

**State of Connecticut – Department of Public Health  
Tobacco Control Program**

**DPH RFP Log# 2025-0901: Connecticut Quitline Services  
Questions and Answers**

1. **Question:** Can you please forward the information noted in DPH RFP #2025-0901: CT Quitline Services, page 26, V. Mandatory Provisions, A. POS Standard Contract, Parts I and II? The request is for a copy of Part I of the standard contract.

**Answer:** Yes, see Part I of the Sample Contract included with this file. The sample contract language is subject to changes at the discretion of the State of Connecticut and is being provided only as a framework to applicants who have indicated their intent to apply for funds under this RFP.

2. **Question:** Noted in paragraph one, page 10 of the RFP, it states 24-hour service for inbound and outbound calls should be provided Monday-Sunday. In section F on page 14 of the RFP, it shares that although 24-hour service is preferred, minimum availability on a weekly basis for one-on-one cessation counselors is to receive inbound and place outbound calls for at least 16 hours per day, including evening and weekend hours.

Is it acceptable to submit the RFP with 16 hours of inbound and outbound call operations, providing for 24 X 7 interactive website operations? Does this RFP language mean that only 24-hour service for inbound and outbound calls is accepted.

**Answer:** Yes, if the minimum availability on a weekly basis for one-on-one cessation counselors to receive inbound and place outbound calls is at least sixteen (16) hours per day, including evening and weekend hours, it is acceptable to submit a proposal.

3. **Question:** One of the minimum requirements is having at least 3 years of experience providing tobacco use cessation quitline services. Is this a hard requirement?

**Answer:** Yes, an eligible vendor must have at least three (3) years of experience providing tobacco use cessation quitline services.

4. **Question:** Please reconfirm the due date for this procurement by providing it in response to answers to questions.

**Answer:** The RFP letter of intent is due on June 30, 2023, and the proposal is due on July 13, 2023.

5. **Question:** Please provide greater explanation of your expectations related to any required subcontracting to minority-owned, women-owned, or other types or categories of small or disadvantaged businesses? For example, what is required with the proposal, and what is required to comply during the term of the contract?

**Answer:** There is no requirement to subcontract with anyone. Should you choose to subcontract, we do ask if they fall into one of those categories as listed on the Subcontractor Schedule Detail Form which is part of the Budget submission.

6. **Question:** Are bidders permitted to deviate in any way from any manner of quoting fees you may be expecting? For example, if there is a pricing page in the RFP, can bidders submit an alternate fee structure? If there is no pricing page in the RFP, do you have any preference for how bidders should quote fees or can bidders create their own pricing categories?

**Answer:** Bidders are asked to provide a fee-for-service budget that includes the details of all costs included in their calculations. The form on Page 61 should be used.

7. **Question:** Please describe your level of satisfaction with your current or recent vendor(s) for the same purchasing activity, if applicable.

**Answer:** This RFP has been released due to an upcoming contract expiration only to align with procurement rules outlined by the State of Connecticut.

8. **Question:** Has the current contract gone full term?

**Answer:** As stated on Page 13 of the RFP, the current contract is due to expire on June 30, 2024.

9. **Question:** Have all options to extend the current contract been exercised?

**Answer:** Refer to Question 8 Answer.

10. **Question:** Who is the incumbent, and how long has the incumbent been providing the requested services?

**Answer:** As stated on Page 13 of the RFP, the current contract is held by Consumer Wellness Solutions, Inc. who has held the current contract since 2019.

11. **Question:** How are fees currently being billed by any incumbent(s), by category, and at what rates?

**Answer:** We are currently paying on a Fee for Service Basis by the type of service rendered, and we are expecting applicants to provide the breakdowns within their proposals.

12. **Question:** What estimated or actual dollars were paid last year, last month, or last quarter to any incumbent(s)?

**Answer:** Our budget going forward anticipates \$200,000 per year for Quitline services. The monthly invoicing is paid on a fee-for-service basis and has varied from \$13,000 per month to \$33,000 per month over the past contract period. Most fluctuations occur throughout the year based on associated media campaigns to promote the service.

13. **Question:** Is previous experience with any specific customer information systems, phone systems, or software required?

**Answer:** There is not an established specific customer information system, phone system, or software that is required.

14. **Question:** What is the minimum required total call capacity?

**Answer:** The three (3) years of call data that was provided within the RFP were to give bidders an estimate of the number of calls that will be expected each year.

15. **Question:** What is the minimum simultaneous inbound call capacity?

**Answer:** The performance measures on Pages 16-17 of the RFP identify the expected response time for answers.

Performance Measures	Outcomes
Clients who request coaching assistance receive help	90% of all inbound calls will be answered "LIVE" during Quitline hours of operation
	85% of inbound calls will be handled within 30 seconds during the regular business hours of the Quitline
	At least 70% of Quitline callers who are interested in speaking to a coach are transferred directly to a coach.
	95% of voice mail shall be returned within one business day
	Self-help materials will be provided to any registrant within two days
	Participants that request text messaging support receive relevant, targeted messages at regular intervals

16. **Question:** What is the maximum hold time?

**Answer:** Refer to Question 15 Answer. The performance measure for answering calls is that 85% of inbound calls will be answered within thirty (30) seconds.

17. **Question:** What percentage of calls must be resolved without a transfer, second call, or a return call?

**Answer:** Please see the performance measure chart that was incorporated into Question 15 for expectations about inbound calls.

18. **Question:** What is the maximum percentage of calls that can be terminated by the caller without resolution?

**Answer:** Callers to the Quitline may register for services multiple times.

19. **Question:** Is there a minimum or maximum number of operators and supervisors?

**Answer:** The Contractor is expected to obtain and maintain a sufficient telephone system, text messaging program, and web service capacity with adequate staffing to minimize the average

length of time callers need to wait for a live response. An average live response should occur within 30 seconds. The current average number of calls per month is less than 200 calls. Staffing levels may need to be adjusted to allow for modifications when national or state media events and campaigns are scheduled, since they usually affect call volume. State-placed media will be placed in counsel with the Quitline contractor.

20. **Question:** What is the required degree of dedication for the call center? (Can call centers work on other contracts at the same time as this one?)

**Answer:** Most quitline operators handle multiple state quitlines.

21. **Question:** What is the required degree of dedication for the operators? (Can call center operators work on other contracts at the same time as this one?)

**Answer:** Refer to Question 20 Answer. Quitline treatment specialists may handle calls for multiple state quitlines.

22. **Question:** What are the recording requirements for inbound and outbound phone calls and how long must recordings be maintained?

**Answer:** The applicant's system should have the ability to record all calls for quality assurance purposes for five (5) years after the call.

23. **Question:** What are the recording and storage requirements for non-phone communications?

**Answer:** The applicant's system should have the ability to record all calls and communications for quality assurance purposes for five years after the call or online registration.

24. **Question:** What information is to be included in call logs?

**Answer:** The applicant's system should have the ability to record all calls and communications for quality assurance purposes for five years after the call or online registration.

25. **Question:** What is the current number of seats for operators and supervisors at your existing call center?

**Answer:** The Department of Public Health currently contracts with Consumer Wellness Solutions, Inc. to provide quitline services until June 30, 2024. The next contractor will be expected to provide similar quitline services – our Department does not operate an existing call center.

26. **Question:** What is the current average wait time for phone calls?

**Answer:** The current average wait time for answering is less than thirty (30) seconds.

27. **Question:** What is the current average handle time for phone calls and other types of communications?

**Answer:** The average call time ranges from fifteen (15) to thirty (30) minutes; intake calls are typically longer than check in calls.

28. **Question:** What is the current average after-call work time for operators?

**Answer:** Current services are provided twenty-four (24) hours per day. As the quit coaches are working with the clients and immediately following their calls, they are entering intake data, notes, and other documentation for accuracy.

29. **Question:** Over the past year, what is the percentage of calls received in English versus non-English?

**Answer:** The documentation that includes the number of services requested in the second most requested language, Spanish, is included on Pages 53-55 of the RFP.

30. **Question:** Over the past year, what percentage of calls received were in Spanish?

**Answer:** This information was included in the Quitline services breakdown included on Pages 53-55 of the Request for Proposal.

31. **Question:** What time of day, days of the week, or times of the year do calls typically peak?

**Answer:** This data changes from month to month as media campaigns may be utilized by either the state or national offices in coordination with the Quitline vendor. In general, there is typically a spike in demand at the end of December/beginning of January, during February, and at other times of the year such as the beginning of fall.

32. **Question:** In Section 11, page 6, the State's RFP (in H. Attachments) requires three recorded calls, including one for intake/registration, one for initial assessment/counseling, and one for follow-up counseling. Since we strive to provide as much interaction and support in a call as the caller has time available to maximize the benefit of each call, the recorded call files can be quite large. The more we try to reduce the file size, the quality of the audio suffers. It will be extremely difficult to incorporate three separate audio files of recorded calls along with all the other required proposal materials and stay under the State's file size limit of 25MB (Section 11. Proposal Due Date and Time). Is the State amenable to limiting the proposal file size (without recorded calls) to 25MB and allowing the three recorded calls to be emailed separately and individually?

**Answer:** Yes, recorded calls may be provided in separate emails, sent individually, and should be sent to the Contact Person by the application due date. The recorded calls do not need to be in the same file as the Application.

33. **Question:** In Section 6, page 18, the State specifies that minimum line spacing must be 1 ½ line spacing. The use of tables in the narrative is often used to better organize the narrative and make the narrative easier to read for the reviewers. However, the table format already reduces the available space more than normal text would. Is it permissible for tables to have single spacing as opposed to 1 ½ line spacing, or to use a slightly smaller font size of Calibri (9 point) as opposed to Calibri 11 point?

**Answer:** Yes, tables may have single spacing vs. 1 ½ line spacing. Bidders are reminded that per Page 18 of the RFP, the pre-designed forms do not need to be reformatted to fit the spacing specifications.

34. **Question:** Can the State please clarify where to locate the Notification to Bidders, Parts I-V that needs to be submitted with the materials to register with the State Contracting Portal?

**Answer:** The current link to the State Contracting Portal is <https://portal.ct.gov/DAS/CTSource/Create-a-CTsource-Account-for-Doing-Business-with-the-State>; the Notification to Bidders Form needed with the application was included within the Application Forms File, although it was left off the table of contents listing. The Notification to Bidders form should be signed and submitted with the proposal.

35. **Question:** Can the State please clarify the program start date? The Procurement Schedule lists the Start of Contract on April 1, 2024. The Transition Plan notes that the contract for the current vendor expires on June 30, 2024. In addition, if a new vendor is selected, can the State please clarify when the vendor can meet with the State and begin the process of transitioning services?

**Answer:** The start date of the new contract is anticipated to be April 1, 2024. For those registrants who registered for program services through March 31, 2024, the contract with the current Quitline vendor runs until June 30, 2024. The new vendor would meet with the State to begin the process any time after August 17, 2023 (after the vendor selection process is complete and vendors have been notified, per the schedule included in the RFP on Page 4.)

36. **Question:** Can the State please provide the total budget spent on Services versus NRT in FY22?

**Answer:** In Fiscal Year 2022, the total budget allocation on Services was \$155,378 and \$100,999 was spent on nicotine replacement therapy.

37. **Question:** Can the State please provide their current Annual Budget for FY23?

**Answer:** We anticipate \$200,000 per year for quitline services, as identified in the RFP on Page 4.

38. **Question:** Can the State please clarify which Connecticut resident by health insurance category are eligible for a 1-call or 5-call program?

**Answer:** All Connecticut residents are eligible for a five (5) call program; the type of program is at the caller's and/or registrant's discretion.

39. **Question:** Can the State please provide the type and quantity of NRT available to registered stand-alone web users?

**Answer:** Beginning in February 2023, all Quitline registrants who are medically eligible when screened may receive up to eight weeks of nicotine replacement therapies. These are offered in combination as discussed with their quitting coach.

40. **Question:** Can the State please provide the type and quantity of NRT available to registered phone users?

**Answer:** Beginning in February 2023, all Quitline registrants (whether online or via phone) who are medically eligible when screened may receive up to eight (8) weeks of nicotine replacement therapies. These are offered in combination as discussed with their quitting coach.

41. **Question:** For the “Basic Quitline Services” program, can the State please clarify the participant eligibility requirements, i.e. who is eligible for coaching calls and who is eligible for NRT?

**Answer:** Any Connecticut resident may receive coaching calls. To receive nicotine replacement therapy, a caller must agree to participate in the ‘multiple call program’ which is a series of five (5) calls and be determined to be medically eligible upon screening.

42. **Question:** Of the Total Monthly Enrollments, can the State please provide percentages of registrations by insurance category (e.g. Uninsured, Medicaid, Medicare, Privately Insured)?

**Answer:**

Below are the average percentage of enrollments by Health Plan from FY2022.

Enrollment	Private	Medicaid	Medicare	Uninsured	Not Reported
Phone (63.5%)	16.8%	47.9%	27.9%	6.7%	0.7%
Online (36.5%)	30.9%	43.4%	13.6%	10.8%	1.3%

43. **Question:** In the 2022 Quitline Utilization Table, can the State please clarify if any portion of the NRT Shipments represent combination NRT? If so, what percentage is mono-therapy NRT and what percentage is combo-therapy NRT?

**Answer:** Yes, the state offers combination therapy nicotine replacement therapy (NRT). The table is the total of both combination therapies and non-therapies. In 2022 the percentage split of NRT shipments was 30% mono-therapy NRT and 70% combo-therapy NRT.

44. **Question:** Can the State please confirm that Bidders should follow the Proposal Outline found on pages 59 – 60 versus the Proposal Outline found on pages 22 – 25. The list of deliverables, e.g. Attachments varies slightly between the two.

**Answer:** The following paragraph was included on Page 22 *“Please note the Program has provided Application Forms in an appendix to this RFP that includes a detailed outline for the proposal submission.”*

45. **Question:** Can the State please clarify where to locate the "Application Information Form"?

**Answer:** The *Applicant Information Form* is located on Pages 57 and 58 of the RFP, in Section VII: Application Forms

46. **Question:** Would the State accept call recordings submitted by email to the Procurement Officer and/or would the State consider receiving the call recordings via USB port via mail?

**Answer:** The State will accept call recordings submitted by email to the Official Contact. Calls may be provided in separate files and are due the same day as the application.

47. **Question:** We currently perform work outside of the State of Connecticut and add employees as needed to perform work across multiple states and clients. Would the State consider amending the contract to allow for hiring employees outside of the State of Connecticut to support this contract?

**Answer:** Yes.