



# Swab Team Services Grant

GRANT REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

Minnesota Department of Health  
PO Box 64975  
St. Paul, MN 55164-0975  
[larry.w.olson@state.mn.us](mailto:larry.w.olson@state.mn.us)  
[www.health.state.mn.us](http://www.health.state.mn.us)

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To obtain this information in a different format, call: 651-201-4919.

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## RFP Part 1: Overview

### 1.1 General Information

- **Announcement Title:** Swab Team Services Grant
- **Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) Program Website:**  
<https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/lead/prof/leadgrants.html>
- **Application Deadline:** May 13, 2025, 4:00 pm

### 1.2 Program Description

The Minnesota Department of Health Lead and Healthy Homes Program (LHHP) is announcing the availability of swab team services grants for the 2026–27 biennium. This grant program is authorized under *Minnesota Statutes* 144.9512. "Swab team services" are defined as activities that provide protection from lead hazards primarily through the use of interim controls. Examples of interim controls include:

1. Removing lead dust by washing, vacuuming with high efficiency particle accumulator (HEPA) or wet vacuum cleaners, and cleaning the interior of residential property;
2. Removing loose paint and paint chips and repainting or installing guards to protect intact paint;
3. Covering or replacing bare soil that has a lead concentration of 100 parts per million or more;

This grant includes three areas of work:

- Education and outreach
- Blood lead testing
- Swab team work

#### Program Goals and Priorities

These grants are intended to train workers, provide lead screening, education, outreach, and swab team services for residential properties. Projects that provide AmeriCorps funding or positions, or leverage matching funds, as part of the delivery of the services will be given priority for the grant funds. In addition, proposed projects should address health equity.

Applications do not need to address all aspects of the grant scope of work. However, LHHP will attempt to fund a combination of applicants that address all three grant areas of work. LHHP will also attempt to assure coverage of services provided by these grants extend statewide.

## 1.3 Funding and Project Dates

### Funding

The total amount of the grant funding for the entire grant period (July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2027) is up to \$958,000, or \$479,000 per year. The grant funds are dependent upon the availability of state lead funds approved by the legislature to MDH. Any awarding of final grant agreements as a result of this RFP process is subject to final approval by the Commissioner of Health.

Funding will be allocated through a competitive process. If selected, you may only incur eligible expenditures when the grant agreement is fully executed, and the grant has reached its effective date, whichever is later.

Funding	Estimate
Estimated Amount to Grant	\$958,000
Estimated Number of Awards	3
Estimated Award Maximum	\$650,000
Estimated Award Minimum	\$50,000

### Match Requirement

No specific dollar amounts are required for in-kind or matching funds. However, projects that leverage other funding sources will be given priority.

### Project Dates

Grants are expected to begin around July 1, 2025, and continue until June 30, 2027, contingent on grantees meeting outcome and reporting expectations, and continued

## 1.4 Eligible Applicants

Eligible applications are non-profit organizations.

Grant funds are not transferrable to any other entity. Applicants that are aware of any upcoming mergers, acquisitions, or any other changes in their organization or legal standing, must disclose this information to MDH in their application, or as soon as they are aware of it.

### Collaboration

Grant applications that propose collaborations among multiple non-profit organizations will be accepted. The duties of each organization must be clearly laid out in the application, and a single fiscal agent must be identified to submit quarterly invoices. Invoices need to account for all expenses and identify each expense for each operating agency that is party to the joint agreement.

## 1.5 Questions and Answers

All questions regarding this RFP must be submitted by email to [larry.w.olson@state.mn.us](mailto:larry.w.olson@state.mn.us). All answers will be posted within two business days at:

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/lead/prof/leadgrants.html>.

Please submit questions no later than 4:00 p.m. Central Standard Time (CST), on May 8, 2025.

To ensure the proper and fair evaluation of all applications, other communications regarding this RFP including verbal, telephone, written or internet initiated by or on behalf of any applicant to any employee of the Department, other than questions submitted to as outlined above, are prohibited. **Any violation of this prohibition may result in the disqualification of the applicant.**

## RFP Part 2: Program Details

### 2.1 Priorities

#### Health Equity Priorities

It is the policy of the State of Minnesota to ensure fairness, precision, equity, and consistency in competitive grant awards. This includes implementing diversity and inclusion in grant-making. [The Policy on Rating Criteria for Competitive Grant Review](#) establishes the expectation that grant programs intentionally identify how the grant serves diverse populations, especially populations experiencing inequities and/or disparities.

Applicants will describe how their proposal promotes diversity and inclusion and improves health equity. Applicants shall also include an evaluation plan for their proposal. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Serving children and pregnant women across Minnesota with a high risk for elevated blood lead levels, based on housing, income, recent immigration, or other factors
- Serving children and pregnant women living in neighborhoods with a history of elevated blood lead levels, such as those identified by Minnesota Public Health Data Access maps (<https://mndatamaps.web.health.state.mn.us/interactive/leadtract.html>)
- Serving children and pregnant women who face barriers to accessing health care and blood lead testing
- Providing swab team worker training to individuals who are from low-income neighborhoods or face other social or economic barriers
- Hiring program staff who are members of the diverse communities served by this grant

This grant will serve:

- Children and pregnant women across Minnesota with a high risk for elevated blood lead levels, based on housing, income, recent immigration, or other factors

Grant outcomes will include:

- Increased blood lead testing rates among children and pregnant women at high risk for lead exposure
- Increased knowledge of lead exposure in high-risk communities
- Reduction of lead hazards in housing
- Increase in the pool of available swab team workers to serve high-risk communities

### 2.2 Eligible Projects

The following tasks are considered to be eligible activities for work to be done as part of the swab team services grant:

#### Education and outreach

- Provide instruction to residents and property owners on the home environment and appropriate lead control techniques
- Provide lead dust cleanup equipment and instruction to residents to allow them to more safely address lead hazards in their home environment

#### Blood lead testing

- Conduct blood lead testing events for screening children and pregnant women

#### Swab team work

- Provide on-the-job training to swab team workers
- Provide swab team services on residential properties for primary or secondary prevention
- Provide lead hazard reduction through abatement or interim controls undertaken to make a residence, childcare facility, school, or playground lead-safe

Per *Minnesota Statutes* 144.9512, subdivision 5, each worker engaged in swab team services in residential properties must have blood lead concentrations below 15 micrograms of lead per deciliter of whole blood ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ ) as determined by a baseline blood lead screening. Successful applicants are responsible for lead screening and must ensure that all swab team workers meet the standards established in this subdivision. Awardees must use appropriate workplace procedures including following the lead-safe directives developed by MDH to reduce risk of elevated blood lead levels. Awardees and participating contractors must report all employee blood lead levels that exceed 15  $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$  to the LHHP. In addition, the laboratory that performed the testing must report all worker blood lead levels, regardless of the level, according to *Minnesota Statutes* 144.9502, subdivision 3.

Applicants must ensure that all participating lead supervisors or certified firms are credentialed and that all swab team workers are licensed as lead abatement workers by MDH under *Minnesota Statutes* 144.9505 and Minnesota Rules, part 4761.2240.

Grantees must follow all other applicable state and federal laws.

#### **Incentive Guidelines**

Incentives are items purchased with grant funds that are used to encourage participating in the specific grant program in order for the grantee to adequately fulfill the goals and objectives of the grant program. Applicants wishing to purchase and distribute incentives must have written effective policies and procedures addressing the purchasing, distributing and security of incentives. The grantee must safeguard these incentives and ensure they are only used for authorized purposes. Incentives may be in various forms, including but not limited to, pre-paid gift cards, water bottles, stress balls, give-away items, and other reasonable items that can be

associated with the programmatic goals and objectives of the project. Pre-paid gift cards are the same as having cash on hand and must be treated as such. The costs of incentives are to be reasonable and in compliance with any grant agreement restrictions, terms, and conditions.

### **Travel Costs**

Travel expenses for applicants are expected to be reasonable. Applicants should describe their travel reimbursement rates as part of the application.

### **Ineligible Expenses**

Ineligible expenses include but are not limited to:

- Solicitating donations
- Taxes, except sales tax on goods and services
- Lobbyists, political contributions
- Bad debts, late payment fees, finance charges, or contingency funds

### **Tasks and Deliverables**

Applications should include proposed project outcomes and a project plan narrative of how those outcomes will be achieved. If the application is awarded less than full funding, a revised work plan is due prior to execution of the grant agreement.

## **2.3 Grant Management Responsibilities**

### **Grant Agreement**

Each grantee must formally enter into a grant agreement. The grant agreement will address the conditions of the award, including implementation for the project. The grantee is expected to read the grant agreement, sign, and comply with all conditions of the grant agreement. Grantee should provide a copy of the grant agreement to all grantee staff working on the grant.

No work on grant activities can begin until a fully executed grant agreement is in place.

A sample grant agreement is attached as **Attachment A**. Applicants should be aware of the terms and conditions of the standard grant agreement in preparing their applications. Much of the language reflected in the sample agreement is required by statute. If an applicant takes exception to any of the terms, conditions or language in the sample grant agreement, the applicant must indicate those exceptions, in writing, in their application in response to this RFP. Certain exceptions may result in an application being disqualified from further review and evaluation. Only those exceptions indicated in an application will be available for discussion or negotiation.

The funded applicant will be legally responsible for assuring implementation of the work plan and compliance with all applicable state requirements including worker's compensation insurance, nondiscrimination, data privacy, budget compliance, and reporting.



Each grantee must formally enter into a grant agreement. The grant agreement will address the conditions of the award, including implementation for the project. Grantee should read the grant agreement, sign, and once signed, comply with all conditions of the grant agreement.

No work on grant activities can begin until a fully executed grant agreement is in place and the State's Authorized Representative has notified the Grantee that work may start.

The funded applicant will be legally responsible for assuring implementation of the work plan and compliance with all applicable state requirements including worker's compensation insurance, nondiscrimination, data privacy, budget compliance, and reporting.

## **Accountability and Reporting Requirements**

It is the policy of the State of Minnesota to monitor progress on state grants by requiring grantees to submit written progress reports until all grant funds have been expended and all of the terms in the grant agreement have been met. Grantees are expected to complete quarterly progress reports on the status of grant outcomes, due 15 days after the end of the quarter (April 15, July 15, October 15, and January 15).

## **Grant Monitoring**

"[Minn. Stat. § 16B.97](#) and [Policy on Grant Monitoring](#) require the following:

- One monitoring visit during the grant period on all state grants over \$50,000
- Annual monitoring visits during the grant period on all grants over \$250,000
- Conducting a financial reconciliation of grantee's expenditures at least once during the grant period on grants over \$50,000

Grantees are expected to participate in programmatic review and a site visit by LHHP at least once during the grant period. Monitoring visits may be more frequent depending on the award amount and due diligence review score.

## **Grant Payments**

Per [State Policy on Grant Payments](#), reimbursement is the method for making grant payments. All grantee requests for reimbursement must correspond to the approved grant budget. The State shall review each request for reimbursement against the approved grant budget, grant expenditures to-date and the latest grant progress report before approving payment. Grant payments shall not be made on grants with past due progress reports unless MDH has given the grantee a written extension.

The invoicing and payment schedule will be: invoices are due at least quarterly, following the same due dates as the quarterly progress reports (April 15, July 15, October 15, and January 15). Invoices must be accompanied by expense reports accounting for costs.

Grantees may adjust their budgets for each expense category by up to 10% of the category total. Budget adjustments in any category of more than 10% require prior written approval from MDH.

## Indirect and Administrative Costs

Applicants with a federally negotiated indirect cost rate may bill the agency for indirect costs in an amount up to but not exceeding that rate, as applied to the grant's total direct costs. Applicants must provide MDH with documentation of the federally negotiated indirect cost rate.

Applicants without a current federally negotiated indirect cost rate may budget for indirect costs in an amount up to but not exceeding a rate of 10%, as applied to the application's total direct costs. Applicants without a federally negotiated indirect cost rate must submit a list of expenses that will be covered by the indirect portion of the budget so that MDH can ensure the expenses are not also listed in other directly billed budget line item categories.

Additionally, MDH requires that:

1. Administrative costs directly attributable to the grant program must be included as part of the appropriate budget line item and not included as part of an organization's indirect costs; and
2. Costs must be consistently categorized as either indirect or direct costs throughout the entire grant period.

Administrative Costs are defined as expenses not directly related to delivering grant objectives, but necessary to support a particular grant program. These items should be included in the applicant's budget as specific line items. To be included as direct costs, these expenses must be attributable and appropriately tracked to specific awards.

Direct Costs are expenses that can be directly attributed to a specific grant program.

Indirect Costs are expenses of doing business that cannot be directly attributed to a specific grant program or budget line item. These costs are often allocated across an entire agency and multiple programs.

Administrative costs incurred as part of the grant program should be reasonable to provide necessary program support and directly billed to the appropriate budget line item (i.e. salaries and fringe for accounting support, human resources or administrative staff and general office supplies and expenses) and not included as part of an organization's indirect costs.

Grantees are responsible for maintaining records (including but not limited to time certifications or time studies, payroll and purchase records) that verify all expenses, whether categorized as direct or indirect.

Invoices to MDH for grant funds that include only indirect costs will not be paid (direct costs must also be included).

## 2.4 Grant Provisions

### Affirmative Action and Non-Discrimination Requirements for all Grantees

The grantee agrees to comply with applicable state and federal laws prohibiting discrimination.

Minnesota's nondiscrimination law is the Minnesota Human Rights Act (MHRA) ([Minn. Stat. § 363A](#); See e.g. Minn. Stat. § 363A.02 (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/363A.02>). The MHRA is enforced by the Minnesota Department of Human Rights (<https://mn.gov/mdhr/>). Some, but not all, MHRA requirements are reflected below. All grantees are responsible for knowing and complying with nondiscrimination and other applicable laws.

The grantee agrees not to discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, status in regard to public assistance, membership or activity in a local commission, disability, sexual orientation, or age in regard to any position for which the employee or applicant for employment is qualified.

The grantee agrees not to discriminate in public accommodations because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, and disability.

The grantee agrees not to discriminate in public services because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, and status with regard to public assistance.

The grantee agrees to take affirmative steps to employ, advance in employment, upgrade, train, and recruit minority persons, women, and persons with disabilities.

The grantee must not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of physical or mental disability in regard to any position for which the employee or applicant for employment is qualified. The grantee agrees to take affirmative action to employ, advance in employment, and otherwise treat qualified disabled persons without discrimination based upon their physical or mental disability in all employment practices such as the following: employment, upgrading, demotion or transfer, recruitment, advertising, layoff or termination, rates of pay or other forms of compensation, and selection for training, including apprenticeship. Minn. Rules, part [5000.3550](#).

### Audits

Per [Minn. Stat. § 16B.98](#), subd. 8, the grantee's books, records, documents, and accounting procedures and practices of the grantee or other party that are relevant to the grant or transaction are subject to examination by the granting agency and either the legislative auditor or the state auditor, as appropriate. This requirement will last for a minimum of six years from the grant agreement end date, receipt, and approval of all final reports, or the required period of time to satisfy all state and program retention requirements, whichever is later.

### Conflicts of Interest

MDH will take steps to prevent individual and organizational conflicts of interest, both in reference to applicants and reviewers per [Minn. Stat. § 16B.98](#) and the Office of Grants Management's Policy 08-01, "Conflict of Interest Policy for State Grant-Making."

**Applicants must complete the Applicant Conflict of Interest Disclosure form (Attachment B) and submit it as part of the completed application.** Failure to complete and submit this form will result in disqualification from the review process.

Organizational conflicts of interest occur when:

- a grantee or applicant is unable or potentially unable to render impartial assistance or advice
- a grantee's or applicant's objectivity in performing the grant work is or might be otherwise impaired
- a grantee or applicant has an unfair competitive advantage

Individual conflicts of interest occur when:

- an applicant, or any of its employees, uses their position to obtain special advantage, benefit, or access to MDH's time, services, facilities, equipment, supplies, prestige, or influence
- An applicant, or any of its employees, receives or accepts money, or anything else of value, from another state grantee or grant applicant with respect to the specific project covered by this RFP/project.
- An applicant, or any of its employees, has equity or a financial interest in, or partial or whole ownership of, a competing grant applicant organization.
- An applicant, or any of its employees, is an employee of MDH or is a relative of an employee of MDH.

In cases where a conflict of interest is perceived, disclosed, or discovered, the applicants or grantees will be notified and actions may be pursued, including but not limited to disqualification from eligibility for the grant award or termination of the grant agreement.

### **Non-Transferability**

Grant funds are not transferrable to any other entity. Applicants that are aware of any upcoming mergers, acquisitions, or any other changes in their organization or legal standing, must disclose this information to MDH in their application, or as soon as they are aware of it.

### **Public Data and Trade Secret Materials**

All applications submitted in response to this RFP will become property of the State. In accordance with [Minn. Stat. § 13.599](#), all applications and their contents are private or nonpublic until the applications are opened.

Once the applications are opened, the name and address of each applicant and the amount requested is public. All other data in an application is private or nonpublic data until completion of the evaluation process, which is defined by statute as when MDH has completed negotiating the grant agreement with the selected applicant.

After MDH has completed the evaluation process, all remaining data in the applications is public with the exception of trade secret data as defined and classified in [Minn. Stat. § 13.37](#), subd. 1(b). A statement by an applicant that the application is copyrighted or otherwise

protected does not prevent public access to the application or its contents. ([Minn. Stat. § 13.599](#), subd. 3(a)).

If an applicant submits any information in an application that it believes to be trade secret information, as defined by [Minn. Stat. § 13.37](#), the applicant must:

- Clearly mark all trade secret materials in its application at the time it is submitted,
- Include a statement attached to its application justifying the trade secret designation for each item, and
- Defend any action seeking release of the materials it believes to be trade secret, and indemnify and hold harmless MDH and the State of Minnesota, its agents and employees, from any judgments or damages awarded against the State in favor of the party requesting the materials, and any and all costs connected with that defense.
- This indemnification survives MDH's award of a grant agreement. In submitting an application in response to this RFP, the applicant agrees that this indemnification survives as long as the trade secret materials are in possession of MDH. The State will not consider the prices submitted by the responder to be proprietary or trade secret materials.

MDH reserves the right to reject a claim that any particular information in an application is trade secret information if it determines the applicant has not met the burden of establishing that the information constitutes a trade secret. MDH will not consider the budgets submitted by applicants to be proprietary or trade secret materials. Use of generic trade secret language encompassing substantial portions of the application or simple assertions of trade secret without substantial explanation of the basis for that designation will be insufficient to warrant a trade secret designation.

If a grant is awarded to an applicant, MDH may use or disclose the trade secret data to the extent provided by law. Any decision by the State to disclose information determined to be trade secret information will be made consistent with the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act ([Ch. 13 MN Statutes](#)) and other relevant laws and regulations.

If certain information is found to constitute trade secret information, the remainder of the application will become public; in the event a data request is received for application information, only the trade secret data will be removed and remain nonpublic.

## 2.5 Review and Selection Process

### Review Process

Funding will be allocated through a competitive process with review by a committee representing individuals knowledgeable in lead education, interim lead hazard control, blood lead testing, and community services. The review committee will evaluate all eligible and complete applications received by the deadline.

MDH will review all committee recommendations and is responsible for award decisions. **The award decisions of MDH are final and not subject to appeal.** Additionally:

- MDH reserves the right to withhold the distribution of funds in cases where proposals submitted do not meet the necessary criteria.
- The RFP does not obligate MDH to award a grant agreement or complete the project, and MDH reserves the right to cancel this RFP if it is considered to be in its best interest.
- MDH reserves the right to waive minor irregularities or request additional information to further clarify or validate information submitted in the application, provided the application, as submitted, substantially complies with the requirements of this RFP. There is, however, no guarantee MDH will look for information or clarification outside of the submitted written application. Therefore, it is important that all applicants ensure that all sections of their application are complete to avoid the possibility of failing an evaluation phase or having their score reduced for lack of information.

### **Selection Criteria and Weight**

The review committee will be reviewing each applicant on a 100 point scale. A standardized scoring system will be used to determine the extent to which the applicant meets the selection criteria.

The scoring factors and weight that applications will be judged are based on the criteria listed on the scoring sheet in **Attachment C**.

Applicants must receive a minimum average score of 60 out of 100 during the review process to be considered for funding.

The number of applicants funded and the amounts awarded will be dependent on the quality of the applications, the total amount of funding requested, the geographic areas covered by applicants with qualifying scores, and the areas of work proposed by applicants with qualifying scores.

If multiple applicants receive qualifying scores, at least two applicants will receive funding. No more than four applications will be awarded funding.

### **Grantee Past Performance and Due Diligence Review Process**

- It is the policy of the State of Minnesota to consider a grant applicant's past performance before awarding subsequent grants to them.
- State policy requires states to conduct a pre-award risk assessment prior to a grant award. Additional information may be required for proposed budgets of \$50,000 and higher to a potential applicant in order to comply with [Policy on Pre-Award Risk Assessment for Potential Grantees](#).

### **Notification**

MDH anticipates notifying all applicants via email of funding decisions by 06/04/2025.

## RFP Part 3: Application and Submission Instructions

### 3.1 Application Deadline

All applications **must** be received by MDH no later than 4:00 p.m. Central Time, on May 13, 2025. If applications are mailed, they **must be received** by MDH by the deadline.

**Late applications will not be accepted.** It is the applicant's sole responsibility to allow sufficient time to address all potential delays caused by any reason whatsoever. MDH will not be responsible for delays caused by mail, delivery, computer, or technology problems.

**Acknowledgement of application receipt.** MDH will "reply all" to the email address that submitted the application to acknowledge receipt of your application within one business day of the receipt of an application. If you do not receive an acknowledgment email within that time frame from when you submitted the application, it means MDH did not receive your application/documents. Please contact Stephanie Yendell at [stephanie.yendell@state.mn.us](mailto:stephanie.yendell@state.mn.us) or 651-201-4894 after that time frame for further instructions.

### 3.2 Application Submission Instructions

The application form is available as **Attachment D**. Applications must be submitted by email to:

Larry W. Olson  
Blood Lead Database Coordinator  
Health Risk Intervention Unit  
[larry.w.olson@state.mn.us](mailto:larry.w.olson@state.mn.us)

PDF is the preferred format for applications and supporting material. Applications saved as Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx) documents will also be accepted. Applications and supporting documents may be saved as a single document or submitted as separate attachments.

### 3.3 Application Instructions

You must submit the following in order for the application to be considered complete:

- Completed application (**Attachment D**)
  - Complete application narrative
  - Ensure that required affirmations are included in narrative
  - Attach organizational chart
  - Complete optional sections if applicable
- Completed due diligence form (**Attachment E**)
  - Include required supporting documentation, as noted on due diligence form
- Completed conflict of interest form (**Attachment B**)

Incomplete applications will be rejected and not evaluated.

There is no page limit for this application. Application narratives should be complete and concise.

Applications must include all required application materials, including attachments. Do not provide any materials that are not requested in this RFP, as such materials will not be considered nor evaluated. **MDH reserves the right to reject any application that does not meet these requirements.**

By submitting an application, each applicant warrants that the information provided is true, correct, and reliable for purposes of evaluation for potential grant award. The submission of inaccurate or misleading information may be grounds for disqualification from the award, as well as subject the applicant to suspension or debarment proceedings and other remedies available by law.

**All costs incurred in responding to this RFP will be borne by the applicant.**

## **RFP Part 4: Attachments**

- Attachment A: Sample Grant Agreement
- Attachment B: Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form
- Attachment C: Scoring Sheet
- Attachment D: Swab Team Application
- Attachment E: Due Diligence Form



## Application Evaluation Criteria

A numerical scoring system will be used to evaluate eligible applications. Scores will be used to develop final recommendations.

Applicants are encouraged to score their own application using the evaluation score-sheet before submitting their application. This step is not required, but may help ensure applications address the criteria evaluators will use to score applications.