

COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC RELATIONS SCOPE OF SERVICES

I. BACKGROUND

- A. The mission of the State of Hawaii Department of Human Services' Med-QUEST Division (MQD) is to empower Hawai'i's residents to improve and sustain wellbeing by developing, promoting and administering innovative and high-quality healthcare programs with aloha. To fulfill this mission within the evolving federal landscape, MQD seeks to align these core values with a comprehensive communication strategy that addresses the mandates of the Working Families Tax Cut Act (H.R.1). The MQD is dedicated to facilitating robust community engagement as required under H.R.1 and to implement specialized outreach and feedback modules to comply with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) community engagement requirements.
- B. MQD is looking to elevate its organizational presence by partnering with a Hawai'i-based consultant to design and execute a strategic marketing and public relations plan. This partnership will leverage targeted marketing outreach and proactive media relations to ensure that members and stakeholders remain informed, engaged, and supported throughout the implementation of H.R.1 and the integration of new CMS community engagement requirements.

II. SCOPE OF WORK

- A. Offeror shall develop and provide a 12-month H.R.1 Community Engagement and Communications Plan including strategies for statewide and island-by-island campaigns. This plan must target multiple external audiences (general population, Med-QUEST members, healthcare providers, managed care organizations, and legislators) and internal audiences (MQD, Department of Human Services, and other State Programs). The plan shall optimize and enhance existing MQD platforms while specifically addressing CMS community engagement requirements through the following:
 - 1. Strategic Messaging: Development and dissemination of content that supports H.R.1 implementation milestones, focusing on eligibility changes and community impact;
 - 2. Advocacy & Briefing Materials: Development of talking points for leadership to ensure consistent messaging across executive and legislative branches;
 - 3. Educational Resources: FAQ development and dissemination to clarify member rights and responsibilities under H.R.1;
 - 4. Operational Consistency: Development of communications template forms for MQD internal use to standardize H.R.1-related notices;
 - 5. Multi-Channel Collateral: Content development for digital and traditional media, including official notices, memoranda, flyers, newsletters, and the MQD website;
 - 6. Earned Media & Public Relations: Development, coordination, and leveraging of

earned media to provide transparent updates to the public;

7. Media Asset Management: Building and maintaining a robust MQD media archive for H.R.1-related content;
 8. Paid Media Coordination: Strategy and coordination for media purchases by MQD, if recommended in the plan;
 9. Multimedia Production: Production of educational and outreach videos for the MQD YouTube channel and social media to explain H.R.1 compliance;
 10. MQD Meetings & Engagement Support: Coordination, preparation, and facilitation support for internal MQD meetings related to H.R.1 community engagement and communications activities, including development of meeting materials, presentation content, and follow-up documentation to ensure alignment across program, communications, and leadership teams.
- B. Deliverables: The Offeror shall submit a draft Communications Plan and a proposed Schedule of Deliverables within three (3) weeks of the Letter to Proceed. The final list, format, and frequency of technical deliverables (e.g., specific collateral types, video counts, or town hall support) shall be finalized during the post-award kick-off meeting and approved by the MQD Contract Manager.

III. MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

- A. Experience: Offeror shall have at least five (5) years of experience in communications strategies, public relations, and community development, with a specific emphasis on public health outreach and community engagement targeting Hawai'i audiences statewide and island-specific populations.
- B. Local Presence: Offeror shall have been registered with the Hawai'i State Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs and have been doing business from a physical address in the State of Hawai'i for at least eight (8) years.
- C. Domain Knowledge: A demonstrated understanding of the H.R.1 Working Families Tax Cut Act community engagement requirements and the CMS standards for specialized outreach and feedback modules.

IV. OFFEROR MUST POSSESS PROVEN EXPERIENCE IN

- A. Government Communications: Planning and implementation for Hawai'i State or County Government organizations.
- B. Medicaid Context: Working with state Medicaid organizations or public health agencies.
- C. Regulatory Literacy: Understanding complex federal and state Medicaid regulations, including member privacy (HIPAA) and CMS community engagement mandates.
- D. Culturally Competent Outreach: Providing customized, linguistically appropriate communications services for Hawai'i's uniquely different island communities.
- E. Media Relations: Established relationships with all Hawai'i media outlets and channels

V. OFFEROR INSTRUCTIONS:

- A. Interested Offerors shall complete the MQD H.R.1 Communications Budget Template and upload the template and all required documentation to HlePRO.

VI. ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS AND REQUIREMENTS:

- A. Offerors shall submit copies of the following by uploading electronic file copies onto HlePRO with their offer:
 - B. Staffing: Resume/Curriculum vitae for proposed staff.
 - C. Technical Proficiency: Documentation of prior experience with Medicaid organizations and a demonstrated understanding of H.R.1/CMS community engagement standards.
 - D. Strategic Planning: Samples of previous comprehensive communications plans.
 - E. Geographic Scope: Samples of communications activities/campaigns/collateral specifically tailored for each of the following Hawai'i communities:
 - 1. Ni'ihau and Kaua'i
 - 2. O'ahu
 - 3. Moloka'i
 - 4. Lāna'i
 - 5. Maui
 - 6. East Hawai'i Island
 - 7. West Hawai'i Island
 - F. Portfolio: Samples of physical and digital collateral pieces, including the year published.
 - G. Professional References: Three professional references from similar government or public health projects.
 - H. *Offerors may satisfy the requirements for Medicaid-specific experience and regulatory

knowledge by subcontracting with a Subject Matter Expert (SME). If a subcontractor is utilized, the offer must include their resume or curriculum vitae clearly documenting their expertise in state and federal Medicaid communications, privacy rules, and regulatory compliance.

VII. TIME OF PERFORMANCE

- A. The time of performance shall commence on the official start date given in a written Notice to Proceed; currently estimated to be from July 15, 2026 through July 14, 2027, with four (4) optional extensions of six (6) months each.
- B. Either MQD or the awarded Offeror may terminate its participation in the service agreement by delivering a written notice of its intent to terminate participation at least thirty (30) days before the date of termination to the address of the appropriate Point of Contact.

VIII. PAYMENT

- A. MQD shall pay awarded Offeror based on a fixed monthly dollar amount, determined by dividing the total awarded annualized expenses by twelve (12) months.
- B. Section 103-10, HRS, provides that the State shall have thirty (30) calendar days after receipt of invoice or satisfactory delivery of goods or performance of the services, to make payment in accordance with the Purchase Order. For this reason, the State will reject any bid submitted with a condition requiring payment within a shorter period. Further, the State will reject any bid submitted with a condition requiring interest payments greater than that allowed by §103-10, HRS, as amended.
- C. The State will not recognize any requirement established by the Vendor and communicated to the State after award of the contract, which requires payment within a shorter period or interest payment not in conformance with statute.

IX. GENERAL CONDITIONS

- A. The State of Hawaii General Conditions shall be made a part of the Purchase Order for awarded communication services.

X. RESPONSIBILITY OF OFFERORS

- A. Offeror is advised that if awarded a Purchase Order under this solicitation, the Offeror shall be required to be compliant with all laws governing entities doing business in the State including the following chapters and pursuant to HRS §103D- 310(c).
1. Chapter 237, tax clearance;
 2. Chapter 383, unemployment insurance;
 3. Chapter 386, workers' compensation;
 4. Chapter 392, temporary disability insurance;
 5. Chapter 393, prepaid health care; and
 6. Chapter 103D-310(c), Certificate of Good Standing (COGS) for awards \$2,500 or greater.
- B. The State will verify compliance on Hawaii Compliance Express (HCE) for awards of \$2,500 or greater.
- C. The HCE is an electronic system that allows vendors, contractors and services providers doing business with the State to quickly and easily demonstrate compliance with applicable laws. It is an online system that replaces the necessity of obtaining paper compliance certificates from the Department of Taxation; Federal Internal Revenue Service; Department of Labor and Industrial Relations; and Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs.
- D. Vendors, contractors and service providers should register online with Hawaii Compliance Express (HCE) prior to submitting an offer at <http://vendors.ehawaii.gov>. The annual registration fee is \$12.00 payable to Hawaii Information Consortium, LLC (HIC).
- E. The "Certificate of Vendor Compliance" is accepted for both contracting and final payment.
- F. Paper documents as proof of compliance are NOT ACCEPTABLE. Offerors are advised that the following paper compliance documents will not be accepted:
1. Tax Clearance Form A-6
 2. Certificate Of Compliance, DLIR Form LIR#27
 3. Certificate Of Good Standing, DCCA (BREG).
- G. Timely Submission of Compliance Document. The "Certificate of Vendor Compliance" must be submitted to MQD within ten (10) working days from the Award Notice date. If the certificate is not submitted on a timely basis, an otherwise responsive offer from a responsible Bidder may not receive the award.