

Request for Proposal: Dedicated Internet Access (DIA) Services

Lewis County Community Health Services dba Valley View Health Center
2690 NE Kresky Avenue, Chehalis, WA 98579
HCP: 131543 – Valley View Health Center

1.0. Introduction

Lewis County Community Health Services, dba Valley View Health Center (VVHC), is a non-profit Federally Qualified Health Center that has established a healthcare consortium of 6 rural and 5 urban healthcare providers in a three-county region in Southwestern Washington. VVHC provides continuity of care services to over 30,000 residents in Lewis, Thurston, and Pacific Counties. VVHC's primary focus is to help low-income, uninsured, underserved, and rural individuals with their ongoing primary healthcare needs.

VVHC, as part of a consortium, is seeking bids for telecom services under the FCC's Healthcare Connect Fund. To support our mission-critical operations and facilitate continued growth, VVHC is seeking proposals from qualified telecommunications providers to deliver high-performance Dedicated Internet Access (DIA) services.

2.0. Project Scope

This RFP outlines the requirements for procuring DIA services that will provide primary and secondary (failover) circuits and services that are secure, reliable, scalable, and high-bandwidth connectivity at 11 sites. Five of the sites in the consortium have established adequate connections, but they are currently part of an MPLS and must be converted to DIA, which will need to be addressed as part of the proposed network architecture. See Appendix A for a map of the sites.

Service Period: The period of service is for 3 years, from July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2028.

The selected vendor will be responsible for the following:

- Implementation of the proposed solutions including both primary circuits and secondary failover circuits. Secondary services must be disparate suppliers and circuits (i.e. if primary circuit is broadband, secondary satellite).
- Ongoing management of these services
- Ensuring adherence to stringent performance standards, industry best practices, compliance with HIPAA security and privacy standards for telecommunications
- Provisioning scalable DIA circuits to each site, capable of supporting the required bandwidth
- Disclose details of any third-party services involved in providing last-mile connectivity
- Coordinate with third-party providers to guarantee timely installation and activation of services
- Provide transparent and itemized pricing for all services, including any third-party costs, to ensure alignment with the FCC Healthcare Connect Fund requirements

3.0. Requirements

3.1. Service Locations

The following table details the addresses and specific requirements for each location:

Location	HCP	Address	Target Bandwidth (Primary & Failover)	Current environment/ vendors' speeds
Pe Ell	13816	402 N Main Street, Pe Ell, WA 98572	1 G/1 G	DIA Primary: BB/100M
Onalaska	27579	1810 Hwy 508, Onalaska, WA 98570-9636	1 G/1 G	DIA Primary: BB/100M
Winlock	27681	100 Cedar Crest Drive, Winlock, WA 98596-9791	1 G/1 G	MPLS Primary: BB/Fibernet/1G
Centralia Medical	27691	1800 Cooks Hill Road, Centralia, WA 98531-9162	1 G/1 G	MPLS Primary: Fiber Optic for WAN Secondary: BB/100M
Chehalis	27692	2690 NE Kresky Avenue, Chehalis, WA 98532-2412	1 G/1 G	MPLS Primary: GIG Secondary: BB/200M/20M
Toledo	27693	117 Ramsey Way, Toledo, WA 98591	1 G/1 G	MPLS Primary: BB/Fibernet/1G
Raymond	27694	300 Ocean Avenue, Raymond, WA 98577-3016	1 G/1 G	DIA Primary: Fiber Optic for WAN Secondary: BB/100M
Morton	27837	148 E Division Avenue, Morton, WA 98356	1 G/1 G	MPLS Primary: Fiber Optic for WAN
Olympia	41835	3775 Martin Way E, Suite A, Olympia, WA 98506-5007	1 G/1 G	DIA Primary: BB/Fibernet/1G Secondary: BB/100M
Mary's Corner	119582	4254 Jackson Highway, Chehalis, WA 98532-8424	1 G/1 G	DIA Primary: BB/100M
Children's Dental	131648	711 Harrison Avenue, Centralia, WA 98531-2109	1 G/1 G	DIA Primary: BB/100M Secondary: BB/100M

*If the target bandwidth cannot be achieved, please inform us in your bid of the bandwidth you are able to provide.

A current Network Map is available upon request and signed NDA.

3.2. Service Level Agreements (SLAs)

The selected vendor must guarantee the following minimum service levels:

- **Bandwidth:** See table in 3.1 Service Locations. **If the target bandwidth cannot be achieved, please inform us in your bid of the bandwidth you are able to provide.**
- **Availability:** 99.99% uptime with proactive network monitoring and rapid incident response.
- **Latency:** Maximum round-trip latency of 40ms for domestic connections.
- **Jitter:** Maximum jitter of (<) 20ms
- **Packet Loss:** Maximum packet loss of 0.2%.
- **Technical Support:** 24/7/365 technical support with guaranteed response times and escalation procedures.

As a requirement, the vendor must be able to guarantee that the requested services are included in the SLA/contract for each connection that will be made. If the parameters cannot be met after the point of implementation, the Consortium reserves the right to terminate any and all contracts based on the fact that services are not being met as specified.

3.3. Technical Specifications

- **Service Level Reporting:** Monthly reports detailing network performance against SLAs, including availability, latency, and packet loss metrics.
- **IP Addressing:** Static IPs will be needed at all locations if possible.
- We currently have Cisco Meraki and licensing through 2028 for all locations and are seeking either management or replacement with cost savings.

3.4. Administrative & Other Specifications

- **Consolidated Invoicing:** All primary and/or secondary invoices for all locations will be incorporated into one monthly invoice and will provide a breakdown of invoicing that includes the service, taxes, and fees by individual site.
- **Account Representative:** A dedicated account manager and coverage plan are needed when the account representative is not available.

4.0. Proposal Submission Instructions

Interested vendors are requested to submit a comprehensive proposal that includes:

- **Executive Summary:** Concisely outlining the vendor's understanding of our requirements and proposed solution.
- **Company Profile:** Demonstrating experience, expertise, and financial stability in providing enterprise-grade DIA services. Additionally, provide the following information with your company profile:
 - Company financial statements
 - Age of company
 - Length of time in industry

- Company ownership
- Number of employees
- Number of office locations
- Address of the nearest location to the City
- Address of your local office responding to the RFP
- Specific company representative assigned to be our contact, including name, address, phone, fax, and email
- Has your company experienced a workforce reduction in the past 5 years?
- Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest
- Litigation History (past five years)
- Number and type of similarly sized organizations that are supported and how those relate to vendor's overall customer base
- Current experience servicing multiple clinical or healthcare sites across large geographic areas similar to VVHC utilizing the FCC HCF program
- **Technical Proposal:** Detailed description of the proposed solution, including:
 - Network architecture
 - Technology employed
 - Service delivery methodology, disclosure of modes (i.e. fiber, broadband, other)
 - Disclosure of suppliers and last-mile carriers
 - Guaranteed Upload and Download Speeds
- **Service Level Agreement:** Formal document guaranteeing the service levels outlined in Section 3.2. - Describe the expected and guaranteed response time for "regular" and "emergency" services. Indicate what you define to be "regular" and "emergency" services. Guaranteed response times of greater than 4 hours for emergency services and the next business day for regular services will not be acceptable.
- **Service Alternatives:** Indicate the provisions for service if your business terminates or is subjected to a shut down for any reason.
- **Default:** State what recourse is available if the proposed system does not perform as quoted and VVHC is faced with loss or interruption of service. Be advised that some form of liquidated damages for nonperformance and/or system failure will be required in any final agreement.
- **Pricing and Commercial Terms:** Clear and detailed pricing structure, including all one-time and recurring costs, payment terms, and contract length.
 - Prices should be shown for each line item.
 - List each location separately in your proposal showing any proposed equipment and costs. This also includes any third-party costs, to ensure alignment with the FCC Healthcare Connect Fund requirements.
 - Cost detail for any non-standard features and optional items as detailed in the system specifications.
 - Provide sample contract and service agreement.
 - The prices quoted herein shall agree with all Washington State and Federal Tax Laws and regulations.

- **Billing:** Vendors are required to provide consolidated billing for services across all participating sites.
 - A single invoice summarizing charges with a minimum break out of service charges and taxes for each site must be presented monthly to simplify financial reconciliation and management.
 - Proposals offering this billing model will receive priority consideration over those requiring multiple invoices.
 - The vendor must also outline billing processes and include examples of billing format.
- **References:** At least three customer references preferably organizations that are either Federally Qualified Health Centers or Rural Access Hospitals. Be advised, that references are a major element of the Company Reputation evaluation criteria.
- **Subcontractors:** All subcontracting shall be pre-approved by VVHC. The Prime Contractor/Bidder shall be responsible for all subcontractor(s) work and payment. VVHC will not pay or coordinate with any subcontractor or third parties directly. Proof of release of liens of subcontractors will need to be submitted prior to invoice approval.

4.1. Proposal Format

All bid proposals must understand and acknowledge USAC invoicing requirements and formats. Bidder will conform to invoicing procedures and processes as promulgated by USAC. Any successful bidder(s) is required to have a current FCC Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN) as required by the Healthcare Connect Fund Order. A SPIN may be obtained by contacting the Universal Services Administrative Company (www.usac.org).

Please include a Table of Contents at the beginning of the Proposal clearly outlining the contents of each section. Please provide the following sections at a minimum:

- Understanding of Project Objectives
- Response to Specifications
- Disclosures and Contractual Requirements
- Pricing and Other Information for Evaluation by Criteria
- Estimated Implementation Plan with various milestones, assuming the contract would be awarded no later than March 27, 2025.
- Appendices and Certifications
- Copy of sample contract(s) for application. Please note that all contracts are subject to negotiation.
- All Proposals must be signed by a duly authorized official representing the vendor
- The contents of each vendor's Proposal, including technical specifications, shall remain valid for a minimum of 90 calendar days from the Proposal due date.

4.2. Vendor Requirements

- VVHC will **only** consider bids from companies in compliance with FCC 19-121 Sections 54.9 and 54.10 and not on the List of Equipment and Services Covered by Section 2 of The Secure Networks Act (<https://www.fcc.gov/supplychain/coveredlist>).
- Contractor agrees to comply with all applicable laws, ordinances, regulations, and rules promulgated by any Federal, State, County, Municipal, and/or other governmental unit or regulatory body now in effect or which may be in effect during the performance of the work. Included within the scope of the laws, regulations, and rules referred to in this paragraph, but in no way to operate as a limitation, public utility, Workers' Compensation Laws, Prevailing Wage Laws, the Social Security Act of the Federal government, and any of its titles, the Department of Human Rights, Human Rights Commission, or EEOC statutory provisions and rules and regulations.

5.0. Rejection and Acceptance of Proposals

The contract will be awarded to the responsible vendor or combination of vendors whose overall Proposals are determined to be the most advantageous to VVHC, considering the relative importance of price and the other evaluation criteria included in this request for proposals.

VVHC not be liable for any pre-contract costs incurred by interested vendors participating in the selection process.

VVHC will require the vendor selected to agree to include the contents of this Request for Proposals and all representations, warranties, and commitments in the Proposal and related correspondences as contractual obligations when developing final written contracts for services, equipment, and software.

Proposals that are not prepared following the proposal submission instructions may be rejected or disqualified. If not rejected, the VVHC may require the correction of any deficiency and accept the corrected Proposal. VVHC reserves the right to the following:

- Accept the Proposal that is, in its judgment, determined to be the most advantageous to the organization considering the relative importance of price and the other evaluation criteria included in this request for proposals.
- To reject the low-price Proposal
- To accept any item of any Proposal
- To reject any and all Proposals
- To waive irregularities and informalities in any Proposal submitted or in the Request for Proposals process.

5.1. Acceptance

VVHC requires an acceptance period of at least 30 days after the completion of the cutover. During this 30-day period, the system must perform without interruption of services and be in compliance with all representations offered in the vendor’s proposal. Should the system fail to perform satisfactorily, the 30-day time frame for acceptance will start over until the system performance is satisfactory for a period of 30 consecutive days. Final payment (including change orders) will be withheld, and any warranty period will not begin, until system acceptance.

6.0. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

Criteria	Description	Evaluation Weight	Proposal Minimum Requirement
Cost	Commercial Competitiveness: Overall cost-effectiveness, value proposition, and contract flexibility.	25	The proposal must include a full detailed cost breakdown including any 3rd-party services providing last-mile connectivity
Quality of Transmission	Service Reliability: Strength of SLAs, proven track record of high availability, and robust incident management processes.	25	Must include Service Level Agreement.
Technical Support	Technical Excellence: Proposed solution's alignment with our technical requirements, scalability, and security features	20	Must include all technical support, service level reporting, and consolidated invoicing in response
Inclusiveness of service	Commercial Competitiveness: Overall cost-effectiveness, value proposition, and contract flexibility.	10	List of services being offered and any requested services not able to offer.
Implementation Timing	Company Reputation: Industry standing, financial stability, and customer satisfaction.	10	Documentation of ability to implement service on July 1, 2025.
Company Reputation	Company Reputation: Industry standing, financial stability, and customer satisfaction.	10	Description of industry standing, financial stability, references, and customer satisfaction.

7.0. Timeline

7.1. RFP Submission Date: March 21, 2025

A deadline for bid submissions will be 28 days after the posting of Form 461 on the USAC website. Program rules require Form 461 and RFP to be posted for a minimum of 28 days.

7.2. Estimated Selection Schedule

The following is the current estimated schedule, as defined by VVHC and can be changed at its discretion:

Key Activities	Dates	
Interest in RFP & Final Date for Vendors to Submit Questions	03/17/2025	To receive communications with any changes in the timeline please submit an email and phone number expressing your interest with a signed CNDA. Any questions must be submitted in writing to administration@vvhc.org by noon PST. No oral interpretations will be made to any vendor.
Answers to Vendors' Questions	03/19/2025	Answers to submitted questions will be provided via email by 12:00 PM PST will be provided to all vendors that have confirmed their intent to propose.
Proposals Due	03/21/2025	Submit proposals to administration@vvhc.org by 5 pm PST in PDF format.
Finalist Vendor Q&A Sessions TBD if needed	03/24/2025	Times to be scheduled with top 2-3 finalist vendors if needed. Presentations will be scheduled between 8 am and 5 pm PST via teleconferencing.
Final Vendor Selection	03/26/2025	Notice will be provided to all vendors that submitted proposals by 5 pm PST. If there are any delays to the Contract award, or changes in dates all organizations who expressed interest in the RFP by 03/17/2025 will receive notification.

Funding Request Submission	03/29-31/2025	VVHC will submit Funding Request to USAC
Implementation Effective Date	07/01/2025	

8.0. Confidentiality

All information provided in this RFP is confidential and intended solely to prepare the proposal.

9.0. Contact Information

All inquiries and proposal submissions should be directed to:

Heidi Zipperer
 Chief Administrative Officer
administration@vvhc.org

10.0. Disclaimer

VVHC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, to request clarification or additional information, and to award the contract based on the evaluation criteria outlined herein. This RFP does not constitute an offer or commitment to purchase.

Thank you for your interest in this opportunity.

RFP Appendix A, VVHC Service Locations

