



Department of Purchasing

100 N. Main Street, 2nd Floor
Suffolk, VA 23434
(757) 925-6762 Fax (757) 925-6763

AUG 11 '21 AM 10:50

POSTED

August 11, 2021

To All Interested Parties:

**Subject: Addendum #1,
Request for Proposal – COVID- 19 Testing Services**

Questions and Answers

QUESTION: Will Suffolk Public School accept a response proposing Antigen Testing?

ANSWER: We would prefer to keep PCR testing

QUESTION: Will SPS consider home collection approaches that have been successfully administered at scale with K-12 students?

ANSWER: We prefer on-site testing with personnel as found in the RFP, however, we will entertain at home testing but only if there is a lab analysis of the specimens. Also, we would like to know the chain of custody of the specimen in such instances

QUESTION: In the RFP, it is specified that the turnaround time for results is 24 hours. Is this from the receipt at the laboratory or from the time of the specimen collection?

ANSWER: From receipt at the laboratory

QUESTION: Are you interested in a pooled testing program where two samples are collected and if the group test comes back positive, we would then automatically process individual samples? Or are you only seeking that one specimen is collected for group results only?

ANSWER: We are interested in a program where individual samples could be tested automatically following a positive pooled test without having to come back on site to collect another specimen.

QUESTION: If pooled testing samples cannot be billed to a patient's insurance, would you be interested in individual PCR tests that are insurance billable?

ANSWER: At this time, we are looking for a pooled testing program with individual specimens only being used to determine the positive individual in a positive pool. We understand that this may or may not be able to be insurance billable, however, if a

proposer knows of a way to keep our billing costs down, we will entertain that as a part of the price proposal portion of the response.

QUESTION: Do you anticipate that testing will take place at all 26 locations in your school district?

ANSWER: Yes

QUESTION: Is there a general idea around the number of students in each school?

ANSWER: This is truly unknown, but our guidance has stated that we should look at testing about 10% of the student population at each school. This could be as few 30 per school and as many as a couple hundred at our largest schools.

QUESTION: We understand the SPS has a total population of 14,000 students and 2,100 employees covering 27 unique locations, including 11 elementary schools, 5 middle schools, 3 high schools, 1 alternative school, 1 center and 6 departments. Are there 27 unique locations or are the departments part of the schools? We are trying to get a sense of the total number of unique locations that we would need to cover to test 400-500 students per week. If there were 16,100 participants spread across 27 unique locations, with 10% requiring testing, that suggests a total of 1,600 tests per week / 27 = approximately 60 tests per location, on average? That would suggest around 10 locations to perform 400-500 tests per week. Is this a fair assumption?

ANSWER: It is a fair assumption that you will be testing approximately 1,400 students/staff members per week at all of our locations. It is important for us to select a partner that will be flexible in this regard based on the fluid nature surrounding COVID-19. As for the 400-500 tests, we would want any one proposer to be able to handle at least that many weekly tests. If we have to award multiple contracts to meet the need, we will keep that option open, but the need remains at an estimated 1,400 tests per week.

QUESTION: Are there particular hours that are available to perform testing? Would a team be able to test one location in the morning and another in the afternoon?

ANSWER: We will allow the contractor or contractors to have access to the buildings during our normal hours of operations. Each school level has different hours of operation starting at 7:00 am and ending at 3:50 PM. Additional hours in the evenings for sports teams will also be available. The schedule will be worked out with the awarded vendor(s).

QUESTION: For pooled testing per class, would we be testing the entire class or just a subset of the class. Do you know the average size of the class that we would be pooling together?

ANSWER: 25-30 students per class

QUESTION: Does this document require offeror signature and submission with RFP response or is this document executed for the successful offeror?

ANSWER: It can be completed either at the time of submission or afterwards. However, this certificate is required as there may be federal funds being used to procure these needs. Also, please see attached federal funds clauses that will need to be signed at the time of award of the contract.

QUESTION: Some testing procedures require mailing to a lab and then review of the specimen. Will longer turnaround times past 24 hours be accepted when factoring in collection, mailing, and review?

ANSWER: 24 hours from receipt by the laboratory.

QUESTION: Will it be acceptable to provide another form of FDA approved testing that is not PCR

ANSWER: No, PCR testing is required

QUESTION: The process utilized does not allow for going directly through the students or employee's insurance. However, the student or employee can provide proof of testing to their insurance agency to see if they will offer reimbursement. Will this be accepted in relation to costs?

ANSWER: Yes, you can add any cost deferral measures that can be deployed as a part of your proposal. However, I do not see how this will help the public body as Suffolk Public Schools will be paying and the funds would go to insured individual. If this is a strategy for cost savings, please detail how this would work in your proposal.

QUESTION: Would you be interested in student/employee pay options?

ANSWER: No; all Suffolk Public Schools' initiated tests will be paid for by Suffolk Public Schools.

QUESTION: Does the SPS have any anticipated test volume/week?

ANSWER: 1,400

QUESTION: Are you expecting sample collection to occur daily, a few times per week, etc.?

ANSWER: Weekly at any given location

QUESTION: What Authority determines the frequency, schools, pool size from each school, etc.?

ANSWER: School district leaders and student health services personnel with recommendations from the local health department

QUESTION: Would you please advise how consent forms will be completed?

ANSWER: Electronic consent forms can be utilized; however, paper copies will also have to be made available - multiple translations will be needed. Suffolk Public Schools will provide reasonable access to student files and will work with selected vendor. However, proposers will be graded on the ease in which parental consents/denials can be obtained and reported to the School Administration.

QUESTION: What is the strategy for testing of Vaccinated population?

ANSWER: This will be a screening testing program - per current CDC and VDH guidelines vaccinated individuals do not need to participate in screening testing. However, as guidance and situations change, so might the testing program.

QUESTION: Is it acceptable to collect and process each sample individually and not pool at the lab?

ANSWER: As long as costs would be comparable to those of pooled testing as outlined in the RFP and this addendum.

QUESTION: Is a turnaround time of 24-48 hours post collection acceptable?

ANSWER: 24 hours from receipt by the laboratory

QUESTION: Our firm does not accept insurance. Would this disqualify our bid?

ANSWER: Not necessarily; however, the proposal will need to detail pricing and any other cost containing measures possible.

QUESTION: Will you require the vendor's staff to collect all specimens or is there an option for school personnel and students to self-collect if trained?

ANSWER: Self collection is allowed; however, vendor staff would be needed to set up collection area, clean/dispose of waste post collection, and assist as needed during collection for on-site collections. Also, it is required to have the laboratory analysis of the specimens.

QUESTION: Are you able to estimate how many school locations would have weekly testing? Would it be one school each week, or several sites?

ANSWER: I would plan on multiple sites each week. Due to the fluid nature of COVID-19, it would be difficult to provide you an exact number.

QUESTION: How far in advance would scheduling be done, can you give an idea of how much notice might be given (dates, number of tests needed, location)?

ANSWER: Every attempt will be made to give at least a 2 week notice to allow the vendor time to arrange staffing and supplies with the ability to shift resources up until close of business the day before collection due to lower/higher needs at a given location. However,

Suffolk Public Schools encourages potential vendors to remain flexible as situations change and new guidance from the CDC, VDH, and VDOE may change our needs.

QUESTION: Please define further the desire to have results in 24 hours. Is this time from collection, or time from sample arrival at the lab?

ANSWER: 24 hours from sample arrival at the laboratory

QUESTION: The FDA is no longer reviewing applications for Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) of pooled tests. Would a Laboratory Developed Test (LDT) be acceptable?

ANSWER: The test must have FDA EUA approval (individual and pooled)

QUESTION: Our testing process allows for source (onsite) pooling of samples, which is ultimately much more cost effective. Is this acceptable?

ANSWER: As long as individual samples can be collected at the same time and stored to allow for quicker identification of the positive individual in a positive pool

QUESTION: Does Suffolk Public Schools intend on billing insurance for employees only?

ANSWER: If allowed, the vendor would need to bill insurance directly - students and staff

QUESTION: Is there a price exhibit or attachment to include the cost per test?

ANSWER: No; you can submit your price per test in your proposal how you see fit.

QUESTION: Are only local companies allowed to apply for it?

ANSWER: All companies that can legally conduct business in the Commonwealth of Virginia are encouraged to participate in the RFP. However, it doesn't change the requirement to staff the job and perform the duties as outlined in the RFP.

QUESTION: Does 'Receipt of test results in 24 hours' mean that 24 hours upon sample receipt to the lab or upon sample collection from students?

ANSWER: 24 hours upon receipt by the laboratory.

QUESTION: Are the tests for surveillance purposes?

ANSWER: This is screening testing (refer to page 11 of the VDOE/VDH interim guidance for K-12 schools document) and/or question 2 on this document <https://www.fda.gov/medical-devices/coronavirus-covid-19-and-medical-devices/covid-19-test-uses-faqs-testing-sars-cov-2> for the difference between surveillance and screening testing.

QUESTION: For pricing would you want to have that in a specific format or in a specific section of the proposal?

ANSWER: Proposers have autonomy in providing the pricing per test and all other cost related items requested in the RFP.

QUESTION: Will on-site staffing be needed for all of the schools under this contract?

ANSWER: Staffing as outlined in the RFP will be required. We anticipate having 1,400 tests performed weekly across the division.

QUESTION: We noticed that there was one attachment available, are there any more attachments that were made available for this RFP?

ANSWER: Only the RFP at this point, this addendum will make it a total of two documents.

QUESTION: On the RFP it states that pooling will occur at the lab, would Suffolk Public Schools be open to having pooling occur on-site instead of at the lab?

ANSWER: Pooling of the samples can happen where the vendor deems appropriate, however the integrity of individual samples needs to remain intact in case follow-up testing of individual specimens is needed as the result of a positive pooled test.

QUESTION: Will each school have a different collection process? Who will be performing the collection?

ANSWER: The vendor will provide staff to collect the specimen, the process should be the same for all locations

QUESTION: How will the insurance information be initially be provided for each test individual (do you have the percentage of students that have private insurance, Medicaid, or no insurance)?

ANSWER: This is a question that will need to be considered for part of the consent information - any suggestions/samples the vendor provides towards the development of a consent form will be reviewed.

QUESTION: Is the 24-hour turnaround time from the time of collection, or from the time of specimen receipt in the laboratory after shipping/transportation?

ANSWER: 24 hours from the time the specimen is received by the laboratory

QUESTION: What is the school district’s preferred format and process for test result reporting?

ANSWER: The vendor will report both positive and negative test results to the parent/guardian/independent student/staff member, school district, and the Virginia Department of Health via secure electronic reporting - or for the department of health via their reporting requirements.

QUESTION: What is your projected spend for this program?

ANSWER: It is unknown at this time as we do not know the negotiated cost per test and how long we will be conducting these tests.

CLARIFICATIONS:

It is preferred that proposals detail the chain of custody of the tests and steps taken to ensure the accuracy of the tests.

Proposers may also offer contact tracing services if you wish. However, such contact tracing must include a total scope of work and may be submitted as a part of this RFP. As this is a related service, Suffolk Public Schools will entertain this as an option moving forward. This allowance does not require Suffolk Public Schools to issue an award for contact tracing or for the testing portions of this RFP

Fourteen hundred tests are what we anticipate and is in no way a guarantee as some weeks we may not need as many tests. We ask all proposers to remain flexible with our needs as they may change quickly.

Please email Anthony Hinds at anthonyhinds@spsk12.net if you have any additional questions and sign below to acknowledge receipt of the addendum and include with your proposal.

Addendum 1 Acknowledged:

Date _____

Sent by:

Anthony W. Hinds
Purchasing Manager