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# Pre-Submittal Applicant Conference

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**Request for Applications No. HHS0013331  
Routine HIV Screening in Healthcare Settings**   
**November 29, 2023, at 10:00 AM CT**

# Introduction

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## Speaker

- **Dedra Williams**, Grants Specialist  
Sole Point of Contact for RFA  
Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC)  
Procurement and Contracting Services (PCS)



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# Agenda

1. Introductions
2. Housekeeping Items
3. Project Overview & Scope
4. Funding Stream Updates & Tracking
5. Grant Term
6. Program Requirements & Allowable Activities
7. Prohibitions
8. Closing Comments



# Procurement Team Roles

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- Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) Procurement and Contracting Services (PCS) is responsible for all procurement and solicitation activities.
- The HIV Prevention Program is responsible for contract management activities throughout the life of the Grant Agreements including, contract development, execution, and monitoring.
- The HIV Prevention Program is responsible for project scope, requirements, performance, results, and monitoring.



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# Schedule of Events

## Deadline for Submitting Questions

December 15, 2023 at 5:00PM CT

Any questions arising prior to the question deadline must be submitted in writing to [Dedra.Williams@hhs.texas.gov](mailto:Dedra.Williams@hhs.texas.gov)

## Tentative Date Answers to Questions Posted

Estimated: December 29, 2023 at 5:00PM CT

## Deadline for Submission of Solicitation Applications

January 18, 2024 at 10:30 AM CT

## Anticipated Grant Agreements Start Date

September 1, 2024



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# Solicitation Access

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HHSC will post all official communication regarding this RFA on the following website, including the notice of award:

- The HHS Grants website is located at <https://apps.hhs.texas.gov/pcs/rfa.cfm>

HHSC reserves the right to cancel this RFA, or to make no award if it determines such action is in the best interest of the State.

HHSC may, in its discretion, reject any and all applications or portions thereof.



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# Sole Point of Contact

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- All communications relating to this RFA must be directed in writing to Dedra Williams, Sole Point of Contact at [dedra.williams@hhs.texas.gov](mailto:dedra.williams@hhs.texas.gov).
- All communications between applicants and HHSC staff members, or any other HHS staff members, concerning this RFA are **strictly prohibited**.
- Failure to comply with these requirements may result in application disqualification.



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# Executive Summary of Program

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Programs under this RFA will be funded to provide opt-out, routine HIV Screening services in healthcare settings such as emergency departments and community health centers that serve under and uninsured populations. Routine HIV Screening is a standard of care and an opportunity to diagnose individuals living with HIV who otherwise may not have been tested and engage newly diagnosed individuals and previously diagnosed individuals in HIV related medical care.



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# Routine HIV Screening

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## Objectives

To provide opt-out, routine HIV screening services in healthcare settings such as emergency departments and community health centers that serve underinsured and uninsured populations. Routine HIV screening is a standard of care and an opportunity to diagnose individuals living with HIV who otherwise may not have been tested and engage newly diagnosed and previously diagnosed individuals in HIV-related medical care.



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# Routine HIV Screening (con't)

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## Strategies



Provide HIV, STI, and HCV screening, diagnosis, and prevention services in a community health setting.



Promote HIV testing and establish ways to regularly rescreen people at increased risk.



Expand innovative options to improve notification of results, adherence, and support for prevention services.



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# Available Funding

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Program	Anticipated Funding Awards	Typical Award	Award Cap
Routine HIV Screening in Healthcare Settings	Anticipated number of awards: 10	\$150,000	\$250,000



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# Available Funding (con't)

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- Budget decisions are based on the scope of work, available funding, and proposed budget
- Program staff anticipate the initial grant funding period for this five-year grant to begin January 1, 2025, through December 31, 2025.
- DSHS will not provide awards in Harris County as the jurisdiction receives direct federal funding.
- DSHS reserves the right to reallocate.
- Additional funding may become available during the five-year performance period.
- DSHS has the right to reallocate funding between activities and eligible service areas.



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# Grant Term

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The Project Period is anticipated to be January 1, 2025, through December 31, 2025 with up to two (2) two-year renewals.




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# Eligible Applicants

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In order to be considered an Applicant eligible for evaluations, Applicant must meet the following minimum requirements:

- A. Be a governmental entity, a non-governmental entity, a not-for-profit organization, a for-profit entity, or an association. Individuals are not eligible to apply.
- B. Be able to provide services in the eligible counties that they propose to serve and must have a physical location that they propose to serve in one of the  counties.



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# Eligible Applicants (con't)

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- To be considered for award, Applicants must execute Exhibit A, HHS Solicitation Affirmations v. 2.4, and provide all other required information and documentation set forth in this Solicitation. This RFA contains the requirements that all Applicants shall meet to be considered for award. Failure to comply with these requirements may result in disqualification of the Applicant without further consideration. Each Applicant is solely responsible for the preparation and submission of an Application in accordance with instructions contained in this RFA.



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# Service Delivery Areas Eligible for Funding

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## Routine HIV Screening in Healthcare Settings

Eligible service areas are located in the 15 Texas counties with the highest number (excluding Harris County) of PLWH in 2021 according to the Texas HIV Surveillance Report 2021 Annual Report.

Eligible Counties	Bell, Bexar, Cameron, Collin, Dallas, Denton, El Paso, Fort Bend, Galveston, Hidalgo, Jefferson, Montgomery, Nueces, Tarrant, and Travis counties.
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# Allowable Services

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## A. Model/Description

Routine HIV Screening programs engage with medical and organizational leadership to put policies in place and act to ensure that HIV Screening is fully integrated into patient care and to build the sustainability of screening in the absence of DSHS-financial support. Examples of integrated HIV Screening include standing orders, laboratory order sets, or intake procedures.



# Allowable Services (con't)

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## **B. Routine HIV Screening program is composed of three core activities:**

1. Routine HIV Screening tests and notification of HIV-positive results;
2. Linkage to and engagement in HIV-Related Medical Care for patients with HIV positive test results; and
3. Program management to develop the policy and infrastructure necessary to assure sustainable screening and quality improvement of testing activities.




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# Allowable Services (con't)

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## C. Routine HIV Screening in Healthcare Settings should include:

1. Recommended HIV Screening for patients in all Health-Care Settings after the patient is notified that testing will be performed unless the patient declines (opt-out screening).
2. Persons vulnerable for HIV acquisition should be screened for HIV at least annually.
3. Separate written consent for HIV testing should not be required; general consent for medical care should be considered sufficient to encompass consent for HIV testing. 



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# Allowable Services (con't)

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4. Prevention counseling via an Enhanced Assessment should not be required with HIV diagnostic testing or as part of HIV Screening programs in Health-Care Settings.
5. Counseling notification of HIV- positive test results is required.
6. Mandatory reporting to Public Health Follow Up

Routine HIV Screening programs work with medical providers and other clinical staff to develop coordinated responses to positive HIV test results into their clinical flow; the interaction for delivering a positive HIV test result should be treated similarly to test results for other chronic conditions.



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# Required Reports

Each Grantee awarded a Grant Agreement as a result of this RFA shall submit the following reports by the noted due dates (further outlined in Sections 2.11 and 2.12)

REPORT	REPORTING PERIOD	DUE DATE
LRP Security Assessment	January 1, 2025 – June 30, 2025	July 15, 2025
Financial Status Report	January 1, 2025 – June 30, 2025	July 31, 2025
LRP Security Assessment	July 1, 2025 – December 31, 2025	January 15, 2026
Financial Status Report	July 1, 2025 – December 31, 2025	February 15, 2026
Annual Progress Report	January 1, 2025 – December 31, 2025	February 15, 2026



# Evaluation Process

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A three-step selection process will be used:

1. Eligibility screening based upon Section 3.2, Application Screening Requirements and Section 3.3, Grant Award Eligibility;
2. Evaluation based upon Section 9.4, Evaluation Criteria; and
3. Final Selection is based upon Section 10.1, Final Selection.



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# Evaluation Criteria

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Per Section 9.4, all eligible applications will be evaluated based upon:

1. Organizational Capacity (Form C, Organizational Capacity) – 10%
2. Organizational Approach (Form D, Organizational Approach) – 10%
3. Performance Measures (Form E, Performance Measures and Standards) – 10%
4. Work Plan (Form F, Work Plan) – 60%
5. Budget (Form G, Requested Budget Template) – 10%



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# Submission of Exhibits

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Applicants must complete and submit the exhibits in accordance with the RFA, Section XIII, Submission Checklist.



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# Prohibitions

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**Grant funds may not be used to support the following services, activities, and costs:**

- A. Any use of grant funds to replace (Supplant) funds that have been Budgeted for the same purpose through non-grant sources;
- B. Inherently religious activities such as prayer, worship, religious instruction, or proselytization;
- C. Lobbying or advocacy activities with respect to legislation or to administrative changes to regulations or administrative policy (confer with 18 U.S.C. § 1913), whether conducted directly or indirectly;
- D. Any portion of the salary of, or any other compensation for, an elected or appointed government official;
- E. Vehicles for general agency use; to be allowable, vehicles must have a specific use related to Project objectives or activities;



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# Prohibitions (con't)

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**Grant funds may not be used to support the following services, activities, and costs:**

- F. Entertainment, amusement, or social activities and any associated costs including but not limited to admission fees or tickets to any amusement park, recreational activity or sporting event unless such costs are incurred for components of a program approved by the grantor agency and are directly related to the program's purpose;
- G. Costs of promotional items, and memorabilia, including models, gifts, and souvenirs but such items may be pre-approved by DSHS for working events or where such costs are incurred for components of a program and are directly related to the program's purpose;
- H. Food, meals, beverages, or other refreshments, except for eligible per diem associated with grant-related travel, where pre-approved for working events, or where such costs are incurred for components of a program approved by the grantor agency and are directly related to the program's purpose;
- I. Membership dues for individuals;



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# Prohibitions (con't)

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**Grant funds may not be used to support the following services, activities, and costs:**

- J. Any expense or service that is readily available at no cost to the Grant Project;
- K. Any activities related to fundraising;
- L. Equipment and other capital expenditures such as capital improvements, property losses and expenses, real estate purchases, mortgage payments, remodeling, the acquisition or construction of facilities, or other items that are unallowable pursuant to 2 CFR § 200.439;
- M. Any other prohibition imposed by federal, State, or local law; and
- N. Other unallowable costs as listed under TxGMS, Appendix 7, Selected Items of Cost Supplement Chart and/or 2 CFR 200, Subpart E – Cost Principles, General Provisions for Selected Items of Cost, where applicable.



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# Delivery for Submission Option

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Applicant must correctly deliver Solicitation Responses by the method below:

- **Submission Option #1:** Applicant shall submit the application through the HHS Online Bid Room utilizing the procedures identified in Exhibit I, HHS Online Bid Room Instructions.
- **Submission Option #2 with USB Drives:** Applicants shall submit each of the following on separate USB drives to the correct mailing address, which is dependent upon mailing method identified in this section (see mailing address options in the RFA, Section 8.3, Required Submission Method).



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# Questions and Answers

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All questions **must** be submitted in writing to the Sole Point of Contact using the formatting below from the RFA, Section 7.3, RFA Questions and Requests for Clarification:

- A. Identifying Solicitation number;
- B. Section number;
- C. Paragraph number;
- D. Page number;
- E. Text of passage being questioned; and
- F. Question; <https://resources.hhs.texas.gov/rfa/hhs0013331>

Submit via email to: [Dedra.Williams@hhs.texas.gov](mailto:Dedra.Williams@hhs.texas.gov) **by 5:00PM on December 15, 2023.**



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# Question Deadline

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- Questions are due by **5:00PM on Friday, December 15th, 2023.**
- Questions received after this deadline cannot be responded to.
- An addendum will be posted to the HHS Grants Website with the answers to questions **on December 29, 2023 by 5:00PM.**



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# Closing Comments

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- Applicants are responsible for meeting the RFA requirements, including any addendums.
- All Addendums must be signed and submitted with the original application.
- Applicants must check the HHS Grants website frequently for any addendums that may have been added to this solicitation.



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## HHS Grants Website

The link is: <https://resources.hhs.texas.gov/rfa/hhs0013331>





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# Thank you!

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**Request for Applications No. HHS0013331**

**Routine HIV Screening in Healthcare Settings**

