

# **Routine Immunization Community Engagement (RICE) 3.0 Request for Funding Applications (RFAs)—Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

The purpose of this document is to recap and answer the questions the Department of Health Services (DHS) received during the live Q&A session held on March 8, 2024, as well as the questions received via email.

## Application Details

**1. What is the application link? And where do I find the budget and performance measurements templates to attach to the link?**

The link to the application is:

<https://redcap.wisconsin.gov/surveys/?s=48DD7RHPNXKFFEA9>. The application is due **April 3rd, 2024 at 11:59pm CST**.

The Performance Measurement and Budget template can be found the Wisconsin Public Notices site and can be filled out and uploaded to the REDCap application.

**2. Is there a maximum limit for amount of funds requested per applicant?**

Yes, organizations can apply for up to \$40,000 for either the pediatric or adult grant.

**3. How many grants will be awarded?**

12 grants total will be awarded- 6 pediatric grants and 6 adult grants.

**4. When will the awards be announced?**

Awards will be announced 30-45 days from the application deadline.

**5. When do you anticipate the contracts to start?**

Contracts can take some time to process through DHS. While a definite date cannot be given, the anticipated timeline for funding is to have contracts starting early to mid-July 2024. This is tentative.

**6. If there are not enough applicants to award the full amount of the grant, can we identify upfront that our organization would like more funds if available?**

You may identify on the application that your organization is willing to accept additional funding if available. However, you still must justify why you would require the additional funds and how those funds will be used towards your objectives.

**7. Are pediatric offices eligible for this grant, or is it only for Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) and Local Health Departments (LTHDs)?**

Organizations meeting at least one of the criteria listed in the RFA are eligible to apply for this grant program.

- 8. Can there be more than one application submitted by a large corporate entity?**  
Sub-organizations under a large corporate entity are eligible to apply for either RFA if they have a unique tax ID and submit separate, unique projects.
- 9. Are we required to have matching grant amounts, or a specific percentage of additional funding dedicated before we can apply to this project?**  
No, the only requirement to apply is that you need to have the funds to fund the activity that you are doing until you are reimbursed by DHS.
- 10. For areas that have high vaccination rates, is the amount of funding given dependent on how much vaccination rates change over the proposed course of activities?**  
No, this funding is awarded based on activities and need.

### VFA/VFC Program

- 11. Does my organization need to be a Vaccines for Children (VFC) or Vaccines for Adults (VFA) provider to be eligible for this grant?**  
No, your organization is still eligible. However, the organizations that are VFC or VFA providers, or are partnered with a VFC or VFA provider, will be given additional points during the scoring review process.
- 12. For vaccine clinics, would we need to follow the same income guides for VFA/VFC?**  
If you are administering vaccines that are provided to you from either the VFA or VFC programs, you need to adhere to the guidelines of those programs (only administer VFA/VFC vaccines to individuals who are eligible to receive those vaccines). This applies to vaccines you receive through any other program, please ALWAYS adhere to the guidelines of those programs.  
  
If you are hosting a clinic, you can vaccinate VFA/VFC eligible individuals with VFA/VFC allotted vaccines, AND you can vaccinate non-eligible individuals using privately bought vaccine.
- 13. We partner with a pharmacy to provide both outreach and vaccinations. How do we determine if the pharmacy we work with is a Vaccine for Adults provider organization?**  
There are no pharmacies currently enrolled in the Wisconsin VFA program.
- 14. We recently did an outreach event as a VFC provider where we went to an open house at a local public school and provided childhood immunizations for those who were behind schedule. Would this type of activity fit into the scope of this grant?**  
Yes, grant funds can be used for a vaccine event but cannot be used to purchase vaccines. The funds can be used to fund the activities associated with a school-based immunization

event. For example, the funds could be used for advertising the vaccine event, professional service costs related to administering vaccines, vaccine storage or transportation materials (for example, vaccine approved coolers), or in-state travel costs.

## Allowable and Unallowable Costs

### **15. Can we bill for vaccines?**

No, vaccines are not reimbursable through this grant. However, items like vaccination supplies (such as gloves, syringes, etc.) are reimbursable as long as they are documented.

### **16. Are event expenses such as refreshments (for example, coffee, water, or snacks for attendees) allowable expenses?**

No, food and beverages are not an allowable expense and are not eligible for reimbursement.

### **17. Are refrigerators or freezer purchases for vaccine storage allowed?**

No, refrigerators or freezers for vaccine storage are not an allowable expense.

### **18. Can we purchase trailers for traveling clinics?**

No, purchase of any vehicle would fall under the "no vehicle" policy and is therefore an unallowable expense.

### **19. Can we get reimbursed for maintenance costs on already-owned vehicles being used for immunization activities?**

Vehicle (equipment) maintenance/upkeep costs are permissible to the extent that the item is used for executing allowable immunization activities ([eCFR :: 45 CFR 75.452 -- Maintenance and repair costs.](#)).

Please note the following:

- Federal immunization funds cannot be used to support vehicle maintenance costs if they do not actually use the vehicles for immunization activities, unless there is a general pooled cost that the jurisdiction equitably applies to all programs.
- If the vehicles are shared use, the costs should be split to ensure immunization funds are not being used to cover the cost of maintenance for other public health programs.
- Also, make sure vehicle maintenance is not already covered under indirect. Since indirect costs are designed for basic overhead, maintenance costs may already be covered though it is possible it may not include 'equipment' maintenance and more so general maintenance.

### **20. Can we use contracted taxi services for getting patients into a clinic?**

Yes, this is an allowable cost.

**21. Can we request reimbursement for wages of coordinators (for example, people who help with scheduling patients, creating Sign-Up Genius links, assist with preparation for a vaccine clinic, administering vaccines)?**

Staffing costs for individuals involved in approved vaccine outreach activities are allowable. If you have a vaccinator or a provider who is assisting your organization with your outreach activities, and that VFC provider invoices you for staff time, they would be considered a sub-awardee. Sub-awardee expenses are allowable expenses under this grant and need to be included in your application.

**22. The head of our pharmacy oversees all the ordering of vaccinations and handles the administrative work leading up to vaccination events. Is their time reimbursable for these activities?**

As long as staffing time relates to the activities approved in grant, and is in the approved budget, their time is reimbursable.

**23. Can we reimburse vendors that develop educational or promotional materials for our vaccine clinics?**

Yes, contactors and vendors are an allowable expense as long as it is in the approved budget.

Promotional items may include t-shirts, hats, bags (tote, fanny pack, and back pack), and water bottles, but items may NOT be branded with external organization's logos; branding outside vaccine content is unallowable. Please refer to the list of allowable and unallowable expenses listed in the RFA.

**24. Can you make donations to immunization coalitions under this grant?**

If you are getting some "service" from the coalition such as communication services, it should be a contracted service and, in the budget, should be listed under Contractual.

Donations made to an immunization coalition without any services rendered is an allowable cost.

**25. Can we use grant funds for forming an immunization coalition?**

If the immunization coalition is local in an area that doesn't already have one, it may be allowable, however this will be subject to how the coalition will fit under the objectives (work and/or goals) of the RICE 2.0 grant.

There currently is a coalition in existence- The [Immunize Wisconsin](#) Coalition.

**26. Can funds be used to obtain continuing education credits or to create a host site for certified medical assistants continuing education?**

Yes. The cost of training and education provided for employee development is allowable, as long as it is education/training specific to vaccines.

**27. Are Facebook Ads/boosting of posts about vaccines and clinics, as well as regular media (tv ads, radio ads, fliers, billboards, etc.) allowable costs?**

Yes, these are all allowable costs. Please remember that social media and regular media ads are meant to supplement the in-person interactions and activities that your organization will conduct as a means of outreach.

**28. Are magnets with CDC or ACIP routine vaccine guidance an allowable expense since they are not necessary printing-related costs?**

So long as the magnets are serving as a medium for communicating accurate and verified vaccine information—like the approved vaccine schedules, or reminders with a date for when to return for dose 2—they would be considered a publication of vaccine information and are an acceptable expense. Other promotional materials or gifted materials with or without branding are not an allowable cost.

**29. Are vaccine clinical supplies an allowable expense (for example, sharps disposals containers, needles, alcohol wipes)?**

Yes, clinical supplies are an allowable expense. Purchasing vaccine doses or vials are not allowable expenses.

**30. Are digital data loggers required for VFC providers considered an allowable expense?**

Yes, digital data loggers for vaccine storage and transport can be funded through this grant.

**31. Are out-of-state conferences or trainings an allowable expense under this grant?**

Out-of-state conferences and trainings are an allowable expense if they are sponsored by a federal government agency (for example, CDC or DHHS) or a national organization for immunizations.

**32. What are stipend reimbursements?**

Stipend reimbursements are funds directed towards stipends designated as a payment made to an individual under a fellowship or training grant. The stipend is in accordance with established levels to provide for the individual's living expenses during the period of training. A stipend is not considered compensation for the services expected of an employee.

## Grant Program

**33. What vaccines are supported by this grant?**

This grant supports all efforts for routinely recommended vaccinations, including the COVID-19 vaccine.

**34. Will there be an additional round of grant opportunities being distributed in the future, and how will we know if there are more opportunities available?**

At this time, we do not have any information on additional grant opportunities. Please check the [Wisconsin Public Notices webpage](#) for future funding opportunities

**35.If vaccine clinics are open to everyone who is interested, including underserved communities and those with insurance and access to health care, would this still fulfill the goals and mission of the grant?**

Yes, as long as the event or vaccine clinic is open and inclusive of all communities, especially communities that are hard to reach or are marginalized, then you are fulfilling the goals and mission of this grant to increase routine vaccination uptake in underserved communities.

**36.Can a 1:1 education opportunity be within the context of a doctor's visit, or does it have to be an outreach event or something equivalent? What if we have an educational flyer on the benefits of vaccination and the doctor provides this to the patient during their 1:1, would that be allowable?**

Yes, providing educational materials to a patient during a 1:1 visit or during an outreach event would qualify. If staff time or the visit is reimbursed through this grant, the patient should not be billed, nor should reimbursement be sought elsewhere (for example, through Medicaid or insurance).

**37.Can you provide activities that would be acceptable in the scope of this grant?**

Sample activities could include vaccine clinics, door knocking events, educational or community engagement events, training advocates in your community, one-on-one vaccine counseling, or social media campaigns. This list is not comprehensive and we encourage applicants to leverage any number of outreach activities that are appropriately suited to the communities they serve.

**38.What will the reporting cadence be when submitting expense invoices for reimbursements?**

The timeline for submitting invoices will be set in the grant agreement and contract and is anticipated to be monthly.

**39.How far back can the reimbursements go?**

Reimbursements can only be given for activities that happen during the scope of your contract.