



# Statewide Operation Courage Communications Campaign Scope of Work September 25, 2020

## **Purpose**

The Maryland Department of Health's Behavioral Health Administration (BHA) is issuing this request for proposals (RFP) to engage a communications firm to develop and execute a statewide, audio and digital platform communications campaign entitled "Operation Courage" to inform and educate the public regarding a program to assist Maryland's frontline workers by providing free mental health counseling services through tele-counseling. The response of frontline workers during a pandemic, in this instance COVID19, has led to an increase of levels of depression, anxiety, and other mental health related concerns. The messaging will provide a website, phone number and text number for viewer to learn more.

The contractor awarded this work will: conduct research and determine the best approach to promote the reason for the program, who is eligible to receive the services of this statewide effort; create messaging to be used for varied audiences and across audio and digital platforms; handle the development of all creative and graphic design; have expertise in making statewide multi-media advertising buys; track and measure the effectiveness of the campaign; update and change messaging and/or platforms as needed over time. The contractor must employ best practices to reach Maryland residents through an integrated communications program that will resonate, engage and encourage participation while addressing the stigma associated with mental health related illnesses.

The expected duration of this campaign is 4 to 5 months. The first set of messaging across audio and digital platforms will need to be ready for public dissemination by December 11, 2020. This is a preliminary document subject to revision prior to finalization. The proposed scope of work may change prior to issuance of a contract.

The Contractor will complete the following tasks:

### **Research**

- Gauge understanding and attitudes toward stigma of seeking help related to mental health concerns
- Determine best approach to explain the free mental counseling services being offered

### **Message Development**

- Develop content for audio and digital platforms, directed at varied audiences
- Create integrated 4- to 5-month communications plan and editorial calendar
- Emphasize campaign slogan "Operation Courage"

- Produce public service announcements, social media posts, press releases, website content, FAQ documents, etc., as needed

### **Creative and Design Support**

- Incorporate existing logo and branding, style guide (to be provided), into new creatives
- Create suite of campaign resources and collateral materials
- Develop digital (to include video), audio and traditional advertising assets
- Incorporate existing website into creatives

### **Paid Media/Advertising**

- Develop plan to use paid media to reach target audiences
- Utilize radio and digital platforms for most effective message distribution
- Provide media plan to reach all geographical regions in Maryland, without reaching into surrounding states
- Provide all cost estimates for paid media/advertising
- Demonstrate ability to effectively execute media buy
- Perform analytics to determine effectiveness of media buy

### **Social Media**

- Develop robust social media campaign across multiple platforms, including suggested posts, graphics, video
- Perform analytics to determine the effectiveness

### **Earned Media**

- Write press releases and conduct direct outreach to media outlets to encourage positive stories about the contact tracing program and its goals
- Help establish relationships with local and statewide media outlets to ensure accurate coverage of the program and its goals
- Provide timely summaries of earned media coverage and social media trends

### **Budget**

Provide an appropriate budget amount (ranges are acceptable) for each category listed under the Scope of Work. The total estimated budget for this project is \$450,000 - \$500,000. This criteria will not be weighted for making a final decision; however, it is required to present a clear picture of the vendor's concept of how to manage the project.

### **Evaluation Process**

Proposals will be evaluated on the following criteria: a) Documented success with similar communications projects b) Documented success in developing content and messaging that resonates with target audiences c) Ability to create effective content and outreach materials in a quick turnaround (initial messaging will need to be disseminated by July 15, 2020) d) Ability to update and alter messaging as needed as the program develops and circumstances surrounding the pandemic change e) ability to perform analytics to determine the effectiveness of the campaign f) Consistency with the overall proposal and stated project goals g) Demonstrated ability to reach targeted demographics based on audio and digital strategy and to provide benchmark statistics/analytics for comparable campaigns.

### **Deadlines**

**Proposals are due by 5 p.m. on October 5, 2020. Email proposal documents to Margie Donohue, Director, Public Awareness, SAPI, BHA at [Margie.donohue1@maryland.gov](mailto:Margie.donohue1@maryland.gov)**

**Review of proposals will take place October 21, 2020.**

**Award of contract will be made October 27, 2020.**