



Opioid Remediation Request for Information

Bureau of Recovery Services

05/31/2023

## 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.

As part of BPHC’s efforts to have an equitable procurement process, BPHC will consider and encourage Certified Unrepresentative Businesses Enterprises (CUBE) 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 submit responses to this RFI.

**The purpose of this Request for Information is to gather community and stakeholder input and will not result in a contract.**

## II. RFI Timeline

Wednesday, May 24 <sup>th</sup> 2023	Posted online at: <a href="https://www.boston.gov/government/cabinets/boston-public-health-commission/working-health-commission/bphc-rfps-and-bids">https://www.boston.gov/government/cabinets/boston-public-health-commission/working-health-commission/bphc-rfps-and-bids</a> by 10:00 AM EST
August 9 <sup>th</sup> , 2023	Responses due via email by August 9 <sup>th</sup> , 2023 by 5:00 PM EST:  Subject – RFI Opioid Remediation  Email: OVERDOSEPREVENTION@BPHC.ORG <b>NO EXCEPTIONS TO THIS DEADLINE</b>

#### Overview of the Opioid Remediation Funding

Opioid manufacturers and distributors were implicated in the opioid epidemic for inaccurately marketing risks related to opioid medication, leading to patients developing opioid use disorders (OUD) and fueling overdoses. Former Attorney General Maura Healey joined attorney generals from across the US and [successfully litigated claims against these companies](#) resulting in a significant financial settlement.

Massachusetts created the Opioid Recovery Remediation Fund (ORRF), managed by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health to administer the Commonwealth's share of the funds. As of December 1, [2022](#) Massachusetts has received \$91,993,357. The Commonwealth is expected to get over [\\$526 million](#) in total over the next 18 years. Approximately 60% of these settlement funds, roughly \$344 million, will go directly to ORRF and the remaining 40% will be split across 150 cities and towns in the Commonwealth. Boston will receive the highest percentage (10%) of these municipal funds, based on criteria including federal data on opioid use disorder, overdose deaths, and the number of opioids shipped into the region. Boston has borne the largest burden of opioid deaths and leveraged substantial resources to fight the epidemic.

The opioid epidemic remains ongoing, exacerbated by COVID-19's disruption of social services and mental health. From 2020 to 2021, fatal opioid-related overdoses increased by 8.8% in Massachusetts. In 2021 more people died from overdose in Massachusetts than any year prior. Similarly, Boston EMS responded to 9% more narcotics-related incidents in 2021 compared to 2020. Overdose rates among Black individuals have [risen disproportionately since 2013](#), emphasizing the need for an equitable approach.

The settlement funding represents a major opportunity and responsibility because opioid use disorder has devastated communities and families. Use of funds should be thoughtful, reflecting the wishes of stakeholders affected by opioids.

While amounts may change, Boston is currently estimated to receive a minimum of [\\$22M over the next 15 years](#). The State has dispersed an initial payment of \$4,676,799 to the City of Boston. Going forward Boston will receive approximately \$1M annually in payments.

These abatement funds offer considerable flexibility, and can support [a wide variety of programming](#) focused on prevention, treatment, harm reduction, recovery supports, and more. The State requests the funding be targeted to fill gaps in the system and is encouraging innovative approaches. For example, Boston can utilize the dollars to stand up new programs or expand existing services not currently reimbursed by state funds. In addition, the use of funds may be informed by Boston's [Long-term Public Health Strategic Outlook](#).

#### Our Invitation

The City of Boston is committed to transparent and public decision-making around the use of these funds. This Request for Information (RFI) is to solicit input into Boston's use of Opioid Remediation Funding.\* The RFI is one of multiple ways we are seeking input from Boston residents and organizations who have been most affected by the opioid epidemic such as families, people with opioid use disorder, and service providers. We are requesting demographic information as part of your responses so that we can ensure we are reaching populations who have been historically marginalized.

Responses will inform how opioid remediation funding gets spent, and respondents are encouraged to consider the overall amount and time frame for disbursements in making their recommendations. The infusion of money has the potential to save lives, heal some of the damages caused by the opioid epidemic, and/or prevent future harm.

## APPENDIX 1: RESPONSES

Voice your vision for how the City of Boston should use the Opioid Remediation Funding and submit your responses to the questions below to [OVERDOSEPREVENTION@BPHC.ORG](mailto:OVERDOSEPREVENTION@BPHC.ORG). Please be sure to put "RFI" in the subject of your email. Submissions should be no longer than 3 pages and may be submitted in Chinese, Cabo Verdean Creole, Haitian Creole English, Portuguese, Somali, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

## APPENDIX 2: [More materials from the State of Massachusetts about the Opioid Remediation Funding](#)

APPENDIX 3: [A chart synthesizing results](#) from an assessment done November 2021 and a strategic planning process from Spring 2022, identifying how the City of Boston should address substance use and homelessness, leveraging public dollars from the American Rescue Plan Act. Both efforts consisted of substantial listening sessions with the public and stakeholders.

### **\*This RFI will not result in a contract**

## IV. Response Instructions

### **Introduction (up to 1/2 page):**

Please introduce yourself or your organization and the population/neighborhood you serve by answering the following questions:

- Name of yourself or your organization
- Your connection to the opioid epidemic (I.e. person in recovery, family member or friend, person who uses drugs, youth/young adult)
- What race/ethnicity category best describes you: Asian, Black/African American, White/Caucasian, Hispanic/Latino(a)(x), Indigenous/Native American, Multiracial, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander.
- For organizations, please provide a brief summary of your organization and what you do. What work are you doing that addresses the opioid epidemic?

**Vision (up to 2 ½ pages): Please propose your vision for the City's use of Opioid Remediation Funding by answering one or more of the questions below. As a reminder, this RFI will inform how opioid remediation funding gets spent and does not constitute strategic planning. The funding is limited and cannot sustain large projects.**

- What are your TOP priorities for how the City of Boston should use the opioid settlement funds? Share up to three top priorities. [See examples here](#).
- Overdose rates among Black individuals have [risen disproportionately since 2013](#). How should remediation funding be used to address this issue in Boston?
- Should the City make a big investment into a single program, or smaller investments into multiple programs?

- Should the City prioritize creating new programming or expanding existing programming?
- Where in this complex issue should we focus our efforts? Impacted families? People in recovery from opioid use disorder? People who use opioids? Youth vulnerable to OUD?

**Online Form:** You may also give input via the online form in multiple languages: [Cabo Verdean Creole](#), [Chinese](#), [English](#), [Haitian Creole](#), [Portuguese](#), [Somali](#), [Spanish](#), and [Vietnamese](#).

Organizations can support the effort by sending their members to this form to ensure we hear from a wide range of Boston residents.

#### V. Submission Instructions

Please submit your Responses by July 12<sup>th</sup> 2023 by 5:00pm EST

Subject – RFI Opioid Remediation

Email: [OVERDOSEPREVENTION@BPHC.ORG](mailto:OVERDOSEPREVENTION@BPHC.ORG)