

**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION**

**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN  
SERVICES MED-QUEST  
DIVISION**

**No. RFI-MQD-2025-006**

**OMBUDSMAN SERVICES  
FOR MEDICAID BENEFICIARIES AND PROVIDERS**

The State of Hawai'i, through its Medicaid agency, the Department of Human Services (DHS), Med-QUEST Division (MQD), is issuing this Request for Information (RFI) to seek information and comments to prepare a Request for Proposal (RFP) for Ombudsman Services for Medicaid Beneficiaries and Providers. The information received through this RFI will assist DHS in preparing the RFP.

The DHS may engage in informal discussions, but, neither the purchasing agency nor interested parties responding have any obligation under the RFI. Please note that participation is optional, and it is not required to respond to any subsequent DHS procurement.

Responses to this RFI are due by 2:00 pm Hawaii Standard Time (HST) on February 6, 2025. Please indicate "Ombudsman Services RFI Response/RFI- MQD-2025-006" on the cover of the document and mail to the following address or email an electronic copy to [QUEST\\_Integration@dhs.hawaii.gov](mailto:QUEST_Integration@dhs.hawaii.gov) include subject line: "Ombudsman RFI Response".

Email responses are strongly encouraged, but responses may also be mailed to:

Mr. Jon Fujii  
c/o Eric Nouchi  
Department of Human Services/Med-QUEST Division  
1001 Kamokila Boulevard, Suite 317  
Kapolei, HI 96707

The DHS reserves the right to incorporate or not incorporate any suggestions in the solicitation, if issued for a contract, any recommendations presented in responses to this RFI and development of a Request for Proposals.

Ryan I. Yamane, Director  
Department of Human Services

**Ombudsman Services for  
Med-QUEST Division (MQD)  
Beneficiaries and Providers**

**Request For Information  
No. RFI-MQD-2025-006**

**Department of Human Services  
Med-QUEST Division  
January 23, 2025**

## **Reason for the RFI**

The State of Hawaii, through its Medicaid agency, the Department of Human Services (DHS), Med-QUEST Division (MQD), is issuing this Request for Information (RFI) to seek information and comments to prepare a Request for Proposals (RFP) to contract an Ombudsman service to assist Medicaid beneficiaries in navigating the grievance and appeals process in the Managed Care and Fee-For-Service (FFS) benefits. The Ombudsman service will assist to resolve health care services issues on access, quality, or quantity limitations in the QUEST Integration (QI) and FFS programs. The Ombudsman service will also be made available to participating and eligible Medicaid providers (Provider) to address their concerns by educating the Provider on how to access the grievance and appeals process of the Managed Care and FFS systems.

The information received through this RFI will assist DHS in preparing the RFP. The DHS will be seeking vendors with the ability to provide information and assistance to Medicaid beneficiaries regarding rights and obligations, and dispute resolution relating to health care services delivered by the providers participating in the QI and FFS programs. This vendor will also need to assist with concerns of the Managed Care and FFS participating providers.

## **Background**

The Med-QUEST Division (MQD) is the unit within the Department of Human Services (DHS) that administers Hawaii's Medicaid program. Medicaid, a federal and state partnership program created by Congress in 1965, provides medical assistance benefits to qualified uninsured and underinsured beneficiaries.

MQD provides healthcare services in a managed care and FFS environment. The majority of the Medicaid beneficiaries receive these services through the QI program which was implemented in 2015. Hawaii Medicaid currently serves approximately 405,401 Medicaid beneficiaries in Managed Care and approximately 100 under FFS.

QI eligible beneficiaries include individuals who are:

- Pregnant Women
- Children (under 19)
- Foster children (under 19)
- Parents and caretakers
- Adults (19 – 64)
- Aged (65 and older), Blind and Disabled

## **RFI Response**

Assuming that the DHS pursues a competitive Request for Proposals (RFP) to provide Ombudsman services for beneficiaries receiving health care services under the QI and FFS programs Statewide, and Medicaid participating providers, please provide responses to the following inquiries based on how your organization would propose to provide services.

1. What qualifications should an Ombudsman vendor have in order to provide Ombudsman services that assist the Medicaid beneficiaries when navigating grievance and appeal process in a Managed Care and FFS environment?
2. What qualifications should an Ombudsman vendor have in order to provide Ombudsman services to address concerns of the Medicaid participating providers?
3. What recommendations do you have regarding appropriate staffing of the program, needed infrastructure, or organization of an Ombudsman vendor to ensure the most efficient and appropriate use of resources?
4. Based on your organization's experiences of Medicaid, Managed Care, and FFS programs, please provide the DHS with any suggestions or recommendations that may assist the DHS in developing a realistic and reasonable RFP.
5. How should MQD monitor its Ombudsman vendor for job performance, including grievance from the public, to assure quality of work?
6. What recommendations can you make to the DHS about how best to administer Ombudsman services to our eligible Medicaid beneficiaries and providers? Are there any special considerations that should be taken into account for improving Ombudsman services and included in this RFP?
7. Are there new ideas or technologies that could improve Ombudsman services and if so, how would it be utilized?

## **RESPONSE SUBMISSION**

RFI response submission must include name, organization (if applicable), and contact information of person/organization submitting the response.

Responses to this RFI are due by 2:00 pm Hawaii Standard Time (HST) on February 6, 2025. Please indicate "Ombudsman Services RFI Response/RFI- MQD-2025-006" on the cover of the document and mail to the following address or email an electronic copy to [QUEST\\_Integration@dhs.hawaii.gov](mailto:QUEST_Integration@dhs.hawaii.gov) include subject line: "Ombudsman RFI Response".

Mr. Jon Fujii  
c/o Eric Nouchi  
Department of Human Services/Med-QUEST Division  
c/o 1001 Kamokila Boulevard, Suite 317  
Kapolei, HI 96707

### **CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION**

If respondents believe that portions of their RFI response should remain confidential, respondents shall clearly identify that portion of their response they wish to maintain as confidential and include a statement detailing the reasons that the information should not be disclosed. (Blanket labeling of the entire document as “proprietary” or “confidential” will result in none of the document being considered proprietary or confidential.)

The detailed reasons shall include the specific harm or perceived prejudice that may arise. The DHS Director, the Med-QUEST Administrator and the Health Care Services Branch Administrator shall determine whether the identified information should remain confidential. A prior notice shall be provided to the respondent if it is determined that any information which was requested to be confidential becomes part of public distribution/information; the respondent requesting confidentiality can choose whether or not to withdraw their submission.

### **COST OF RESPONSE**

DHS will not reimburse any respondent for the cost of preparing and submitting a response to this RFI.

### **USE OF INFORMATION**

The Department reserves the right to incorporate in a solicitation, if issued, for such a contract, any recommendations presented in responses to this RFI. Please note that participation in this RFI process is optional and is not required in order to respond to any subsequent procurement by the Department. Neither the Department nor the responding party has any obligation under this RFI.

If there are any questions or clarifications to this RFI, please contact Mr. Jon Fujii at [QUEST\\_Integration@dhs.hawaii.gov](mailto:QUEST_Integration@dhs.hawaii.gov)