

**RFP 2023-002 Basic Needs Issue Area
Official Questions and Answers**

All questions should be directed to the RFP Authorized Contact Person: Kiara Price at APHCompetitions@austintexas.gov or in the PartnerGrants database by no later than Thursday, March 23, 2023 by 3PM CST.

Last Updated March 27, 2023:

Question No.	Questions	Answers
1	For continuation applicants, will we be receiving existing exhibits from our grant manager to update, or will we need to start with fresh forms?	If an agency has a current contract that will be competed through this RFP, the agency will need to apply through the RFP process. The proposal submitted will be used to develop and negotiate the new contract if chosen for award.
2	On page 4 of the Exhibit C - Scope of Work, I don't see the amount of funding available for Service Category 5: Transportation like it is for the other service categories. Is there a specific allocation for that service category?	Transportation falls in the "other program categories" section of the Scope of Work. The amount can be found in the Other Basic Needs Services section: "At least \$394,196 in other programs that meet the criteria of Basic Needs Services. Offerors may apply for an annual minimum total of \$70,000. APH anticipates awarding up to 6 agreements in this service category."
3	Should there be separate proposals for each specific program category although it is all under one organization?	Applicants need to submit unique proposals for unique programs. Different program categories require different proposals. If applicants have a program that crosses into more than 1 program category (for example: a program that provides transportation and food access under the same program - same staff, etc.), a single proposal can be submitted.
4	The grant award amounts by service category are phrased as "at least x dollars annually." May an applicant request more than what is estimated per service category?	Applicants can submit a request for as much as they choose for each program. The scope of work outlines funds available for the different issue areas. It is unlikely, unless specified otherwise, that only one agency will be awarded in each category. Please review the funding section of the scope of work for more information about minimum award amounts.
5	If a program provides services in more than one category, what service category which one should we apply for?	If there is a primary service category listed, agency should list that. If unclear, applicants can submit more than one category in the RFP Proposal, but it needs to be one clear program. APH will divide awarded proposals into service categories during the award process. However, if there are two specific, unique programs, it is not recommended to make them one application.
6	How does collaboration work? Do we submit as one organization, or how would that work?	There is a section in the application to indicate collaboration. One agency will need to be the designated fiscal agent, but there is an opportunity to share narrative detail about collaboration between agencies.

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7	The intended beneficiary of the Basic Needs RFP is anyone who earns less than 200% of FPL, and housing programs and shelters aren't part of the scope -- but I'm wondering if there is any delineation of housed/unhoused/supportively housed within that intended beneficiary class?	<p>The intention of the Basic Needs funding is to ensure individuals and families have access to the resources needed for household stability and progress towards or maintenance of self-sufficiency. APH has separate sources of funding that support housing and shelter programs, which are not a part of this RFP.</p> <p>Per Section VII. Priority Populations of Exhibit C – Scope of Work, primary focus of this funding should be on residents of Austin/Travis County living at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level. No additional housing status criteria are included for the sake of this RFP. Full eligibility criteria can be reviewed in Exhibit D – APH Client Eligibility Requirements.</p>
8	Are you recording this session to share later?	<p>The session will not be recorded, but all materials will be made available on the competition website by March 8, 2023.</p> <p>https://www.austintexas.gov/article/2023-002-basic-needs-issue-area-rfp</p>
9	What is mobile food access?	<p>Mobile Food Access is described in Exhibit C – Scope of Work on page 6 as “providing free food distribution and/or low- or no-cost food retail using a non-permanent mobile distribution model in underserved areas and/or to communities that predominantly include residents who are low income.”</p>
10	Can you provide more details on the Business Continuity/Emergency Preparedness requirements? Is there required participation in any City emergency planning meetings or activities? In the event of a disaster, how would the city communicate with grantees about providing emergency services?	<p>APH is interested in understanding how the program being applied for and/or any program at the agency would be able to support should an emergency response be activated.</p> <p>Per the APH Social Services Agreement Boilerplate:</p> <p>8.6 Business Continuity. Grantee warrants that it has adopted a business continuity plan that describes how Grantee will continue to provide services in the event of an emergency or other unforeseen event and agrees to maintain the plan on file for review by the City. Grantee shall provide a copy of the plan to the City’s Contract Manager upon request at any time during the term of this Agreement, and the requested information regarding the Business Continuity Plan shall appear in the annual AAP documentation.</p> <p>8.6.1 Grantee agrees to participate in the City’s Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan and other disaster planning processes. Grantee</p>

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		<p>participation includes assisting the City to provide disaster response and recovery assistance to individuals and families impacted by manmade or natural disasters.</p> <p>Please refer to Exhibit E – APH Social Services Agreement Boilerplate and Exhibits for information about required policies.</p>
11	<p>If we have one program that can provide services in multiple categories do we need to submit one or multiple proposals?</p>	<p>Applicants need to submit unique proposals for unique programs. Different program categories require different proposals. If you have a program that crosses into more than 1 program category (for example: a program that provides transportation and food access under the same program - same staff, etc.), applicants can submit a single proposal.</p>
12	<p>Is the max amount we can request for the Household Stability category \$207,034, OR is that the total amount available for all three agreements? (referring to page 12 on Attachment C, Scope of Work)</p>	<p>See Answer to #4: Applicants can submit a request for as much as they choose for each program. The scope of work outlines funds available for the different issue areas. It is unlikely, unless specified otherwise, that only one agency will be awarded in each category. Please review the funding section of the scope of work for more information about minimum award amounts.</p>
13	<p>Does Guardianship fall under legal services program?</p>	<p>Please see page 7 in the Scope of Work that identifies services that fall within this Program Category (Legal Services). Note that the City indicates, “The City is intentionally leaving program strategies open beyond the criteria listed in this section, allowing Offerors to propose solutions to meet community needs effectively.</p>
14	<p>Does an approved threshold review form need to be submitted before an LOI can be uploaded?</p>	<p>An Annual Agency Threshold Application must be submitted prior to submitting an Intent to Apply Form to any RFP. It may or may not be approved by that time but must be in submitted status at minimum. The Annual Agency Threshold does need to be approved in order for an Intent to Apply to be approved and for an Offeror to gain access to the final application, so please allow sufficient time for both approvals.</p>
15	<p>Does this grant cover case management services (FTE) provided through referral from Guardianship to other services?</p>	<p>Yes, if case management services fall within the program scope of work.</p>
16	<p>Under reporting guidelines it states reporting identity. Does that mean name?</p>	<p>Awardees are required to maintain records to verify client eligibility according to Exhibit D – APH Client Eligibility Criteria. While agencies need to maintain secure client records with all necessary information,</p>

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		quarterly and annual reporting should only include de-identified data without client identifying information included.
17	Are electronic signatures allowable on all the documents to be submitted? If not, which documents must be "inked", and scanned?	Electronic signatures are allowable if they are truly electronic via salesforce, DocuSign, or Adobe e-sign (this one is free) with a true signature and not typed.
18	The grant lists number 5 as "transportation" as one of the categories throughout the grant, however, in the portion with the breakdown of award amounts for awards and timeline, it lists number 5 category as "other basic needs services." Which is it? Or are basic needs and transportation category the same?	See #2: Transportation falls in the "other program categories" section of the Scope of Work. The amount can be found here: Other Basic Needs Services: At least \$394,196 in other programs that meet the criteria of Basic Needs Services. Offers may apply for an annual minimum total of \$70,000. APH anticipates awarding up to 6 agreements in this service category.
19	Did you say that it takes up to a week for the Annual Threshold to be processed?	Yes, but it may take more or less time depending on whether clarification or correction is needed or depending from the agency.
20	Is the CLAS and the LAP the same?	No, CLAS refers to Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services, a system of standards intended to advance health equity and eliminate health care disparities. LAP refers to a Language Access Plan. LAP focuses more specifically on steps for ensuring materials and services are provided in linguistically appropriate ways for the service population. Please see Section VI. Principles of Service Delivery in Exhibit C – Scope of Work for details.
21	If we were under legal services, guardianship clients are incapacitated so would there be a self-sufficiency requirement for them (#1 under category 4)?	If clients are able to maintain housing or public benefits, the program qualifies.
22	Some financial management support services charge a nominal client service fee which in no way cover all the costs of the program. Would those services be automatically be ineligible due to this?	Please provide more specific information on this scenario to APHCompetitions@austintexas.gov .
23	Are clients in state institutions eligible (such as prisons)?	Yes, as long as they are within Austin/Travis Co. Submit any specific questions to APHCompetitions.

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24	The RFP is clear that there is separate funding for homeless services. What homeless RFPs, particularly for shelter services, will be coming out?	A shelter RFP may be coming out soon, the date is to be announced. Check the APH Competitions website for upcoming competitions.
25	Is purchasing things like HEB gift cards for clients an allowable activity under "food access?"	Yes, please reference the Budget and Narrative Exhibit, specifically the Instructions tab.
26	Can we submit multiple proposals in the same service category but with different projects, i.e. two food access projects?	We would prefer that agencies submit one proposal per service category as long as the programs described are connected. If programs are truly distinct, an agency may submit multiple proposals.
27	Will all the questions and answers discussed today also be posted to the website?	Yes, all presentation materials, including Q&A will be published on the competition website here: 2023-002 Basic Needs Issue Area RFP AustinTexas.gov
28	Is there a minimum annual grant amount or a maximum annual grant amount?	See Exhibit C – Scope of Work, Section IV. Funding and Timeline for the funding parameters for each program area. Different service categories may have different minimum amounts. See #4 for information about maximum amounts.
29	We have some funding that will last through the end of the year. Can we make adjustments to the budget in the first year to accommodate the change in funding?	APH works with agencies with a variety of funding sources and is willing to work with agencies individually upon award to negotiate appropriate spending expectations. For the Purpose of the RFP, all budgets should include a full 12-months of average expected program spending.
32	If we have two different service types in one proposal, should we submit multiple budgets?	Submit one budget per proposal. Distinct programs or services should be included in distinct proposals, but services included in the same proposal as part of the same overarching program may be submitted in one proposal. Please consider how disparate the programs and services are when determining how many proposals to submit.
33	Can we apply for tenants' rights without applying to legal services? Does there have to be a legal services component to qualify for tenants' rights funding?	Offerors may apply for any subset of services under each service category, or additional services that meet the criteria of Exhibit C - Scope of Work. Some funding in Service Category 4: Legal Services and Tenants' Rights is specific to a collaboration with Austin Code Department. Please review Exhibit C carefully for full details.
34	Is there a cap on administrative costs?	No. Each proposal evaluation involves a cost analysis process, and the justification for the proposed budget will help evaluators determine if the administrative costs and cost per client are reasonable for the proposed program. Offerors should be sure to answer

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		all parts of all questions to provide the appropriate information.
35	Where can we find additional details about the collaboration with Austin Code?	Please see Exhibit C: Scope of Work for information about the collaboration with Austin Code Department to implement the Tenant’s Advocacy program.
36	In the transportation item, is capital a permissible cost, such as for the purchase of vehicles?	In general, APH tries to fund social services directly, but a certain amount of capital purchases may be allowed. Capital purchases are generally limited to items under \$5,000. Please see Exhibit E – Social Services Contract Boilerplate with Standard Exhibits for more information about purchasing policies.
37	If our program fits into three different service categories, does it work to our advantage or disadvantage to submit multiple applications?	APH staff can’t determine which proposals are at an advantage or disadvantage. Offerors should do their best to submit different proposals for programs that are distinct from one another, and one proposal for services that fall under one overarching program.
38	What kinds of things would APH be looking for in the emergency response question?	Please see the response to Question 10. APH is interested in understanding how the program being applied for and/or any program at the agency would be able to support should an emergency response be activated. Please see Sections 8.6 and 8.6.1 of Exhibit E: Standard Boilerplate.
39	We are supposed to upload performance reports related to past experience providing the services we are proposing. Our organization hasn’t received long-term grant support from one source and may have evidence from various funders and in various formats. Is there flexibility on what kinds of reports we could submit?	Various types of performance reports are acceptable, including quarterly reports, annual reports, etc. Please upload documents that demonstrate related experience providing similar services and fully respond to the narrative in Form 2 – RFP Proposal to provide evaluators with enough context to draw connections between documents submitted and the experience needed to support your proposal.
40	We haven’t had anything monitored by a funder yet. Is that a problem for the threshold?	No, that will not be a problem in a Threshold Application. Under this circumstance, please respond “No” to the question concerning monitoring reports in the Threshold Application and include a brief explanation stating that you don’t have any reports from funders.
41	Is there a goal for annual clients served or a cost-per-client goal/cap?	No, there is no goal or cap for number of clients served annually or cost per client. Offerors will be able to provide a cost per client and a justification for that cost per client in Form 2 – RFP Proposal.
42	Is the cost per client inclusive the overhead/administrative costs and services?	Yes, the cost per client is automatically calculated based on the annual goal of clients served entered into the budget and the total annual budget and is inclusive of all proposed program costs.

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43	Will you accept applications for less than the total amount in a program area?	Yes, but there may be minimum amounts in each category. Please see Exhibit C – Scope of Work, Section IV. Funding and Timeline for details in each category.
44	Will full or partial salaries for culturally appropriate case managers be considered allowable under this RFP? (Looking at the household stability category.)	Please see Budget and Funding Summary spreadsheet, Instructions tab for more information. Full salaries are allowable if staff are working full-time on the program. Generally, staff funding and time is determined by the agency through a cost allocation method and not determined by APH.
45	Do we need to submit an Intent to Apply and RFP for all three programs or just one RFP, outlining our SOW in all three programs?	Please see the response to question 3. Unique Intent to Apply submissions and RFP Proposals will be required for unique program categories.
46	As you know, our current APH contract for our Meals on Wheels Program, is in the amount of \$482,700. Being that the new Food Access award amount total is just over \$618,000, should we expect not to be awarded the same amount (IF we are awarded)? Would it be recommended that we apply for less? Just trying to gauge how to proceed. We certainly need all the funds we have been awarded in past years, but do not want to jeopardize our application if we apply for too high of an amount	Applicants can submit a request for as much as they choose for each program. The scope of work outlines funds available for the different issue areas. It is unlikely, unless specified otherwise, that only one agency is awarded in each category. Please review the funding section of the scope of work for more information about minimum award amounts.
47	For the Basic Needs Issue Area grant are we required to choose only one of the service categories (Housing Stability, Food services, Legal Services, Transportation) for our proposal? Or can we include multiple in the grant application?	Offerors should do their best to determine the best way to submit their proposal(s). If the programs are distinct from one another, you could submit more than one proposal or do one proposal for services that fall under one overarching program. However, there must be separate Intent to Apply for each proposal that is submitted. If an agency has already submitted one Intent to Apply, they will only be able to submit one proposal.
48	A question we had with the Basic Needs grant is if we are able to use these funds to support housing programs for clients exiting homelessness? The scope of work states that “Funding for housing and homelessness	Per the scope of work, funding for housing and homelessness services is not eligible.

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	services is included in other APH funding opportunities and is not eligible for funding under this solicitation”. Just wanting to make sure that our programs that we are applying for are eligible.	
49	Can we provide rental assistance to young adults who are renting but are not the official leaseholder/owner of the property? (e.g., paying to stay in a room at a friend’s house) We would help the young adult negotiate an agreement to ensure the housing costs are reasonable.	Proof of residency is a requirement for this funding and can be established through a letter from a landlord, head of household or lease.
50	Can you clarify if the following assistance categories will be eligible under this contract? a. Debt/arrears (e.g., rent, utilities, etc.) b. Paying for substance use treatment c. Un-licensed childcare (e.g., paying family members for babysitting) as there is a severe shortage of licensed providers d. Assistance with car payments to maintain access to private transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Rental Arrears is eligible expense, however, there should be an effort by the agency to make sure that the arrears costs are reasonable. However, the City has not developed requirements to make a determination of establishing reasonable limits. b) Substance abuse treatment is funded through a different issue area and is not eligible. c) APH does not fund un-licensed childcare. d) Car payments could be proposed with justification and reasonable limits.
51	It was our understanding from the presentation that we needed to submit one letter per issue area. We are interested in two areas, but the form does not ask for us to declare this. Should we submit two letters on intent?	There must be separate Intent to Apply for each proposal that is submitted. If an agency has already submitted one Intent to Apply they will only be able to submit one proposal.
52	Since our current funding under these contracts is higher than the amount allocated for the relevant service category of the new RFP, should we plan to apply for a reduced funding amount for these programs, or would we be able to apply for the same amount or slightly more than we’re currently receiving?	In the Scope of Work, there is funding that is “flexible” to be used across any category, which can include Household Stability. Please apply for funding that your program is requesting through this RFP. The amounts provided are minimum amounts per Program Category. Please see Solicitation Provisions and Instructions (Exhibit B) that indicates that the amount allocated to awardees of the solicitation may incorporate additional funding should it become available.

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53	I am struggling with #6 of section 1. In the event of a public health emergency, what response services would your agency be prepared to provide to support APH?	Please see the response to Question 10. APH is interested in understanding how the program being applied for and/or any program at the agency would be able to support should an emergency response be activated. Please see Sections 8.6 and 8.6.1 of Exhibit E: Standard Boilerplate.
54	Can dollars from this grant be used exclusively for OTFA (One-time financial assistance)? Or is providing case management services required as well?	One-time financial assistance can be provided if it is negotiated in the budget and described in full within the budget narrative.
55	Performance Measure 20 b. iv in the application additional proposed is that required or options.	Additional proposed performance measures are optional.
56	Regarding funding, is it one year with possible of renewal, if there are extensions is the amount set at the same amount.	The funding is for one year with four renewal options, pending APH annual budget approval. The amount is set at the same amount annually, outlined in the awarded contract.
57	General Operations is there a budget cap for that category	No there is no budget cap for general operations budget category.
58	Language access plan: is it a requirement for the funding or was it just weighed in the application?	Language access is a key part of the cultural competency of a program. In the application, APH asks about agencies' Language Access Plan to determine the agency's level of work in this area. It is a required to be submitted in the application if the agency has a plan written down. If the agency does not have a plan written down, the agency may explain the process for developing a plan in the answer. Completed plans, or plans in progress, may be reviewed annually during monitoring.
59	Eligibility requirements, we serve kids that are sometimes removed from their home and may be relocated out of the Austin/Travis County area we use the zip code as the child's residence. Can funds be used for those children in CASA's care?	In the proposal agencies must explain any exceptions to client eligibility in response to question 14 and any other questions that may cover this issue. If awarded, eligibility exceptions can be discussed during the negotiation process.

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60	Food Access, with the minimum application amount of \$70,000 would this be per contract.	Per the scope of work the minimum amount of \$70,000 per application is required.
61	Is the Form 4 required as part of the application	Yes. In the Offer Sheet, there are instructions for the forms agencies are required to submit. Form 4 in its entirety is required to be submitted and signed.
62	I have a question about where to put the Client Food and Beverage costs in the Budget Format. Specifically, on the 1st tab (Instructions) it lists the line-item categories and what can be included in them, including "Client Food and Beverage." However, on the 2nd tab (Budget Narrative), "Client Food and Beverage" is not listed on any of the rows under "Financial Assistance to Clients." Is this perhaps an oversight on APH's part or am I supposed to put "Client Food and Beverage" costs under one of the other "Financial Assistance to Clients" row categories (such as "Direct Client Assistance")?	<p>That was an APH error. Please add the Client Food and Beverage to the Financial Assistance to Client line.</p> <p>Please note – the line item “Client Food and Beverage” is only used if it is a gift card or groceries for individual clients and is not a regular part of the program. So, for the purposes of this RFP, you will add those to the “Financial Assistance to Client”.</p> <p>The line-item General Operations should be used for food for clients that is a regular part of the program services.</p>
63	In the Budget Narrative and Funding Summary Excel doc, I don't see a Funding Summary tab (for listing other funders of the program), but it is referenced in the Instructions tab. Should there be a Funding Summary tab, or is that not required for this competition?	That was an APH error. There is no separate tab for funding summary so please ignore those instructions.
64	In the COA Basic Needs grant RFP, under “Performance Measures, 20B Social Services Outcome Measures,” the RFP states “Proposals must include one or both of the following standard social services outcome measures:	If your proposed program meets the requirements otherwise outlined in Exhibit C - Scope of Work and neither of these outcome measures aligns with your program, you may reply N/A for these items.

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	<p>Percent of households at risk of homelessness that maintain housing.</p> <p>Percent of individuals who obtain or maintain public benefits.”</p> <p>Neither of these outcomes is appropriate for our program type (Double Up Food Bucks nutrition incentives). Should we reply N/A for both of these? The wording of the question makes it sound like we need to include at least one, but both are out of our scope. Please advise.</p>	
65	<p>In the proposal scoring process, how much weight is given to the direct client assistance budget category?</p>	<p>The direct client assistance budget category is not weighted separate from the other categories. Please see the Program Budget and Funding Summary and Cost Effectiveness section in the proposal for scored questions related to the budget.</p>
66	<p>On the RFP, it states that "Forms 1-4 must be filled out, signed, scanned, and uploaded into PartnerGrants."</p> <p>Does this mean we need to print and sign the RFP Proposal and Program Budget + Funding Summary, or just the Offer Sheet and COA Certifications and Disclosures forms, which have signature lines.</p>	<p>In the Offer Sheet, there are instructions for the forms agencies are required to submit. Forms 1 and 4 require signatures and electronic signatures are acceptable. Other exhibits in the RFP do not require signatures but are required to submit an application.</p>
67	<p>Could you please clarify the distinction between an output and an outcome? Our understanding is that the output would be the service we are providing. The outcome would be the impact on the clients we are serving. Is this correct?</p>	<p>The required output counts all unduplicated clients receiving services through the program. Other outputs might count how many people are provided a particular service if there are more than one.</p> <p>In general, an outcome measures the success rate of the program. For example, the number of persons who successfully meet a goal of the program (numerator) out of the persons surveyed or exited by the program (denominator).</p>
68	<p>In the outcome "Percent of households at risk of homelessness that maintain housing," is there a standard definition for "households at risk</p>	<p>At risk of homelessness refers to individuals or families who are currently housed and not considered homeless, but who are unstably housed. They are low income, and do not have sufficient resources or support networks to stay in housing without</p>

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	<p>of homelessness"? If there is not a standard definition, are there example definitions we can reference for writing this measurement section?</p> <p>For the additional outcomes that we have an option to provide, but are not required to provide, do we get to offer any outcome that we feel best fits our program? Or are there lists of standard APH outcomes that we should use for this purpose?</p>	<p>assistance. They may be facing eviction or living on someone’s couch temporarily. They may be living in a motel with their own funding (not funded by an agency). In general, you can find a definition from HUD, but this funding is not funded through HUD, so there may be some variations not included in the definition: Criteria for Definition of At Risk of Homelessness - HUD Exchange</p> <p>Regarding the optional outcome, agencies can submit any outcome that best fits their program, as long as there is a required outcome also provided.</p>
69	<p>If our organization provides childcare but receives funding from the City of Austin for services completely unrelated to childcare, is our organization still required to meet the childcare specific insurance requirements?</p>	<p>If an agency’s program included in this RFP application includes childcare services (not in the presence of a parent), the insurance required would be Sexual Abuse and Molestation coverage. Please see the Insurance section in Exhibit E: Boilerplate and Standard Exhibits.</p>
70	<p>When the City boilerplate says "shall have access to, and the right to audit, examine, and copy any and all records of the Grantee related to the performance under this Agreement" does that mean the City needs to have access to identifying documents for the organization's clients? Or is there an option to have documentation stored and labeled in a manner that protects their identities but still meets the requirements for maintaining records?</p> <p>I'm asking in reference for RFP 2023-02 Basic Needs, but this is a general question about boilerplate</p>	<p>Yes, in general, the City must have access to identifying documents for clients during a file audit or program monitoring.</p> <p>APH prohibits agencies from sending identifying information in monthly claims or performance reporting and would only be reviewing file documentation during an audit or monitoring and follows privacy rules related to that protected information.</p> <p>Any variation from the terms and conditions of the contract, would be negotiated after an award was made to the agency.</p>

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