



Department of Human Services

Office of the Secretary

Request for Information

Statewide Resource and Referral Tool: Draft Technical Submittal Requirements

Date: November 15, 2019

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PART 1. General Information

1.1 Purpose of this Request for Information

The Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (“DHS” or “Department”) Office of Administration, Bureau of Procurement and Contract Management, issues this Request for Information (“RFI”) to gather input and information on the draft Technical Submittal for a potential Request for Proposals (“RFP”) for a Statewide Resource and Referral Tool (“R&RT”).

DHS seeks to procure and implement a person-centered, statewide R&RT to assist individuals with obtaining meaningful information and access to the services they need to achieve overall wellbeing, positive health outcomes, and financial self-sufficiency. As the Department gathered information through an RFI released in December 2018, DHS learned that a number of communities, healthcare organizations and systems, counties, research institutions and non-profit organizations have adopted a system, or are in the process of selecting a R&RT. The Department recognizes that as communities and entities continue to work on separate tools or systems, the care and services coordination for families in Pennsylvania will continue to be fragmented.

The Department envisions a statewide solution that builds an unprecedented multi-sector collaborative model for healthcare and social services delivery that will ultimately improve the health outcomes of the most vulnerable Pennsylvanians, while creating efficiencies for healthcare providers and social services organizations assisting individuals and families.

1.2 Request for Information Timeline

Event	Date
Release RFI	November 15, 2019
RFI Responses Due	December 16, 2019

The Department is requesting that all responses to this RFI be submitted by 12:00 p.m. on the due date. Responses must be submitted electronically to the following email account with “R&RT RFP Draft Comments” in the email subject line: RA-PWRIFICOMMENTS@PA.GOV.

While the Department does not intend to respond to questions or clarifications during the RFI response period, respondents may submit questions related to this RFI electronically to: RA-PWRIFICOMMENTS@PA.GOV using “R&RT RFP Draft Question” in the email subject line. The Department may or may not respond based on the nature of the question. The Department will post all answers provided online at: <http://www.emarketplace.state.pa.us>.

1.3 Disclaimers

The Department is not liable for any costs or expenses incurred by respondents in the preparation of responses related to this RFI.

This RFI is issued for information and planning purposes only and does not constitute a solicitation for future business, an offer for procurement, or any other type of current or future procurement action, and is only intended to gather information and input. The Department will not award an agreement on the basis of this RFI or otherwise pay for any of the information received.

The Department may use the information gathered through this process in the development of future procurement documents; however, the Department does not guarantee that this will occur. The Department will not return responses to this RFI. Respondents will not be notified of the results of the review, nor will they be provided copies of it. If the Department issues a procurement document, no respondent will be selected, pre-qualified, or exempted based on its participation in this RFI process.

Respondents should be aware that the responses to this RFI will be public information and that no claims of confidentiality will be honored. All responses are subject to a request for public records made under the Pennsylvania Right-to-Know-Law (“RTKL”), 65 P.S. § 67.101, et seq., and the Department will disclose responses if a RTKL request is made. The Department is not requesting, and does not require, confidential, proprietary, or other competitively sensitive information to be included as part of the RFI submission. Ownership of all data, material and documentation originated, prepared, and provided to the Department during this RFI process will belong exclusively to the Department.

PART 2. Background

DHS is increasingly focused on advancing a holistic approach to health and well-being through its programs and services. The circumstances and conditions in which our constituents live and grow, sometimes referred to as social determinants of health (“SDOH”), greatly influence their physical and mental health.

SDOH can take many forms, including: food access, employment status, educational level, access to affordable transportation, safe and affordable housing, access and utilization of regular health services, environmental conditions, and social cohesion in communities, among others.

Individuals also face barriers in accessing information on obtaining the services that may address SDOH needs. They are often provided a phone number, card, brochure, or website; however, in many cases, no mechanism for follow-up on referrals exists. As a result, agencies have no way to track whether an individual’s needs were met.

A statewide R&RT will assist individuals with obtaining meaningful information and access to the services they need to achieve overall wellbeing, positive health outcomes, and financial self-sufficiency.

DHS has engaged in a comprehensive, multi-sector stakeholder input process as part of its development and refinement of the objectives and requirements for a R&RT. The input provided and the information gathered through an RFI released in December 2018 helped provide the framework for the attached draft technical submittal, as well as the proposed plan for implementation. The Department is releasing this RFI to provide an opportunity for all stakeholders and the public to provide comments and to assist DHS in further refining the content and scope of a potential draft procurement.

PART 3. Request for Information Submission Format

Through this RFI, the Department is soliciting information and comments regarding the potential technical submittal that is being considered for a potential future RFP for the statewide R&RT.

The draft technical submittal, which is attached as Appendix A, provides certain requirements that the Department is contemplating for the statewide R&RT. All interested respondents are asked to respond in writing to this RFI, in accordance with the response format outlined below.

3.1 Response Submission

Please prepare responses simply, providing straightforward and concise language and descriptions. All responses should be produced in Arial 12-point font and submitted as a Word document, not a PDF. Please limit your response to no more than fifteen (15) pages, not including the cover letter or attachments. Please refrain from sending marketing materials to the Department.

3.2 Cover Letter

Please include a cover letter with the following information:

1. An introduction to the respondent or respondent's organization, background, and interest in the R&RT.
2. General information about the respondent and respondent's organization, including: Name, Address, Point of Contact for this RFI with a telephone number and an e-mail address.

3.3 Conceptual Solutions and Strategies Response

The following provides a suggested structure for a response to this RFI. This structure is intended to minimize the effort required to develop and analyze submitted responses. If you wish to comment on any of the draft Technical Submittal Sections mentioned below, please note the specific provision (for example, Section I.3.C.4) and provide your comments. Please address the following:

- (a) The proposed Prior Experience provisions included in Appendix A, Section I-3.B. Explain the reasoning underlying your comments on these requirements.
- (b) The proposed Personnel provisions included in Appendix A, Section I-3.C. Explain the reasoning underlying your comments to these requirements.
- (c) The Department's proposed Training provisions included in Appendix A, Section I-4. Explain the reasoning underlying your comments to the training requirements.
- (d) The Department's proposed Work Plan provisions included in Appendix A, Section I-6. Explain the reasoning underlying your comments to the work plan requirements.
- (e) The proposed Requirements identified in Appendix A, Section I-7. Explain the reasoning underlying your comments to these requirements.
- (f) Discuss the Department's proposed Reports and Project Control provisions included in Appendix A, Section I-8. Explain the reasoning underlying your comments to these provisions.

- (g) The Department's proposed Performance Standards included in Appendix A, Section I-9. Explain the reasoning underlying your comments.
- (h) Any comments to the R&RT Technical Submittal that would help the Department improve the intended project, its implementation, and accessibility for individuals and families. Explain the reasoning underlying your comments.
- (i) Comments regarding an appropriate cost structure for a phased statewide implementation of an R&RT. DHS is particularly interested in cost structures that are not based on licensing costs per individual user. Provide any information that may inform the development of the Cost Submittal.
- (j) The ability of R&RT platforms to integrate with other R&RT platforms. Through the stakeholder engagement process, DHS learned that there are organizations that have already implemented a R&RT. The Department is interested in obtaining additional information on the capabilities of the various platforms to have interoperability.
- (k) The Department is seeking information on the ability of platforms to integrate various SDOH assessments (*i.e.*, PRAPARE, AHC, or Health Leads) as tool defaults, as well as allowing organizations to upload their existing assessments or questions to the R&RT. Please comment on the feasibility of the platforms to link similar questions from different existing assessments within the tool to report on a specific need or service. For example, if an organization utilizing the tool asks a question about food security using an assessment developed internally, could that question be linked to food security questions within other assessments within the tool to produce comprehensive reports on food insecurity needs and services?
- (l) DHS received input expressing concerns about the implications of sharing information with community-based organizations (CBOs) that are not covered under HIPAA privacy and security regulations. Please comment on how this concern has been addressed in other states, how much information can be shared with CBOs that are not covered by HIPAA, and how information is shared in a way complies with HIPAA.