STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION FOR WASTEWATER TESTING SERVICES

RFI # 34349-26525
OCTOBER 17, 2024

1. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:

The State of Tennessee, Department of Health issues this Request for Information ("RFI") for the purpose of learning more about the availability of expert services to support the Department's Waterborne and Zoonotic Program with laboratory wastewater testing services and the price ranges associated with these services that routinely support the collection of samples via sampling kits, laboratory analysis, and support later analysis of influent composite or grab water samples collected pretreatment from Wastewater Treatment Plants (WWTPs). We appreciate your input and participation in this process.

2. BACKGROUND:

The purpose of this RFI is to secure information on available services and associated price ranges for expert laboratory wastewater testing services that routinely support the collection of wastewater samples via sampling kits, laboratory analysis, and support later analysis of influent composite or grab wastewater samples collected pretreatment from WWTPs. These samples will be analyzed for specific analytes, which will be determined based on program needs. The selected laboratory will collaborate with the Department's Waterborne and Zoonotic Program and the State Public Health Laboratory (SPHL) to fulfill federal grant activities. The primary goal is to improve and expand laboratory testing capabilities to support ongoing wastewater-based epidemiology. This initiative aims to enhance the overall effectiveness of monitoring and responding to public health threats.

The Waterborne and Zoonotic Program currently houses the wastewater surveillance initiative, coordinating projects and overseeing the implementation of wastewater surveillance across Tennessee. This program supports the overarching goals of the Communicable and Environmental Diseases and Emergency Preparedness Division (CEDEP). In this role, the Waterborne and Zoonotic Program acts as the main point of contact for partnerships between local health departments, WWTPs, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) National Wastewater Surveillance System (NWSS), and the SPHL. Responsibilities include onboarding WWTPs into the program to routinely collect and submit wastewater samples for testing, analyzing, and visualizing test results, and distributing data to both internal and external partners, including the CDC's NWSS. Testing capacity for a limited number of analytes is available through the SPHL. The State is interested in contracting with a laboratory that can provide testing services to expand the range of analytes that can be tested in wastewater samples.

3. COMMUNICATIONS:

3.1. Please submit your response and any questions to this RFI to:

Jessica Taylor, Competitive Procurement Assistant
Procurement Management Office,
Division of Administrative Services
Andrew Johnson Tower, 6th Floor
710 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, TN 37243
Phone: 615-532-7560
Email: Jessica.Lynn.Taylor@tn.gov

3.2. Please reference RFI # 34349-26525 with all communications to this RFI.

3.3 A Pre-Response Conference will be held at the time and date detailed in the RFI § 4, Schedule of Events. Please contact the main point of contact, referenced in RFI § 3.2., to RSVP for the Pre-Response Conference. Your response is necessary to ensure that there is adequate space to accommodate overall attendance. The Conference will be held at:

Meeting Name: RFI #34349-26525 Teleconference
Meeting number (access code): 2301 310 2936
Meeting password: 3BQfhquBV26
Meeting Link:
https://tn.webex.com/tn/j.php?MTID=m34da920dba6a78d84a06bbfc74d045c1
Join by phone: +1-415-655-0001 US TOLL

4. RFI SCHEDULE OF EVENTS:

	EVENT	TIME (Central Time Zone)	DATE (all dates are State business days)
1.	RFI Issued		October 17, 2024
2.	Pre-response Conference	11:00 a.m.	October 21, 2024
3.	Written “Questions & Comments” Deadline	2:00 p.m.	October 28, 2024
4.	State Response to Written “Questions & Comments”		October 31, 2024
5.	RFI Response Deadline	2:00 p.m.	November 8, 2024

5. GENERAL INFORMATION:

5.1. Please note that responding to this RFI is not a prerequisite for responding to any future solicitations related to this project and a response to this RFI will not create any contract rights. Responses to this RFI will become property of the State.

5.2. The information gathered during this RFI is part of an ongoing procurement. In order to prevent an unfair advantage among potential respondents, the RFI responses will not be available until after the completion of evaluation of any responses, proposals, or bids

resulting from a Request for Qualifications, Request for Proposals, Invitation to Bid or other procurement method. In the event that the state chooses not to go further in the procurement process and responses are never evaluated, the responses to the procurement including the responses to the RFI, will be considered confidential by the State.

5.3. The State will not pay for any costs associated with responding to this RFI.

6. INFORMATIONAL FORMS:

The State is requesting the following information from all interested parties. Please fill out the following forms:

RFI # 34349-26525 **TECHNICAL INFORMATIONAL FORM**
1. RESPONDENT LEGAL ENTITY NAME:
2. RESPONDENT CONTACT PERSON: Name, Title: Address: Phone Number: Email:
3. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF EXPERIENCE PROVIDING SIMILAR SCOPE OF SERVICES/PRODUCTS IN THE UNITED STATES ATA STATEWIDE LEVEL
4. VENDOR BACKGROUND AND EXPERIENCE Describe up to three (3) projects in which your company has implemented similar services to those described in the second section of this description. Projects should have been implemented within the last five (5) years. For each project, describe: 1) Client Name 2) Brief description of the project 3) Description of the process used in previous projects to send and receive sampling kits when obtaining samples from wastewater treatment plants 4) Listing of necessary materials and associated costs for sending and receiving sampling kits 5) Listing of necessary positions and associated costs for sample procurement
5. TIME PERIOD NEEDED FOR DEVELOPMENT OF SAMPLING STANDARD OF PRACTICE FOR WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANTS AND IMPLEMENTATION TO ROUTINELY RECEIVE WASTEWATER SAMPLES.
6. DESCRIPTION OF TECHNICAL APPROACH FOR LABORATORY WASTEWATER TESTING PROCESS AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGY. Projects should have been implemented within the last five (5) years. For each of the three (3) projects listed in the response to question #4 of this **TECHNICAL INFORMATIONAL FORM**, please describe the following: 1) How quality control measures have ensured the highest level of data quality

2) The laboratory QA/QC procedures and assay controls, including definitions and pass/fail criteria
3) The laboratory protocol for processing and testing wastewater to quantify each available wastewater analyte
4) The number of samples tested per week
5) The length of time required to transition from testing one set of targets to a different set
6) How communication and collaboration was ensured between agency project investigators

7. DESCRIPTION OF DATA HOUSING, SECURITY, DATA ANALYSIS SUPPORT, AND DATA VISUALIZATION SUPPORT

Projects should have been implemented within the last five (5) years. For each project, describe:

1) The method(s) used to share wastewater test results with project investigators
2) The type of database used to store wastewater test results. If project investigators were granted access to the database, describe how this process was managed and the associated security measures
3) The type of analytical support provided during the project
4) The type of data visualization support provided during the project

8. DESCRIPTION OF WASTEWATER TESTING CAPACITY

For each analyte listed below, please provide a YES/NO answer to whether your agency has the capacity to test wastewater for the analyte. Additionally, please provide a short description of the available genomic capacity for each analyte.

1) West Nile Virus – YES/NO
2) Hepatitis A – YES/NO
3) Measles – YES/NO
4) Norovirus (GI & GII) – YES/NO
5) Candida Auris – YES/NO
6) Mpox (Clade I & Clade II or NVO Assay) – YES/NO
7) SARS-CoV-2 – YES/NO
8) RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus) – YES/NO
9) Influenza (A & B) – YES/NO
10) H5N1 (Avian Influenza) – YES/NO
11) Dengue – YES/NO
12) Human Adenovirus (40/41 - GF) – YES/NO
13) Carbapenemases/ESBLs/Colistin resistance/Vancomycin resistance – YES/NO
14) Campylobacter – YES/NO
15) Salmonella – YES/NO
16) Enterovirus D68 – YES/NO
17) Cryptosporidium – YES/NO
18) Rotavirus A – YES/NO
19) Zika – YES/NO

20) Clostridioides difficile (C. Diff) – YES/NO
21) Polio – YES/NO
22) Tuberculosis – YES/NO
23) Shigella – YES/NO
24) Parainfluenza (HPIV) – YES/NO
25) Human Metapneumovirus (HMPV) – YES/NO
26) Shiga toxin-producing E. coli – YES/NO

9. DESCRIPTION OF WASTEWATER TESTING VALIDATION AND COST

Projects should have been implemented within the last five (5) years. Describe up to three (3) projects in which your company has validated a new target. For each project, describe:

1) The process and requirements to validate a newly selected target
2) The length of time to validate a new target

10. DESCRIPTION OF DATA OWNERSHIP & PUBLICATIONS

Projects should have been implemented within the last five (5) years. Describe up to three (3) projects in which your company has requested partial or full ownership of the data. For each project, describe:

1) Data sharing agreements or requirements you requested from the project investigators, including any restrictions or conditions
2) Publications that used any/all data from the project partnership
3) The steps taken to protect the privacy of utilities and any public health-related data used

COST INFORMATIONAL FORM

1. Describe what pricing units you typically utilize for similar services or goods (e.g., per hour, each, etc.:

2. Describe the typical price range for similar services or goods

3. DESCRIPTION OF WASTEWATER TESTING COST

If your agency answered YES to having the capacity to test for the analyte listed in #8 of the **TECHNICAL INFORMATIONAL FORM** and/or genomic analysis is available, provide a price range by analyte and panel (if available) per sample. Additionally, please provide a price range for testing multiple samples simultaneously:

1) West Nile Virus
2) Hepatitis A
3) Measles
4) Norovirus (GI & GII)
5) Candida Auris
6) Mpox (Clade I & Clade II or NVO Assay)
7) SARS-CoV-2

8) RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus)
9) Influenza (A & B)
10) H5N1 (Avian Influenza)
11) Dengue
12) Human Adenovirus (40/41 - GF)
13) Carbapenemases/ESBLs/Colistin resistance/Vancomycin resistance
14) Campylobacter
15) Salmonella
16) Enterovirus D68
17) Cryptosporidium
18) Rotavirus A
19) Zika
20) Clostridioides difficile (C. Diff)
21) Polio
22) Tuberculosis
23) Shigella
24) Parainfluenza (HPIV)
25) Human Metapneumovirus (HMPV)
26) Shiga toxin-producing E. coli

4. WASTEWATER TESTING VALIDATION COST

   Projects should have been implemented within the last five (5) years. Provide a price range for the three (3) projects your agency chose as examples in #9 of the **TECHNICAL INFORMATIONAL FORM** for new target validation.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS
1. Please provide input on alternative approaches or additional things to consider that might benefit the State: