

Project Empowerment RFA Q&A

1. Will the slides be shared?

The recorded presentation of the slide deck is posted here: [Request for Applications 24-10049](#)

2. Do all community organizing and outreach programs need to include systems advocacy?

No, systems change work is not required for community organizing and outreach programs. Awardees may conduct, but are not limited to, the various community organizing and outreach activities listed in the RFA. Note that any activities designed to influence legislative change at the local, state, or federal level are not allowed.

3. Can you please define staff care activities?

Staff care activities include any activities that are trauma-informed, culturally appropriate and promote a safe work environment for staff.

4. Can applicants apply as a sub under one tier, and as a single applicant under a separate tier?

No. Applicants may only apply for one of the award tiers and annual award amounts; however, you may apply for an award and still be a subcontractor on another organization's application.

5. If we apply for Tier 1 but would also like to do staff capacity building and community outreach, could we do that with Tier 1 funding if we also do required Tier 1 activities with our project?

Yes, Tiers 1B and 1C allow applicants to conduct organizational activities as long as the applicant also chooses one prevention and control activity.

6. Can Tier one include 3 activities from the prevention and control or is there a requirement to add one activity from the organizational section?

Applicants may propose three prevention and control activities in their Tier 1C applications.

7. Is it a requirement that 100% of clients served must be from Black/AA and Latinx communities?

This funding aims to improve viral suppression among Black/AA and Latinx people with HIV (PWH), and to prevent HIV acquisition among Black/AA and Latinx people who are particularly vulnerable to HIV. Health and Safety Code (HSC) Section 120780.5 establishes funding for the purposes of providing comprehensive HIV prevention and control activities to the most vulnerable and underserved individuals living with, or at high risk for, HIV infection. For the purposes of this RFA, those populations include Black/AA and Latinx. Priority subpopulations may include men who have sex with men (MSM), trans women, trans MSM, people who inject drugs (PWID), and cisgender women; however,

CDPH/OA will consider other populations for which local data indicates a disproportionate impact by HIV.

8. Can the LOI be sent in the body of an email or does it have to be in an email attachment on letterhead?

Yes, the letter of intent (LOI) can be included in the body of an email.

9. Can the budget include the cost of the actual Mpox vaccines?

No, community-based organizations (CBOs) and FQHCs will be eligible for reimbursement for mpox vaccine administration and vaccine outreach/education activities. Costs related to these activities should be factored accordingly into proposed budgets. However, the cost of the vaccine is not a reimbursable cost by this funding.

10. Can agencies apply for a tier 1 and tier 2 award?

No. Applicants may only apply for one of the award tiers and annual award amounts; however, applicants who apply for either a Tier 1B or 1C award can include organizational activities in addition to prevention and control activities.

11. Can we purchase Aprelude?

The purchase of medications is not allowed; however, CDPH/OA recommends that organizations collaborate and or work with organizations that can increase access to medications for clients.

12. How do we, in the application, communicate that members of the affected community has weighed in on our proposed activities?

This can be communicated within the Application Narrative Template.

13. Can the application include population outside of the EHE geographical area?

Yes, applicants may include individual CBOs and local health jurisdictions (LHJs), as well as collaborations between CBOs and LHJs. Eligible applicants include: 1) any LHJ in California, and 2) any CBO located within any LHJ in California. Applicants may use this funding to serve populations outside of the EHE geographical area as long as they are within California.

14. Can agencies request funds in advance to start project implementation?

No. Funding advances are not allowed.

15. What information must the LOI include?

Prospective applicants are required to submit the LOI to CDPH/OA indicating their intent to apply in response to this RFA. Applicants may indicate interest in more than one award in their LOI; however, ultimately, they may only apply for one award. The LOI must be electronically signed by an official authorized to enter into a contractual agreement on behalf of the applicant. A typed signature will suffice. An example of the language for the LOI may be: "This letter

confirms that [name of applying agency] intends to apply for Tier 1A or Tier 2 Project Empowerment funding.”

16. Are for-profit community based organizations allowed to apply? If not, allowed to link with non-profit?

Those eligible to apply for this funding are those that are considered local government entities such as LHJs, CBOs with non-profit status (501c3) and/or University of California or California State University applicants.

17. Since Housing First is one of the competencies of the State Strategic Plan, can resources on housing navigation and support be budgeted?

Yes. Funds may be used on housing navigation and support. Housing incentives are limited to \$500 per client.

18. Is an outside evaluator required/preferred for this project?

An outside evaluator is not required for this project.

19. Can awardees anticipate obtaining invoice payments within 30 days of submission?

CDPH payment terms are net 45 days from the receipt of an approved invoice.

20. Can you please provide the project empowerment email in the chat?

projectempowerment@cdph.ca.gov

21. Stipends for people with lived experience allowed?

Approval to provide stipends for people with lived experience will be permitted by CDPH/OA on a case-by-case basis if the applicant is chosen for an award.

22. I understand that an applicant cannot apply for both tiers. But can an applicant apply as a sub under one tier, and as the single applicant under a separate tier?

No. Applicants may only apply for one of the award tiers and annual award amounts; however, applicants may apply for an award and still be a subcontractor on another organization's application.

23. Will Letters of Support be required from Local Health Departments to support CBO applications?

Yes.

24. Is there a requirement for MOUs/letters of support? If so, how many?

There is a requirement for applicants to provide a letter of support from the local health department (LHD)(s) where services will be provided. If providing services in more than one jurisdiction, submit a form for each LHD where your project will operate. There is no requirement for applicants to provide a memorandum of understanding.

- 25. For building the capacity of our staff, we would like to pay the tuition of our HIV+ community health worker to obtain her LVN certificate and also train one of our patients and pay for their CHW certification. Would these tuition fees be acceptable expenses if they are used to support PLWH to advance their training and if they are currently employed by our program?**

No. Funds may not be used to pay tuition for medical certificates or ongoing certification.

- 26. What costs are allowable under lab services?**

Lab costs that support Project Empowerment services are allowed. If awarded, organizations should submit a list of lab costs to CDPH/OA for approval before paying for these services.

- 27. Will applicants be asked to provide in-kind donations to support the grant?**

No, applicants will not be asked to provide in-kind donations to support the grant.

- 28. Please repeat the email address to submit the LOI - and what is the content of the LOI that is required.**

projectempowerment@cdph.ca.gov

The LOI must indicate an applicant's intent to apply in response to this RFA. Applicants may indicate interest in more than one award in their LOI; however, ultimately, they may only apply for one award. The LOI must be electronically signed by an official authorized to enter into a contractual agreement on behalf of the applicant. A typed signature will suffice.

- 29. Can the applicant apply for Tier 1 in multiple counties?**

No. While we welcome multi-jurisdictional applications, each applicant may only apply for one award tier and annual award amount.

- 30. Does increasing staff available to provide culturally appropriate HIV prevention services to AA and LX populations mean adding prevention staff FTE, or can it mean supporting, training staff providing those (and related) services?**

Increasing staff available to provide culturally appropriate HIV prevention services to Black/AA and Latinx populations can be hiring or reassigning staff and/or supporting and training current staff to provided related services.

- 31. Is it mandatory that an FQHC collaborate with a CBO?**

No.

- 32. Can funds be used for medical supplies for testing, such as sharps, gauze, etc?**

Yes, funds may be used for medical supplies for testing, but only if those costs support Project Empowerment services.

33. How will CDPH monitor the funds to ensure they are being spent to reach the priority populations?

CDPH/OA will monitor and review spending of funds via invoices submitted. Awardees will be required to enter quantitative data into Local Evaluation Online (LEO) and to attend data meetings with Prevention, Evaluation and Monitoring staff to show that priority populations are being successfully reached with Project Empowerment funds. Also, awardees must provide qualitative narrative via progress reports, biannually, to describe how they are using funds to reach and engage priority populations. Additionally, all awardees will be required to attend and participate in quarterly awardee webinars to share challenges, successes and lessons learned as their project unfolds. Lastly, CDPH/OA may conduct on-site audits to review records in detail. Audits that determine activities were not allowable or in support of Project Empowerment could result in a request for reimbursement to the State.

34. Does staff recruitment mean we have to recruit additional staff, or can we use these funds to help recruit, train, support and retain already existing staff/funded positions?

Staff recruitment can include hiring or reassigning staff and/or training, supporting, and retaining existing staff.

35. Hello, is this replacing the formal Prevention grant PS18-1802?

No. This is a separate demonstration project.

36. If there are challenges with the forms provided, can we reach out to CDPH? (We asked the attendee “Can you please clarify? Are you talking about the actual application package?” The attendee responded “yes” in the chat.)

If upon reviewing this RFA, a potential applicant has any questions regarding the RFA, discovers any problems, including any ambiguity, conflict, discrepancy, omission, or any other error, the applicant shall immediately notify CDPH/OA in writing via e-mail to request clarification or modification of this RFA. Questions/inquiries must be received by the time and date referenced in the Tentative RFA Timeline.

37. Can you use grant funds to provide patient incentives for testing or retention in care services?

Yes, but client incentives should be limited to one per client per stage in a specific process, no more than \$50 per incentive. Also, housing incentives should be limited to \$500 per client.

38. Can LOI be an email from the ED stating interest specifying which tier?

Yes, an LOI can be an email from an emergency department stating interest in a specified tier. The LOI must be electronically signed by an official authorized to enter into a contractual agreement on behalf of the applicant. A typed signature will suffice.

39. Is conference attendance an allowable activity for staff development/care?

Yes, but note that travel to send staff to conferences within California or out of state must be approved by OA in advance.

40. Does staff capacity building apply to all HIV services we provide (prevention, screening, early intervention, linkage to care, HIV primary care, partner services)? Does capacity building mean increasing HIV team FTE & # (or diversity) of people served, or can it focus on quality of care of delivery of services, continuity of care, trauma-informed care, etc.?

Yes, staff capacity building applies to all HIV services provided by the applicant and refers to the investment in the development and care of staff that serve and/or reflect the priority population(s).

Awardees conducting staff capacity building activities may conduct the following activities but are not limited to 1) hire and/or reassign staff that are reflective of the priority populations, 2) provide staff care activities, 3) support staff development and training, and 4) build organizational capacity to serve Black/AA or Latinx people and communities. Other considerations may include providing cultural humility training to staff to build skills in serving Black/AA and Latinx communities or providing implicit bias training to hiring staff to ensure equitable hiring practices.

41. Can you repeat which Tiers can include organizational activities, in addition to prevention and control activities?

Tiers 1B and 1C can include organizational activities in addition to prevention and control activities.

42. Are there any reporting requirements and/or deliverables?

Yes, there are reporting requirements. Any projects that provide direct services with these funds (i.e., testing, linkage to care, PrEP, etc.) will be required to include data collection, entry, management, monitoring, and quality control in their evaluation plan. Both quantitative and qualitative evaluation will be required for projects that provide direct services.

Projects that do not provide direct services with these funds (i.e., staff development or community organizing) will be required to provide ongoing qualitative evaluation.

- 43. What are the limitations for provider(s) time? this would be for any medical provider overseeing the project or directly involved with the project.**

There are no limitations for provider time for medical providers overseeing the project or directly involved with the project.

- 44. How long will the narrative portions of the application be?**

The application narrative template or the application itself may not exceed 20 pages. You must use Arial 11-point font.

- 45. Can you say more regarding what types of Letters of Support are required? Do all categories of applicants need a letter from their County DPH? Or only CBOs?**

All applicants will be required to provide a letter of support from the LHD(s) where services will be provided. If providing services in more than one jurisdiction, submit a form for each LHD where your project will operate. Note that there is a specific attachment that you will receive when you submit an LOI. It's called the funding summary and letter of support and provides specific instructions around that.

- 46. Can we use grant money to purchase an electric medical van to perform mobile medical services in the community?**

No, purchases of vehicles are not allowed with this funding.

- 47. Can we email additional questions to the Project Empowerment email after this webinar?**

The deadline for submitting written questions was on Wednesday, April 24, 2024, by 5PM PST.

- 48. Can you lease a vehicle for medical services as purchase is not permitted?**

Yes, leasing a vehicle is allowed, but with some restrictions. The leasing contract must not have an option to purchase, it must have a term not greater than the term of the contract, unless your agency has plans to continue the agreement on your own. Also please note a few other allowed costs verses unallowed costs concerning vehicles:

Allowable: Fuel and general maintenance (ex. routine vehicle maintenance such as oil change, filter replacement, tire rotation, detailing/sanitizing)

Unallowable: Storage, any fees or costs associated with DMV requirements, vehicle wrap, window tinting, vehicle repairs, vehicle improvements, etc.

- 49. Can you elaborate more about medical staff time mentioned in the budget section?**

Applicants are required to complete the RFA Budget Justification tab to provide a detailed description of all proposed expenditures, including the major responsibilities of the applicant's personnel charged to this agreement for each FY. For all personnel, the applicant must provide the following:

- *Position title*
- *First and last name*
- *If the position is vacant, the estimated start date for the position that is to be filled*
- *Description of duties the staff person will perform and how these duties support the implementation of Project Empowerment services.*

Please note that personnel classifications and/or professional disciplines must be appropriate for the major responsibilities outlined in the description of duties, and for the management and oversight of the project that CDPH/OA funds.

50. When can we expect this video/slide deck to be posted?

The recorded presentation of the slide deck is posted here: [Request for Applications 24-10049](#)

51. Is the LOI ok to send email with Agency letter head with wet signature in an PDF Attachment ok?

Yes. The LOI must be electronically signed by an official authorized to enter into a contractual agreement on behalf of the applicant. A typed signature will suffice.

52. Can STI testing kits be included in the budget?

Yes, you may budget for the purchase of STI test kits.

53. Is there any sort of word limit to the LOI, does it just need to be a straightforward expression of interest in the award?

There is no word limit. Prospective applicants are required to submit the LOI to CDPH/OA indicating their intent to apply in response to this RFA. Applicants may indicate interest in more than one award in their LOI; however, ultimately, they may only apply for one award. The LOI must be electronically signed by an official authorized to enter into a contractual agreement on behalf of the applicant. A typed signature will suffice. An example of the language for the LOI may be: "This letter confirms that [name of applying agency] intends to apply for Tier 1A or Tier 2 Project Empowerment funding."

54. Can you clarify are the amounts annual or total?

The following award amounts are annual:

- *Tier 1A – three \$250K awards • Tier 1B – three \$350K awards*
- *Tier 1C – three \$500K awards • Tier 2 – eight \$150K awards*

- 55. Can any funds be used for capital improvement on an owned building project. I.E. kitchen upgrade for commercial use to feed participants?**
No. The funds may not be used to purchase assets nor be used for capital improvements.
- 56. Can funding be used for rental space for Empowerment related activities (large events)?**
Fees for event space is an allowable cost for Project Empowerment related activities; however, you may not fund an entire event offering rental spaces to others.
- 57. Is it a 4-year grant?**
Yes. The terms of the resulting contracts will be four years in duration. The anticipated project start date referenced in the tentative RFA timeline may vary, due to the time required to finalize the agreement, obtain signatures and process the agreements between awardees. The fourth year will conclude June 30, 2028.
- 58. Can the agency choose what media is allowable or does the funder decide if Billboard, Commercial etc is allowed?**
Innovative and effective Media campaigns are welcome; however, CDPH/OA will approve these on a case-by-case basis if the applicant is a chosen awardee.
- 59. Can we submit budget with different expenses/line items from one year to the next? Or are we subbing one year's budget at a time?**
Yes, you may have different line items that carry budgeted dollars in different years. For example, you may have costs for one thing in year one, but no further costs for that in the remaining term of the agreement, so that would show zeros for the remaining years. Likewise, you may have costs for something that will not begin until year two or three, you will show zeros in the preceding years. Show all line items and dollars for the years where you intend to expend for that budget line item.
- 60. Multi-Media?**
All tiers and annual award amounts may use up to 10% of award on new media.
- 61. When will the Q&A be released?**
The Q&A will be released on Monday, April 29, 2024.
- 62. Reporting is annual? semiannual? quarterly?**
Reporting frequency for quantitative and qualitative data monitoring and analysis will be determined by, and at the discretion of CDPH/OA.
- 63. Where can we read about the first round of grantees?**
You can find the [Intent to Fund Announcement for the previous iteration of Project Empowerment](#) here:

https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DOA/Pages/OA_prev_projectempowerment.aspx

- 64. Will this grant be reimbursement based - meaning, are grantees going to be spending money and then sending in reimbursement requests or will they receive portions of the award throughout the contract period?**
Yes, the funding of this grant will be reimbursement-based. Your organization will spend the money first and then send in the appropriate backup with the invoice workbooks to seek reimbursement.
- 65. For community organization (monthly or quarterly taskforce meetings) and outreach, can grant funds be used to provide lunch for the community taskforce meetings?**
CDPH/OA may approve nutritional supplements on a case-by-case basis for the applicant chosen as an awardee.
- 66. Can the grant funds be used to purchase PrEP and given free to low-income patients?**
The purchase of medications is not allowed. Applicants should leverage other available options to provide PrEP to clients.
- 67. Can the applicant apply for one tier in one more than one county?**
No. While we welcome multi-jurisdictional applications, each applicant may only apply for one award tier and annual award amount.
- 68. Must applicants propose to serve both African American and Latinx populations, or may applicants propose to serve one or the other population?**
Applicants may propose to serve both African American and Latinx populations, or they may propose to serve African American or Latinx populations.
- 69. Page 12 of the RFA indicates that there will be no advances in funding only reimbursement monthly or quarterly. Didn't AB 590 signed by the Gov in 10/23, ensure that NPs can receive up to 25% in start funds when contracting with the state?**
No. Assembly Bill No. 590 authorizes an administering state agency to advance a payment not to exceed 25% of the total grant or contract amount to a recipient entity, defined to mean a private, nonprofit organization that qualifies under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, subject to meeting specified requirements.
- 70. Do we have to indicate which Tier we are interested in applying to in the LOI?**

No. You do not have to indicate which tier you are interested in applying for, but if you know or have an idea, you can mention one or more tiers in your LOI. Ultimately, you can only apply for one award.

71. Can we change the Tier that we mentioned in the LOI later in the RFA when we apply?

Yes.

72. There is no mention of addressing STDs - was that intentional? If so, can we as part of our response to the RFA, propose to provide STD screening?

Applicants may propose STI screening with other HIV prevention and control activities. CDPH/OA has developed a syndemic framework for ending the epidemics of HIV/HCV/STIs that recognizes that STIs, viral hepatitis, injection drug use, and HIV are interacting epidemics, or syndemics, that can be addressed using similar strategies. Providers incorporating the syndemic approach into their programs will provide holistic, coordinated care that addresses these overlapping epidemics, and focus on increasing access to quality healthcare settings.

Tier 1 applicants will be required to include this syndemic approach, along with the following approaches in their project proposals. For full definitions of required approaches, visit our website to see [“Effective Approaches for HIV Programs”](#):

- Benefits counseling and navigation*
- Comprehensive sexual health education*
- Harm reduction*
- Health and wellness*
- Health equity approach*
- Innovative testing strategies*
- Involvement of the priority population in service delivery*
- Safe and secure program environment*
 - Social networks*
 - Status neutral approach*
 - Telehealth*
 - Trauma-informed practices*

73. Do we need a LOS if we subcontract another agency for a specific activity?

All applicants must submit an LOS. If the applicant will provide services across multiple jurisdictions, the applicant must provide an LOS from each jurisdiction where services will be provided.

74. Would PPIR grantees be eligible to apply for Project Empowerment funding?

Yes.

- 75. Are indirect costs permissible under this RFA? If yes, are there any limits placed on indirect costs? Can we request the full indirect cost rate in our proposed grant budget?**

Allowable indirect costs include general administration/fiscal activities, such as: invoicing, processing, budgeting, accounting, payroll, janitorial services, building maintenance, security and/or alarm system monitoring costs, utilities, general liability, etc. For LHJs applying as the applicant, the Indirect Cost Rate (ICR) the applicant submits in their budget must be the approved rate on file with CDPH (see what your [county's indirect cost rate is here on the CDPH website](#)). Applicants may allocate less than this rate but cannot exceed the rate. For non-LHJs applying as the applicant, the ICR should not surpass 25% of total personnel costs and all ICRs will be reviewed for reasonableness.

- 76. The budget amounts listed are per year or each year for 4 years? (i.e. what is the total award? Tier 1A \$250,000/year x 4 years= \$1million OR \$62,500/year x4 years=\$250,000)**

The award amounts mentioned in the RFA are per year. For example, the award amount for Tier 1A is \$250,000 per year.

- 77. Can funds be used to purchase a \$50,000 electric van to conduct HIV testing services out of?**

The purchase of a vehicle is an unallowable cost.

- 78. Can funds be used to pay tuition for PLWH to obtain advanced medical degrees (LVN, MA, CHW certificate programs)?**

Funds may not be used to pay tuition for advanced medical degrees (including LVN, MA, or CHW certificate programs).

- 79. I was wondering if there is a template available for the Letter of Intent that we could use?**

There is no template for the LOI; however, an example of the language for the LOI may be: "This letter confirms that [name of applying agency] intends to apply for Tier 1A or Tier 2 Project Empowerment funding."

- 80. I am inquiring about where I can download the required forms/templates for this RFA. I didn't see a hyper link embedded in the RFA itself or on the website.**

Upon submitting the LOI, CDPH/OA will send the applicant all required application attachments. The [LOI must be sent via e-mail](#) to projectempowerment@cdph.ca.gov. Applicants that fail to submit the LOI by the specified deadline are precluded from applying and will not receive an application.

- 81. Attachment 2 Cover Sheet: Can this signed form be submitted as a PDF (to lock the signature) instead of submitting in the original Word format you have provided?**
No. All attachments should be sent back in the same file format they were provided.
- 82. Attachment 9 Payee Data Record (STD 204): What is the contact information for CDPH that should be entered in Section 2 of this form?**
Section 2 asks for applicants to check a box that matches their entity type. If you are referring to Section 6, this section must be completed by the state agency/department requesting the STD 204. Please refer to the instructions on page 2 of the STD 204.
- 83. Attachment 9 Payee Data Record (STD 204): After completing the “SECURED” form, it will not save. Error message: “there is a problem reading this document (105)” Any suggestions?**
Thank you for notifying us. We have sent out an updated version. Moving forward, all organizations that submit an LOI will receive the corrected version of this form.
- 84. Attachment 10 Payee Data Record Supplement (STD 205): Same as Attachment 9; After completing the “SECURED” form, it will not save. Error message: “there is a problem reading this document (105)” Any suggestions?**
Thank you for notifying us. We have sent out an updated version. Moving forward, all organizations that submit an LOI will receive the corrected version of this form.
- 85. Attachment 11 Funding Summary LOS: Can this signed form be submitted as a PDF (to lock the signature) instead of submitting in the original Word format you have provided?**
Attachment 11 may be modified if submitting the Funding Summary portion separate from the Letter of Support. Do not change the language within this document.
- 86. Are electronic signatures on documents acceptable?**
The LOI must be electronically signed by an official authorized to enter into a contractual agreement on behalf of the applicant. A typed signature will suffice.
- 87. Are County LHJs aware and prepared to respond to the Attachment 11 requirement? In some cases, LHD staff (Coordinators, Director or Managers) are reluctant or unauthorized to sign Letters of Support. How should we proceed if we encounter this?**

Attachment 11 is a standard requirement for CDPH/OA RFA submissions. It is up to the applicant to reach out to their LHD to secure a signed LOS. We understand that it may require additional time to secure a signed Letter of Support. Applicants must [submit this document](#) either with their application package or to projectempowerment@cdph.ca.gov within 30 days of submitting their Project Empowerment application. Failure to submit this document may result in disqualification.

88. What is the allowable percentage for Indirect Costs?

For LHJs applying as the applicant, the Indirect Cost Rate (ICR) the applicant submits in their budget must be the approved rate on file with CDPH (see what your county's indirect cost rate is here on the CDPH website). Applicants may allocate less than this rate but cannot exceed the rate. For non-LHJs applying as the applicant, the ICR should not surpass 25% of total personnel costs and all ICRs will be reviewed for reasonableness.

89. Attachment 6 Activities List: Only the section that corresponds to our selected response to Attachment 7 must be completed, correct? For example, applicant chooses, Tier 2, Staff Capacity Building and must complete "F" Section on the Organizational Activities tab. Yes?

The Activities List outlines all activities you are proposing to implement based on the funding tier you are applying for. The Activities List should include all activities proposed in the Application Narrative. For example, applicants applying for Tier 2 funding for staff capacity building should enter all requested information for the "F" (staff capacity building) rows, including those for any additional sub-activities they are proposing. For sub-activities not pre-populated in this document, list them under the "Other proposed activities" line for the appropriate activity, adding new rows if necessary. Do not change font or reformat the document.

90. Attachment 7 Application Narrative Template: what questions do Tier 2 applicants need to complete on this template?

On Attachment 7, all applicants must insert their organization name, select the award for which they are applying, and select the activity(ies) they are proposing. If an applicant is applying for Tier 2 funding, they would also respond to all questions under the organizational activity they are proposing (staff capacity building or community organization and outreach) for a maximum total of 60 points. Note that staff capacity building has 20 narrative prompts/questions and community organization and outreach has 14 narrative prompts/questions to be responded to.

91. Attachment 7 Application Narrative Template: do Tier 2 applicants only need to complete the purple section on this template?

No. On Attachment 7, all applicants must insert their organization name, select the award for which they are applying, and select the activity(ies) they are proposing. If an applicant is applying for Tier 2 funding, they would also respond to all questions under the organizational activity they are proposing (staff capacity building or community organization and outreach) for a maximum total of 60 points. Note that staff capacity building has 20 narrative prompts/questions and community organization and outreach has 14 narrative prompts/questions to be responded to.

- 92. Attachment 7 Application Narrative Template: do Tier 2 applicants only choose and respond to only one of the two capacity building sections (i.e. Staff Capacity Building or Community Organization & Outreach)?**

Yes. On Attachment 7, Tier 2 applicants only respond to the prompts/questions for the organizational activity they are proposing (staff capacity building or community organization and outreach). All applicants must insert their organization name, select the award for which they are applying, and select the activity(ies) they are proposing.

- 93. Proposal packet: Is there a total page limit?**

The application narrative (Attachment 7) may not exceed 20 pages. Additional attachments are not included in this page limit.

- 94. General question: Does CDPH and/or OA have plans to utilize an online grant application system in the future to simplify and streamline the grants process?**

Not at this time.

- 95. Are stipends and/or incentives for program participants an allowable expense?**

Client incentives are allowable but should be limited to one per client per stage in a specific process, no more than \$50 per incentive. Also, housing incentives should be limited to \$500 per client.

- 96. Per page 9 of the RFA, applicants may only apply for one of the award tiers listed on pages 10-11. Please clarify if applicant is allowed to apply to provide Tier 1C services in more than one county and if so, does the applicant need to submit two separate applications?**

Yes, applicants are allowed to provide Tier 1C services in more than one county. While we welcome multi-jurisdictional applications, each applicant may only apply for one award tier and annual award amount.

- 97. Are there specified counties for which the applicant can apply under this opportunity or is any county in the state of California allowed?**

Eligible applicants include any LHJ in California.

- 98. Is it possible for applicants to sub-contract under a tier and be a main contractor under another tier? For example: Can SFAF be a sub-contractor for Tier 1C and be a main contractor for Tier 2?**

Yes. You may apply for an award and still be a subcontractor on another organization's application.

- 99. Are there additional guidelines on the HIV testing kits? How are they defined? Are they take home, mail sent kits? Can training support be provided to staff as part of the proposal?**

Applicants may propose the purchase of HIV test kits for use by test counselors who have been certified by CPDH/OA or its training partners to operate that specific HIV test kit. Training provided by test kit manufacturers does not count as training. The purchase of HIV self-test kits is allowable under this award.

- 100. On Attachment 7, Application Narrative, as a Tier 2 applicant focused on Staff Capacity Building, do we answer ONLY the Staff Capacity Building questions that = 60 points?**

On Attachment 7, all applicants must insert their organization name, select the award for which they are applying, and select the activity(ies) they are proposing. If an applicant is applying for Tier 2 funding for staff capacity building, they would also respond to all questions under "Staff Capacity Building" (20 questions/prompts total) for a maximum total of 60 points.

- 101. MHF operates a temporary housing assistance program, covering either moving costs into a transition housing facility or the first two months of housing. This program aims to address housing instability among people living with HIV, assisting them in overcoming barriers to routine healthcare such as attending medical appointments and adhering to medication regimens. Given that housing instability is a significant obstacle to starting and adhering to PrEP, could we explore using housing vouchers funded by the grant to tackle this issue?**

Housing incentives/vouchers are allowed but should be limited to \$500 per client.

- 102. Could MHF offer vaccinations for clients who have not been previously vaccinated for Hepatitis A and B, as well as provide testing for Hepatitis A, B, and C?**

No, CBOs and FQHCs will be eligible for reimbursement for mpox vaccine administration and vaccine outreach/education activities. Costs related to these activities should be factored accordingly into proposed budgets. However, the cost of the vaccine is not a reimbursable cost by this funding.

- 103. MHF runs a rapid STI testing clinic and incentivizes referrals from clients who bring others for testing. Considering the importance of PrEP in HIV**

prevention, could we consider allocating funding for PrEP referral incentives within this program?

Yes, but client incentives should be limited to one per client per stage in a specific process, no more than \$50 per incentive.

104. In the Budget Template (Exhibit B, Attachment 5), what should we enter in Column B, labeled "SOW Reference"?

Leave this column blank for this part in the RFA process. This column will be completed by the selected awardees. After the Scope of Work (SOW) is finalized, the budgets must support the SOW and the awardee will identify the SOW reference at that time.

105. The Application Certification Checklist indicates that Partnering Agency/Subcontractor Letter(s) of Support (if applicable) should be completed on Attachment 11. However, page 2 of Attachment 11 has wording that is specific to LHDs only. If we propose to partner or subcontract with a CBO, should we just delete all LHD specific references and have use page 2 for the CBO LOS?

No, do not delete anything from Attachment 11. The intention of Attachment 11 is for Project Empowerment applicants to identify their current funding sources and to provide a letter of support from the LHD(s) where services will be provided. If providing services in more than one jurisdiction, an applicant would submit a form for each LHD where their project will operate.

While not required, applicants may include separate letters of support from partnering and/or subcontracting CBOs. These letters of support should not be submitted using Attachment 11, however, they may be submitted on CBO/organization letterhead as a general letter of support.

106. Page 8 of the RFA references applicants intending to partner with another agency and instructs us to describe how services will be delivered. However, the Tier 1 and 2 questions on pages 14-21, partnering with another agency is referenced only once, in the list on page 19 of possible activities under Community Organizing: "Partnering with organizations serving priority populations to engage and recruit....". Other questions reference only "subcontractors." What is the difference between a partner and a subcontractor? If we want to partner with a CBO to deliver some of the proposed activities with funding from this initiative, does that not automatically make them a subcontractor?

A subcontractor provides agreed upon service(s) as part of a contract. Not all partnerships would have a formal contract. If an applicant wants to partner with a CBO to deliver some of the proposed activities in this project, it would not necessarily make them a subcontractor.

107. The Application Cover Sheet must be signed in blue ink. Should we scan the signed form and submit as a pdf (original sheet is in MSWord)?

The Application Cover Sheet does not need to be signed and should be sent back in the same file format it was provided.