

**Emergency Contraception RFA**  
**Questions Submitted by Potential Applicants**  
**EC RFA #0904090336**

1. **Question:** Can you define a county borderline for upstate New York above the “Lower Hudson Valley Region” referenced on page 2 of the RFA? Are Greene and Columbia Counties part of the lower Hudson Valley, with Albany and Rensselaer Counties as part of the upstate region?

**Answer:** Greene, Columbia, Albany and Rensselaer counties are part of the upstate region of New York. The upstate region of New York includes Albany, Allegany, Broome, Cattaraugus, Cayuga, Chautauqua, Chemung, Chenango, Clinton, Columbia, Cortland, Delaware, Erie, Essex, Franklin, Fulton, Genesee, Greene, Hamilton, Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, Livingston, Madison, Monroe, Montgomery, Niagara, Oneida, Onondaga, Ontario, Orleans, Oswego, Otsego, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady, Schoharie, Schuyler, Seneca, Steuben, St. Lawrence, Tioga, Tompkins, Warren, Washington, Wayne, Wyoming, and Yates. The downstate region is comprised of the Bronx, Dutchess, Kings, Nassau, New York, Orange, Putnam, Queens, Richmond, Rockland, Sullivan, Suffolk, Ulster, and Westchester.

2. **Question:** In reference to Appendix B, *Budget Sample Form*, at the bottom, the form says, “Federal funds are being used to support this contract. Code of Federal Assistance (CFDA) numbers for these funds are: (required).” What does that mean?

**Answer:** Federal funds are not being used to support this contract. This RFA is supported by New York State funds, therefore CFDA numbers are not required, and will not be issued with the contract award.

3. **Question:** Given that “women of reproductive age” is a very broad category would it be permissible to narrow the outreach focus in order to develop a more directed and ideally more effective outreach campaign? For example, could we target a specific group (i.e. Latinas), and age range (i.e. 18-24) living in a largely suburban downstate county (i.e. *not* New York City)?

**Answer:** The intent of the RFA is to design, implement and evaluate a statewide initiative to increase awareness of the availability of EC among health care professionals, adolescents and women at high risk for unintended pregnancy. Applicants may review data to determine those groups or populations at highest risk for unintended pregnancy in their catchment area and design efforts to target those high risk areas. The scope of the effort, however, must not solely focus on one community or sub-population.

4. **Question:** Can the state clarify who the target audience is with reference to women of reproductive age – women at high risk of pregnancy, at-risk populations, and/or cultural communities? Are there specific groups of women of reproductive age the state would like agencies to focus on?

**Answer:** The RFA states that “the campaign will be directed to health care providers, women of reproductive age and professionals serving populations at high risk for unintended pregnancy and stress the need for ongoing family planning and reproductive health care services.” Applicants should review data from their catchment area to define the target population of adolescents and women at highest risk for unintended pregnancy as well as health care providers and professionals serving those women. Applicants must then develop outreach and educational methods to reach the target population.

5. **Question:** Downstate, and in particular New York City, there are many languages spoken. Is it the state's intent that media campaigns be in multiple languages?

**Answer:** The design of the campaign, as well as development of materials, must be based on the most effective means to reach the target population. Materials and methods must be designed to be culturally sensitive and in languages understandable to the target population.

6. **Question:** Referring to page 2, C., “The purpose of this RFA is to secure a contractor or contractors who will work with the Department to reduce unintended pregnancies...” Is the contractor collaborating with NYSDOH? What is the degree of NYSDOH's involvement? Will NYSDOH provide assistance and or collaboration to grantees?

**Answer:** NYSDOH will work closely with successful applicants to ensure the development of effective campaigns that meet the stated purposes in the RFA. This includes close collaboration on the implementation of the campaign; review and consultation on the media and educational materials developed to reach professionals and consumers; and in the design of an evaluation of the effectiveness of the initiative. Draft materials may require approval by the NYSDOH prior to finalization and use by the contractor. In addition, NYSDOH will oversee project budget(s) and reports to ensure contractor(s) are making progress towards achieving stated objectives.

7. **Question:** Does the state expect the selected upstate and downstate agencies (assuming two separate agencies are selected) to coordinate or collaborate in any way?

**Answer:** If separate grants are awarded, NYSDOH plans to work with successful applicants to share ideas and strategies in the development of effective campaigns through methods such as periodic meetings or teleconferences. Furthermore, NYSDOH may require coordination of the implementation of regional campaigns to ensure statewide outreach and education on EC is conducted during the same period.

8. **Question:** Is it acceptable to focus on traditional media, or is NYSDOH's interest primarily on social marketing avenues? We ask because it is difficult to obtain measureable results using social media outlets, and therefore may be hard to determine if this outreach is effective.

**Answer:** NYSDOH is interested in the development of educational materials and media campaigns that reach adolescents and women at highest risk for unplanned pregnancies and the health care providers and professional serving these women. Applicants must propose the best methods for reaching this population including traditional media and/or

innovative strategies. Regardless of the strategies proposed, the applicant must demonstrate the ability to evaluate the effectiveness of these approaches. Recognizing the difficulty in measuring impact in a short period of time, the applicant may propose process as well as outcomes measures.

9. **Question:** Would it be possible to apply for only one component of the RFA, requesting half of the grant amount?

**Answer:** Yes. The grant will fund up to two projects, one for the downstate region and the other for the upstate region of New York. Applicants may apply to cover one or both regions, with separate applications required for each region.

10. **Question:** Does NYSDOH intend to use the findings from this work to conduct a larger outreach, education, and dissemination campaign for EC in NYS?

**Answer:** All materials developed through this RFA are the property of NYSDOH. As such, NYSDOH may use the materials to conduct additional EC outreach and education campaigns or to share with appropriate providers to use on additional targeted campaigns in the future.

11. **Question:** May we use findings and/or materials developed from past New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (NYCDOHMH)-funded grants that have focused on marketing EC to specific groups for this work?

**Answer:** Applicants may use any appropriate materials and methods used in other campaigns if they are appropriate and effective to reach the target population, and the applicant includes proof that full permission to use the materials has been obtained from the entity, such as the NYCDOHMH.

12. **Question:** The goals of this RFA are lofty and appear difficult to measure. For example, on page 5, under letter C. Expected Outcomes, a primary outcome is that “Funded projects will be expected to produce measurable increase in use of EC.” Given that EC is now widely available over-the-counter in pharmacies, it is difficult to measure changes in use. Will NYSDOH assist in measuring potential increases in EC use by collecting data (i.e. EC sold) from pharmacies or other distributors of EC such as pharmaceutical companies?

**Answer:** NYSDOH recognizes that it is difficult to quantify a measurable increase in the use of EC. The NYSDOH does have access to data such as numbers of Medicaid recipients obtaining EC as well as data from the statewide network of family planning providers and may track those data. Due to the difficulty in measuring impact over such a short period of time, process measures will also be acceptable in addition to outcome measures.

13. **Question:** Can NYSDOH clarify what it is looking for in outcomes; specifically how it anticipates agencies to produce “measureable increases in the use of EC” and “decrease in unplanned pregnancies”?

**Answer:** NYSDOH recognizes that it is difficult to quantify a measurable increase in the use of EC and to measure a decrease in unplanned pregnancies during the period of

this grant. As stated previously, the applicant may also propose process measures to assess outcomes.

14. **Question:** Page 2 of the RFA refers to possible renewal of funding for an additional year. Can you provide clarification about \$250,000 funding for subsequent years?

**Answer:** It is expected that contracts awarded as a result of this competitive application will be for the following time period: January 1, 2010 through December 31, 2010. Subsequent funding for one additional year is contingent upon the availability of funding, satisfactory performance, and approval of work plans and budget.

15. **Question:** What is the timeline for the application process? When will the awards be announced?

**Answer:** Applications are due on September 28, 2009. Awards will be announced after completion of the review process and receipt of the necessary approvals. It is the intent of the NYSDOH for the contract period to start on January 1, 2010.

16. **Question:** The RFA states that up to \$500,000 in funding is available in total, and up to two awards (applicants) at up to \$250,000 each are anticipated. Can an applicant applying for both upstate and downstate apply for up to \$250,000 in each proposal totaling up to \$500,000, or is the \$250,000 to be split among both downstate and upstate projects (example \$125,000 for downstate, \$125,000 for upstate)?

**Answer:** Applicants applying for both upstate and downstate regions can submit separate applications for up to \$250,000 for each region. In this case, applicants would apply for a combined maximum of \$500,000. The award of \$250,000 is meant to be used in each region and will not be split between downstate and upstate projects.

17. **Question:** Should the 6 additional applications truly be “bound”? What does this mean exactly as most proposals do not ask for this?

**Answer:** No, the 6 additional applications do not need to be bound. However, the additional applications must be stapled or connected in some way so that complete proposals are easily identified.

18. **Question:** For the 2 original unbound signed applications, should attachments be included?

**Answer:** NYSDOH requires only 1 original unbound application with all attachments included.