



JUSTIN ELICKER
MAYOR

CITY OF NEW HAVEN
COMMUNITY SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

54 Meadow Street, 9th Floor • New Haven, Connecticut 06519
Phone 203-946-6999 • Fax 203-946-7234



MARITZA BOND, MPH
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH

July 6, 2020

The Honorable Tyisha Walker-Myers
President, New Haven Board of Alders
City of New Haven
165 Church Street
New Haven, Connecticut 06510

RE: Resolution authorizing the mayor of the city of new haven to apply for and accept a building local organizational capacity to respond to covid-19 in the amount of \$100,000 from the national association of county and city health officials to prevent the transmission of covid-19 and to execute, acknowledge, implement and deliver any and all documents as may be considered necessary or appropriate with respect thereto.

Dear President Walker-Myers:

In accordance with the Order of New Haven Board of Aldermen (Board) authorizing the Mayor to apply for and accept all grants on behalf of the City of New Haven (City), passed on 17 October 1994, I write to respectfully request the Honorable Board of Alders to authorize the Mayor of the City of New Haven to apply for and accept the Building Local Organizational Capacity for COVID-19 Response grant in the amount of \$100,000 from the National Association of County and City Health Officials and to execute, acknowledge, implement and deliver any and all documents as may be considered necessary or appropriate with respect thereto.

With these funds, the New Haven Health Department will work with high-risk health care facilities to identify and address their gaps in infection control to minimize the risk of COVID-19 transmission. A more detailed description of the program is provided in the Executive Summary. Program administration and services will be provided by the New Haven Health Department. We are seeking **UNANIMOUS CONSENT** as the funder requires entities who are awarded the grant to enter into contract with 30 days of notification. The funder anticipates notified selected entities on July 21, 2020.

Should you require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Sincerely,

Maritza Bond,
MPH Director of Health

June 2, 2020

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF NEW HAVEN TO APPLY FOR AND ACCEPT A BUILDING LOCAL ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY TO RESPOND TO COVID-19 IN THE AMOUNT OF \$100,000 FROM THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY AND CITY HEALTH OFFICIALS TO PREVENT THE TRANSMISSION OF COVID-19 AND TO EXECUTE, ACKNOWLEDGE, IMPLEMENT AND DELIVER ANY AND ALL DOCUMENTS AS MAY BE CONSIDERED NECESSARY OR APPROPRIATE WITH RESPECT THERETO.

WHEREAS, the New Haven Health Department recognizes the preventing the spread of COVID-19 among New Haven residents;

WHEREAS, the City of New Haven will apply for funding from the National Association of County and City Health Officials; and upon receipt of such grant, the City will accept said grant in its entirety;

WHEREAS, Access Health CT has issued a request for proposals, entitled Building Local Organizational Capacity for COVID-19 response, intended to identify gaps in infection prevention and control at high-risk healthcare facilities and to develop protocols to address such gaps to prevent the spread of COVID-19;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it RESOLVED by Board of Alders of the City of New Haven that the Mayor, on behalf of the City, is authorized to apply for and accept the grant mentioned herein from the National Association of County and City Health Officials.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mayor is authorized to execute said application for funding for an amount of about \$100,000 and to execute any revisions, amendments or modifications to said contract.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of New Haven is home to five skilled nursing facilities/long term care facilities, an assisted living facility, a large university hospital, two federally qualified health care centers, four dialysis centers. The New Haven Health Department (NHHD) has established relationships with each of these organizations. Additionally, the NHHD has partnerships with the City's detention center, forty-eight public and private K-12 schools, homeless shelters, and homecare providers in the City.

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted several gaps in infection prevention and control (IPC) at the congregate living and healthcare facilities in New Haven. Among the identified gaps were lack of and improper use of personal protective equipment at one of the skilled nursing home facilities in New Haven. As a result, the facility was cited by the Connecticut Department of Public health. It was also identified that several of these health care settings lack proper preparation for an emergency response, including not having any staff members fit-tested for N95 use. NHHD staff worked to support these facilities with resources and education around testing and cohorting strategies. Health Department staff worked with facilities during the COVID crisis to address immediate concerns, however, long term education and continuous quality improvement programs are needed to build sustainable infection control processes to protect staff and residents.

Two part-time nurses, who are trained and certified in infection control, will be hired week to work with high-risk healthcare facilities within New Haven on developing and strengthening their infection and prevention control policies. The nurses will provide support and education to partner organizations on best practices in infection control and will complete ICAR assessments of each facility by July 31, 2021. Utilizing two part-time employees, each who can work up to 19-hours per week, will allow for varied working hours including to include evenings, nights, and weekend hours. This will provide partnering facilities' staff with access to the nurses, regardless of staffs' shifts.

All work performed by the New Haven Health Department is governed by a Board of Health, with overall programmatic and fiscal oversight provided by the Director of Health, Maritza Bond. The Director of Public Health Nursing, Dr. Vazquez, will provide direct program and fiscal oversight of the grant and the infection control staff members. Ms. Bond and Dr. Vazquez each have over 20 years' experience in the public health field. Dr. Vazquez has a Doctor of Nursing Practice and experience in infection control in a hospital setting. As the Public Health Nursing Director, she manages the public health nursing staff, including the 42 school nurses, and oversees clinical operations of the Health Department's clinic, which provides school physicals, adult and pediatric immunizations, and testing and treatments for sexually transmitted infections. The infection control nurses will also work with Brian Weeks, the Epidemiologist for the NHHD. Mr. Weeks holds a MSPH and is CIC certified.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the NHHD's Health Director, Director of Public Health Nursing, and Epidemiologist have worked diligently to support point prevalence surveys in skilled nursing/long term care and assisted living facilities, establish pop-up testing sites in

neighborhoods identified as “hot spots” within the city, and stand-up a 24-hour COVID-19 hotline. NHHD staff also trained public health nurses and MPH students to support contact tracing. The team also developed an interactive dashboard to track and trend COVID-19 data including number of cases, demographic information, death data, hospitalization data, and to map it to spotlight hot spots within the City.

This grant will facilitate capacity building within the NHHD to establish new partnerships within the community and at-risk populations to support infection control and COVID-19 practices. These practices will include the formation of a city-wide infection control committee composed of partners including staff from skilled nursing/long term care facilities, assisted living facility staff, the New Haven Health Department public health nurses who staff the school health rooms, home care agencies, homeless shelter staff, corrections/reentry program staff, Federally qualified health care centers, and the university hospital in the City. Director Bond, Mr. Weeks and Dr. Vazquez will also support this committee and its activities.

The infection control staff would be responsible for other projects to support infection prevention activities with partner agencies including collecting data, collaborating on cohorting strategies, and supporting flu vaccination efforts to further protect residents from illness, conducting site visits to partner facilities, and providing education to partner agency staff. Page Break

The New Haven Health Department has existing relationships with HAI partners to support this project. Historically, the Department maintains a strong relationship with the State of Connecticut, Department of Public Health Healthcare Associated Infections (HAI) Division. Through the COVID-19 efforts, this relationship was reinforced as the City and State Health Departments worked together to support the at-risk facilities in the City with testing and cohorting strategies.