



**Request for Proposals**  
**California Government Relations and Lobbying Support (2027-2029)**

**Issue Date:** September 30, 2026

**Proposal Due Date:** October 30, 2026

**Contract Period:** January 1, 2027– December 31, 2029, with provisional annual renewal option

**Submit submissions to:** Bekki Lee Wendt, [bleewendt@phi.org](mailto:bleewendt@phi.org)

**Candidate Interviews:** November 9-18, 2026

**Overview**

The Public Health Institute is a national independent nonprofit that advances the health and wellbeing of all people and communities, particularly those facing the greatest barriers. Rooted in 60 years of public health experience, PHI moves ideas into actions through practice, policy, research and community engagement, while serving as the operational backbone for more than 40 programs delivering evidence-based solutions to complex health challenges. PHI is headquartered in Oakland, California, and has served for decades as a public health pillar in the state, working as a thought partner, policy advocate, and an implementation partner to California's public health system.

We are seeking to retain the services of a Sacramento-based government relations firm to represent the organization at the California state legislature, the Governor's office, and with California state government agencies. In addition to general government relations, activities will also include targeted lobbying and advocacy services to support and advance PHI's priorities. The successful firm will be expected to provide advice and counsel regarding advocacy and government relations strategy that will protect and advance PHI's public health priorities and program funding and continue to build PHI's reputation as a leading voice for public health. PHI is seeking a firm that shares this mission-driven approach, brings a genuine partnership orientation to its work with PHI's programs and staff, and understands the value of community-centered, ecosystem-level thinking in advancing public health policy.

This work is grounded in PHI's mission to advance the health and wellbeing of all people and communities, and it serves two related purposes. The first is advocacy on public health policy issues where PHI has expertise and standing, such as those outlined in the Bidder Requirements section below. The second is advocacy and relationship-building to advance PHI's own programs, funding, and organizational interests with California state government. These purposes are closely related and will often overlap within the same piece of advocacy. The successful firm will be expected to provide advice and counsel across both, and to continue building PHI's reputation as a leading voice for public health in California.

PHI is seeking to develop a long-term partnership with a firm that shares our commitment to advancing public health in California, particularly with individuals and communities who face the greatest systemic barriers to health. We will execute an initial twelve (12) month contract, with two (2) options to extend the term for twelve (12) months each, for a total possible contract period of thirty-six (36) months.



Interested parties are requested to submit a response outlining their ability to deliver the scope of work (include references to relevant experience) and detail the corresponding fee schedule and cost.

### **Bidder Requirements**

- The successful firm will have at least 15-years experience as an advocate, lobbyist and government relations specialist, representing nonprofit and nongovernmental organizations, with demonstrated experience advancing priorities at the state capitol and with government agencies across a broad spectrum of public health topics and issues.
- The firm must be a registered California lobbying firm in good standing with the Secretary of State and FPPC.

PHI works across a broad range of public health issue areas. Bidders should have a general understanding of the following areas, which reflect how PHI organizes its work:

- Disease Prevention
- Environmental Health
- Healthy Communities
- Maternal and Child Health
- Nutrition and Food Security
- Public Health Workforce
- Reproductive Health
- Behavioral Health

For this engagement, PHI's near-term legislative priorities are expected to center on a subset of these areas.

- Know-how and demonstrated experience representing clients on state contracting and administrative issues
- Demonstrated experience and relationships within state government agencies, including, but not limited to, the Governor's office, California Department of Public Health (CDPH), California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS), Department of Health Care Access and Information (HCAI), California Health and Human Services Agency (CHHSA), California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), and the California Department of Social Services (CDSS)
- Disclosure of any current clients that pose a potential conflict with PHI's public health priorities or positions.



## **Scope of Work**

The firm will work directly with PHI's CEO, Chief Development and Strategic Initiatives Officer, PHI Program Directors/Principal Investigators and staff and their support team. There will also be occasional engagement with the General Counsel and Director of Communications. The firm will work across a broad variety of public health priorities and topic areas to advance the mission and organizational interests of the Public Health Institute. Specific areas of support, counsel and staff work will include:

## **Strategy**

- Develop a California legislative and budget strategy, including whether and how to sponsor legislation or budget requests.
- Develop strategy concerning PHI's engagement and relationship with California state government leadership, agencies and departments.
- Advocate on public health policy issues where PHI has subject matter expertise and standing, distinct from advocacy tied directly to PHI's own funding or organizational interests.
- Advise PHI on positions to take on bills, budget items, and propositions.

## **Legislative and Budget Work**

- Advocate and lobby on PHI priorities as agreed.
- Work with PHI programs to sponsor, co-sponsor, and support specific legislation and budget proposals related to PHI's interests, potentially covering four to five bills at any one time.
- Draft and prepare legislative language and manage interaction with member's offices, working in conjunction with key PHI staff.
- Prepare or provide input into the drafting of letters to the legislature.

## **Representation and Relationship-Building**

- Schedule meetings as necessary with legislative offices and government agency representatives.
- Represent PHI and testify during committee hearings, legislative briefings and in meetings with members of the legislature and staff.
- Facilitate outreach at the state capitol and within state government to deepen the recognition of PHI and its programs.
- Work with coalition partners and allies on both PHI's organizational priorities and broader public health policy issues where PHI has expertise.
- As needed, provide input and support for program or group advocacy days.



### **Monitoring and Analysis**

- Monitor, track and analyze state legislation of relevance to PHI's interests, generating bill lists that summarize legislation across different priority areas.
- Monitor and analyze the California state budget, identifying issues of relevance to PHI's interests.

### **Internal Coordination and Reporting**

- Participate in twice monthly check-in meetings with PHI leadership.
- Develop a quarterly report that includes summaries of engagement activities, legislative tracking, and budget developments.
- As needed, participate in and provide input and support to prepare for PHI leadership meetings, such as the PHI Board of Director's meetings and occasionally present directly to the Board of Directors.
- Working with the Office of the General Counsel, provide a quarterly breakdown of the lobbying activities and expenses for PHI's FPPC filings

### **Proposal Requirements**

Proposals should not exceed 7 pages, excluding the fee schedule and references, and should include:

1. **Understanding.** A brief statement of your understanding of PHI, this engagement, and the two related purposes of the work described above.
2. **Approach.** Your approach to work and partnership with clients and your approach to the scope of work outlined above, including how you would advance both PHI's own legislative and budget priorities and PHI's advocacy on broader public health policy issues, recognizing that these often overlap in practice. Address your approach separately for each of the following: Strategy, Legislative and Budget Work, Representation and Relationship-Building, and Monitoring and Analysis.
3. **Relevant Experience.** Two to four examples of relevant experience and similar clients, including work on the public health issue areas listed in Bidder Requirements and relationships with the state agencies named above. For each example, include the approximate annual budget or fee for the engagement, its duration, and a brief description of the scope of work involved.
4. **Team.** Key personnel who would work on this account, their relevant experience, and their expected time commitment.
5. **Fee Schedule.** An itemized fee schedule, with lobbying and non-lobbying activities broken out separately. PHI's available budget for this engagement is \$90,000 to \$100,000 per year.

Please also provide three references, ideally from other nonprofit or mission-driven organizations, with current contact information.