



RFP to detect levels of psychoactive substances through wastewater monitoring in Boston

Executive Office

10/17/2023

I. Overview

The Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) is the local public health department for the City of Boston. BPHC's mission is to protect, preserve, and promote the health and well-being of all Boston residents, particularly the most vulnerable.

All service contracts awarded by the Boston Public Health Commission may be subject to following the City of Boston's living wage ordinance. This ordinance requires that all employees working on sizable city contracts earn an hourly wage that is enough for a family of four to live at or above the federal poverty level. This wage amount called the living wage, is recalculated every year. For more information, please visit <https://www.boston.gov/worker-empowerment/living-wage-division>.

As part of BPHC's efforts to have an equitable procurement process, BPHC will consider and encourage unrepresentative businesses that includes; Minority-owned Business Enterprises (MBE), Women-owned Business Enterprises (WBE), Veteran-owned Business Enterprises (VBE), Disability-owned Business Enterprise (DOBE), Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Business Enterprises (LGBTBE), Minority Non-Profit (MNPO), Women Non-Profit (WNPO), Minority Women Non-Profit (MWNPO) and local businesses to apply to this RFP.

II. RFP Timeline

Monday, 10/16/2023	Legal Announcement posted in the Boston Globe
Tuesday, 10/17/2023	Posted on boston.gov/bids by 10:00 AM EDT
Tuesday, 10/24/2023	<p>Questions due by 5:00 PM <u>EDT</u> to:</p> <p>Procurement@bphc.org</p> <p>snair@bphc.org</p> <p>jhart@bphc.org</p> <p>Subject – Query - Wastewater monitoring RFP</p>
Monday, 10/30/2023	Responses to questions available for viewing on boston.gov/bids by 5:00 PM EDT
Friday, 11/10/2023	<p>Proposals are due via email by 5:00 PM EDT</p> <p>Subject – Wastewater monitoring Proposal</p> <p>Email: Procurement@bphc.org</p> <p>NO EXCEPTIONS TO THIS DEADLINE</p>
Tuesday, 12/05/2023	<p>Notification of Decision:</p> <p>Desired date to award. BPHC has the discretion to extend this time period without notice to the proposers, cancel or rebid. All proposals shall remain valid and open for a period of one hundred twenty (120) days from the proposal submission date unless a proposer notifies BPHC of its withdrawal.</p>

III. Scope of Work

Wastewater monitoring is a community-level approach for monitoring disease or chemical biomarkers that are excreted in human urine and feces and collected in sewers. Overall, from 2017-2022, there was an increase in the rates of drug-related hospital patient encounters, and substance use-related deaths among Boston residents. These increases were largely driven by opioid and cocaine use, which disproportionately affected Black and Latinx residents.

Besides, fentanyl, a highly potent opioid, is a major contributor to fatal drug overdoses in Boston and was found to be present in 94% of people who died of opioid-overdose in 2021. Nearly 60% of fentanyl-related deaths were found to be in some combination with other opioids and/or cocaine. Boston residents who use illegal opioids other than fentanyl, cocaine, and/or methamphetamine are still at risk of a fentanyl overdose due to the common presence of fentanyl in the drug supply. Narcan, a medication that rapidly reverses the effects of an opioid or fentanyl overdose, is widely distributed in Boston, but is not effective when overdose involves xylazine, an emerging adulterant of the drug supply.

Psychoactive substance wastewater monitoring programs in Montana and Marin County, California have observed increases in the concentration of psychoactive substances prior to emergency calls for overdose. In Cary, North Carolina, monitoring naloxone levels in wastewater across different neighborhoods allowed public health officials to identify areas with presumptive unreported overdoses, which has helped inform public outreach efforts and interventions in communities.

BPHC proposes to conduct a wastewater monitoring pilot for psychoactive substances to address the overdose crisis and substance-use related deaths among Boston residents. Our goal is to implement a pilot monitoring program to help the BPHC prioritize and focus mitigating strategies to support overdose prevention. Substance use metabolites in the wastewater can serve as a near real-time indicator of substance use and thus can be used as a complementary to existing substance use monitoring data.

Through this Request for Proposal (RFP), BPHC seeks a partner to conduct psychoactive substance wastewater monitoring. This RFP will be funded through our ARPA funds and therefore may expire by the end of 2026. Our partner would implement a well-documented pilot wastewater monitoring program with state-of-the-art sampling and analytical methods. The partner would utilize robust reproducible approaches and technologies that have been evaluated by federal agencies, non-governmental organizations, wastewater utilities, academic researchers, and industry.

IV. Minimum Qualifications

Proposers must possess the following qualifications:

1. Completeness and timeliness: Well-established track record of timely high-quality sampling, processing, analysis and reporting of psychoactive substances and/or their metabolites in wastewater, with specific capacity to monitor the following compounds: fentanyl, xylazine, naloxone, methadone, cocaine, and methamphetamine.
2. Accuracy: Demonstrated use of appropriate controls. Well documented quality control and quality assurance measures to ensure reliability of the data.
3. Ability to implement a collection system from manholes.
4. Enforcement of data integrity and accountability: Demonstrated understanding of requirements for confidentiality of data derived from communities.
5. Understanding of Boston neighborhood layout and dynamics of factors that might influence local variability.
6. Availability of raw data to the BPHC for the purpose of more sophisticated modeling.
7. Consistency: Web-ready reporting of wastewater testing results (e.g., tables, graphs, normalization, units) that convey critical information on multiple levels to stakeholders including (governmental agencies, Boston residents, academic collaborators).

V. Application Instructions

Please submit the following documents. Proposals that do not include the minimum indicated below will not be considered for review.

Minimum requirements:

1. A proposal narrative with a detailed description of methodology used to sample, analyze, and report results.
2. Proposed sampling frequency.
3. Itemized budget. This should clearly show cost break up per sample, and per site. BPHC has allocated \$180,000 for this pilot program. Budget should include cost of additional equipment, if any, that BPHC would need to purchase.
4. Turnaround time for sampling and results – sample timeline.
5. Proposed duration of the contract.
6. References and institutions or government agencies currently using the service.
7. Partners or other collaborating organizations.
8. Wastewater monitoring testing services website link.

VI. Submission Instructions

Please submit your Proposal with total estimated cost via email to:

Subject – Wastewater Psychoactive Substances Monitoring

Email: Procurement@bphc.org

Proposals via email are due by Friday, Nov 10th, 2023, 5:00 PM EDT