



In today's complex Medicaid landscape, health plans are looking to chart their course to a winning proposal. When competing for Medicaid health care contracts, your proposal must align with the state's overall objectives, values, goals and priorities.

To ensure these stars align, begin developing your strategy for a new procurement 18–24 months prior to the expected request for proposal (RFP) release date. You need this extended lead time to develop and implement specific strategies and tactics that improve your competitive position. It enables you to develop a branded, strategic message that conveys the desired information in a controlled, targeted manner.

A first step in developing a winning strategy is to understand the procurement agency's issues, motivators and hot buttons. The state Medicaid agency may be facing many **issues**, ranging from public health challenges to budgetary constraints. But not all issues are motivators.

A **motivator** is an objective that the procurement agency is trying to achieve. **Hot buttons** are a combination of the issues and motivators that reflect the state's primary concerns and drive the RFP's specific requirements.

For example, let's say a previous Medicaid contractor was unable to provide reliable transportation or equitable access to care. These issues would also be motivators and hot-button issues, and the next RFP would likely include related requirements or questions.

A successful strategy aligns the bidding organization's proposal to the state's hot-button issues and addresses each of the objectives with a specific, measurable solution. Describe how your organization will accomplish the statement of work (SOW), including the tasks involved, when they'll be done, and who will do them.

Effective strategic statements incorporate tactical characteristics. They recognize that each statement may incorporate multiple action plans. Each statement should address the agency's hot buttons, incorporate the organization's strengths and mitigate their weaknesses. Effective strategies also highlight the competition's weaknesses and diminish their strengths.



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Charting the course to a winning Medicaid proposal

Once you've developed the strategy statements, you can begin to develop win themes for the anticipated RFP release.

Bidding organizations need the 18–24 months leading up to the RFP release to:

- Align strategic goals and business objectives with the anticipated RFP requirements
- Address the procurement agency's hot buttons
- Assess their operational processes, identify any functional gaps and develop innovative solutions before beginning the RFP response process

Charting the correct course toward a winning proposal takes time and focus. Skipping the strategic planning step of the process is inefficient and can sink your win probability. A professional Medicaid proposal consulting group can provide stellar navigation. We can help you develop effective strategies that can transform your next RFP response into a winning proposal.

Optum Medicaid Advisory Services

Whether your organization is a national, regional or local MCO, the goals are the same. You need to win bids, reduce costs and meet regulations. Our Medicaid proposal practice team applies the most current industry information to deliver meaningful results right from the start. We have the breadth of expertise at a national level coupled with deep local insights.

[Learn more](#) about how our team can help.

Learn how Optum Advisory Services can help you determine and reach your organization's goals.



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