

## RFI Questions/Answers

### Medicaid Dental Benefit Third-Party Administrator

Thank you for your interest in the Louisiana Department of Health's (LDH) Dental RFI. We appreciate your thoughtful questions and the opportunity to provide additional clarity. Please note that responses below are intended to guide stakeholders in understanding LDH's considerations and planning efforts. These responses are not final policy decisions and are intended solely for informational purposes as part of the RFI process.

**Question #1:** If this RFI greenlights a solicitation, what is the estimated timeframe for procurement?

**Answer #1:** A timeframe for procurement is not available at this time.

**Question #2:** What is the anticipated contract value?

**Answer #2:** A contract value is not available at this time.

**Question #3:** I see that the RFI states, "Currently, dental services are administered through risk bearing Dental Benefit Program Managers." How may I obtain copies of any incumbent contract documents?

**Answer #3:** Louisiana Medicaid Dental Benefit Program Manager contract documents are public facing and can be found online at <https://ldh.la.gov/resources?cat=66&d=12&y=0&s=0&q=>

**Question #4:** I would like to inquire if there is an incumbent vendor fulfilling the Medicaid Dental Benefit Third Party Administrator (TPA) RFI under 305PUR LDH DENTAL. If yes, could you please provide the contract number and the vendor's name?

**Answer #4:** The Louisiana Medicaid dental program does not have a TPA vendor. Services are administered through Dental Benefit Program Managers, utilizing a risk-based, prepaid ambulatory health plan model. The current contractors are DentaQuest and MCNA Dental.

**Question #5:** Is it mandatory to submit a response to the RFI to be eligible to submit a bid for the RFP?

**Answer #5:** No, it's not mandatory.

**Question #6:** Will the RFI response be considered in the scoring of the RFP response?

**Answer #6:** No, the RFI will not be considered in the scoring of any future RFP.

**Question #7:** To ensure the LDH receives specific and helpful information, and to protect the confidentiality of RFI responders, will it consider revising the RFI instructions to include the following statement: "Responses to this RFI will remain confidential until the completion of the Request for Proposal process." Not including this statement could result in very general responses that will not be helpful to the state.

**Answer #7:** For purposes of this request for information, the provisions of the Louisiana Public Records Act (La. R.S. 44:1 et seq.) will be followed. Pursuant to this Act, all information received shall be open to public inspection. Respondents are reminded that trade secrets and other proprietary information submitted with this request may be subject to public disclosure. If applicable, it is the responsibility of the submitter to claim any protection at the time of submission. To safeguard any trade secrets and/or confidential information, each page containing such data shall be specifically identified and marked as “CONFIDENTIAL”. Additionally a redacted copy should also be submitted. If you fail to submit a redacted copy, it will be assumed that your organization does not consider any of the information in your response to be confidential.

Responders should refer to the Louisiana Public Records Act for further clarification.

**Question #8:** Are there any limitations on the number of pages for the RFI response?

**Answer #8:** No, there is not a limit on the number of pages.

**Question #9:** What is the anticipated timeline and next steps following this RFI, including the release of any future RFP?

**Answer #9:** A timeline for releasing an RFP for a Dental TPA has not been established. Potential responders will receive an email notification once a formal request for proposals is released. Potential vendors that wish to receive email notification of all state bid opportunities can also register in LaGov via the [vendor enrollment portal](#).

**Question #10:** What are the state’s expectations for the TPA’s role in actively managing the provider network to ensure adequate access, quality, and cost-effectiveness?

**Answer #10:** The state may elect to have the TPA recruit, credential, and contract with Louisiana dental providers. Expectations would focus on network adequacy.

**Question #11:** In a TPA arrangement, does the state expect the administrator to negotiate provider agreements on behalf of the state or will the administrator contract directly with providers?

**Answer #11:** The state may elect to do either, depending on the ability of the TPA to perform the functions, and the arrangement for processing claims.

**Question #12:** In addition to traditional FFS reimbursement, is the state open to exploring and funding alternative payment models, such as quality-based incentives or shared savings arrangements, to incentivize provider participation and improve outcomes?

**Answer #12:** The state is open to exploring these types of arrangements. Louisiana Medicaid implemented a quality initiative for general and pediatric dental clinics earlier this year. This program directs incentive to clinics that demonstrate improvement on specific quality measures. LDH is responsible for the overall oversight of this program.

**Question #13:** Should the state prefer the TPA to recruit and manage the network directly, what is the process for getting a provider intent to contract template approved?

**Answer #13:** The state would collaborate with the TPA to review and approve all related materials.

**Question #14:** What percentage of the provider network will need to be in place prior to go-live if the TPA is required to develop and maintain the network?

**Answer #14:** Readiness thresholds for network adequacy is a procurement activity. At this time the only information being requested is your approach to recruiting dental providers and strategies for increasing provider participation.

**Question #15:** How does the state expect the TPA to measure network adequacy and quality, and will the TPA be responsible for meeting specific performance targets?

**Answer #15:** LDH expects to maintain and improve current network adequacy and quality measures. Details on standards are publicly available in the Louisiana Medicaid Dental Benefit Program Manager contracts. These documents are public-facing and can be found online at <https://ldh.la.gov/resources?cat=66&d=12&y=0&s=0&q=>

**Question #16:** How many Medicaid enrollees are currently considered IDD, special needs, or have complex conditions that would require a referral for care coordination? Will the dental TPA be required to coordinate transportation needs for enrollees with special needs?

**Answer #16:** In SFY 2024, there were approximately 61,066 children, and 15,985 adults identified within a type case of having a special need. Transportation services to dental appointments are covered through health plan benefits. LDH expects transportation services to continue to be available through the beneficiary's health service platform.

**Question #17:** If the State elects to move forward with some form of a TPA model, would the State be willing to share medical data (from the MCOs) for purposes of improved coordination of care between medical and dental providers? If so, what data elements would be provided?

**Answer #17:** Subject to appropriate privacy and data-sharing agreements, LDH is supportive of enhancing coordination of care between medical and dental services. LDH is open to exploring suggested mechanisms for the TPA to access relevant medical data from MCOs.

**Question #18:** Is the State open to the TPA using performance-based incentives to reward providers for achieving specific quality targets?

**Answer #18:** It is LDH's expectation that any dental TPA contract will be non-risk bearing. Louisiana Medicaid implemented a quality initiative for general and pediatric dental clinics earlier this year. This program directs incentives to clinics that demonstrate improvement on specific quality measures. LDH is responsible for the overall oversight of this program.

**Question #19:** Will the State agree to a recommendation that it will fund incentives beyond a standard fee for service model to incentivize providers to improve dental health outcomes?

**Answer #19:** Louisiana Medicaid implemented a quality initiative program for general and pediatric dental clinics earlier this year. This program directs incentives to clinics that demonstrate improvement on specific quality measures. LDH is responsible for the overall oversight of this program.

**Question #20:** Will the state provide recent utilization data by procedure code, provider, and zip code for the most recent three fiscal years? Such data is crucial to estimating the cost to administer the dental benefits.

**Answer #20:** A [public records request](https://ldh.govqa.us/WEBAPP/rs/(S(2pf3axmlmvmiizzpx1pg4afa))/SupportHome.aspx?sSessionID=) can be submitted for information where a record exists. Here is a link to inquire on records maintained by the Louisiana Department of Health [https://ldh.govqa.us/WEBAPP/rs/\(S\(2pf3axmlmvmiizzpx1pg4afa\)\)/SupportHome.aspx?sSessionID=](https://ldh.govqa.us/WEBAPP/rs/(S(2pf3axmlmvmiizzpx1pg4afa))/SupportHome.aspx?sSessionID=)

**Question #21:** Are there any specific cost containment targets that the State is hoping to achieve through this transition?

**Answer #21:** While specific cost targets have not been finalized, LDH anticipates that a TPA model will support more efficient administration and better cost control. Cost-effectiveness will be a key evaluation metric in any future procurement.

**Question #22:** Once the State has decided on the best approach forward, does the State have a target implementation date or year for the new contract?

**Answer #22:** A target implementation date is not available at this time.

**Question #23:** Does the department believe it would be beneficial for the Medicaid Managed Care Organizations (MCOs) to manage the care, delivery, and payment of dental services whether they occur in a medical or dental setting? Could this potentially reduce the number of costly emergency room visits? Dental pain is a significant reason for adult ER visits

**Answer #23:** Louisiana Medicaid currently administers dental care, delivery and payments through dental managed care. Through this request for information, the Department welcomes stakeholder input on integrated care models.

**Question #24:** Under the proposed TPA model, will the State continue to adhere to the current standards for prior authorizations, claims payment, and provider network?

**Answer #24:** Yes. LDH expects that the TPA will adhere to timeframe standards for prior authorizations, claims processing, and network adequacy requirements.

**Question #25:** How many vendors does LDH anticipate awarding a TPA contract to?

**Answer #25:** LDH has not publicly specified a number of anticipated awards at this RFI stage.

**Question #26:** Can responders provide a redacted version of the response to remove proprietary information?

**Answer #26:** Yes, if applicable, a redacted copy labeled as proprietary or confidential is acceptable. For purposes of this request for information, the provisions of the Louisiana Public Records Act (La. R.S. 44:1 et seq.) will be followed. Pursuant to this Act, all information received shall be open to public inspection. Respondents are reminded that trade secrets and other proprietary information submitted with this request may be subject to public disclosure. If applicable, it is the responsibility of the submitter to claim any protection at the time of submission. To safeguard any trade secrets and/or confidential information, each page containing such data shall be specifically identified and marked as "CONFIDENTIAL". Additionally, a redacted copy should also be submitted. If you fail to submit a redacted copy, it will be assumed that your organization does not consider any of the information in your response to be confidential.

Responders should refer to the Louisiana Public Records Act for further clarification.

**Question #27:** If no redacted copy is permitted, how should responders flag proprietary information and will the unredacted response be public record?

**Answer #27:** Yes, if applicable, a redacted copy labeled as proprietary or confidential is acceptable. For purposes of this request for information, the provisions of the Louisiana Public Records Act (La. R.S. 44:1 et seq.) will be followed. Pursuant to this Act, all information received shall be open to public inspection. Respondents are reminded that trade secrets and other proprietary information submitted with this request may be subject to public disclosure. If applicable, it is the responsibility of the submitter to claim any protection at the time of submission. To safeguard any trade secrets and/or confidential information, each page containing such data shall be specifically identified and marked as "CONFIDENTIAL". Additionally, a redacted copy should also be submitted. If you fail to submit a redacted copy, it will be assumed that your organization does not consider any of the information in your response to be confidential.

Responders should refer to the Louisiana Public Records Act for further clarification.

**Question #28:** Does LDH see a difference between a traditional ASO model and the TPA model that you are exploring?

**Answer #28:** LDH has not explicitly defined differences at this stage. Additional details will be available once a request for proposal is released.

**Question #29:** Do you intend for Case Management, Quality Programs, and Network Management to be included services under a TPA model?

**Answer #29:** These are options that are being explored, information gathered from this request will help LDH in developing a comprehensive Scope of TPA Services for a potential future Request for Proposal.

**Question #30:** Do you intend to require medical/dental integration between the dental TPA and the MCOs?

**Answer #30:** Subject to appropriate privacy and data-sharing agreements, LDH is supportive of enhancing coordination of care between medical and dental services. LDH is open to exploring suggested mechanisms for the TPA to access relevant medical data from MCOs.

**Question #31:** Do you have expectations around Value-Based Care?

**Answer #31:** LDH is open to exploring suggested mechanisms for Value-Based Care.

**Question #32:** Do you have contemplated staffing model requirements?

**Answer #32:** Staffing requirements have not been defined.

**Question #33:** Do you have draft required performance guarantees/service level agreements for the TPA model?

**Answer #33:** Not at the RFI stage. LDH will likely develop draft SLAs and performance guarantees during the RFP phase. Stakeholder input is valuable in shaping these expectations.

**Question #34:** Should LDH decide on a change from to the current service delivery model will the expectations associated with the performance guarantees/service level agreements remain the same, or will new ones be created?

**Answer #34:** If Louisiana Department of Health decides to transition from the current service delivery model, it is anticipated that new performance guarantees/service level agreements (SLAs) will be developed to align with the specific requirements and goals of the new model.

**Question #35:** If new ones are created, how would a responder be involved in that process?

**Answer #35:** Responders typically provide feedback on proposed service level agreements during an RFP process through written comments, pre-bid meetings, or negotiation phases.

**Question #36:** Do you have a draft contract available for review for this model? Can you share the draft?

**Answer #36:** A draft contract is not available at this time.

**Question #37:** When do you anticipate releasing the RFP for dental services?

**Answer #37:** A timeline for procurement activity has not been drafted at this time.

**Question #38:** When do you anticipate releasing the RFP for medical services?

**Answer #38:** This is a request for information concerning dental service administration. Medical services considerations are not a part of this request.

**Question #39:** Will the Dental Services RFP be released at the same time as the medical RFP?

**Answer #39:** This is a request for information concerning dental service administration. Medical services considerations are not a part of this request.

**Question #40:** In the Cost Estimate Section, are you looking for the proposed model structure, proposed pricing, or both?

**Answer #40:** Both

**Question #41:** Will the DOH provide claim volume, call volume, and prior authorization volume to inform responder's cost estimate for TPA services?

**Answer #41:** A [public records request](https://ldh.govqa.us/WEBAPP/rs/(S(2pf3axmlmvmiizzpx1pg4afa))/SupportHome.aspx?sSessionID=) can be submitted for information where a record exist. Here is a link to inquire on records maintained by Louisiana Department of Health  
[https://ldh.govqa.us/WEBAPP/rs/\(S\(2pf3axmlmvmiizzpx1pg4afa\)\)/SupportHome.aspx?sSessionID=](https://ldh.govqa.us/WEBAPP/rs/(S(2pf3axmlmvmiizzpx1pg4afa))/SupportHome.aspx?sSessionID=)

**Question #42:** Given the scope of this RFI is for a non-risk bearing TPA, is the responder responsible for negotiating fees with the provider network or just paying the Medicaid fee schedule?

**Answer #42:** Specific roles for the dental TPA are being explored. LDH BHSF sets baseline rates for covered services.

**Question #43:** What is the governance structure around the payments to network providers?

**Answer #43:** LDH BHSF sets baseline rates per covered service. Fee Schedules can be reviewed online at [www.lamedicaid.com](http://www.lamedicaid.com). Currently, Reimbursement for covered services shall be no less than the published Medicaid fee-for-service rate in effect on the date of service.

**Question #44:** Does LDH want the responder's organization to determine negotiated rates, or would LDH have a set fee schedule with an expectation that all network providers will accept the pre-negotiated rates?

**Answer #44:** Medicaid sets baseline rates per covered service. Fee Schedules can be reviewed online at [www.lamedicaid.com](http://www.lamedicaid.com). Currently, Reimbursement for covered services shall be no less than the published Medicaid fee-for-service rate in effect on the date of service. However, it is LDH's expectation that any future dental TPA contract will be non-risk bearing.

**Question #45:** When responding to the RFI, where should responders place their response to Section 2.3.4 Approach and Methodology? We do not see this section listed with the items in Attachment I - Scope of Services.

**Answer #45:** Recommendations can be incorporated within any section where your organization would like to include them.

**Question #46:** For purposes of responders submitting RFI responses via email to LDH, is there a file size limitation?

**Answer #46:** Yes, there is a 30MB uncompressed limit and not a compressed limit. If sending via secure email the size limit is reduced to 10MB.