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STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
DIVISION OF FINANCE AND PROCUREMENT

Lori A. Shibanette
Commissioner

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Kerrin A. Rounds
Chief Financial Officer

November 2, 2021

The Honorable Karen Umberger, Chairman
Fiscal Committee of the General Court and

His Excellency, Governor Christopher T. Sununu
and the Honorable Council
State House
Concord, NH 03301

REQUESTED ACTION

Pursuant to the provisions of RSA 14:30-a; VI, authorize the Department of Health and Human Services, New Hampshire Hospital, to accept and expend federal funds in the amount of \$8,008,000 from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SFRF), to fund an increase in access to at-home COVID-19 tests. This is an allowable use of ARP FRF funds under Section 602 (c)(1)(A) to respond to the public health emergency or its negative economic impacts, effective upon approval by the Fiscal Committee and Governor and Council through June 30, 2023 and further authorize the allocation of these funds in the accounts below. **100% Federal Funds.**

05-095-094-940010-24650000¹ HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES, DEPT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, HHS: NEW HAMPSHIRE HOSPITAL, NEW HAMPSHIRE HOSPITAL, ARPA DHHS FISCAL RECOVERY FUNDS

Class/Obj	Class Title	Current Modified Budget	Increase (Decrease) Amount	Revised Modified Budget
000-400338	Federal Funds	\$33,035,413	\$8,008,000	\$41,043,413
	General Funds			
	Total Revenue	\$33,035,413	\$8,008,000	\$41,043,413
020-500200	Current Expense	\$1	\$0	\$1
030-500301	Equipment	\$1	\$0	\$1
040-500800	Indirect Costs	\$2,121,473	\$0	\$2,121,473

¹ All direct program costs will be accounted for using activity 00FRF602PH9509A and all administrative and indirect costs will be accounted for using activity 00FRF602PH9509Z. Accounting classifications may be subject to technical changes at the discretion of the Department of Administrative Services' Division of Accounting Services.

041-500801	Audit Fund Set Aside	\$30,892	\$8,000	\$38,892
042-500620	Post-Retirement Benefits	\$8,733	\$0	\$8,733
046-500464	Consultants	\$1	\$0	\$1
047-500240	Own Forces Maintenance (Bldg-Grnds)	\$1	\$0	\$1
048-500226	Contract Repairs; Bldg, Grounds	\$1	\$0	\$1
059-500117	Temp Full Time	\$98,792	\$0	\$98,792
060-500601	Benefits	\$126,251	\$0	\$126,251
102-500731	Contracts for Program Services	\$19,378,043	\$8,000,000	\$27,378,043
103-502664	Contracts for Ops Services	\$11,271,224	\$0	\$11,271,224
	Total Expenses	\$33,035,413	\$8,008,000	\$41,043,413

EXPLANATION

The Department is requesting to accept and expend ARP SFRF funding to increase access to at-home COVID-19 tests and as allowable from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The Department would enter into a contract with Vault Health Inc. for \$8,000,000 to provide individuals including children, parents, teachers and school personnel, and other residents of New Hampshire to have access to at-home polymerase chain reaction (PCR) COVID-19 tests. The Department would seek reimbursement from FEMA for COVID-19 tests that meet specific FEMA requirements for reimbursement, and utilize ARPA funds for COVID-19 tests that are not FEMA eligible for reimbursement. Vault Health is the only testing provider identified who has the ability to mobilize at-home testing kits across the State immediately upon Governor and Executive Council approval.

The Contractor is also the only vendor identified who provides at-home PCR tests conducted on saliva-based samples, which allows for the easy transport of specimens within prepaid return envelopes to the laboratory. The Contractor is immediately able to ship COVID-19 specimen collection kits to New Hampshire residents in any location across the state along with prepaid overnight return envelopes. The contractor is also willing to ship specimen collection kits with return envelopes in bulk quantities to locations determined by the Department such as schools and other locations to be able to reduce the turnaround time that persons wait until they receive their test results.

The Contractor will provide instructions via Zoom on how to self-administer the test and enclose the sample within a prepaid envelope to send to their laboratory as necessary. Within 24 hours of the test being processed, the Contractor provides the test results to the person tested. This type of at-home COVID-19 testing reduces the needs for in-person specimen collection and allows residents of New Hampshire to have an additional at-home test option other than antigen-based tests, which currently has a national shortage and only has FDA emergency use authorization for symptomatic persons. PCR tests have FDA authorization for both symptomatic and asymptomatic persons. The State continues to experience a fall and winter surge of COVID-19 and additional options for COVID-19 tests are needed. The addition of this test method will potentially allow the quicker return to school or work for persons with symptoms of COVID-19 who subsequently test negative for COVID-19 compared to relying on appointment-based in-person testing locations, which are limited because of staffing shortages or who have a testing requirement within their jobs. The quicker return to work and school will further allow for the continued strength of the Granite State economy. The additional at-home test option also means increased access to COVID-19 tests in rural or medically underserved areas who have less access to services.

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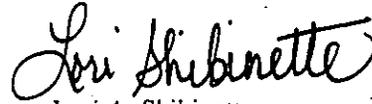
The contract will have a maximum cap to not exceed \$8,000,000, which is anticipated to pay for greater than 100,000 tests, which on average costs about \$80 each depending on if the individual requires specimen collection supervision or can self-manage their specimen collection. Should less tests be necessary and funds remain at the end of the contract, the State may use the remaining ARPA funds for other purposes.

The funds are to be budgeted as follows:

Class 041	The funds will be used to pay for audit fund set aside per State requirement.
Class 102	The funds will be used to contract for at home COVID 19 tests.

In the event that these Federal Funds become no longer available, General Funds will not be requested to support this program.

Respectfully submitted,



Lori A. Shibinette
Commissioner