

Part I. Core Surveillance

The following criteria will be used to evaluate applications for their technical acceptability:

1. **Program Need and Resources:** The extent to which the applicant describes the requirements for, and activities of, the HIV/AIDS surveillance system that includes a presentation of existing strengths and limitations. The extent to which this overview includes: the program need in terms of HIV/AIDS morbidity (*i.e.*, delineation of the annual number of HIV/AIDS cases and case rates); extent and level of funding devoted to prevention, treatment, and care programs in the area that require HIV/AIDS surveillance data for resource allocation and program planning; uses of surveillance data, including linkages to public health program activities such as PCRS; ability to analyze data that allows for the identification of trends in emerging modes of HIV transmission (by various demographic indicators and behaviors); all existing and potential sources of HIV/AIDS cases; a description of HIV/AIDS reporting procedures and resources in the area including a presentation of data items currently collected; ongoing quality assurance procedures to promote data quality; sources of funding beyond federal monies provided by CDC; the flow of data through the reporting system; existing policies and procedures that are written and implemented for security, confidentiality, data dissemination and surveillance procedural activities; educational and training activities undertaken to develop and enhance the skills of surveillance staff and staff in reporting facilities; a copy of the most recent annual surveillance report; State legislation and/or regulations pertaining to the reporting, collection, uses and dissemination of HIV/AIDS surveillance data.

2. **Collaboration and Use of Data:** The extent to which the applicant describes past, current, and proposed collaboration with: the relevant HIV/AIDS organizations and agencies within the reporting area; CDC, and other States or national organizations involved in coordinating and assuring the quality, completeness, and accuracy of HIV/AIDS surveillance data; locally and Federally-funded prevention, treatment and care programs such as the CDC prevention programs or the Ryan White Care Act; and the extent HIV/AIDS surveillance data are used to assist public and private partners (*e.g.*, community planning groups, AIDS Service Organizations) as a guide for allocating HIV prevention and care

resources, and as a means to evaluate the success of their intervention programs.

3. **Proposed Objectives:** The extent to which program objectives are: specific, measurable, time-phased, and realistic; related to recipient activities, program purpose and program activities; derived from needs identified in the resources and needs assessment; and consistent with national HIV/AIDS surveillance program objectives.

4. **Program Plan and Methods for Implementation:** The extent to which the applicant adequately describes the procedures and methods to be used to accomplish the program objectives for their surveillance program; and describes how program plans and procedures will facilitate achievement of national objectives for HIV/AIDS surveillance.

5. **Program Evaluation Plan:** The applicant provides an evaluation plan that is appropriate for measuring progress toward program area and national HIV/AIDS surveillance objectives; the plan should include a specified time-line and methods for identifying promoters and barriers to program success.

6. **Project Management and Staffing Plan:** The extent to which proposed staffing, organizational structure, staff experience and background, identified training needs or plan, and job descriptions and curricula vitae for both proposed and current staff indicate ability to carry out the purposes of the program.

7. **Budget:** The budget is reasonable, clearly justified, consistent with the demonstrated need and proposed activities, and likely to lead to program success.

Part II. HIV Incidence Surveillance

1. **Program Plan:** The degree to which the applicant provides evidence of their understanding of the project goals and conceptual background through the presentation of a coherent plan that describes all the necessary activities and personnel needed to conduct HIV Incidence surveillance. Quality of plans for conducting data analysis and presentation showing how data have been and will be used to improve state and local HIV prevention programs and HIV services and care.

2. **Objectives:** The extent to which the objectives are specific (with time frames), realistic, and address the required recipient activities.

3. **Methods for Implementation:** The extent to which the applicant demonstrates the technical capability to conduct the project using the appropriate data collection and analytic

methods. Specific technical capabilities to be reviewed for each project include: The ability to identify new HIV infections reported to the surveillance system in a timely manner; collaboration with laboratory partners, including public health laboratories and commercial laboratories responsible for HIV testing in the state, to obtain aliquots of blood for STARHS testing; preparation and transport of specimens to reference laboratories for STARHS testing; obtainment of sufficient HIV testing history information; linkage of HIV case data to laboratory specimens, and to HIV testing history information; and in areas that execute unlinked STARHS, the extent to which the methods are feasible and appropriate.

4. **Program Evaluation Plan:** The applicant provides an evaluation plan that is appropriate for measuring progress toward program area and national HIV Incidence surveillance objectives; the plan should include a specified time-line and methods for identifying promoters and barriers to program success.

5. **Budget:** The budget is reasonable, clearly justified, consistent with the demonstrated need and proposed activities, and likely to lead to program success.

Part III. Capacity Building for Epidemiologic and Program Evaluation Activities

1. **Program Need and Resources:** The extent to which the applicant describes the need for resources to achieve the purpose. The detail should include how awardees will collaborate with public and private partners (such as, HIV prevention and care community planning groups and AIDS service organizations) to use surveillance, program, and other health-related data to enhance community planning, evaluation, and monitoring achievement of goals and objectives.

2. **Plan and Objectives:** The extent to which the applicant describes its plan for achieving the purpose, including presentation of goals, objectives, activities, and time frames along with narrative discussion. The narrative discussion should include:

- a. Objectives for the collection, use, analysis, interpretation of surveillance, program, and other health-related data to enhance epidemiologic and program evaluation activities.

- b. Discussion of the "Recipient Activities" outlined above.

3. **Methods:** The extent to which the applicant describes how surveillance and other health-related data will be used to improve epidemiologic and program evaluation activities, including,