

STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA  
OFFICE OF PROCUREMENT MANAGEMENT  
523 EAST CAPITOL AVENUE  
PIERRE, SOUTH DAKOTA 57501-3182

**South Dakota Opioid Needs Assessment**  
PROPOSALS ARE DUE NO LATER THAN 5:00 PM CST ON MARCH 6<sup>TH</sup>, 2025.

RFP13180

BUYER: Division of Behavioral Health

POC: Kirsten Blachford  
[Kirsten.Blachford@state.sd.us](mailto:Kirsten.Blachford@state.sd.us)

**Written Responses to Offeror Questions**

Vendor Question	Answer
<b>Questions related to Scope of Work</b>	
Is the scope limited to opioids or is it broader to substance use disorder (maybe with a focus on opioids)?	The scope is opioid treatment, prevention, and recovery programming and other strategies that align with the approved uses set out in Exhibit A within the South Dakota Opioid Settlement MOA. Co-occurring substance use may be included in the assessment.
Please confirm that “Other Strategies,” Topic Areas B, C, and D, are focused on assessing needs in each respective area, and not implementing research, training, or leadership activities?	Yes, the focus of this RFP is to assess needs in the topic areas outlined. Implementation of any research, training, or leadership activities is NOT part of the scope of this RFP.
<p>Do you have any descriptions of the Assessment Topic Areas?</p> <p>Does peer coaching fall under 1.A. Treatment: Treatment for Opioid Use Disorder, 1.B. Treatment: Connect People Who need Help to The Help They Need (Intervention), 1.C. Support People in Treatment and Recovery and Reduce Stigma, or another category?</p> <p>1.B. Treatment: Connect People Who need Help to The Help They Need (Intervention) – Does this section include all categories of Social Determinants of Health such as food security, transportation, access to healthcare, etc. or is it limited to a specific focus?</p> <p>Does 1.E. Treatment: Address the Needs of Women Who Are or May Become Pregnant include up to 1-year post-partum, similar to the SD Maternal Mortality Review Committee?</p>	The assessment topic areas are the same as those outlined in Exhibit A to the RFP (approved uses for settlement funds). There are no additional descriptions of topic areas beyond what is stated in Exhibit A.

Vendor Question	Answer
<p>Please confirm that the level of response is targeted at topic area (e.g., the “A., B., C.”) level of topics listed in the table on 3.1, and not the Category level (e.g., Treatment, Prevention, Other) -- meaning that vendors could apply for just one subpart of a larger category?</p>	<p>Vendors can apply for just one sub-part (topic area).</p> <p>Responses should align with the topic areas noted as A., B., C., etc. as noted in Section 3.1 and not the category level.</p> <p><i>For example</i>, a response may be limited to one topic area such as the assessment of <i>Part Two: Prevention, Topic Area A: Prevent Over-Prescribing and Ensure Proper Prescribing of Opioids</i>. Each of the approved uses within that Topic Area (see Exhibit 1) should be considered in offeror’s responses for each Topic Area.</p>
<p>In Exhibit A, within a given topic area, there are 5 strategies and then many sub strategies within each strategy. Should the needs assessment address all sub-strategies within a strategy area (e.g., on page 10 of Exhibit A, Topic One: Treatment. Strategy: A. Treatment for Opioid Use Disorder. Sub strategies 1-14)?</p> <p>Would you be willing to award an organization two of the topic areas?</p> <p>Is there a maximum number of topic areas that one vendor could apply for?</p>	<p>Vendors can apply for one or more topic areas (strategies) and their approved uses (sub-strategies). Responses that do not address each approved use of the topic area(s) chosen will not be considered.</p>

Vendor Question	Answer
<p>We understand that DSS is discouraging a vendor to propose evaluating every topic area, however, would it be allowable to include a subcontractor so that a single proposal could cover every area?</p> <p>In performing this work in other states, we have found many efficiencies in having one overall assessment that touches on each key area (e.g., streamlined data collection from relevant stakeholders, ability to look and prioritize across areas). Is there a reason why it is discouraged to apply for all topic areas?</p> <p>Can you please explain the rationale for not wanting one contractor for all three topic areas since they are all interrelated and part of the continuum.</p> <p>The RFP cautions against proposals assessing all/many topic areas, however some cost efficiencies might occur by addressing areas with overlapping potential data sources (such as the Treatment category). Is the preference to engage differing contractors for each topic area within a category, or would the state welcome proposals across topic areas in the category? Similarly, if no offerors are selected for a topic area, would the state ask successful offerors to evaluate the topic area?</p>	<p>As noted in RFP Section 1.1 the state anticipates selecting more than one vendor to accomplish this work based on their qualifications and ability to realistically execute their proposed evaluation approach in the timeline provided. Offerors are discouraged, but not prohibited, from applying for all topic areas. Offerors are encouraged to present the approach they feel would provide the best outcome in support of a “thorough understanding of the State’s opioid abatement and remediation needs” as per Section 1.1 of the RFP.</p> <p>Use of subcontractors is allowable; offeror’s responses should identify those individuals or organizations and their experience, key personnel, and how they will be part of the overall evaluation design proposed within the requested information in Section 3.0 and 4.0 of the RFP.</p>
<p>To what extent is in-person engagement desired from successful vendors?</p> <p>Are there any in person requirements for the vendor as part of this work?</p>	<p>In-person engagement for the completion of the study methodology is at the discretion of the offeror; plans to travel to or within the state to gather information should be defined in the evaluation design within the proposal.</p> <p>Interim and final report-out of deliverables can be done virtually.</p>
<p>Section 3.3 requests that each topic area be “broken out by region.” Would a state-level topic area evaluation design with mention of regional sampling and analysis be considered responsive?</p>	<p>Each topic area chosen must have its own evaluation design and its methods be designed in a way to allow for results to be understood on a regional basis, using the established five behavioral regions commonly used by DSS in its related work. A map of the state by region is available in Attachment C.</p>
<p><b>Questions related to existing data sets</b></p>	

Vendor Question	Answer
<p>Do you have a list of confidential aggregated data sources we would have access to (justice system information, open treatment bed reports, department of corrections data, etc.) and what kind of data it is (quantitative, qualitative, mostly quantitative with some qualitative, etc.)?</p> <p>To what extent will the DBH facilitate access to existing data that may be used for evaluation purposes (e.g., indicator data from state/county level agencies; local survey data; etc.)?</p> <p>To what extent will the state facilitate access to data sets, such as existing survey/epidemiological or administrative/agency data?</p> <p>Are vendors expected to use publicly available data for analysis, or will data access be provided by the state?</p> <p>The rfp states: "The analysis will build upon trends and data available from the surveillance, outcome monitoring, and impact evaluation efforts already completed by the Department of Social Services State Opioid Response Team and the Department of Health." What specific data and/or reports will be shared with the contractor?</p>	<p>Offerors should identify in their proposal response what specific data elements they would like to request access to in support of their evaluation plan. Data relevant to the specific scope of awarded proposals will be discussed in partnership with DSS and any other appropriate agency (e.g., DOC, DOH) during contract negotiations.</p>
<b>Questions related to the Cost Proposal</b>	
<p>Within Attachment D (Excel budget spreadsheet), is a separate "Detailed Budget" tab required for each topic area that we are applying for?</p>	<p>A detailed budget should be completed for the full scope of the proposed project with all required budget items included on one "Detailed Budget" tab. All offerors need to additionally complete the "Summary Page" to estimate expenses specifically to each topic area.</p>
<p>Is there an opportunity to negotiate budgets if the overall budget exceeds the funding maximum?</p>	<p>No.</p>
<p>Does the State of South Dakota have limitations on incentives or compensation for participants in primary data collection?</p>	<p>No. Vendors should justify the necessity of the expense and its per participant costs in the Budget Narrative.</p>
<p>On the Budget Template excel spreadsheet, there is a space to include total fringe rate percentage. Will you accept fully-loaded rates?</p>	<p>Yes, note the personnel rates are fully loaded in the cost justification.</p>
<b>Questions related to the RFP Response Structure &amp; Requirements</b>	
<p>Will the state still accept Letters of Intent, or will the state waive the requirement for a letter to be received by February 6th?</p>	<p>No.</p>

Vendor Question	Answer
<p>If we are applying for multiple topic areas, should sections 3.2 and 3.4 (page 9 of RFP) be broken out by topic area? If so, are the page limits a per-topic-area page limit, or will we need to describe all applicable topic areas within those page limits?</p> <p>Would you consider allowing more than 1-2 pages for section 3.2 regarding Organizational Experience and Key Personnel given the amount of information requested within that section?</p> <p>Is there a page or word limit for the Complete Narrative section and/or the proposal as a whole?</p>	<p>Sections 3.2 and 3.4 of the RFP do not need to be broken out by topic area.</p> <p>Vendors should describe all chosen topic areas within the stated page limits. There is not an overall page limit for the proposal.</p>
<p>The contract length is specified as going through May 2026 in Section 1.14 of the RFP, however the timeline details in Section 3.4 do not specify any work beyond March 2026. Are there other activities that you expect to occur in April and May 2026?</p>	<p>The state fiscal year contract end date is May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2026, allowing additional time if needed to finalize the identified key milestones in Section 3.4.</p>
<p>Will out-of-state vendors be considered?</p> <p>Will preference be given to vendors located in South Dakota?</p> <p>We have regional staff not based in South Dakota who can travel to SD for select in-person meetings. Does this meet expectations for the criterion “availability to the project locale” or is the state seeking in-state offerors?</p>	<p>Yes, out of state vendors will be considered. See Section 6.0 for specific scoring criterion, which includes both familiarity with and availability to the project locale. In-person engagement for the completion of the study methodology is at the discretion of the offeror; plans to travel to or within the state to gather information should be defined in the evaluation design within the proposal. Interim and final report-out of deliverables can be done virtually.</p>
<p>Are there particular special project constraints (6.1.8) the state is anticipating at this time?</p>	<p>No; the offeror should identify and speak to its ability and history in addressing any anticipated constraints based on its previous experience in conducting similar assessments.</p>
<p>Attachment D is not presented in the RFP document. Can you please send it? I understand that the table on p. 8-9 is a summary of Attachment D, but the Attachment in its entirety is not currently available.</p> <p>The RFP mentions: “<i>Within the summary page of <b>Attachment D</b>, each topic area must also be presented with a budget sub-total representing evaluation efforts supporting that area and their approved uses. For any topic areas not being addressed, the offeror should state “no response” to ensure clarity.</i>” Would Attachment D be referring to the <b>Budget Proposal Template</b> that was provided? If not, where could we locate Attachment D?</p>	<p>Attachment D is the Budget Proposal Template.</p>

Vendor Question	Answer
<p>The RFP says that “The Contractor shall maintain business automobile liability insurance or equivalent form with a limit of not less than \$1,000,000.00 for each accident. Such insurance shall include coverage for owned, hired and non-owned vehicles.” We don’t have any vehicles titled in the company name and thus no coverage for “owned”, we do have coverage for hired and non-owned. Typically, the “owned” requirement can be waived if the company doesn’t have any owned vehicles. Can it be waived?</p>	<p>Yes, this can be discussed during contract negotiations.</p>
<p>The RFP indicates that the offeror may be required to submit a copy of their most recent independently audited financial statements. (pg 10) As a private entity, we are not required to have audited financials. Do. You anticipate enforcing this requirement?</p>	<p>No.</p>
<p><b>Questions related to Stakeholder Engagement</b></p>	
<p>To what extent will the DBH be able to support participant recruitment for primary data collection activities if applicable (e.g., connections to existing organizations or networks that are relevant)?</p>	<p>Participant supports should be identified and budgeted for if deemed necessary for the completion of the work as proposed by the offeror. Support for that through a contract will be subject to its necessity and scope and determined during contract negotiations.</p>
<p>Who is the South Dakota Opioid Advisory Committee comprised of?</p>	<p>A listing of advisory council members can be found: <a href="https://doh.sd.gov/programs/lets-be-clear/prescription-opioid-abuse-prevention-initiative/">https://doh.sd.gov/programs/lets-be-clear/prescription-opioid-abuse-prevention-initiative/</a></p>
<p>What cross-departmental relationships exist to support this work?</p>	<p>Relationships supporting this work are best characterized by the composition of the Opioid Abuse Advisory Committee membership and include but are not limited to the Department of Social Services, the Department of Health, the Attorney General’s Office, and numerous professional associations, university representatives, and boards. The Project Manager for this effort within DSS will be responsible for connecting successful offerors to other state agencies or departments within DSS as needed based on the specific assessment scope / topic areas chosen.</p>
<p>Do you have existing stakeholder forums that will be engaged throughout the project apart from the Opioid Advisory Committee?</p>	<p>Yes, the Project Manager for this effort within DSS will provide information or connection to other stakeholder groups based on the scope of the contracted assessment(s).</p>
<p>Does the state anticipate engaging counties for this work as a stakeholder?</p>	<p>Engagement of stakeholders will be determined based on the scope of the contracted assessment(s). The Project Manager for this effort within DSS can engage participating local government contacts (counties and cities) if needed.</p>
<p><b>Other Questions</b></p>	

Vendor Question	Answer
<p>Is there an incumbent?</p> <p>Is there an incumbent who has supported related work for you in the past?</p>	<p>This is the first study commissioned by the Opioid Abuse Advisory Committee to inform use of settlement funding; there is no incumbent specific to the scope of this RFP. The Project Manager for this effort within DSS will provide information or connection to known related work relative to the scope of the contracted assessments for context.</p>
<p>Are there any interventions that South Dakota has tried that have not worked to date?</p> <p>Is there any information you can share about work related to Treatment that has already been completed?</p>	<p>Offerors are encouraged to design their approach based on publicly accessible information, and additional evaluation or project-specific information will be made available during contract negotiations. Interventions used to date are summarized in the 2024 Annual Opioid Report available at <a href="https://letsbeclearsd.com/about">https://letsbeclearsd.com/about</a>. Projects supported by settlement funding, however, are less than two years in their demonstration so capacity building and impacts associated with those interventions are not yet fully known.</p>
<p>Is this project building off of previous work?</p>	<p>Yes, though this is the first comprehensive study commissioned by the Opioid Abuse Advisory Committee this project will contribute to the existing evaluation efforts associated with some but not all topic areas impacted by other state-funded initiatives managed by both DSS and the Department of Health. Project directors and evaluators for those initiatives will contribute data and information relative to the scope of the contracted assessments as and if appropriate. The Project Manager for this effort within DSS will provide information or connection to any other known related work relative to the scope of the contracted assessment(s).</p>
<p>Do you anticipate interactions between vendors selected for different components of the work?</p> <p>Please describe if and how the Division of Behavioral Health will coordinate multiple contractors working on different need assessment projects across the three categories and 12 areas outlined in the RFP.</p>	<p>Yes. This will be coordinated by the Project Manager for this effort within DSS. As noted in the RFP, offerors can expect and should budget for regular communication with the Project Manager, which will be used in part to coordinate activities between vendors.</p>
<p>Are there IRB requirements on the part of South Dakota Department of Social Services to conduct this data collection? Does the Department have an IRB of record that the contractor should plan to use? If so, is there a cost or fee associated?</p>	<p>No. Should the vendor propose an evaluation design that warrants an IRB, the vendor must describe its approach to facilitate that and include any relevant costs or fees in the budget proposal.</p>
<p>Does the Division of Behavioral Health anticipate or expect protected health information (PHI) to be used in the needs assessment project?</p>	<p>No.</p>

Vendor Question	Answer
<p>Question from our research office - Does the following statement inhibit publication? 12. WORK PRODUCTS:            Consultant hereby acknowledges and agrees that all reports, plans, specifications, technical data, miscellaneous drawings, software system programs and documentation, procedures, or files, operating instructions and procedures, source code(s) and documentation, including those necessary to upgrade and maintain the software program, and all information contained therein provided to the State by Consultant in connection with the performance of services under this Agreement shall belong to and is the property of the State and will not be used in any way by Consultant without the written consent of the State. Papers, reports, forms, software programs, source code(s) and other material which are a part of the work under this Agreement will not be copyrighted without written approval of the State.</p> <p>Will deliverables be available to the public or for internal state use only?</p>	<p>Yes, publication may be allowed but only through written approval by the State.</p> <p>Deliverables will be prepared for both public and internal state / advisory committee use.</p>
<p>Does the DBH anticipate collection of data and/or dissemination of findings in language(s) other than English?</p>	<p>No.</p>
<p>Would the Division of Behavioral Health consider extending the RFP deadline at least seven days to allow adequate time for applicants to construct a comprehensive and thorough scope of work response?</p>	<p>No.</p>
<p>Can you provide a list of pre-qualified vendors for this RFP?</p>	<p>There were no pre-qualified vendors.</p>