



Request for Proposal  
2025 – 2026 Boston Child Health Survey

Center for Public Health Science and Innovation

## Overview

The Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) is the local public health department for the City of Boston. BPHC's mission is to work in partnership with communities to protect and promote the health and well-being of all Boston residents, especially those impacted by racism and systemic inequities.

BPHC seeks a vendor to conduct data collection for the 2026 Boston Survey of Children's Health (BSCH). The BSCH will be modeled closely after the National Survey of Children's Health (NSCH) which is designed to produce national and state-level data on the health and well-being of children under 18 years of age in the US. The NSCH is sponsored primarily by the US Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) Health Resources and Services Administration's Maternal and Child Health Bureau (HRSA MCHB). The US Census Bureau conducts the NSCH on behalf of the HHS under Title 13, United States Code, Section 8(b) which allows the Census Bureau to conduct surveys on behalf of other agencies. The BSCH will be conducted independently of the HRSA MCHB and the US Census Bureau and while our survey instrument will be closely modeled after the NSCH instrument we expect our sampling methodology to be different from the national survey.

As part of BPHC's efforts to have an equitable procurement process, BPHC will consider and encourage underrepresented 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.

Living Wage Compliance: all service contracts awarded by BPHC may be subject to 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 sufficient for a family of four to live at or above the federal poverty level. This wage amount, called the living wage, is recalculated annually. For more information, visit <https://www.boston.gov/worker-empowerment/livingwage-division>

RFP Timeline	
Thurs June 26, 2025	RFP Posted on the Boston Globe
Thurs, June 26, 2025	RFP available online at <a href="https://boston.gov/rfp">boston.gov/rfp</a> by 11:00 AM EDT
Wed, July 9, 2025	Questions due in writing by 5:00 PM EDT to: <a href="mailto:RFR@bphc.org">RFR@bphc.org</a>  Subject – 2025 - 2026 BCHS RFP Applicant Questions
Wed, July 16, 2025	Responses to questions available for viewing on <a href="https://boston.gov/rfp">boston.gov/rfp</a> by 5:00 PM EDT
Wed, July 30, 2025	Proposal due via email by 5:00 PM EDT to: <a href="mailto:RFR@bphc.org">RFR@bphc.org</a>  Subject – 2025- 2026 BCHS RFP <b>NO EXCEPTIONS TO THIS DEADLINE</b>
Wed, September 3, 2025	Notification of Decision:  Desired date to award. BPHC has the discretion to extend this time period without notice to the proposers. 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.

## Scope of Work

The BPHC is seeking a vendor to conduct on-going monthly BCHS data collection for a 6-month period beginning in January 2026 among Boston residents who have a child residing in their household. The survey instrument will be provided by the BPHC and will average 26-27 minutes in interview length.

### Survey Methodology and Screening

The BPHC requires data collection to follow a random-digit-dial (RDD) method utilizing a computer-assisted telephone interview (CATI) system. All Boston households with landline telephones are to be included in a landline frame. In addition, a substantial portion of interviews will be collected in a cell phone frame of non-institutionalized Boston caregiver adults ages 18 and older who use a cellphone. We expect the proposed sampling plan will utilize a disproportionate stratified random sampling method in which high density stratum will be sampled at a higher rate than the medium density stratum to increase the efficiency of the data collection process. The proposed sampling plans should be described in detail and should include plans to periodically evaluate the sampling strategy and adjust to improve response rates while maintaining proportional geographical representation (please see Small-Area Sampling section below).

We would like cost estimates for two landline/cell-phone combination options. These are overlapping dual frames in which some percentages of interviews are collected within the landline phone frame, and the remainder are collected within the cell-phone frame. In this mix, the cell-phone users are not necessarily cellphone only users. Please see the cost estimate summary table below for more information on the proportion of landline and cellphone in the sample options.

Survey methodology should be conducted according to standard survey methods, with exceptions noted here. The survey partial-complete point (the point after which partially completed interviews will be accepted toward the final sample size count) is set at a minimum 80% completion of the survey instrument. Partials may constitute a maximum of 5% of the sample total for each of the frames. Additionally, two residency screener questions are to be included in the respondent selection process; these are city/town of residence and zip code of residence (Boston zip codes for purposes of this survey include and are limited to: 02108, 02109, 02110, 02111, 02113, 02114, 02115, 02116, 02118, 02119, 02120, 02121, 02122, 02124, 02125, 02126, 02127, 02128, 02129, 02130, 02131, 02132, 02134, 02135, 02136, 02199, 02210, 02215, 02163, and 02467.)

Respondents who do not reside in Boston (i.e., do not meet the residency screener questions) will not be eligible for participation. The acquisition of the landline and cell-phone sampling frames is the responsibility of the applicant and should be included in the proposal.

Responses to this RFP should clearly outline their understanding of the appropriate survey methodology, and further should specify methodology assumptions, such as net incidence, coverage, and response rate.

In addition to the two residency screeners, there will be a third screener question to ascertain a child residing in the household. Besides, the child health survey has two parts: a) the selection questionnaire; b) topical questionnaire. The selection questionnaire collects information about the presence of all children within the household, child demographic information, and basic questions about each child's health. One child will be selected from the completed first part, and one of three age-based topical questionnaires is provided to the household based on the sampled child's age and health status.

#### Small-Area Sampling

In similar population-based health surveys, we have utilized cell phone sampling methods that are more commonly applied for efficient sampling in small-area research (county and city level). This included a cell sample design based on telephone exchanges that have their rate centers (the midpoint of the rate area) in the vicinity of the Boston area.

Applicants should indicate their understanding and experience with cell phone sampling in geographically small areas; and propose a methodology for cell phone sampling in the city of Boston.

#### Respondent Oversample

In order to achieve a survey sample which is more representative of specific Boston community groups, the BPHC may conduct an oversample in specific zip codes. Please provide your oversampling methodology targeting under-represented groups. In addition, we would also like to know more about your experience with oversampling.

#### Alternate Languages

The BPHC desires that the survey be readily conducted in both English and Spanish according to the linguistic needs of each individual respondent, with the Spanish dialect tailored to best reflect that spoken by Boston's Spanish-speaking community. The selected applicant will prepare the Spanish-

translation of the survey instrument. The BPHC would require an opportunity to review this translation for accuracy and cultural appropriateness prior to CATI programming and fielding.

Please include details on your organization's capacity to complete interviews among Spanish-speaking Boston residents, including your protocol for identifying and then completing interviews among Spanish-speaking respondents.

Additionally, the BPHC would like to receive add-on pricing for interviewing in each of the following languages (please provide price for each language individually): Chinese (Mandarin and Cantonese), Vietnamese, Haitian Creole, Portuguese, and Cape Verdean Creole. Please include details on your organization's capacity to complete interviews among Boston residents speaking any of these languages and your protocol for identifying and then completing interviews.

#### Interviewer Training and Quality Assurance

Applicants are expected to include an interviewer-training process for the survey, including mock-interview procedures, exercises on pronunciation of medical conditions, exercises on gaining cooperation of interviewees, and preparation to respond to interviewee questions. Sensitivity on the part of the interview team is especially important given the nature of some survey topics. Please describe the quality assurance protocol that will be followed.

In your proposal we would like you to discuss your organization's expertise in refusal conversion strategies. While we do not expect you to contact a respondent who clearly asks to be removed from calling or who is verbally abusive, we would like to hear about your strategies when eligible respondents initially refuse to participate with a "soft" refusal.

The BPHC would like the selected applicant to provide a toll-free line to respondents so that they could call at their convenience if they had questions about the survey, wanted to complete the interview, or wanted to give feedback. In addition, a BPHC staff number will be available for respondents wishing to follow-up directly with BPHC to verify the authenticity of the survey or provide feedback.

The BPHC requires remote access for pretesting of CATI system programming prior to the start of live interviewing. Also, the BPHC requires the ability to remotely live-monitor interviewers via audio tie-in, including visual access to the CATI program, upon request. Monthly status reports to monitor data collection progress are also desired.

#### Deliverables

Deliverables include: a) a first-month raw dataset (due Feb 15, 2026), b) a three-month dataset (due April 15, 2026), c) an end-of-survey dataset (due July 15, 2026), d) final unweighted and weighted SAS datasets (due Aug 15, 2026), and e) a detailed methods report for interviews among Boston residents (due Aug 15, 2026). The delivery dates included here assume data collection begins January 2026 and ends June 2026. The weighted dataset should include a design weight consistent with Census Bureau's NSCH methods. Additionally, data should be post-stratified twice, producing two distinct final weight variables by applying a raking algorithm to iteratively adjust the design weighted sample to match the population for specific demographic dimensions. The BPHC would like the selected applicant to provide details to the BPHC project team on the weight variables design and

calculation for BPHC review and approval. In the proposal, please describe your organization's expertise and experience conducting complex survey design weight calculations, including consideration of an overlapping dual-frame sample design, and your ability to adapt such calculations to the Boston population. Additionally, please describe your expertise with applying imputation techniques for treatment of missing data, and methods for minimizing design effects during the weighting process.

The final methods report should include descriptions of the sample design for both landline and cell phone samples, the screening process, the data collection protocol, the survey questionnaire, the quality assurance protocol and interviewer monitoring, a thorough description of the weight design methodologies, data processing procedures, data quality indicators and survey response rates following American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) guidance. In addition, a survey code book that matches variable names to their corresponding question numbers and/or description, including design variables, is required. A copy of the statistical software code used in weighting should be included.

Please complete the table below for the cost of services by providing prices for the items listed. All prices listed by the applicant shall be firm fixed price inclusive of all charges, including delivery. In addition to completing the cost table below, please include a detailed budget for 2,000 interviews and a distribution of 5% landline and 95% cellphone.

For data collected via the requested overlapping dual-frame sampling method specified in this RFP:

Total Sample Size	Landline 10%/ Cellphone 90%	Landline 5%/ Cellphone 95%
1800 interviews		
2000 interviews		
2200 interviews		
2500 interviews		

We anticipate the contract period from September 15, 2025, through September 14, 2026. The Applicant must conduct on-going monthly data collection among Boston residents with a child in their household for a full 6-month cycle beginning in January 2026. Deliverables, which must be submitted within two weeks of completing data collection for that period, include a first month's raw dataset, a first three month's dataset, and end of survey dataset. Final deliverables include: a final unweighted and weighted SAS dataset and methods report for interviews among Boston residents. The final dataset and methods report for the data collection are to be submitted to the BPHC by August 15, 2026.

### Minimum Qualifications

Proposers must possess the following qualifications for each role and assignment as indicated.

Please provide brief examples of how your company meets or exceeds these qualifications.

A qualified applicant must possess the following in order to have their proposal considered and perform the service as described herein:

- 1) Have a minimum of 5 years of experience in the collection of interview surveys with a complex survey design via a computer-aided telephone interviewing process.
- 2) Experience weighting data collected from a complex survey design.
- 3) Experience collecting data from both landline and cellular telephone samples.
- 4) Experience collecting health survey data with highly sensitive topics.

### Application Instructions

In writing the proposal, provide a clear and concise description of how the requirements can be met as set forth in the Scope of Services listed in the RFP including the Cost of Services (page 7) to indicate pricing. The Boston Public Health Commission is exempt from payment for Massachusetts sales tax and tax should not be included.

The BPHC reserves the right to waive informalities in any or all Proposals; to reject any or all Proposals; to revise the RFP and re-request for proposals, if it is in the public's interest to do so.

Applicants must complete and submit the reference request form (Reference Form) found in this RFP.

### Submission Instructions

Please submit your proposal as one pdf file inclusive of the cost table, detailed budget, and the reference form.

Please submit your Proposal by: Wednesday July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025, via email by 5:00 PM EDT

Subject: 2025- 2026 BCHS RFP Proposal

Email: [RFR@bphc.org](mailto:RFR@bphc.org)

## Reference Form

### Request for Proposal: 2025 - 2026 Boston Child Health Survey

Company / Entity Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

List three (3) service contracts related or similar to the scope of service described in this RFP that have been completed within the past ten (10) years.

#### Business Reference 1

Company or Entity: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name & Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Brief Description of Work: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount of Contract: \_\_\_\_\_

Contract Start / End Date: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Business Reference 2

Company or Entity: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name & Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Brief Description of Work: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount of Contract: \_\_\_\_\_

Contract Start / End Date: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Business Reference 3

Company or Entity: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name & Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Brief Description of Work: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount of Contract: \_\_\_\_\_

Contract Start / End Date: \_\_\_\_\_