

Application: Building Workforce Capacity of Rural/Frontier Local Health Departments to Respond to COVID-19

Instructions: APPLICATIONS MUST BE SUBMITTED THROUGH THE ONLINE SYSTEM. COMPLETE THIS FORM IN ITS ENTIRETY AND UPLOAD YOUR ANSWERS, WHEN PROMPTED, IN THE ONLINE SYSTEM, AVAILABLE AT: https://naccho.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_2gZmE1E3mLsG1P7. **Applications are due by 11:59PM ET on Monday, November 30, 2020.**

Please note that responses are automatically saved each time the respondent progresses a page within the application and the responses themselves are limited to the word counts indicated. If you are having issues accessing the online application, please contact preparedness@naccho.org for other submission options. Additionally, send your completed budget template ([attached here](#)) to preparedness@naccho.org. Incomplete applications or applications received after the deadline will not be considered.

A. CONTACT INFORMATION		
Local Health Department Name: Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency		
Street Address: 1120 S. Dora Street		
City: Ukiah	State/Territory: CA	Zip Code: 95482
Approximate population size served by LHD (number):	89,000 individuals	
Primary type of population served by LHD (select all that apply):	Frontier (RUCA 10) LHD Address RUCA Code: 4-10 Rural (RUCA 4-9)	
ZIP codes in the LHD's jurisdiction (please list all, separating each with a comma)	95410, 95415, 95417, 95418, 95420, 95427, 95428, 95429, 95432, 95437, 95445, 95449, 95454, 95585, 95456, 95459, 95460, 95463, 95466, 95587, 95468, 95469, 95470, 95481, 95482, 95488, 95490, 95494	
Current number of staff:	74 full-time equivalents (FTEs) (all staff) 65 non-clinical full-time equivalents (FTEs)	
Lead project contact (agency-designated project contact for all matters pertaining to the project): Name, Title: Nash Gonzalez, COVID Vaccine Director Email: GonzalezN@MendocinoCounty.org Phone: 707-234-6661		
Lead finance contact (agency-designated finance contact for all matters pertaining to processing contracts and invoices): Name, Title: Mary Alice Willeford, Acting HHSA Asst Director, Admin Email: willefom@mendocinocounty.org Phone: (707) 468-7067		
In the last 24 months (November 2018 – November 2020) has your LHD received any grant funding from NACCHO? (Note: this information is for tracking purposes and has no bearing on review and selection.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	

If yes, provide a general description, dates and approximate amount of each separate grant funding received.	
B. CONTRACTING INFORMATION	
Selected LHDs will enter into a contract with NACCHO to complete the deliverable(s) selected as part of this application. To expedite the contracting process for selected sites, agreement with NACCHO standard contract terms and conditions, found here, is a requirement for application. No modifications will be made. The information below will help to begin the contracting process immediately upon selection.	
The LHD (or entity that will be contracting with NACCHO, e.g., city government), including any relevant financial or legal offices, has read NACCHO's standard contract language and would be able to enter into a contract without making modifications to the terms and conditions.	<input checked="checked" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The LHD (or contracting entity) will be able to sign and return a contract to NACCHO within 30 calendar days of receipt.	<input checked="checked" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If you selected 'No' to either of the above, please explain.	
C. CURRENT COVID-19 WORKFORCE ACTIVITIES	
C.1. Describe your recent/current COVID-19 contact tracing and testing, and vaccine administration activities. <u>(Max 300 Words)</u>	
<p>Mendocino County has identified 29 contact tracers, this includes the support provided from the State and Disaster Health Care Volunteers to assist. Staff complete State required training as well as on-line training with county leads to ensure skills in both investigation processes as well as navigating the CalConnect system. Staff focus efforts on isolation of new cases and then shift to contact tracing and placing these individuals into quarantine. Mendocino County is currently in the process of developing prioritization procedures as the continued increase in cases is exceeding the current staffing abilities. Mendocino County continues to experience a shortage of bilingual/bicultural staff to complete case investigations and has been utilizing the translation services available through Language Line.</p> <p>Mendocino County is working with health care partners including clinics, hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, pharmacies and local physicians to ensure access to vaccines and tracking as required within the State systems. Additional partners will include schools, local governments, community based organizations and businesses. These partners will help as points of distribution, assist in messaging and serve as community liaisons to ensure outreach to all areas of the community as well as help in engaging hard to reach populations. Mendocino County is planning a table top exercise in December to walk through the phased approach, looking at a five phase plan in alignment with the Center for Disease Control recommendations.</p>	
C.2. Describe your efforts to ensure adequate staffing and to train your workforce to engage in COVID-19 contact tracing and testing, and vaccine administration activities. Please include information on workforce structure, hiring processes (including for contact tracers), and all virtual and in-person training activities. <u>(Max 300 Words)</u>	
<p>Mendocino County has redirected internal County staff to assist in contact tracing and case investigations as well as accessed Disaster Healthcare Volunteers, and State workers. There are an average of 15 investigators assigned Monday through Friday and ten over the weekend. The reduction over the weekends are due to State staff not being available. As to training Mendocino County developed additional training materials to address gaps in the initial training and navigation provided at orientation. This training program is a 6 hour training (2 hours x 3 days), it reviews CalConnect navigation, interview</p>	

techniques and the level of detail needed to complete a thorough investigation. Additionally, we review the Health Orders to ensure that all investigators and contact tracers are aware of current orders, isolation and quarantine protocols. There is a 30 minute daily huddle via zoom to discuss questions, challenges and updates. Mendocino County has also hired two staff to serve as community health services specialists to work in a model similar to Promotores to ensure engagement of individuals and provide additional supports throughout the case investigation.

Mendocino County is in the process of hiring staff to support vaccine rollout and coordinate efforts throughout the county. Upon hiring these staff will provide training to community partners based on information released through CDPH and CDC. Training will also include internal procedure development and processes for vaccine distribution, tracking and reporting. Currently base plans are being modified from both the H1N1 response efforts as well as flu shot clinics and distribution processes.

D. COVID-19 WORKFORCE CHALLENGES

Please describe challenges that you have encountered in your COVID-19 response that affect your workforce capacity and ability to implement COVID-19 programs and initiatives. (Max 400 Words)

Mendocino County has experienced significant challenges in redirecting staff to these efforts as mandates for other programs and conflicting tasks have been difficult to overcome. Further staffing internally has been reduced by those staff that have children at home and not able to work, also those individuals that are high risk and while working from home would be an option, internet and broadband access impedes this option. As the pandemic has continued many staff have experienced COVID fatigue and burnout. Another challenge staff have experienced in the past month has been the overwhelming volume of work as we experience the current "Second Surge" in cases. Individuals being placed in isolation are less forthcoming with recent interactions and often fail to identify close contacts. This has been significantly more challenging and staff need to have more in-depth conversations tracking COVID-positive individual's daily actions and interactions. Additionally, staff are getting more push back from community members stating they are not willing to comply with Health Orders to isolate or quarantine.

As to the Vaccine Administration, there is a significant need to increase staffing to ensure adequate response and coordination efforts countywide. This will require staff to provide oversight for marketing and messaging, coordination of vaccine dissemination, procedural development to ensure alignment with CDC guidance, tracking and reminders to the public to ensure follow-up vaccination, and complete ongoing required reports.

The County has had to modify internal processes for hiring and orientations of new hires. As to hiring there has been two specific areas identified as difficult to fill; the first being medical professionals due to significant demand in workforce for this field, the second being bicultural/bilingual individuals. Additionally, staff being hired are not willing to work in the field to place individuals in isolation or quarantine when someone does not have a telephone. Currently we have two staff willing to do this work thereby limiting response and ability to contain COVID positive individuals.

E. CATEGORY OF WORK

Please select the category/ies of work on which you will focus your workforce capacity building activities. (Select one or both.)

Mendocino County would focus efforts for this grant on **Vaccine Administration**, given the significant level of planning and development needed to ensure adequate messaging and tracking as well as the requirements and logistics of this project still under development for Mendocino County.

F. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDS

NACCHO wants to support the ability of rural and frontier health departments working on COVID-19 to build their workforce capacity to conduct contact tracing and testing, and to administer vaccinations. Please select up to three (3) priority training and technical assistance (TTA) areas that would be most useful to assist in the implementation

of action plan activities. In the space below each selected area, please provide additional details about your workforce needs, capacity and capabilities, which may include staffing, training, and retention, among others. **(Max 200 words)**

Mendocino County would appreciate support in the following areas:

- **Technical Training:** Knowledge and skill development in technical areas related to contact tracing and testing and vaccine administration that will assist frontline staff to implement these activities.
- **Public Communications:** A focus on engaging with the community in a meaningful way that builds trust and understanding of COVID-19 response activities.
- **Public Health Authorities:** Insights on how to utilize authorities available to public health during emergencies that expedite administrative processes and procedures, streamline procurement and personnel actions, and support the implementation of protective health measures.

G. PROJECT PARTNERSHIPS

List the key organizations you anticipate participating in this project and briefly describe their role(s). **(Max 200 Words)**

Mendocino County will be partnering with clinics, hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, pharmacies and local physicians to ensure access to vaccines and tracking as required within the State systems. Additional partners will include schools, local governments, community based organizations and businesses.

H. PROPOSED PROJECT ACTIVITIES

H.1. What are your initial proposed activities (subject to change following awards)? What do you plan to do with this funding? **(Max 200 Words)**

As Mendocino County is comprised of just under 4,000 square miles, requiring many to travel several hours to access services due to the rural nature of the county. The initial efforts will focus on the procedures and partnership development to ensure adequate access throughout the county. This will include key points of distribution for these areas as well as working through required tracking of vaccinations, prioritization of groups for vaccine, messaging to ensure the public is informed on the process the dissemination of the vaccine as well as the second round of vaccination.

H.2. How will you ensure sustainability of capacities built through this grant's activities? **(Max 100 Words)**

These supports will continue through Realignment and other grant funding opportunities and will build on existing processes to then be able to apply the developed work and efforts to existing programs within the current communicable disease and immunization unit as well as community outreach programs including WIC and CalFresh Outreach.

H.3. How do you anticipate that these activities will address health disparities within your population? **(Max 100 Words)**

These efforts will focus in engaging rural areas to ensure access to services and to assist in overcoming barriers to access, especially for those low income households lacking access to travel and ongoing medical care. Additionally, services will be messaged in partnership with local clinics, schools, businesses and affiliation groups to enhance partnership and engagement in effort to address barriers and mistrust of government entities. Services will also be provided with onsite bilingual/bicultural individuals to further increase engagement.

Submission Information

Timeline (subject to change)

- *November 3, 2020*: RFA released
- *November 10, 2020 1:00PM EST*: Informational webinar ([link to webinar page](#))
- *November 30, 2020, 11:59PM EST*: Deadline for submission of grant applications
- *Approximately December 18, 2020*: Anticipated notice of award announced
- *January 2021*: Contract period commences
- *November 12, 2021*: Final action plan, sustainability plan, and progress report due

Applicant Questions and Guidance

*NACCHO will support interested applicants to offer guidance and address specific questions about the RFA. Interested parties should attend the **November 10, 2020** informational webinar and/or review the FAQ document produced after the webinar is held. The webinar's recording will be posted to the [Public Health Preparedness page](#).*

Funding and Disclaimer Notices

This project is supported by a grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC-RFA-OT18-180202SUPP20). CDC does not endorse any particular product, service, or enterprise. Views expressed in related products do not necessarily reflect those of CDC, Health and Human Services.

This RFA is not binding on NACCHO, nor does it constitute a contractual offer. Without limiting the foregoing, NACCHO reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to reject any or all proposals; to modify, supplement, or cancel the RFA; to waive any deviation from the RFA; to negotiate regarding any proposal; and to negotiate final terms and conditions that may differ from those stated in the RFA. Under no circumstances shall NACCHO be liable for any costs incurred by any person in connection with the preparation and submission of a response to this RFA.