCare currently has about 180,000 members and is the second largest Medicaid health plan in the region.

The CountyCare provider network includes all CCH facilities, every FQHC in Cook County and more than 30 community hospitals. CountyCare also covers approved home and community-based services and allows members to fill prescriptions at local pharmacies or use CCH’s mail order system.

3. Purpose

CCH seeks to identify the most competitive proposer(s) of Qualified Pharmacy Staff IV Products Quality Assurance services.

4. Business Goals and Objectives

CCH intends to award one multi-year contract, which is anticipated for thirty-six (36) months with an additional two (2) one-year extension options. The award agreement may be terminated by CCH for convenience (without cause) upon thirty (60) calendar day's prior written notice of termination delivered to the awarded Proposer by certified mail.

5. Schedule

CCH anticipates the following schedule.

Activity	Estimated Date
RFP posted to the website	November 10, 2020
Proposer Inquiry Deadline	November 19, 2020 by 2:00 p.m. (CT)
CCH response to Inquiries – Tentative	Week of November 23, 2020
Proposal Due Date	December 11, 2020 by 2:00 p.m. (CT)
Evaluation of Proposals -Tentative	January 1, 2021

6. Current State

In July 2014, CountyCare transitioned from the federal Waiver authority and subsequently became a Medicaid managed care plan under the State's County Managed Care Community Network (County MCCN) rules. This transition allowed for County Care's to expand beyond the newly eligible ACA adult population to include traditional Medicaid populations in Family Health Plans (FHP) and seniors and Persons with Disabilities (SPD) coverage. CountyCare currently has about 180,000 members and is the second largest Medicaid health plan in the region.

CountyCare consolidates all claims information into its central CCH data warehouse for reporting and analysis. Data files are currently provided by the TPA to CCH as modified flat files and include medical, behavioral, and pharmacy claims. CountyCare currently estimates IBNR through a monthly process and receives a formal actuarial opinion on IBNR estimates at the end of its fiscal year

6.1 Scope of Work

This RFP seeks to identify a Contractor to provide Pharmacy Staff IV Products Quality Assurance services that will assess and plan for financial impact of risk. Contractor should be able to provide a value-based approach within risk quantification and financial modeling of risk outcomes and to be able to supply the management tools and insight required within the below stated areas:

- a. Media Fill Validation
- b. Fingertip testing
- c. Sterility / Endotoxin testing
- d. Ingredient / Strength verification
- e. On-site staff training and validation (Hazardous Medication and Sterile Processing)
- f. Beyond use date stability testing
- g. Policy development / checklist
- h. Staff Education
- i. Competency learning modules/on-line
- j. Monthly terminal cleaning of all sterile compounding areas.

6.2 Specifications

The specifications provided herein are for reference purposes. Minor variations from those specifications will be considered. Proposer must clearly identify any instance in which their service specifications differ from those set forth in the proposal documents.

Requirement	Proposer Response
<p>a. Media Fill Validation – This includes the passing of Soybean-Casein Digest Medium through separate tubing sets into separate evacuated containers. The media filled samples are then incubated and evaluated for growth. Results are then reported within twenty-one (21) days as per 797 specifications and or 800 specifications when available. Category 1 and Category 2 CSP’s.</p>	
<p>b. Glove Fingertip Sterility Sampling – This includes the collection of gloved fingertip and thumb samples from both hands onto agar plates which are then incubated and evaluated for growth. Results are then reported within twenty-one (21) days as per 797 and/or 800 specifications when available.</p>	
<p>c. Onsite Employee Aseptic Technique Training and Validation. This includes a web-based training and validation in the theoretical principles and practical skills of proper hand hygiene, garbing procedures, aseptic work practices, achieving and maintaining ISO Class 5 environmental conditions and cleaning/ disinfection procedures, proper labeling and packaging. Personnel shall complete didactic training, pass written competence assessments and undergo skill assessments using observational audit tools and media-fill testing. Visual observations shall be documented on a form and provided to supervising staff at each location along with written competency assessments as per 797 and/or 800 specifications when available. Develop method to assess the competency of staff members who compound sterile products. Debriefing of observations after each onsite visit.</p>	

Requirement	Proposer Response
<p>d. Onsite Employee Hazardous Medication Handling and Preparation- This includes a web based training and -validation in the theoretical principles and practical skills of proper hand hygiene, garbing procedures, aseptic work practices, chemotherapeutic dose calculations, and proper safe handling of hazardous medications including the importance and the use of closed system transfer devices. Personnel shall complete didactic training, pass competency assessment exam, and undergo skill assessments using observational audit tools. Visual observations shall be documented on a form and provided to supervising staff at each location along with competency assessments and exam results as per USP updates when available.</p>	
<p>e. Reporting/Policies/Checklist – This includes developing policies and procedures to identify changes in USP, generating reports and sending out automatic updates to appropriate personnel and offering continuing education on updates to USP that is pharmacy specific. Reports should be provided seven (7) days post available results.</p>	
<p>f. Bacterial Endotoxin Testing – This includes utilizing experience and expertise necessary to perform all the tests required by USP for bacterial endotoxin testing on end process samples</p>	
<p>g. Identity and Strength Verification of Ingredients – This includes identifying strength of random IV preparations in the clean rooms to check for purity and potency. A measure of the concentration, strength or activity of a medication should be given to pharmacy immediately.</p>	

Requirement	Proposer Response
<p>h. Beyond Use Date and Stability Testing – This includes stability testing use when needed to extend the BUD longer than the USP defaults for preparations. (Example – A refrigerated drug that has a dating of nine days moves to a room temperature drug that has a dating of 90 days). Vendor must perform stability indicating tests within the USP guidelines via specific storage condition of the drug.</p>	
<p>i. Monthly terminal cleaning of all sterile compounding areas Ability to perform high-level disinfection and cleaning, using approved agents, of the buffer or clean area, ante-area, segregated compounding areas, walls, ceiling and shelving per USP 797 standards.</p>	

6.2.1 Locations:

John H Stroger Hospital of Cook County

Hoods: 4 in PB Infusion Center, 2 in Stroger 2nd floor Infusion Center, 1 in OR Pharmacy, 5 in Main Inpatient Pharmacy
Personnel: 70
1901 W Harrison Street
Chicago, Illinois 60612

Provident Hospital of Cook County

Hoods: 2 Units (1 Biological Safety Cabinet located in Chemotherapy Buffer Room and 1 Laminar Flow Hood located in the IV Room)
Personnel: 34
500 E 51st Street
Chicago, Illinois 60615

Ruth M Rothstein CORE Center of Cook County

Hoods: 2 BSC in room 1-137
Personnel: 6
2020 W Harrison Street
Chicago, Illinois 60612

6.3 Transition-in Approach

Proposers must describe their plan to transition in including but not limited to:

- a. Transition approach/steps ;
- b. Required qualifications and certifications for the required roles prior to transition;

- c. Description of how the required resources will meet/submit the required certifications/qualifications;
- d. Description of how the resources will track and report performance.

6.4 Reporting

Proposer must describe frequency and type of reporting expected including:

- a. Method to establish baseline data to measure performance;
- b. Reporting of performance measurements based on defined goals and objectives;
- c. Transparent cost reports.

6.5 Contract Performance Review

Proposers should describe all expected contract performance metrics, and approach to report Contract Performance at least twice a year and including the following:

- a. Service levels agreement;
- b. Resources Performance;
- c. Tracking in reporting of the stated business goals and objectives:

7. Required Proposal Content

This RFP provides potential Proposers with sufficient information to enable them to prepare and submit proposals. CCH is supplying a base of information to ensure uniformity of responses. It must be noted, however, that the guidelines should not be considered so rigid as to stifle the creativity of any Proposer responding. This RFP also contains the instructions governing the submittal of a Proposal and the materials to be included therein, which must be met to be eligible for consideration. All Proposals must be complete as to the information requested in this RFP in order to be considered responsive and eligible for award. Proposers providing insufficient details will be deemed non-responsive. CCH expects all responses to reflect exceptional quality, reasonable cost and overall outstanding service. **Any page of a Proposal that Proposer asserts to contain confidential proprietary information such as trade secrets or proprietary financial information shall be clearly marked "CONFIDENTIAL PROPRIETARY INFORMATION" at the top of the page. Additionally, the specific portions of the page that are asserted to contain confidential proprietary information must be noted as such. However, note that ONLY pages that are legitimately confidential should be marked Confidential. CCH will return proposals that mark all pages Confidential or are copyrighted. All proposals submitted to CCH are the property of CCH. Further, the Proposer is hereby warned that any part of its Proposal or any other material marked as confidential, proprietary, or trade secret, can only be protected to the extent permitted by Illinois Statutes.** Proposals shall not contain claims or statements to which the Proposer is not prepared to commit contractually. The information contained in the Proposal shall be organized as described in this section.

7.1 Cover letter

Please limit this to one page. The cover letter shall be signed by an authorized representative of the Proposer. The letter shall indicate the Proposer's commitment to provide the services proposed at the price and schedule proposed. Do not forget to sign your cover letter.

7.2 Executive Summary

Please limit this section to two pages or less, including:

- a. A brief description of the proposer’s capability to provide the described services;
- b. Point of Contact (name, email, phone) for this RFP;
- c. Key team members and Partners (subcontractors) and respective services alignment (work to be performed by each subcontractor team under this contract);
- d. Signature by authorized representative.

7.3 Response to Scope of Work

Please insert your response to the Scope of Work Section 6 in this section.

7.4 Proposer’s Profile and Track Record

The proposer must include a ***description*** of the organization’s track record as follows:

Company Profile (Prime only)	
a. Legal Name	
b. Assumed Names if any	
c. Legal Address (Address, City, State Zip Code) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Company Headquarters • Company Regional Office 	
d. Legal Structure (e.g. sole proprietor, partnership, corporation, joint venture)	
e. If a subsidiary, provide the same information about the Parent Company as required in this table format.	
f. Date and State where formed.	
g. Proposer's principals/officers including President, Chairman, Vice Presidents, Secretary, Chief Operating Officer, Chief Financial Officer, and related contact information.	
h. Proposer Business background and description of current operations	
i. Number of employees	
j. Number of years in business	
k. Total number of years providing the proposed services	
l. Is Proposer a licensed business to perform the work in scope? If so, please specify relevant certifications.	
m. Proposer's Federal Employee Identification Number (or Social Security Number, if a sole proprietorship)	

n. Is proposer authorized to conduct business in Illinois? Please provide Registration Number issued by the Illinois Secretary of State, and attach Cook County Assumed Business Name Certificate, if applicable. Also, provide a copy of the Certificate of Good Standing . If not authorized, please explain.	
o. Describe any merger or acquisition discussions in which the proposer is involved.	
p. List any contracts that the Proposer has entered into during the past ten (10) years with Cook County, and Cook County Department, or CCH.	
q. Provide the addresses of office locations where the services pursuant to this RFP will be performed.	

7.5 References and Track Record

Proposers must provide at least three (3) relevant references in the required table format below, from clients that used similar services from your firm. If partners/subcontractors plan to perform a major part of the scope, they should also provide three (3) references in alignment with their proposed project role. CCH plans to call references: please alert your clients.

Name of the organization	
Name of the contact person (title, email and phone number. Email must be from an organization, not a personal email)	
Project dollar value	
Prime or subcontractor?	
Contract Period	
Project Scope	

7.6 Key Personnel

Provide a table with the following information:

- i. Proposed project resources;
- ii. Roles;
- iii. High level skills (project alignment);
- iv. Proposed work location for each resource (onsite/offsite);
- v. Time commitment to the project if awarded;

The Chief Procurement Officer reserves the right to reject any key personnel proposed if it is determined not to be in CCH' best interest. The evaluation of proposals includes the qualifications of the personnel

proposed; therefore, proposers must name key personnel as part of their response. Key Personnel must not be replaced during the project without the approval of the Chief Procurement Officer.

7.7 MBE/WBE Participation

The Proposer may be comprised of one or more firms as to assure the overall success of the project. The proposer must present a team chart that clearly identifies each team member and specify their role in the project (this should be more detailed than the information provided in the executive summary). For each subcontractor, provide the name of the firm(s), brief company background, level of participation, MBE or WBE if applicable, the type of services each resource, from each firm, will provide. For each MBE/WBE certified firm proposed, provide the appropriate information in the Economic Disclosure Statement Forms (in a separate envelop).

The Chief Procurement Officer reserves the right to accept or reject any of the team members if in The Chief Procurement Officer's sole opinion replacement of the team member, based on skills and knowledge, is in the best interest of the County. Consistent with Cook County, Illinois Code of Ordinances (Article IV, Division 8, and Section 34-267), and CCH has established a goal that MBE/WBE firms retained as subcontractors receive a minimum 35% MWBE overall participation of this procurement. **The Office of Contract Compliance has determined that the participation for this specific contract is 35% MWBE participation.**

The Proposer shall make good faith efforts to utilize MBE/WBE certified firms as subcontractors. In the event that the Proposer does not meet the MBE/WBE participation goal stated by CCH for this procurement, the proposer must nonetheless demonstrate that it undertook good faith efforts to satisfy the participation goal. Evidence of such efforts may include, but shall not be limited to, documentation demonstrating that the proposer made attempts to identify, contact, and solicit viable MBE/WBE firms for the services required, that certain MBE/WBE firms did not respond or declined to submit proposals for the work, or any other documentation that helps demonstrate good faith efforts. Failure by the proposer to provide the required documentation or otherwise demonstrate good faith efforts will be taken into consideration by CCH in its evaluation of the proposer's responsibility and responsiveness.

7.8. Financial Status

- a. Provide the audited financial statements for the last three fiscal years. Include the letter of opinion, balance sheet, schedules, and related auditor's notes. Summary format and links to online financials are allowed. If applicable, submit the financial report of your parent company.
- b. State whether the proposer or its parent company has ever filed for bankruptcy or any form of Reorganization under the Bankruptcy Code, and, if so, the date and case number of the filing.

7.9 Conflict of Interest

Provide information regarding any real or potential conflict of interest. Failure to address any potential conflict of interest upfront may be cause for rejection of the proposal.

If no conflicts of interest are identified, simply state "[Company X] has no conflict of interest."

7.10 Insurance Requirements

Prior to Contract award, the selected proposer will be required to submit evidence of insurance in the appropriate amounts. However, with its Proposal, the proposer is required to provide a statement on their company letterhead stating their agreement, or objections if any, to meet all insurance requirements stated below. Proposers may also submit current certificates of insurance evidencing compliance with this insurance provision. The standard Insurance Requirements captured in the sample Contract General Terms and Conditions (GC-03) may be modified to meet the needs of the future project.

7.11 Contract

Sample Contract General Terms and Conditions are available in the Doing Business with CCH website. Execution of the Contract is not required at the time the qualifications are submitted. However, if the proposer disagrees with any Contract provisions, or is proposing alternate language, it shall include the language for consideration by submitting the proposed redlines on the sample Contract General Terms and Conditions document. CCH will not consider any exceptions or proposed alternate language to the Contract General Terms and Conditions if the proposer does not include these objections or alternate language with the proposal. CCH shall not be deemed to have accepted any requested exceptions by electing to engage a Proposer in negotiations of a possible Contract.

7.12 Legal Actions

Provide a list of any pending litigation in which the proposer may experience significant financial settlement and include a brief description of the reason for legal action.

If no Legal actions are identified, simply state “[Company X] has no pending legal actions in which our firm will experience any significant impact to this Contract.”

History of Legal Actions for the last 36 months:

Action	Date

7.13 Confidentiality of Information

The Selected proposer may have access to confidential information, including Protected Health Information (PHI) to perform the functions, activities, or services for, or on behalf of, CCH as specified in this RFP. The Proposer must acknowledge that if awarded there is a high likelihood that the selected proposer may have access to PHI, in paper or electronic form, and thus, it shall sign a Business Associate Agreement with CCH. As a Business Associate, the selected proposer will agree to comply with all federal and state confidentiality and security laws and regulations, including HIPAA, HITECH, the Medicaid Confidentiality Regulations, as defined herein, and all other applicable rules and regulations. The proposer must commit to require all staff, including drivers, Attendants, and other personnel, and Subcontractors to complete HIPAA training upon hire, and no less frequently than annually thereafter.

CCH reserves the right to review and accept the training program prior to implementation, or require the selected proposer to use HIPAA materials or training sessions supplied by CCH.

7.14 Economic Disclosure Statement

Execute and submit the Economic Disclosure Statement (“EDS”). The EDS form can be found at <https://cookcountyhealth.org/about/doing-business-with-cook-county-health/>. The EDS must be submitted with the pricing proposal in a separate envelope.

7.15 Cost Proposal

Proposers must submit pricing proposals in a separate sealed envelope clearly marked with the RFP number and the label “Pricing Proposal.” Proposers are required to submit one (1) paper pricing file and one (1) electronic pricing file (*in excel* and emailed to the email addresses specified on the cover page).

The pricing proposal must include any supplemental options or schedules offered by the proposer. All pricing information must be submitted in the required **MS Excel form** to facilitate analysis and ***must include all assumptions***. Proposers should include elements or references to the pricing proposal **only in this section and separate the pricing proposal according to the instructions above**.

CCH makes no guarantee that the services or products identified in this RFP will be required. The proposer must provide sufficient pricing details to permit CCH to understand the basis for the proposal.

CCH is neither obligated to purchase the full quantities proposed by the proposer, nor to enter into an agreement with any one proposer.

7.16 Addenda

Since all Addenda become a part of the Proposal, **all Addenda must be signed by an authorized Proposer representative and returned with the Proposal. Failure to sign and return any and all Addenda acknowledgements shall be grounds for rejection of the Proposal.** Addenda issued prior to the Proposal due date shall be made available via CCH website: <http://www.cookcountyhealth.org/about-Cook County Health/doing-business-with-Cook County Health/>

8. Evaluation and Selection Process

An Evaluation Committee comprised of the CCH and County personnel will evaluate all responsive Proposals in accordance with the selection process detailed below.

8.1. Proposal Assessment

The Evaluation Committee will review all Submittals to ascertain that they are responsive to all submission requirements.

8.1.1 Proposal Evaluation

The RFP provides requirements and data, which will be used as a basis for a written presentation of qualifications of the firm(s) and proposed staff, project approach, systems and

methodologies for delivery of the Project. CCH will evaluate the Proposals to establish a list of qualified Proposer for Shortlist.

8.1.2. Shortlist Proposer Presentation

The Evaluation Committee, at its option, may invite one or more proposers to make presentations and/or demonstrations. The Evaluation Committee may request that all or a shortlisted group of proposers engage in proactive pricing feedback, submit clarifications, schedule a site visit of their premises (as appropriate), provide additional references, respond to questions, or consider alternative approaches.

8.2. Right to Inspect

CCH reserves the right to inspect and investigate thoroughly the establishment, facilities, equipment, business reputation, and other qualification of the proposer and any proposed subcontractors and to reject any RFP regardless of price if it shall be administratively determined that in CCH's sole discretion the proposer is deficient in any of the essentials necessary to assure acceptable standards of performance. CCH reserves the right to continue this inspection procedure throughout the life of the Contract that may arise from this RFP.

8.3. Consideration for Contract

Any proposed contract including all negotiations shall be subject to review and approval of CCH management, CCH Legal and CCH's Board of System Board. Proposed Contracts are also subject to review by the Cook County Office of Contract Compliance.

Following finalization of Contract documents to the satisfaction of CCH executive management, CCH shall secure appropriate reviews and may approve the proposed Contract for execution in its sole discretion. The identity of the successful proposer shall be posted on the website.

9. General Evaluation Criteria

9.1. Responsiveness of Proposal

The Proposal(s) will be reviewed for compliance with and adherence to all submittal requirements requested in this RFP. Proposal(s) which are incomplete and missing key components necessary to fully evaluate the RFP may, at the discretion of the Chief Procurement Officer or designee, be rejected from further consideration due to "Non-Responsiveness" and rated Non-Responsive.

Proposer must be compliant with all the submission requirements of the RFP. The evaluation committee will evaluate all responsive Proposal in accordance with the evaluation criteria detailed below.

9.1.1 General Criteria Proposal

Proposals will be reviewed and selected based on qualifications of the Proposer to successfully perform the Services for the County throughout the course of the contract as evidenced by the following criteria:

- A. Ability to achieve the CCH’s business goals, objectives, and Scope of Work described in this RFP, by providing a succinct and feasible description of the proposed implementation approach.
- B. Qualifications and experience of the proposer to successfully perform and provide the services described in this RFP, as evidenced by the successful provision of similar services in similar environments and in compliance with all applicable laws.
- C. Relevant Experience
- D. Reasonableness of Overall Price
Price will be evaluated separately for overall reasonableness and competitiveness.

In addition, the Evaluation Committee may review and consider the information and evidence Proposer’s responsiveness to the following categories:

- 1. MWBE Utilization Plan (EDS forms);
- 2. Financial Status;
- 3. Conflict Interest;
- 4. Insurance Requirements;
- 5. Contract Terms and Conditions (objections and/or suggested alternate language);
- 6. Legal Actions;
- 7. Addenda acknowledgement (See Addenda Section)

10. Instructions to Proposers

These instructions to proposers contain important information and should be reviewed carefully prior to submitting the Required Proposal Content. Failure to adhere to the procedures set forth in these instructions, failure to provide positive acknowledgement that the proposers will provide all services and products or failure to provide acceptable alternatives to the specified requirements may lead to disqualification of the submitted proposal.

10.1 Questions and Inquiries

Questions regarding this RFP will be submitted in writing to the contact(s) email listed on the cover page of this RFP no later than the date stated in the Schedule.

Question must be submitted in the following format, **in MS Excel**, and the subject of the email should reference the RFP #, Title and Proposer’s Name.

ID	Vendor Name	RFP Section	Question

Should any proposer have questions concerning conditions and specifications, or find discrepancies in or omissions in the specifications, or be in doubt as to their meaning, they should notify the Supply Chain Management Office via the email provided on the cover sheet no later than the date stated on the

Schedule and obtain clarification prior to submitting a Proposal. Such inquires must reference the proposal due date and CCH RFP number.

10.2 Pre-proposal Conference (if Applicable)

CCH will hold a Pre-Proposal conference call on the date, time, and location indicated on the cover page. Representatives of CCH will be present to answer any questions regarding the goods or services requested or proposal procedures. If a mandatory pre-proposal conference is required, the proposer must sign the pre-proposal conference or site inspection sheet and include a copy of this sign-in sheet in the response to the RFP.

10.3 Number of Copies

Proposers are required to submit **one (1)** original hard copy, and one (1) electronic copy (emailed to the email addressed on the cover page) and no later than the time and date indicated in the RFP.

NOTE: One (1) paper copy of the pricing proposal and one (1) EDS copy must be submitted separate from the rest of the response.

Each submission must then be separated as follows:

1. **One (1) technical hard copy - the original - excluding Pricing and EDS forms;**
2. **One (1) Pricing and EDS hard copies in a separate envelope;**
3. **One (1) complete electronic response package (including excel pricing file and EDS) emailed to the email addresses on the cover page. The technical response must be a single electronic file (do not submit a file per RFP section). The email must clearly indicate the RFP Number and Title.**

Please see the **Proposal Receipt Acknowledgement form** at the end of this file for the form required at delivery time.

DO NOT USE EXPENSIVE PAPER OR MARKETING GRAPHICS THAT MAY DISTORT ELECTRONIC PAGES.
PLEASE USE STANDARD PAPER.

10.4 Format

Hardcopies of the RFPs should be submitted in a separate envelope (or electronic file) except pricing which may be submitted in a separate envelop. Material should be organized following the order of the Required RFP Content Section separated by **labeled tabs**. Expensive paper and bindings are discouraged since no materials will be returned. **Numbered titles and pages are required.**

CCH reserves the right to waive minor variances.

10.5 Time for submission

Proposals shall be submitted no later than the date and time indicated on the cover page of this RFP.
Late submittals will not be considered.

10.6 Packaging and Labeling

The outside wrapping/envelope shall clearly indicate the RFP title, proposer's Name, proposers address, and point of contact information. **The Price Proposal and EDS shall be submitted in a separate sealed envelope but can be in the same box.** The envelope shall clearly identify the content as "Price Proposal". All other submission requirements shall be included with the Technical Proposal.

10.7 Timely delivery of Proposals

The proposal(s) must be either delivered by hand or sent to CCH through U.S. Mail or other available courier services to the address shown on the cover sheet of this RFP. Include the RFP number on any package delivered or sent to CCH and on any correspondence related to the Proposal. If using an express delivery service, the package must be delivered to the designated building and drop box. Packages delivered by express mail services to other locations might not be re-delivered in time to be considered. CCH assumes no responsibility for any Proposal not so received.

10.8 Availability of Documents

CCH publishes competitive bid, RFP, and other procurement notices, as well as award information, at <http://www.cookcountyhealth.org> under the "Doing Business with CCH" tab. Proposers intending to respond to any posted solicitation are encouraged to visit the website above to ensure that they have received a complete **and** current set of documents.

10.9 Alteration/Modification of Original Documents

The proposer certifies that no alterations or modifications have been made to the original content of this Bid/RFP or other procurement documents (either text or graphics and whether transmitted electronically or hard copy in preparing this proposal). Any alternates or exceptions (whether to products, services, terms, conditions, or other procurement document subject matter) are apparent and clearly noted in the offered proposal. Proposer understands that failure to comply with this requirement may result in the proposal being disqualified and, if determined to be a deliberate attempt to misrepresent the proposal, may be considered as sufficient basis to suspend or debar the submitting party from consideration from future competitive procurement opportunities.

10.10 Cost of Proposer Response

All costs and expenses in responding to this RFP shall be borne solely by the proposer regardless of whether the proposer's Proposal is eliminated or whether CCH selects to cancel the RFP or declines to pursue a Contract for any reason. The cost of attending any presentation or demonstration is solely the proposer's responsibility.

10.11 Proposer's Responsibility for Services Proposed

The proposer must thoroughly examine and read the entire RFP document. Failure of proposers fully to acquaint themselves with existing conditions or the amount of work involved will not be a basis for requesting extra compensation after the award of a Contract.

10.12 RFP Interpretation

Interpretation of the wording of this document shall be the responsibility of CCH, and that interpretation shall be final.

10.13 Specifications and Special Conditions

The specifications in this document provide sufficient information for proposers to devise a plan and provide pricing. Minor variations from those specifications will be considered as long as proposers identify any instance in which their services specifications differ from those outlined in the proposal documents.

10.14 Errors and Omissions

The proposer is expected to comply with the true intent of this RFP taken as a whole and shall not avail itself of any errors or omission to the detriment of the services or CCH. Should the proposer suspect any error, omission, or discrepancy in the specifications or instructions, the proposer shall immediately notify CCH in writing, and CCH will issue written corrections or clarifications. The proposer is responsible for the contents of its Proposals and for satisfying the requirements outlined in the RFP. Proposer will not be allowed to benefit from errors in the document that could have been reasonably discovered by the proposer in the process of putting the proposal together.

10.15 Proposal Material

The Proposal material submitted in response to the RFP becomes the property of CCH upon delivery to the Supply Chain Management Office and may become part of a Contract.

10.16 Confidentiality and Response Cost and Ownership

All information submitted in response to this RFP shall be confidential until CCH has executed a Contract with the successful proposer or has terminated the RFP process and determined that it will not reissue the RFP. Any page of a Proposal that Proposer asserts to contain confidential proprietary information such as trade secrets or proprietary financial information shall be clearly marked "CONFIDENTIAL PROPRIETARY INFORMATION" at the top of the page. Additionally, the specific portions of a page that are asserted to contain confidential proprietary information must be noted as such. However, note that ONLY pages or specific information that are/is legitimately confidential should be marked Confidential and Proprietary. CCHHS will return proposals that mark all pages Confidential or are copyrighted. All proposals submitted to CCHHS are the property of CCHHS.

Further, the Proposer is on notice that any part of its Proposal or any other material marked as confidential, proprietary, or trade secret, can only be protected to the extent permitted by Illinois law, including but not limited to the Illinois Freedom of Information Act [5 ILCS 140 *et seq.*]

10.17 Awards

CCH may, at its discretion evaluate all responsive Proposals. CCH reserves the right to make the award on an all or partial basis or split the award to multiple proposers based on the lowest responsible proposers meeting the specifications, terms, and conditions. If a split award impacts the outcome of the project, it must be so stated in the proposal.

10.18 CCH Rights

CCH reserves the right to reject any and all offers, to waive any informality in the offers and, unless otherwise specified by the proposer, to accept any item in the offer. CCH also reserves the right to accept or reject all or part of your Proposal, in any combination that is in the best interest of CCH.

10.19 Cancellation of RFP; Requests for New or Updated Proposals

CCH, in its sole discretion, may cancel the RFP at any time and may elect to reissue the RFP later. CCH may also issue an Addendum modifying the RFP and may request supplemental information or updated or new Proposals.

11. Definitions

The following definitions shall apply to this RFP:

“Abuse” means (i) a manner of operation that results in excessive or unreasonable costs to the Federal or State health care programs, generally used in conjunction with Fraud; or (ii) the willful infliction of injury, unreasonable confinement, intimidation, or punishment with resulting physical harm, pain or mental anguish, generally used in conjugation with Neglect.

“Appeal” means a request for review of a decision made by proposer with respect to an Action.

“Addendum” or “Addenda” shall refer to a one or more documents posted to the website by which modifies this Request for Proposal or provides additional information.

“Board” or “System Board” shall refer to the Board of Directors of the Cook County Health and Hospitals System.

“Contract” shall mean a properly executed Contract that has been negotiated between CCH and a proposer for some or all of the Deliverables described in this RFP.

“Contractor(s)” shall mean the individuals, businesses or entities that have submitted a Proposal and have negotiated a contract that has been properly executed on behalf of the Contractor and CCH.

“County” shall mean the County of Cook, Illinois, a body politic and corporate.

“Deliverables” shall refer to the items, supplies, equipment or services that will be provided pursuant to any Contract entered into as a result of this RFP.

“Fraud” means knowing and willful deception, or a reckless disregard of the facts, with the intent to receive an unauthorized benefit.

“General Conditions” shall mean the terms and conditions posted to the CCH website.

“Proposal” shall mean the document(s) submitted by proposer(s) in response to this RFP that constitute a proposer's offer to enter into contract with the CCH under terms consistent with this RFP, subject to the negotiation of a contract and approval by the Board.

“Proposer(s)” shall mean the individuals or business entities, if any, submitting a Proposal in response to this RFP.

“Procurement Director” or “System SCM Director” shall mean the System Director of Supply Chain Management who serves as chief procurement officer for the CCH.

“Request for Proposals” or “RFP” shall refer to this solicitation of Proposals by CCH which may lead to the negotiation of a contract and the recommendation that the CCH authorize a Contract with a proposer.

“Solution” the specific configuration of Deliverables that is submitted in a Proposal to meet the needs and goals of the CCH as articulated in this RFP.

12. Appendix A – Proposal Receipt Acknowledgement Form

This acknowledgment of receipt should be signed by a representative of Supply Chain Management located at Stroger Hospital, 1969 W. Ogden Avenue, lower level (LL) Room 250A, Chicago IL, 60612.

The outside wrapping shall indicate the RFP Number and Title, Proposer’s Name, Proposers Address, and Point of Contact information. **Prefill the first two lines before submission.**

Solicitation Number and
Title: _____
Vendor Name: _____
Accepted By: _____
Date: _____
Time (if time machine is not available, hand write the time): _____ P.M _____ A.M

Proposals shall be submitted no later than the date and time indicated on the cover page of the RFP. **Late submittals will not be considered.**

Proposers must cut this sheet in two. SCM will time-stamp top and bottom sections. SCM will keep one section, and the proposer will keep the other section.



Proposal Receipt Acknowledgement Form

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Time Stamp Here