



## California Department of Public Health **MEMORANDUM**

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**DATE:** November 14, 2024  
**TO:** ALL INTERESTED PARTIES  
**FROM:** Robert Schechter, MD  
**SUBJECT:** Addendum to Request for Applications (RFA) 24-10229

In an effort to ensure a thorough review of applications and parity among Communicable Disease Control, Immunization Branch (IZB) is extending the release of the notice of intent to award in tentative RFA timeline in the Vaccine Confidence-Latinx Communities RFA. Please review the updated timeline included with this memorandum as an attachment. The revised timeline is also listed below:

- RFA released: **August 26, 2024**
- Deadline for submitting written questions: **September 6, 2024**
- Application submission deadline: **September 26, 2024, by 11:59PM PST**
- Notice of intent to award release: **November 15, 2024, by 12PM PST**
- Appeal deadline: **November 20, 2024, by 12PM PST**

For questions related to this memorandum, please email [VaccineConfidenceRFA@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:VaccineConfidenceRFA@cdph.ca.gov).

Sincerely,  
Robert Schechter, MD  
Chief, Immunization Branch  
Communicable Disease Control

Cc: Maria Volk  
Assistant Chief, Immunization Branch  
Communicable Disease Control

Noemi Marin  
Chief, Operations Section  
Communicable Disease Control

Edgar Ednacot  
Chief, Information & Education Section  
Communicable Disease Control

## Part I: Funding Opportunity Timeline and Description

Table 1. Tentative Request for Applications (RFA) Timeline

Event	Date
<b>RFA released</b>	Original date: Monday, <b>7/8/24</b> Updated date: Monday, <b>8/26/2024</b> by 5PM PST
<b>Deadline for submitting written questions</b>	Original date: Monday, <b>7/15/2024</b> Updated date: Friday, <b>9/6/2024</b>
<b>Application submission deadline</b>	Original date: Wednesday, <b>7/31/24</b> by 5PM PST Updated date: Thursday, <b>9/26/2024</b> , by 11:59PM PST
<b>Notice of intent to award released</b>	Original date: Friday, <b>8/9/24</b> Updated date: Friday, <b>11/15/2024</b> by 12PM PST
<b>Appeal deadline</b>	Original date: Wednesday, <b>8/14/24</b> Updated date: Wednesday, <b>11/20/2024</b> by 12PM PST
<b>Anticipated Grant start date</b>	Upon execution



**Request for Applications (RFA)**  
**No. 24-10229**  
**Increasing Vaccine Confidence Among**  
**Hispanic/Latinx or Immigrant Communities**

## Table of Contents

California Department of Public Health .....	1
MEMORANDUM.....	1
Request for Applications (RFA) No. 24-10229 .....	1
PART I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION .....	3
Purpose .....	3
Background.....	4
Eligible Entities (EE) .....	4
Award Period.....	5
Tentative RFA Time Schedule .....	5
PART II. PROJECT REQUIREMENTS .....	6
RFA Award Allocations .....	6
Program Requirements .....	6
Budget .....	9
PART III. ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS AND SUBMISSION.....	10
Questions and Application Evaluation Process .....	10
Grounds for Rejection.....	10
Application Review .....	1
Instructions for RFA Submission.....	1

## PART I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

### Purpose

As part of a larger CDC Vaccine Confidence grant, \$200,000 shall be available for encumbrance or expenditure until June 30, 2025. This funding will allow for the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) Immunization Branch (IZB) to work with promotores and/or community health workers to increase vaccine confidence among persons who are Hispanic/Latinx or immigrants residing in Healthy Places Index (HPI) Quartile 1 (represented as dark blue in percentile ranking) regions of California. These are the zip codes with the lowest vaccination rates/ highest disease burden.

The purpose of this Request for Applications (RFA) is to select one (1) organization to develop and deliver training/education on vaccines to promotores/community health workers with an emphasis on COVID-19. Additional focus on RSV and flu vaccines is highly encouraged although not required. Once trained, promotores or community health workers should develop a community/culturally-sensitive outreach plan for working with the most vulnerable and underserved communities in California (HPI Quartile 1 zip codes) with a special emphasis on outreach to Hispanic/Latinx and/or immigrant communities. Applicants will be required to incorporate an evaluation component which will allow for an understanding of lessons learned and dissemination of lessons learned to strengthen new and existing programs.

The project is aligned with California's goal to decrease the incidence of COVID-19, RSV, and influenza infections and improve vaccine confidence among Hispanic/Latinx or immigrant communities.

Applicants must demonstrate experience and expertise in providing culturally appropriate services to Hispanic/Latinx or immigrant communities in HPI Quartile 1 zip codes. Applications will be evaluated based on need in the geographic area, populations served and reached, competency of the entity applying, and program design.

**The project is expected to begin upon contract execution as early as late-August 2024 and be completed by June 30, 2025.** Please note that organization representatives must be available for check-ins with project leads at the start of the project and at least 2-3 times during the project and will be required to provide any data collected to project leads during each check-in.

**If you have questions or concerns regarding this RFA, please email [VaccineConfidenceRFA@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:VaccineConfidenceRFA@cdph.ca.gov).**

## Background

Severe respiratory illness or death caused by RSV, COVID-19, and influenza (flu) viruses are vaccine-preventable. These illnesses are transmitted similarly when respiratory droplets from a person infected with the virus enters the body of someone who is uninfected. This can happen through proximity of coughs or sneezes or touching the same surfaces/objects then touching eyes, nose, mouth, where the virus can then enter the body. For some persons, RSV, COVID-19, or flu is a mild and short-term illness, but in others the infection can lead to severe outcomes, including hospitalization and death. To prevent these illnesses, vaccination is strongly recommended against:

- COVID-19 and influenza for everyone 6 months+, including pregnant people.
- RSV for older adults (60 years+), pregnant people, infants under 8 months of age and toddlers at high-risk for severe RSV.

While vaccines are the most effective ways to prevent these diseases, vaccination rates are lagging among communities of color, including Hispanic/Latinx and other immigrant populations. Lower vaccination rates are due to language barriers, lack of promotion or empowerment to get vaccinated, limited health knowledge and access to health services, and mistrust. Improving relationships between community members and trusted organizations, who deliver culturally-appropriate health services or education directly to these communities, leads to healthier outcomes. The goal of this project is to educate and empower these communities on these vaccines and increase access to resources needed to protect against these diseases.

For the latest information on COVID-19, flu and RSV, visit the CDPH Respiratory Disease dashboard and prevention pages. For additional information about COVID-19 vaccination coverage in your community by age, race, and ethnicity, see the CDPH COVID-19 vaccination data page.

## Eligible Entities (EE)

Entities that are eligible to receive this award must demonstrate that they have the capacity to fulfill the programmatic and administrative requirements listed below, including the ability to reach vulnerable and underserved Latinx/Hispanic or immigrant communities living in HPI Quartile 1 zip codes. EEs include but are not limited to any non-profit organization, community-based organization, federally qualified health center (FQHC) and other community clinic with the ability to reach HPI Quartile 1 zip codes.

Eligible entities that intend to partner with another agency to provide promotores/community health worker training or any of the other required activities must include in their narrative response a detailed explanation of how the training will be developed and delivered to promotores/community health workers and how outreach will be conducted by trained promotores/community health workers.

If an EE intends to partner with another agency to provide medical care or any of the other required activities, they must include a detailed explanation of how services will be delivered and how patients will be referred in their narrative response. All referrals or handoffs of clients for service provision must be “warm handoffs” followed by confirmation of service delivery.

Examples of warm handoffs include face-to-face or telephone contact to directly link individuals to another provider for a service.

Please note: As required by California law, business entities must be in good standing and qualified to do business in California, including EEs that have concurrent or prior contract/grant relationships with CDPH and/or IZB. CDPH and/or IZB will consider any prior letter of correction, written notice of breach, or inadequate performance sent to EE in its scoring.

### Award Period

The award period will extend through June 30, 2025, from the grant start date. The anticipated project start date referenced in the Tentative RFA Time Schedule may vary due to the time required to finalize and process the agreements between awardees and CDPH Immunization Branch (IZB). Awardees are not authorized to begin work until the agreement is finalized. Work conducted outside the effective start and end date of the agreement will not be eligible for reimbursement.

### Tentative RFA Time Schedule

Event	Date
RFA Released	Original date: July 8, 2024 Updated date: August 26, 2024, by 5:00 P.M.
Deadline for submitting written questions	Original date: July 15, 2024 Updated date: September 6, 2024
Application submission deadline	Original date: July 31, 2024 Updated date: September 26, 2024
Notice of Intent to Award Released	Original date: August 9, 2024 Updated date: November 15, 2024
Appeal Deadline	Original date: August 14, 2024 Updated date: November 20, 2024, by 12:00 P.M.
Grant start date	Upon contract execution

## PART II. PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

### RFA Award Allocations

A total amount of \$200,000 will be awarded through the RFA to develop and deliver a training on RSV, COVID-19, and flu vaccines to promotores/community health workers. The health workers should then utilize information/skills gained to educate and empower community members with confidence, resources, and access to vaccination.

CDPH/IZB will consider entities that demonstrate experience and expertise in providing culturally appropriate services or outreach to those including, but not limited to Hispanic/Latinx or immigrant communities. CDPH/IZB will consider specific priority populations for which local data indicates a disproportionate impact by COVID-19, RSV, and/or flu.

**CDPH/IZB will award one award of \$200,000 for encumbrance or expenditure until June 30, 2025.**

### Program Requirements

#### Project Activities and Objectives

Successful applications will demonstrate the EE's capacity to accomplish the following programmatic activities and objectives, by providing responses to the components in the Narrative Template (Attachment 5). Applications must include the following activities and objectives.

- Increase the number of Latinx/Hispanic or immigrant community members who are up to date on COVID-19 (required), RSV and/or flu vaccinations.
- Increase the number of Latinx/Hispanic or immigrant community members who express vaccine confidence as it relates to COVID-19 (required), RSV, and/or flu.

Please note, in addition to project objectives, EEs will be required to meet with CDPH and provide project updates and reports at an interval to be determined upon receipt of award.

#### Project Components and Scoring

Using the Narrative Template (Attachment 5), respond to all items within each section. When responding to the statements and questions, be mindful that application reviewers may not be familiar with the EE and its services. Therefore, answers should be specific, succinct, and responsive to the statements and questions as outlined. The review team will base its scoring on the maximum points indicated for each section. Breakdown of total points for each section can be found below:

#### Project Components and Scoring



<b>Components required for all grantees</b>	<b>Maximum Points (100 pts)</b>
Priority Populations and Communities	20
Community Engagement and Outreach Activities	25
Capacity to Train and Deliver to Promotores/Community Health Workers	20
Program Monitoring and Evaluation	20
Linkage or referral to Immunization Services (COVID-19 required)	15

Applicants applying for the award will be scored on all required components in the criteria above, and the maximum total points for an applicant are 100.

#### Priority Populations and Communities

- The EE must currently serve priority populations that include but are not limited to Latinx/Hispanic or immigrant communities in HPI Quartile 1 zip codes of California.
- **The EE should provide an estimated number of persons within the priority populations who can be served by the various activities of the project.**

#### Community Engagement and Outreach Activities

- Describe how EE will provide services that are culturally and linguistically appropriate.
- Describe how the EE will engage the priority population(s) in planning and design of the project.
- Describe how the proposed project will meet the identified needs of the priority population(s).
- Describe your project's basis: For example, proposed projects may 1) utilize best- practices and evidence-based approaches\*, those which have been shown to be effective within the proposed priority population; and/or 2) be innovative, involving the application of new ideas or promising practices which address the needs of priority populations.

#### Capacity

- List any concurrent or prior contract/grant relationships with CDPH/IZB over the last five years. If the EE has received any letters of correction or written notices of breach or inadequate performance from CDPH/IZB related to any concurrent or prior contract/grant relationships, please describe them.
- List any other agency or grant funding used to train promotores/community health workers on immunizations for Latinx/Hispanic or immigrant populations. Include the funding source, activities being funded and when the funding will end. Describe how the proposed program will be distinct without duplicating services.
- Describe the EE's experience in implementing evidence-based\* and/or strength-based programs or innovative strategies that will lead to outcomes that are aligned with goals of this project.
- Describe current and proposed staffing and staff capacity to complete the award activities. Describe any planned activities such as trainings to increase staff capacity to do immunization-related work.
- Describe the EE administrative systems and accountability mechanisms for grant management.

### Program Monitoring and Evaluation

- Budget finds should be allocated to evaluation activities, which should include data collection (e.g. number of promotores trained, number of community members reached by each activity, number of community members vaccinated [if feasible] and type of outreach activities).
- Eligible entities will meet with CDPH and provide progress report summaries at appropriate intervals and at end of grant period.
- Eligible entities must demonstrate the capacity to collect and monitor project data, including established processes for data collection, entry, and routine monitoring, sufficient staffing, and inter-agency agreements as needed.
- Eligible entities should provide SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound) objectives. (E.g., By October 31, 2024, 50 promotores will be trained on how to increase COVID-19 vaccine confidence among Latinx/Hispanics living in HPI Quartile 1 zip codes; By December 31, 2025, 25 community health workers will outreach to 100 Ukrainian refugees via door-to-door campaign).

### Linkage or Referral to Immunization Services (COVID-19 vaccine required)

- Eligible entities must discuss strategies for providing COVID-19 vaccine and/or facilitating COVID-19 vaccination for Latinx/Hispanic or immigrant community members. Administration and/or referrals for flu and RSV immunizations is preferred but not required.
- If the EE does not have capacity to vaccinate, they should describe a referral strategy, and provide linkages or referrals to COVID-19 vaccination services and other vaccine- preventable diseases (e.g. RSV and flu). For example, linking patients who have Medi-Cal coverage to a pharmacy that can provide and bill for the vaccine. EEs that intend to partner with another entity to provide vaccination must include in their narrative response a detailed explanation of how services will be delivered and how patients will be referred. All referrals or handoffs of clients for service provision must be “warm handoffs” followed by confirmation of service delivery. **Attach letters of support if collaborations are planned.**

### Budget

The budget justification template (Attachment 4) must be completed. The budget justification must explain all expenses included. There will be no reimbursement of pre-award costs.

CDPH/IZB reserves the right to deny requests for any item listed in the budget that is deemed unnecessary for the implementation of the project. Selected awardee will be required to submit a detailed budget worksheet which will be provided by CDPH. This detailed worksheet will not be included as part of the fully executed grant agreement to allow CDPH and the Awardee the flexibility for budget modifications as needed.

## PART III. ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS AND SUBMISSION

### Questions and Application Evaluation Process

If upon reviewing this RFA, a potential EE has any questions regarding the RFA, or discovers any problems, including any ambiguity, conflict, discrepancy, omission, or any other error in the RFA, the EE shall immediately notify CDPH IZB in writing via e-mail, to request clarification or modification of this RFA. All such inquiries shall identify the author, EE entity name, address, telephone number, and e-mail address, and shall identify the subject in question, specific discrepancy, section and page number, or other information relative to describing the discrepancy or specific question.

Questions/inquiries must be received by the time and date referenced in the Tentative RFA Time Schedule (Page 5). Questions will be accepted via e-mail at:

[VaccineConfidenceRFA@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:VaccineConfidenceRFA@cdph.ca.gov).

Inquiries will be responded to via e-mail to the requestor only. If a prospective EE fails to notify CDPH IZB of any problem or question known to an EE by the date indicated in this section, the EE shall submit an application at EE's own risk. Prospective EEs are reminded that applications are to be developed based solely upon the information contained in this document and any written addenda issued by CDPH/IZB.

Following the closing date for application submissions, CDPH IZB will evaluate each application to determine responsiveness to the RFA requirements. Applications found to be non-responsive at any stage of the evaluation, for any reason, will be rejected from further consideration. **Late applications will not be reviewed.** CDPH may reject any or all applications and may waive any immaterial defect in any application. Please note that submitting budgets with "to be determined" positions will not exempt the EE from providing detail on specific services to be provided by the positions listed.

### Grounds for Rejection

CDPH may, at its sole discretion, correct any obvious mathematical or clerical errors. CDPH/IZB reserves the right to reject any or all applications without remedy to the EEs. There is no guarantee that a contract will be awarded after the evaluation of all applications if, in the opinion of CDPH, none of the applications meets California's needs.

Circumstances that will cause an application package to be deemed non-responsive include:

- The application is received after the deadline set forth in this RFA.
- Failure of the EE to complete required forms and attachments as instructed in this RFA or as instructed in the attachments.
- Failure to meet format or procedural submission requirements.
- EE provides inaccurate, false, or misleading information or statements.
- EE supplies cost information that is conditional, incomplete, or contains any unsigned material, alterations, or irregularities.

- EE does not meet EE qualifications set forth in this RFA.
- EE does not use and/or modifies Narrative Template or other provided attachments.

### Application Review

Applications that meet the format requirements and contain all the required forms and documentation will be submitted to an evaluation committee convened by CDPH IZB. The committee will assign numeric scores to each responsive application. The applications will be evaluated in each category based upon the quality and completeness of its response to California's needs, the likelihood of successful accomplishments of the activities and objectives and RFA requirements. The evaluation will constitute recommendations to CDPH IZB management. Final approval of awardees will be made by the CDPH IZB Branch Chief or a designee.

### Instructions for RFA Submission

#### Application Submission Requirements

The provided application templates must be used when responding to the RFA. Do not reformat any of the templates. The size of the lettering must be at minimum 11-point, Arial font. Do not send application as one single PDF. All attachments should be sent back the same file format that they were provided. EEs intending to apply are expected to thoroughly examine the entire contents of this RFA and become fully aware of all the requirements outlined in this RFA. Applications are to be developed solely on the material contained in this RFA and any written addendum issued by CDPH/IZB.

The following is the order in which sections in the application must be submitted. A complete application package (Attachments 1-5) must be submitted. A brief description of each section to be included is given below:

## Application Checklist

### 1. General Items:

- Submit all attachments in the same file format that they were provided. Do not reformat any of the templates.
- All forms must have the same exact naming convention throughout, or they will not be accepted by the Contracts Management Unit. For example, if the licensed name of an agency is “Trinity Community Healthcare Center Inc.,” all documents must include that full name and not a shortened version such as “Trinity Health.”
- Do not send application as one single PDF.
- The size of the lettering within application is at least 11-point, Arial font.

### 2. Application Certification Checklist

- Complete the checklist (Attachment 1). This sheet will serve as the guide to make certain that the application package is complete, and to ensure that the required documents are organized in the correct order.

### 3. Application Cover Sheet

- Complete the application cover sheet (Attachment 2). This sheet must be signed by an official authorized to enter into a grant agreement on behalf of the EE.

### 4. Project Synopsis (one page limit)

- Include a one-page Project Synopsis (Attachment 3) of the proposed program and how it will be integrated with the EE’s current activities.

### 5. Budget Justification Template

- Complete the Budget Justification Template (Attachment 4). The terms of the award will be through **June 30, 2025**.
- Please note that funds may not be used to pay for vaccine, screening tests, clinical care or other services that can be billed to 3rd party payers. The budget descriptions of services, duties, etc. found in the Budget Justification Template (Attachment 4) must explain and justify both program services funded by other funding and those, if awarded, funded by this grant.
- Availability of other funding will not affect the scoring of this RFA. For example, the salaries line item must list each position that is associated with this program. Include a brief explanation of each position’s major responsibilities, and the time allocation to be funded by the grant, which results from this RFA. For the operating expenses category, provide a general description of expenses included in the budget line item. Proposed consultants must indicate the number of contracted hours and costs associated with hiring a consultant for the project. All subcontractor(s) shall be listed by name and address in the application. Note: The cost of developing the application for this RFA is entirely

the responsibility of the EE and shall not be chargeable to the State of California or included in any cost elements of the application.

6. Application Narrative Template

- Complete the Application Narrative Template for Tracks A&B (Attachment 5) covering the funding period through June 30, 2025. The application narrative must include complete descriptions of your plan to carry out the project.

**NOTE: Applications that fail to follow ALL the requirements may not be considered.**

Application Submission Instructions

Applications must be submitted via e-mail to [VaccineConfidenceRFA@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:VaccineConfidenceRFA@cdph.ca.gov) as referenced in the Tentative RFA Time Schedule (Page 5).

Notification of Intent to Award

Notification of the State's intent to award grants for this "Vaccine Confidence among Latinx/Hispanic or Immigrants" project will be posted on the CDPH/IZB website. Additionally, a letter will be e-mailed to the EE notifying them of the status of their application.

Disposition and Ownership of the Application

All materials submitted in response to this RFA will become the property of CDPH/IZB and, as such, are subject to the Public Records Act (Government Code Section 6250, et. seq.). CDPH/IZB shall have the right to use all ideas or adaptations of the ideas contained in any application received. The selection or rejection of an application will not affect this right. Within the constraints of applicable law, CDPH/IZB shall use its best efforts not to publicly release any information contained in the applications which may be privileged under Evidence Code 1040 (Privileged Official Record) and 1060 (Privileged Trade Secret) and which is clearly marked "Confidential" or information that is protected under the Information Practices Act.

Award Appeal Procedures

An EE who applied and was not funded may file an appeal with CDPH/IZB. Appeals must state the reason, law, rule, regulation, or practice that the EE believes has been improperly applied regarding the evaluation or selection process. There is no appeal process for applications that are submitted late or are incomplete. Appeals shall be limited to the following grounds:

- CDPH/IZB failed to correctly apply the application review process, the format requirements or evaluating the applications as specified in the RFA.
- CDPH/IZB failed to follow the methods for evaluating and scoring the applications as specified in the RFA.

Appeals must be sent by email to [VaccineConfidencRFA@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:VaccineConfidencRFA@cdph.ca.gov) and must be received as referenced in the Tentative RFA Time Schedule (Page 5).

The CDPH/IZB Chief, or designee, will then come to a decision based on the written appeal letter. The decision of the CDPH/IZB Chief, or designee, shall be the final remedy. EEs will be notified by e-mail within 15 days of the consideration of the written appeal letter.

CDPH/IZB reserves the right to award the funding when it believes that all appeals have been resolved, withdrawn, or responded to the satisfaction of CDPH/IZB.

#### Miscellaneous RFA Information

The issuance of this RFA does not constitute a commitment by CDPH/IZB to award funds. CDPH/IZB reserves the right to reject any or all applications or to cancel this RFA if it is in the best interest of IZB to do so.