

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR INDEPENDENT REVIEW ORGANIZATIONS TO CONDUCT EXTERNAL REVIEWS OF APPEALS – SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

In response to questions received regarding the RFP dated September 16, 2024, please see the responses set forth below:

- 1. I would like to confirm the due date for the above-mentioned RFP as November 4, 2024 4pm. The body of the RFP states on page 6 that proposals must be received by October 23, 2024 4pm so just wanted to confirm the correct date.**

The RFP is due 11/4/24, by 4PM EST.

- 2. Would the IRO Vendor be responsible for submitting Acknowledgement and Determination Letters to the member and provider?**

The IRO shall send their determination letter to the commissioner, the health carrier, the covered person and, if applicable, the covered person's authorized representative. The Department does not require an acknowledgement letter from the IRO.

- 3. Are the decisions final and binding as an External Review?**

Yes, Sec. 38a-591g(a)(3)

- 4. Is a CT External Review certification required?**

Either approval by the Commissioner to act as an independent review organization (following submission of a response to this RFP) or accreditation by a nationally recognized private accrediting review entity approved by the Commissioner is required for any successful applicant.

- 5. Is CT Licensure required of the physician reviewer making the determination?**

No, the physician reviewer can be licensed in any state (not necessarily CT). Sec. 38a-591l(c)(4)(C).

- 6. Is a specialty match required of the physician reviewer making the determination?**

While an exact specialty match is not required, a certification in an "appropriate" specialty to the subject of the review is required. Sec. 38a-591l(c)(4)(C).

- 7. Is member-friendly language required in the determination letter?**

The State expects the determination letters to avoid technical terms and to be written in plain English that can be understood by the average person

- 8. Who are the current IRO's performing this work?**

IPRO, Maximus Federal, Managed Medical Review Organization and National Medical Review

9. Is there a standard contracted rate(s) that The State of CT can share?

The State does not have standard rates

10. Are there special onboarding requirements that The State of CT has for onboarding new vendors?

The State will provide details to the selected IRO Vendors to complete the onboarding process. However, a new vendor can expect training on the CT external review workflow and the portal used for processing the external reviews.

11. Are there examples of past reports The State of CT can share?

During the term of a contract, the State may require reports that include, in the aggregate by state where the covered person requesting the review resides and by health carrier:

- (A) the total number of requests for an external review, whether such requests were for a standard or an expedited external review;
- (B) the number of such requests resolved and, of those resolved, the number resolved upholding the adverse determination or final adverse determination and the number resolved reversing the adverse determination or final adverse determination;
- (C) the average length of time for resolution;
- (D) a summary of the types of coverages or cases for which a review was sought;
- (E) the number of such reviews that were terminated as a result of reconsideration by the health carrier of its adverse determination or final adverse determination after the receipt of additional information from the covered person or the covered person's authorized representative; and
- (F) any other information the commissioner may request or require.

CGS 38A-591m(e)(2).

12. In section B4 "Procurement Schedule" It states the proposal due date is 11/4/2024, however in section B11 "Proposal Due Date and Time" it states: "Proposals must be received by the Official Contact on or before the due date and time: October 23, 2024 at 4pm." Can The Department confirm which due date is correct?

See response to question 1

13. What are the rates of the incumbents currently serving as an Independent Review Organization (IRO) to CID?

	Maximus		NMR		IPRO		MMRO	
	Full Review	Consideration of New Information or Withdrawal of Appeal Prior to Completion of Full Review	Full Review	Consideration of New Information or Withdrawal of Appeal Prior to Completion of Full Review	Full Review	Consideration of New Information or Withdrawal of Appeal Prior to Completion of Full Review	Full Review	Consideration of New Information or Withdrawal of Appeal Prior to Completion of Full Review
Standard Review	\$775.00	\$225.00	\$675.00	\$125.00	\$785.00	\$200.00	\$685.00	\$140.00
Expedited Review	\$875.00	\$305.00	\$825.00	\$250.00	\$875.00	\$225.00	\$790.00	\$140.00
Expedited Behavioral Health Review	\$995.00	\$385.00	\$1,175.00	\$250.00	\$975.00	\$225.00	\$895.00	\$195.00
Experimental & Investigational	\$940.00	\$335.00	\$800.00	\$175.00	\$925.00	\$225.00	\$795.00	\$195.00
Expedited Experimental & Investigational	\$995.00	\$410.00	\$1,100.00	\$175.00	\$975.00	\$225.00	\$965.00	\$195.00

14. What are the historical, annual volume of reviews for 2023, broken down by the following categories:

- (1) Standard: 209
- (2) Expedited: 143
- (3) expedited behavioral health: 3
- (4) experimental and investigational: 5
- (5) expedited experimental and investigational: 4

15. What are the historical, annual volume of reviews for 2024, broken down by the following categories:

- Standard: 144
- Expedited: 133
- expedited behavioral health: 2
- experimental and investigational: 3
- expedited experimental and investigational: 1

16. What were the top five specialties that were assigned for reviews in 2023?

The Department does not track specialties. The IROs assign each appeal to a specialty as part of the review process. However, the top five diagnoses in 2023 were: Behavioral Health, Spine/Back Disorder, Pain Management, Weight Loss Related, Diabetes

17. What were the top five specialties that were assigned for reviews in 2024?

The Department does not track specialties. The IROs assign each appeal to a specialty as part of the review process. However, the top five diagnoses in 2024 are: Weight Loss Related, Behavioral Health, Pain Management, Spine/Back Disorder, Diabetes

18. This section states the due date is 10/23/2024 at 4pm. The website and all other areas of the RFP state the due date is 11/4/2024 at 4pm. Please confirm the due date is 11/4/2024 at 4pm EST.

See response to question 1

19. If applicant proposal volume file size exceeds the CID's 25 MB limitation, please confirm the applicant may submit proposal as portioned attachments (Proposal Part 1, Proposal Part 2) to more than one email (labeled email 1 of X, 2 of X, etc.).

This is allowable, however proposals must meet page limitations

20. This section states: "Timelines for External Reviews are as follows:"

Standard: 45 days

Experimental/Investigational: 20 days

Expedited Behavioral Health: 24 hours

Expedited Experimental/Investigational: 5 days

Expedited (all others): 48 hours or 72 hours if any portion of the 48-hour period falls on a weekend.

Are all dates business days (inferred in bold above)?

In terms of the IRO requirements, all review timeframes are based on calendar days.

21. Please advise which option is correct: 1 or 2.

For expedited cases:

1) **are verbal decisions within the required timeframes acceptable, and then subsequent written decisions to follow within a day or two?**

OR

2) **are written decisions required to be provided within the timeframes, e.g., written decisions must be delivered within 24 hours for expedited behavioral health reviews?**

The independent review organization shall notify the commissioner, the health carrier, the covered person and, if applicable, the covered person's authorized representative in writing of its decision to uphold, reverse or revise the adverse determination or the final adverse determination 38a-591g(i)(1)

Within 24 hours for expedited, behavioral health reviews

Within 48 hours (or 72 hours if over a weekend) for all other expedited reviews

22. Please confirm the applicant can use 10 pt Times New Roman for tables, figures, graphics, and charts.

RFP requirement is 12 pt font

23. In E this section is titled "Attachments"; however, in the Proposal Checklist, it is titled "Appendices." Which title should be used for this section: "Attachments" or "Appendices"?

Appendices is a type of Attachment

24. If the applicant chooses to declare certain sections of the proposal as confidential, please confirm we may place our "Declaration of Confidential Information" in the Attachments/Appendices section.

Yes, see page 17 of the RFP for information related to confidentiality

25. Please confirm the order of attachments/appendices as listed in the bullets below is correct as presented.

- **IRS Determination Letter**
- **Financial Statements**
- **Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement**
- **Statement of Assurances**
- **Declaration of Confidential Information (if needed)**

The proposed order is acceptable

26. Please confirm that the applicant may include with our proposal a transmittal (cover) letter that is outside of the page limitations.

Confirmed

27. Please confirm that the applicant may include with our proposal a graphic cover page that is outside of the page limitations.

Confirmed

28. What is the annual volume of reviews for years 2022 and 2023 broken down by the following review categories: standard, expedited, expedited behavioral health, experimental & investigational, and expedited experimental & investigational?

2022

Standard: 150

Expedited: 145

Expedited behavioral health: 7

Experimental and investigational: 6

Expedited experimental and investigational: 2

2023

Standard: 209

Expedited: 143

Expedited behavioral health: 3

Experimental and investigational: 5

Expedited experimental and investigational: 4

29. Who is/are the current incumbent/s for this work/contract?

See response to question 8

30. The Department has mentioned not including any extra attachments or appendices other than those requested. That said, does the Department want the bidder to include the written policies and procedures that govern our standard and expedited external review processes in an appendix, or can the bidder just attest that they have the written policies and procedures in place?

Documentation showing compliance with C.G.S. § 38a-591l(c), including written policies and procedures that govern all aspects of both the standard external review process and the expedited external review process, shall be included in an appendix.

31. Can you please clarify the proposal due date? The RFP notes two different dates: November 4, 2024 and October 23, 2024.

See response to question 1

32. Where does the Department want the bidder to include the language: THIS IS AN ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION?

Anywhere in the email

33. Can you outline examples of "other key data and metrics" that have been requested and how often this was requested in the past?

This is an attempt to improve contract performance as needed. Please review page 8 of the RFP.

34. What is the anticipated notification date for the contract award?

An attempt will be made to notify the selected applicants by December 1, 2024.

35. What were the top five (5) clinical specialties, including credentials, needed for reviews in 2022 and 2023?

The Department does not track specialties. The IROs assign each appeal to a specialty as part of the review process. However, below are the top five diagnoses:

2022: Behavioral Health, Crohn's/IBS, Pain Management, Heart Disease, Prostate Cancer

2023: Behavioral Health, Spine/Back Disorder, Pain Management, Weight Loss Related, Diabetes

36. What is the incumbent/s current pricing for this work broken down by the following review categories: standard, expedited, expedited behavioral health, experimental & investigational, and expedited experimental & investigational for both a full review and consideration of new information or withdrawal of appeal prior to completion of a full review.

See the response to question 13

37. Proposal Due Date and Time as stated in the RFP: Proposals must be received by the Official Contact on or before the due date and time: October 23, 2024 at 4pm. Please confirm proposal due date: November 4, 2024 or October 23, 2024 at 4pm.

See the response to question 1

38. Can tables, diagrams, and graphics be smaller than 12 pt font?

See the response to question 12

39. The applicant's name must be displayed in the header of each page. Can the header and footer be smaller than 12 pt font?

Yes

40. Is Section E: Attachments, F: Declaration of Confidential Information, G: Conflict of Interest – Disclosure Statement, and H: Statement of Assurances included in the 35-page limit?

No (the 35-page limit applies to section D: Main Proposal; sections E through H are not subject to this requirement – however, the content of sections E through H must be responsive to the respective descriptions provided in the RFP, and not supplement the information required in section D)

41. Are the proposals due on October 23rd (Page 6 of 34) or November 4th (Page 20 of 34)?

See the response to question 1

- 42. On Page 5 of 34, under Section 7. Minimum Qualifications of Applicants, please clarify that the reference to possessing a URAC accreditation relates to URAC's accreditations around independent review, such as URAC's Independent Review Organization: Comprehensive Review (Internal & External) 5.2 Accreditation program.**

The URAC Independent Review Organization accreditation is an example of an accreditation by a nationally recognized private accrediting entity that the commissioner has determined is equivalent to or exceeds the minimum qualifications of an IRO. C.G.S. § 38a-591(d).

- 43. Please provide how the work share of reviews is determined and assigned and also the number of reviews that each entity completed in calendar year 2023.**

Cases are assigned randomly

I PRO: 101
MMRO: 89
Maximus: 91
NMR: 91

- 44. Conn. Agencies Regs. § 38a-591-1 - Utilization review company licenses. This regulation references a utilization review company being licensed by the commissioner and all requests for licensure shall be made on a form prescribed annually by the commissioner. Please clarify/confirm that this licensure request form is completed upon notice of award of this RFP.**

This specific regulation pertains to utilization review companies and is inapplicable to this RFP process.

- 45. How are case files transmitted to the IRO? (4. Data and Technology Expectations - must demonstrate infrastructure to collect data).**

External reviews are uploaded to our portal

- 46. Please provide a breakdown, by percentage and year, for the last 3 years, of the physician specialties utilized in the prior contract periods?**

See the responses to questions 16, 17 and 35

- 47. Please provide historical volume data for each of the following external review types:**

- a. Standard: 45 days
- b. Experimental/Investigational: 20 days
- c. Expedited Behavioral Health: 24 hours
- d. Expedited Experimental/Investigational: 5 days
- e. Expedited (all others): 48 hours or 72 hours if any portion of the 48-hour period falls on a weekend

See the responses to questions 14, 15 and 28