

Request for Application (RFA): Rural Health Transformation Program Funding Opportunity for Definitive Mobile Dental Services

A series of funding opportunities will be issued over the lifecycle of the Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP) grant related to Kentucky's five priority initiatives. For more information on Kentucky's plan, visit our website: [Kentucky Rural Health Transformation](#).

Please submit responses by June 12, 2026, to be considered for funding available October 1, 2026, through September 30, 2027.
Submit to: john.landis@ky.gov.

I. Context and Background

Rural Health Transformation

The Commonwealth of Kentucky has been awarded funding through the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Rural Health Transformation Fund (RHTF). This investment will empower Kentucky to launch and implement its Rural Health Transformation Plan (RHTP), a community-driven strategy to expand access and improve health outcomes for rural residents across the Commonwealth¹.

About the Program

This project is 100% funded by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) for a total of \$212.9 million in budget year 1, with 100% by CMS/HHS. The RHTF grant spans five budget periods aligned with federal fiscal years (FY2026–FY2030). Funding is disbursed annually by CMS based on achievement of performance metrics.

The Commonwealth of Kentucky has been awarded funding through the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Rural Health Transformation Fund (RHTF). This investment will empower Kentucky to launch and implement its Rural Health Transformation Plan (RHTP) — a community-driven strategy to expand access and improve health outcomes for rural residents across the Commonwealth.

Rooted in Health: Rural Dental Access

A key component of Kentucky's Rooted in Health: Rural Dental Access initiative involves increasing access to dental care through mobile services that bring care directly into rural communities. Through this grant opportunity, the Kentucky Department for Public Health (DPH) is soliciting applications

¹ For more information on this funding opportunity, see [Governor's Beshear's press release](#), the [CMS Notice of Funding Opportunity](#), and [federal assistance listing 93.798—Rural Health Transformation Program](#) on Grants.gov.

from non-profit organizations to provide definitive mobile dental care in rural areas across the Commonwealth. Mobile dental units will collaborate with the state and rural health partners (including Community Health Workers, Public Health Dental Hygiene teams, and universities) to increase access to definitive dental care in areas of high need where access to traditional dental providers may be limited.

Definitions

“Mobile dental services” refers to the provision of dental care delivered through mobile or portable dental units that travel to community-based sites to provide in-person dental services outside of a fixed clinical setting.

“Mobile dental unit” refers to a self-contained vehicle or portable system equipped to deliver dental services, including appropriate clinical equipment and supplies, at temporary service locations.

“Definitive dental services” refers to services that diagnose and treat active oral disease or conditions, rather than solely preventing disease or identifying the need for further care.

“Rural” refers to non-metropolitan counties or outlying metropolitan counties that do not include an urban area with a population of 50,000 or more. This definition is inclusive of counties that are “Partially Rural.”²

II. Allowable Uses of Funds

Overview

The period of performance for FY 2027 awards begins October 1, 2026, and goes through September 30, 2027. Awards may vary depending on the number of applicants and proposed budgets. DPH expects proposals and budgets to vary significantly depending upon factors including:

- Geographic reach and service area coverage, including the number and size of priority or high need communities served;
- Frequency and volume of service delivery, such as proposed service days, anticipated patient volume, and types of services provided through the mobile model; and
- Scope and complexity of clinical services, including the ability to deliver definitive dental care within the mobile setting

Allowable Costs

Costs are allowable to the extent that they are related to the provision of mobile dental services and adhere to guidance from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) related to the RHTP grant. Allowable costs include:

- Personnel costs necessary to operate mobile dental services, including dentists, dental hygienists, dental assistants, operational support staff, and Community Health Workers.

² For additional details on our definition of “rural,” please visit: [How We Define Rural | HRSA](#). To view a map of Kentucky’s rural counties, please visit: [KY RHTP Other Supporting Documentation CMS-RHT-26-001.pdf](#).

- Mobile dental unit costs, including purchase or leasing, operation, maintenance, fuel, insurance, and minor equipment necessary to support mobile service delivery. Funds for vehicles over 26,001 lbs will be considered by RIH leadership on a case by case basis, with the following considerations:
 - Safety
 - Rural access design
 - Innovative technology
- Dental equipment and supplies required for mobile service delivery (e.g., dental chairs, radiography equipment, instruments, sterilization supplies).
- Clinical and operational supplies necessary to support patient care, infection control, and safe operation of mobile units.
- Information technology and reporting costs directly related to scheduling, service tracking, and required data reporting for Rooted in Health program monitoring and evaluation activities.

Indirect Costs

Indirect costs are allowable up to 10% of total costs. This limitation applies even if the awardee has a higher negotiated indirect costs rate. Further, the total amount of administrative costs funded by the award through direct and indirect costs cannot exceed 10% of the total award value.

III. Program Objectives

Funded programs must demonstrate their willingness and ability to:

1. Expand access to mobile dental services in Kentucky's rural communities to address gaps in restorative, endodontic, exodontic (tooth extraction), and prosthodontic (digital dentures) oral health care.
2. Deliver full-spectrum mobile dental services in areas with identified high need for follow-up dental care within their service area.
3. Increase the availability of dental care for rural residents who face geographic, financial, or system-level barriers to traditional dental services.
4. Collaborate with the state and community service sites to support effective and timely deployment of mobile dental services in rural areas.
5. Complete infection control modules offered by Kentucky DPH.

IV. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are non-profit organizations incorporated in the Commonwealth of Kentucky that demonstrate the capacity, experience, and authority to operate mobile dental units and deliver direct dental services in Kentucky's rural communities. Applicants may include, but are not limited to:

- Colleges and universities
- Federally Qualified Health Centers and Rural Health Clinics (FQHCs and RHCs)
- Other non-profit organizations with experience operating mobile dental units

V. Timeline

Week of May 11, 2026 – RFA Released

May 21, 2026 – RFA Information Session

May 29, 2026 – RFA Office Hours

June 12, 2026 – Deadline for Receipt of Applications

September 1, 2026 – Notification of Award to Grantees

October 1, 2026 – Funding Period Begins*

*Awardees will be required to report on progress regularly throughout each funding period to support Kentucky's continued receipt of RHTP funds from CMS. Additional detail on reporting requirements will be provided to successful applicants.

VI. Services

The selected applicant will serve as a mobile dental services provider as part of Kentucky's Rooted in Health initiative and will be responsible for providing definitive dental care to rural communities across the Commonwealth. At a minimum, applicants must demonstrate the capacity and commitment to providing the following required services:

Mobile Dental Service Delivery

Applicants will collaborate with the state and mobile dentistry partners to provide in person dental services in rural areas of Kentucky. This includes:

- Coordinate with Community Health Workers, Public Health Dental Hygienists, universities, and other partners to determine areas of dental need;
- Arrange dental service days and times with local partners or host sites (e.g., community sites, health departments, schools, long term care facilities);
- Work with local partners to obtain informed consent from patients or guardians;
- Transport, set up, and operate mobile units at service locations;
- Provide dental services directly to patients in the community through mobile delivery.

Definitive Dental Care

Applicants must deliver definitive dental care through the mobile dental units. Services may include, but are not limited to:

- Diagnostic services (e.g., examinations, radiographs);
- Restorative services;
- Exodontia services; and
- Prosthodontic services, as feasible within the mobile care model.

The primary objective of the mobile dental program is to deliver comprehensive dental treatment; however, preventive services may be provided as necessary to support overall oral health but not in isolation of providing definitive dental treatment for caries, infections, and/or replacement of missing teeth when needed by the patient.

Staffing and Clinical Oversight

Applicants must supply the personnel necessary to operate mobile dental clinics and deliver services, including:

- Maintain sufficient clinical staffing to support safe, high-quality service delivery;
- Ensure appropriate clinical supervision and oversight; and
- Comply with all applicable professional licensure, credentialing, regulations, and scope-of-practice requirements.

Program Support and Coordination

Applicants must support Rooted in Health program operations by coordinating service delivery activities and participating in required program reporting, following state regulations. This includes:

- Align mobile dental service schedules and locations with Kentucky DPH and designated local partners;
- Participate in planning activities related to service deployment, site selection, and scheduling; and
- Submit required service utilization and encounter data as specified by DPH to support program monitoring and evaluation.

These activities are intended to support statewide oversight and alignment with RHTP and Rooted in Health initiative goals.

VII. Funding Timeline

This RFA will prioritize programs that demonstrate high readiness to begin implementation and spend awarded funds during the first budget period of the RHTP grant (October 1, 2026, through September 30, 2027). Awards will be based on proposed scope, readiness, and anticipated performance during Budget Period 1 (BP1). Continuation of funding beyond BP1 will be contingent upon demonstrated performance, compliance with reporting requirements, and alignment with program goals, and will be subject to the availability of future RHTP funding.

Programs applying for funding available October 1, 2026, must submit budgets and implementation plans aligned to BP1 timeframes, including clearly defined deliverables and milestones to be achieved by September 30, 2027. While applicants may describe longer-term program visions or sustainability plans, budgets should reflect only costs anticipated to be incurred during BP1. Please note that obligated funds must be fully spent by the end of the BP1 funding period.

Given Kentucky's two-year biennium contracting structure, DPH may use contract amendments or issue new contracts to support future funding periods. Additional details regarding contracting and performance expectations will be provided to selected applicants.

VIII. Funding Limitations

This funding opportunity is subject to restrictions from CMS per federal guidance³. If awarded, applicants will be expected to execute the grant agreement in compliance with federal rules, laws, and regulations and specific requirements established by CMS.

This RFA is competitive, and not all applicants may be funded. DPH reserves the right to modify or reduce funding based on program performance, progress toward stated objectives, or availability of appropriate staffing support.

IX. Response Scoring

5 Points Application Parameters

(2 points) Are the pages requested clearly marked?

(3 points) Is the budget provided in the requested template? ("Attachment A")

30 Points Organizational Readiness and Capacity

(10 points) Organizational experience providing mobile or community-based dental services

- 10 = Demonstrates substantial experience providing mobile dental or community-based dental services, particularly in rural areas.
- 5 = Demonstrates some relevant experience, but scope or applicability is limited.
- 0 = Does not demonstrate prior experience relevant to mobile dental service delivery.

(10 points) Readiness to deploy and operationalize awarded funding within the funding period

- 10 = Clearly demonstrates readiness to rapidly deploy awarded funding, including established operational systems, identified service sites or partners, staffing readiness, and demonstrated ability to initiate services within the BP1 funding period.
- 5 = Demonstrates partial readiness to deploy funding; some operational elements are identified, but readiness is contingent on additional planning, hiring, procurement, or approvals.
- 0 = Does not adequately demonstrate readiness to deploy or operationalize awarded funding within the BP1 funding period.

(5 points) Proposed timeframe for deployment of mobile dental services

- 5 = Proposes deployment of mobile dental services within 6 months with a clear and feasible launch timeline.
- 3 = Proposes deployment within one year, with a reasonable but delayed timeline.
- 0 = Deployment timeframe is not specified or is unclear.

³ For more detail on funding limitations, reference the [CMS Notice of Funding Opportunity](#), [CMS Frequently Asked Questions](#), and [CMS Notice of Award](#).

(5 points) Use of innovative technology

- 5 = Proposes the use of appropriate and feasible innovative technologies (e.g., digital dentures) that clearly improve access, speed of service delivery, or patient experience in mobile dental settings
- 3 = Identifies the use of innovative technology, but the application or added value to mobile service delivery is limited or not clearly articulated.
- 0 = Does not propose or address the use of innovative technology to support mobile dental services.

35 Points ***Rural Reach and Service Impact***

(15 points) Geographic reach and rural focus

- 15 = Clearly demonstrates the ability to provide mobile dental services in rural communities.
- 8 = Rural service intent is stated, but geographic reach is not clearly defined.
- 0 = Rural focus is unclear or not demonstrated.

(10 points) Plan for reaching priority populations

- 10 = Clearly identifies priority populations to be served (e.g., children, older adults, uninsured or underinsured individuals, high-need rural communities) and demonstrates that service delivery is designed to reach populations with oral health needs.
- 5 = Mentions priority populations, but targeting or reach is not clearly articulated.
- 0 = Does not identify priority populations or demonstrate a coherent approach to service delivery.

(10 points) Projected service volume and return on investment

- 10 = Clearly describes expected service volume and impact (e.g., number of mobile units deployed, service days, patients served) and demonstrates a strong return on investment relative to the proposed budget
- 5 = Identifies service volume or impact measures, but ROI or alignment with budget is unclear or insufficiently justified.
- 0 = Does not clearly describe service volume, impact, or return on investment.

15 Points ***Community Engagement***

(15 points) Community engagement plan

- 15 = Provides a clear, well-defined strategy for engaging and coordinating with community partners and service sites (e.g., local health departments, schools, community organizations). Clearly demonstrates readiness to deploy services in settings that support access for rural populations.
- 8 = Describes a strategy for engagement with community partners or identifies potential service sites, but the coordination approach or readiness is limited or not fully defined.
- 0 = Does not adequately describe a strategy for community engagement.

10 Points ***Implementation Timeline (October 1, 2026 – September 30, 2027)***

(5 points) Are the milestones detailed enough to be actionable?

- 5 = Milestones are clearly defined and time-bound, with specific activities, responsible parties, and sequencing that demonstrate readiness for implementation.
- 3 = Milestones are identified but lack sufficient detail, clarity, or linkage to specific activities or responsible parties.
- 0 = Milestones are vague, incomplete, or not provided.

(5 points) What is the feasibility of the proposed timeline?

- 5 = Timeline is realistic and feasible given staffing plans, infrastructure readiness, and scope of services, and demonstrates the ability to initiate services within the proposed timeframe.
- 3 = Timeline appears generally feasible but includes assumptions or dependencies that are not fully addressed.
- 0 = Timeline is not feasible, internally inconsistent, or does not align with program requirements.

5 Points Budget Development

(5 points) Using the provided budget template ("Attachment A"), is the budget reasonable for the intent of the program?

- 5 = Budget reflects a sound understanding of program needs and available resources, with costs appropriately scaled to reflect planned programming and staffing.
- 3 = Budget is mostly appropriate but leaves gaps in cost justification, resource alignment, or funding continuity
- 0 = Budget does not demonstrate financial viability, includes unclear or misaligned costs, or fails to meet program requirements.

X. Application Instructions

Applicants should submit the following information as a clearly labeled application packet to john.landis@ky.gov by June 12, 2026, for Year 1 funding.

1) A one-page cover sheet that includes:

- a. Applicant organization name
- b. Proposed project title
- c. Name, title, phone number, and email address of the primary point of contact
- d. Legal status of the applicant organization (e.g., 501(c)(3) non-profit)

2) An application narrative **not to exceed twenty (20) pages** that includes:

- a. Description of the applicant's organization, including relevant experience providing mobile dental services or community-based dental care and experience serving rural Kentucky populations.
- b. Description of the proposed mobile dental services model, including mobile units to be deployed, clinical services to be provided, proposed service locations and settings (e.g., community sites, schools, Local Health Departments), and anticipated service volume and geographic coverage.
- c. Description of planned community engagement and coordination, including approach to patient outreach and continuity of care.

- d. Description of anticipated staffing and operations, including clinical and operational staff to be deployed and day-to-day operations of mobile service delivery.
 - e. Description of potential challenges to mobile dental service delivery in rural areas and planned mitigation strategies.
 - f. An evaluation plan, including outcomes to be measured, data collection methods, and how results will be used to assess success.
 - g. A sustainability plan for how services will be continued or transitioned to alternate funding sources, fixed clinical sites, or community partners at the conclusion of the RHTP grant.
 - h. Timeline with identified milestones and deliverables for implementation of the program from October 1, 2026, through September 30, 2027.
- 3) Supporting documentation **not included in the twenty (20) pages**:
- a. Documentation demonstrating the applicant's ability to operate mobile dental units (e.g., description or inventory of mobile dental units)
 - b. Resumes or position descriptions for key clinical and operational staff
 - c. Proof of licensure and registration to operate dental services in Kentucky, as applicable
 - d. Letter(s) of support or partnership from community sites or organizations where services are proposed to occur
 - e. Budget for FY27 using the provided budget template ("Attachment A")

DPH reserves the right to request additional information or clarification from applicants during the review process.

Thank you for your interest in applying for funding through the Rural Health Transformation Program to support access to dental care. We value your commitment to improving rural oral health outcomes in Kentucky.

Please note that applications received after the deadline will not be guaranteed consideration for Year 1 funding.