

**ST. MARY'S COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT
DIVISION OF PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE**

**LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC:
DURING-AND-AFTER ACTION REVIEW**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)
FISCAL YEAR 2023
#22-17**

RFP EMPHASIS

The St. Mary's County Health Department (SMCHD) is commissioning a During-and-After Action Review of the St. Mary's County public health response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The review should include an examination of St. Mary's County Health Department's response to date and the coordination between SMCHD and local partners for collaborative response strategies. The resulting Review(s) should describe what has happened since the declaration of a pandemic in February 2020; strengths and challenges from the public health response thus far; current and future threats to a functional public health response; current and future opportunities or new prospects to consider for an improved or more efficient response; and concrete recommendations for SMCHD's response to the ongoing threat of COVID-19 as well as future health and medical emergency events.

ELIGIBILITY

To apply for the During-and-After Action Review RFP, an organization/person must:

- Possess demonstrated expertise in the areas of community emergency response, public health evaluation, or conducting comprehensive after-action reviews of responses to emergency events
- Be available to begin providing agreed upon services by July 1 2022
- Must be able to coordinate/collaborate with beneficiaries of the project. Work experience with a US local or state government is an advantage

CONTACT

For more information contact:

Tressa Setlak, Director
Division of Preparedness and Response
St. Mary's County Health Department
21580 Peabody Street, PO Box 316
Leonardtown, Maryland 20650
Tressa.Setlak@Maryland.Gov
301-475-4330 Main Number

BACKGROUND

SMCHD is the local health department for St. Mary's County, Maryland. SMCHD works with other local public and private partners and state partners to respond to public health concerns. SMCHD serves as the lead local entity in responding to Health and Medical Events (Emergency Support Function 8, or ESF-8), and with the assistance of the county's Emergency Operations Center mobilizes support agencies in response to an ESF-8 event.

The first cases of COVID-19 in St. Mary's County, Maryland were reported in March of 2020. Public health actions to control the human burden of disease and consequent utilization of health care system resources required a surge in staffing, facilities, technology, data capabilities, communications, and mitigation efforts (including contact tracing, testing, vaccination, outbreak control measures). The execution of activities to control disease in St. Mary's County and then to distribute vaccines, constituted a stress test of SMCHD, its partners, and elected officials. Rapid and near constant changes in scientific knowledge, federal and state policies, and personnel, accompanied by a fluid landscape of media messages, added to the already stressed local public health system.

The pandemic has highlighted moments of great resourcefulness, creativity, and partnership to minimize impact of the pandemic on the local population. However, the pandemic has also exposed fundamental weaknesses in public health infrastructure at all levels of government, the resulting challenges to community emergency preparedness.

GOALS

The main goals of this During-and-After Action Review (AAR) are to describe the COVID-19 response in St. Mary's County, identify what has worked and areas for growth, and make recommendations for improvements to public health emergency preparedness and response. Lessons learned from this AAR will allow for a nimbler public health response to emergency events.

This during and after-action review should provide practical, concrete recommendations and action steps that SMCHD and our partners can realistically implement given available/anticipated resources. The Review should be organized according to the functions of the public health response thus far, as outlined below. The table below is an incomplete listing of the range of potential functions that might become part of the final Review.

FUNCTIONS TABLE

Functions of Public Health Response	Potential Subtopics
Crisis Communications	<p>Timeliness and availability of current information</p> <p>Multiple strategies intended to inform and provide guidance to community members, policy makers, health care workers, business owners, and community partners</p> <p>Internal communications with public health workforce</p> <p>Accessibility for individuals with disabilities, non-English speakers, and those most at risk for severe COVID-19 illness (seniors, immunocompromised, those with chronic illness)</p> <p>Management of mis/disinformation</p> <p>Communication strategies to promote Health Equity in COVID-19 response</p>
Science & Surveillance	<p>Up-to-date understanding of science; Local data surveillance, analysis, and communication; connection and comparisons with state-wide data analysis and reporting</p>
Policy	<p>Translation and implementation of federal, state and local policy related to COVID-19; quarantine and isolation recommendations</p>
Safety & Security	<p>Safety of Public Health and other workers at Mass Vaccine/Testing Sites and other community sites utilized during the response, cybersecurity</p>

Mitigation Strategies	PPE, Cleaning, Ventilation
Therapeutics	Medications, Alternate Care Sites, Healthcare System Resources
Vaccination	Management of initial vaccine rollout, translation of vaccine eligibility updates, mass vaccination, pop-up vaccination sites, routine vaccine sites, homebound vaccination (NALB vaccination program), vaccine inventory management (cold-chain), vaccine transfer hub, allergy patients, public perceptions
Testing	Accessibility, distribution, consistency of testing resources, public perceptions
Contact Tracing	Integration of CDC/MDH/Local guidance, customer service, public perceptions, contact tracing management systems
Outbreak Management	Mitigation of further spread, resources to manage, relationship with higher-risk partners
Logistics	Facilities, Staffing, IT, ICS structure and usage, Supply chain management
Finance	Procurement of resources, utilization of FEMA reimbursements

Anticipated impacts of pandemic	Behavioral Health - assessment, planning and actions to handle demand Post-COVID conditions - assessment, planning, and response
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GENERAL INFORMATION

The organization or service provider wishing to apply must:

- Meet the eligibility requirements listed in this document.
- Submit an application
- Designate one person (Program Director) to be the liaison with SMCHD EP&R Division Director to coordinate and report on the status of services provided.
- Commit to meet with the SMCHD Division Director on a biweekly schedule from the date of contract to provide updates on project progress. Schedule may be modified based on performance.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

All provider proposals for funding must be reviewed and approved by the St. Mary’s County Health Department. Providers/candidates selected must meet the eligibility criteria described above to be considered for funding.

REPORTING

The Awardee will make any/all documents and records, including any work completed, available for audit/evaluation to SMCHD upon request.

GRANT AGREEMENT AND TERMINATION FOR NON-PERFORMANCE

The Awardee shall enter into an Agreement with the SMCHD. Any Agreement resulting from this RFP may be terminated by either SMCHD or the Awardee by giving sixty (60) days written notice to the other party.

If the Awardee shall fail to fulfill in a timely and agreed upon manner its obligations under the Agreement, or if the Awardee shall violate any terms of the Agreement, within the sole discretion of the SMCHD, the SMCHD may immediately terminate the Agreement by giving written notice to the Awardee. Any completed work by Awardee shall be immediately shared with SMCHD at such time.

INVOICING

The Awardee may submit an invoice at the time of agreement for no more than 15% of the total award amount. All other payments will be on a cost-reimbursement basis. The Awardee must give bi-weekly reports of work, services and items that have been approved by the

SMCHD P&R Division Director per the project timeline and budget at biweekly meetings between the Awardee and SMCHD P&R Division Director. Invoices for work, services and items not on the project timeline and/or not approved by the SMCHD P&R Division Director may result in denial of further funding. Awardee must provide receipts and/or other documentation of expenditures. Receipts and proof of payment will be required for reimbursement.

Invoices are to be submitted monthly to:

Tressa Setlak, Division Director
Preparedness and Response Division
St. Mary's County Health Department
21580 Peabody St., PO Box 316
Leonardtown, Maryland 20650
Tressa.Setlak@Maryland.Gov
301-475-4330 Main number

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS AND REVIEW PROCESS

Applications must not exceed ten (10), single-spaced pages using twelve (12) point Times New Roman font. Proposals exceeding the 10-page limit will not be considered. Please use headings that correspond to the evaluation criterion outlined below. The proposal budget may be submitted as a separate attachment and will not count towards the 10-page limit. The RFP cover page (Attachment 1) shall be included, and will not count towards the 10-page limit.

The Proposed Work section of the application should describe in detail the methodology for the proposed During-and-After-Action-Review, including data collection methods, types of reports generated, and time involved with various methodological steps. All Functions of Public Health Response and subtopics as identified in the Functions Table should be addressed.

A panel of reviewers will conduct the application review process using the rating scale below. The decision to award funds of any amount will be based on the merits of the application. The decision of the reviewers will be final. Applications will be examined for:

- | | |
|---|-------------|
| 1. Provider Expertise & Organizational Capacity | (20 points) |
| 2. Proposed Work | (60 points) |
| 3. Timeline | (10 points) |
| 4. Budget Narrative | (10 points) |

APPLICATION DEADLINE

One copy of the application for the During-and-After Action Review must be emailed to Tressa Setlak at Tressa.Setlak@Maryland.Gov with email receipt confirmation. Applications received after 5:00pm on July 5th, 2022 will not be considered for review. Faxed or mailed applications will not be accepted.

DURING-AND-AFTER ACTION REVIEW APPLICATION TIMELINE

STEPS TO COMPLETION

COMPLETION DATE

Advertise RFP	May 16, 2022
Application Submission Deadline	June 13, 2022
Review of Applications	July 5, 2022
Notification of Awards or Non-award	by July 8, 2022

Attachment 1:
FY 2023 ST. MARY'S COUNTY DURING-AND-AFTER ACTION REVIEW
APPLICATION COVER PAGE

PROJECT TITLE: _____

ORGANIZATION _____

AMOUNT OF GRANT FUNDS REQUESTED (Please indicate amount for each year of grant, if applicable) _____

CONTACT PERSON

(1) _____ TITLE _____

CONTACT PERSON

(2) _____ TITLE _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

PHONE NUMBER _____ FAX _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

IS YOUR ORGANIZATION COMMUNITY-BASED? YES NO

DOES YOUR ORGANIZATION HAVE NONPROFIT STATUS? YES NO

DATE OF NONPROFIT STATUS _____

FEDERAL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER _____

I DO SOLEMNLY DECLARE AND AFFIRM THAT THE CONTENTS OF THIS APPLICATION ARE TRUE AND CORRECT TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE, INFORMATION, AND BELIEF.

PRINTED NAME _____

TITLE _____

SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____