

Request for Information



State of Alaska
Department of Health
Division of Public Health

Date Issued: September 15, 2023

ALASKA STATE VIROLOGY LABORATORY COURIER SERVICE

A. Introduction:

The Department of Health, Division of Public Health, Section of Laboratories is requesting information from qualified courier service vendors to serve the Alaska State Virology Lab (ASVL), located at 1051 Sheenjek Drive, Fairbanks, AK 99775. The laboratory is situated on the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) campus. The laboratory requires courier services for transportation and delivery of specimens, such as human and animal materials containing infectious substances to the laboratory from various clinics and hospitals in the Fairbanks area. An infectious substance is defined as a substance containing a viable microorganism, such as a bacterium, virus, rickettsia, parasite, or fungus that is known or reasonably believed to cause disease in humans or animals.

B. Background Information:

- ASVL has relied on a courier service for more than twenty years to gather and deliver specimens from providers in the Fairbanks area daily.
- The courier also goes to the Fairbanks International Airport Post Office daily to retrieve ASVL's mail and to take outgoing bags of mail to the post office.
- The courier picks up all Alaska Air Cargo Goldstreak sent to ASVL on an as-needed basis.

C. Scope of Work

The courier must be able to meet the following schedule. The courier should expect to make a maximum of eleven (11) stops per day to pick up specimens in various locations and multiple trips to/from.

1. Check in at Lab:

- 8:00 am - 8:30 am
- Monday through Friday
 - Pick up ASVL's collection cooler and local reports and receive route instructions for the day (see courier routing slip attached).

2. Daily Route:

- 8:30 am - 11:30 am
- Monday through Friday

- The normal daily route will consist of five (5) regular stops:
 - U.S. Post Office, 5400 Mail Trail Road, Fairbanks, AK 99709
 - Fairbanks Memorial Hospital, 1650 Cowles Street, Fairbanks, AK 99701
 - Fairbanks Regional Health Center, 1025 W. Barnette Street, Fairbanks, AK 99701
 - Interior Community Health Center, 1606 23rd Avenue, Fairbanks, AK 99701
 - UAF Center for Health and Counseling, Arctic Health Building, 2141 Koyukuk Drive, UAF Campus, Fairbanks, AK 99775

3. Fed Ex:

- 12:30 pm – 1:30 pm
- Tuesday through Friday, an extra routine stop is required at FedEx
 - FedEx Ship Center, 6059 Old Airport Way, Fairbanks, AK, 99709

4. Additional Stops: Additional stops are non-routine and occur when a facility has notified the laboratory that there are specimens to be picked up. These will be noted on the courier routing slip provided each morning by ASVL (see attached).

- 8:30 am – 11:30 am
- Possible additional stops that may be incorporated into the daily routing slip:
 - Fairbanks Correctional Center, 1931 Eagan Drive, Fairbanks, AK 99701
 - Fairbanks Pioneer Home, 1502 Wilbur St., Fairbanks, AK 99701
 - Planned Parenthood, 1867 Airport Way #160, Fairbanks, AK 99701
 - Bassett Army Hospital, 4076 Neely Road, Fort Wainwright, Fairbanks, AK 99703
 - LabCorp, Inc., 1626 30th Avenue, Fairbanks, AK 99701
 - Fairbanks Youth Facility, 1502 Wilbur Street, Fairbanks, AK 99701
 - Alaska Airlines Goldstreak Office, 5175 Airport Industrial Road, Fairbanks, AK 99709
 - Chief Andrew Isaac Health Center, 1717 West Cowles Street, Fairbanks, AK 99701

D. Deliverables

Couriers will be required to provide a completed courier routing slip each day, Monday – Friday (see attached). The courier will provide directly to ASVL's administration for documentation purposes.

E. Preferred Minimum Experience

- 1. Driver requirements:** The vendor must train its own employees to meet the State and Federal guidelines concerning the transport of hazardous materials (Title 49 Code of Federal Regulations: <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2011-title49-vol2/xml/CFR-2011-title49-vol2-sec173-134.xml> and the Occupational Safety Health Administration (OSHA) bloodborne pathogens standards: <https://www.osha.gov/Publications/osh3186.pdf>), including, but not limited to, the following:
 - Drivers must possess documented training on universal precautions and bloodborne pathogens.
 - Drivers must possess documented training on handling and shipping hazardous materials.

- Drivers must possess documented training on hazardous material decontamination and spill cleanup.

2. Vehicle requirements:

- The vehicle itself must be dependable and in sound mechanical condition.
- The vehicle must maintain an interior temperature between 40-85°F to ensure integrity of specimens.
- The cargo space of the vehicle should be suitable for the material being shipped and provide adequate space for multiple mail bags and coolers.
- The vehicle should not be used for simultaneously transporting unnecessary passengers or animals.
- **Spill Kit:** The vehicle must be equipped with materials that can decontaminate a potential biohazard spill. A spill kit containing absorbent material, a chlorine disinfectant, a leak-proof waste disposal container, and heavy duty reusable gloves should be kept in the transport vehicle.

3. Security and confidentiality:

- Drivers must have documented training regarding the Health Information and Portability & Accountability Act (HIPAA). The driver is required to maintain the confidentiality of laboratory reports and specimens.
- The courier service shall have a security plan that is available to the laboratory outlining the courier's plan to protect patient specimens from becoming damaged, lost, or stolen.

F. Budget

The Department of Health, Division of Public Health, Alaska State Virology Laboratory has a maximum budget of \$400,000 to utilize over the next ten (10) years to support courier services needs.

Initial contract period: estimated start date of November 1, 2023 through October 31, 2024, with nine (9) optional one-year renewals.

Initial Contract	November 1, 2023 thru October 31, 2024
Option 1 of 9	November 1, 2024 to October 31, 2025
Option 2 of 9	November 1, 2025 to October 31, 2026
Option 3 of 9	November 1, 2026 to October 31, 2027 (and so on)

G. Questions

1. Do you have safe, reliable transportation with adequate space for mail bags?
2. Do you have great communication skills for when problems arise during the route?
3. Are you knowledgeable about the Fairbanks area and the medical providers located in Fairbanks?
4. Are you able to maintain confidentiality when transporting medical specimens?

Response Information:

How to Participate

Interested applicants/firms who believe they can provide the services described above should indicate their interest by submitting an electronic response with the following information:

- Company name
- Contact information (email) for the individual(s) who should be notified if DOH releases a solicitation
- A summary that clearly describes your company's capabilities and experience related to providing the services described in this RFI (Sections C and D).
- A summary that clearly describes how the applicant/firm meets or exceeds the *preferred minimum experience* above (Section E).
- A statement confirming that the company anticipates the project deliverables, as shown in Section D, are reasonably within the estimated budget provided (Section F). Or, if not, why?
- Provide narrative statements in response to the questions listed in Section G.
- A summary of any concerns regarding the project as described, and what potential obstacles should be anticipated.

Submission Instructions

Applicants/firms must submit their response as a .pdf file, sent via email, on or before October 16, 2023, 2:30 pm, prevailing Alaska time. The response should be attached to the email with "Virology Lab Courier Services" included as the subject line of the email to the following:

Anneliese Zlitni

Procurement Specialist

Alaska Department of Health

anneliese.zlitni@alaska.gov

It is the responsibility of the interested party to follow up with the procurement specialist(s) shown above to ensure that response was received prior to the time and date specified at the top of this RFI.

Important Notice:

This RFI does not extend any rights to prospective vendors or obligate the State to conduct a solicitation or purchase any goods or services. Nor will the State be financially responsible for any costs associated with the preparation of any response for the requested information. This RFI is issued for the sole purpose of obtaining information as described in this notice. However, the information obtained from this request may be used to prepare a purchase, contract, or solicitation in the future.