



Vehicles-For-Hire Incentive Program: Questions and Answers

November 17, 2023

The following questions (edited for clarity and anonymity) have been received from potential applicants to this RFP and other interested stakeholders. We publish our answers here for guidance in preparing proposals.

Question 1. Table 1-Program Summary Table-Driver Eligibility states that all Massachusetts medallion holding taxi drivers will qualify for the incentive. There are other taxi ownership arrangements in Massachusetts that will fall outside of the eligibility requirements. For example, there are cities in Massachusetts that do not have taxi medallion systems but provide local taxi companies with a permit to operate as a taxi company. Does this mean that only Boston, Cambridge, and Somerville medallions owners that are owner operators will only be eligible for this incentive?

- a. **All taxi permits that are given to a driver by a city or town in the Commonwealth will qualify for the program. These permits will be submitted to the Awardee for identification and verification of eligibility.**

Question 2. Can a professional consultant or an organization provide their credentials and experience to MassCEC to be presented to an applicant team as a possible subcontractor? The professional consultant/organization would support specific tasks that the applicant team may not have the experience or contacts to support.

- a. **MassCEC expects to award one (1) award for the full scope of the project. If an applicant is unable to fulfill the full scope, the entity must reach out to other partners to form an applicant team. One Lead Applicant should submit the application for the project team.**

Question 3. Respondents are expected to collect driver data per Task 3B. Can rebates be made contingent on the driver providing this data? What if drivers refuse to provide data or are unable to provide data such as costs and savings differences?

- a. **MassCEC expects all participating drivers to engage in an intake survey conducted during the application or upon award of the VFH rebate. The intake survey will gather information including the electric vehicle purchased, the driver's previous rideshare vehicle, and the driver's address (or similar information). The Awardee will be encouraged to incentivize participants to provide data on their programs experience via a 6-month survey. This could include gift cards for survey completion or similar strategies.**

Question 4. Please confirm the contract type (Firm Fixed Price, Time & Materials, or other).

- a. **The contract will be Firm Fixed Price on a per milestone basis. Awardees are required to complete the [Budget Worksheet](#) and submit with their application. This spreadsheet includes costs per individual milestone (for example, the cost to process each incentive deployed by the Awardee). The values input into the budget worksheet will be considered during the application evaluation process.**

Question 5. One of the program goals related to emissions reductions is “path to scale.” Given the 6 month engagement, can you clarify why this is important?

- a. **MassCEC anticipates that learnings and recommendations from this pilot version of the program will inform potential future iterations of the VFH Incentive Program. In this instance, the “path to scale” refers to identifying strategies to maximize greenhouse gas (GHG) reductions in such future programs.**

Question 6. For Scope 1, Task 3 Data collection, will the consultant need to review and utilize paper records or driver logs?

- a. **We expect that records will be digital under most circumstances.**

Question 7. For Scope 1, Task 3 Data collection how are “desired driver vehicle charging locations” determined? How does this vary from “typical driver vehicle charging locations”?

- a. **Rideshare drivers may typically charge in locations that are not convenient nor preferred (typical driver vehicle charging locations). MassCEC hopes that driver feedback on “desired driver vehicle charging locations” can be used to help site future charging locations around the Commonwealth.**

Question 8. Will the contractor manage the email hotline mentioned in Scope 1, Task 5?

- a. **Yes, the contractor is expected to handle this.**

Question 9. Will the contractor be responsible for developing the online application?

- a. **Yes, the Awardee will be responsible for developing the online application for drivers.**

Question 10. The RFP requests that respondents list all state and federal contracts over the last 5 years. Can this be limited to those relevant to the scope of work?

- a. **MassCEC has reevaluated the need for this requirement and will waive it. MassCEC will post a revised RFP document with a request that respondents list completed and active state and federal contracts relevant to the scope of work over the last 5 years.**

Question 11. For Scope 1, Task 4, has MassCEC already established relationships with both Uber and Lyft or has that relationship-building not yet started?

- a. **MassCEC has had multiple discussions with Uber and Lyft during the process of developing this program and RFP.**

Question 12. Estimated Timeline - The timeline in the RFP indicates a January 2024 program kickoff. Does MassCEC have a target timeline for when the program will open to applications?

- a. **We hope the Awardee will open the program to applications by spring 2024.**

Question 13. Scope of Work - Does MassCEC already have agreements in place with TNC companies, the DPU and taxi companies to provide the data listed in Scope 1?

- a. **MassCEC will facilitate all data sharing between the TNCs and the Awardee. Our understanding is that the TNCs will supply the:**
 - i. **Number of rides and miles, per quarter, in the most recent four (4) quarters for TNC drivers applying via self-certification;**
 - ii. **Aggregate number of trips taken by program participants;**
 - iii. **Aggregate number of miles driven by program participants; and**
 - iv. **Aggregate/anonymous trip location info.**
- b. **Here is a list of data that is expected of the Awardee to collect from drivers:**
 - i. **Typical driver vehicle charging locations;**
 - ii. **Desired driver vehicle charging locations;**
 - iii. **Participant vehicle type;**
 - iv. **Participant vehicle pricing;**
 - v. **Driver demographics;**
 - vi. **Driver costs and savings as a result of electrification; and**
 - vii. **Driver satisfaction and program feedback.**
- c. **MassCEC does not anticipate any data sharing from taxi companies or the DPU. Taxi drivers will be required to submit taxi medallion or permit information to confirm eligibility.**

Question 14. Under proposal requirements, the Workplan Narrative indicates that the page limit is “up to 8 pages”. Later in that paragraph, it says that we are allowed “up to 4 paragraphs for each Scope. Since there are 3 scopes, are we limited to 8 or 12 pages?

- a. Ideally, applicants will limit their Workplan Narrative to 8 pages or less. MassCEC anticipates that Scope 3 (Translation Services) will not necessitate the full 4 pages. However, MassCEC is willing to accept applications up to 4 pages for each scope, if necessary.**

Question 15. Regarding Scope 1, Task 4: Program Marketing, can you please confirm what languages the marketing materials will need to be translated in?

- a. It is required for materials to be available in English, Spanish, and Portuguese. In addition, the number of languages that the Awardee is capable of translating materials into will be taken into consideration when evaluating applications. MassCEC prefers that the Awardee be able to additionally translate materials into:
 - i. Arabic;**
 - ii. Cape Verdean Creole;**
 - iii. Chinese (Mandarin and Cantonese);**
 - iv. French;**
 - v. Haitian Creole;**
 - vi. Hindi;**
 - vii. Khmer;**
 - viii. Korean;**
 - ix. Russian;**
 - x. Somali; and**
 - xi. Vietnamese.****

Question 16. Does Scope 1, Task 4: Program Marketing have a maximum spend for the marketing strategy to inform taxi drivers about the program? Or is this budget amount up to what the consultant proposes in their pricing?

- a. The budget for all milestones should be created by the Awardee. MassCEC will weigh cost-effective proposals higher.**

Question 17. Regarding Scope 1, Task 5: Website Creation and Management, can you confirm if the website will need to be built in WordPress or Drupal?

- a. The consultant may use either. We do not expect to host the website on the MassCEC website.**

Question 18. Regarding Scope 1, Task 5: Website Creation and Management, will the consultant be required to assist with website maintenance and/or updates once the website is live?

- a. **We expect the consultant to maintain the website while the program is active.**

Question 19. To be eligible for incentives, must a TNC driver complete 400 rides or 1,800 miles in the “most recent quarter” and in each of three (out of four) most recent quarters? Therefore, as outlined in Table 1 below, Driver 1 who completed 1,200 rides is eligible. Driver 2 who completed 1,525 rides – and Driver 3 who completed 1600 rides – are both not eligible.

Table 1: Driver Eligibility Scenarios

Driver #	Oct – Dec 2023	July – Sept 2023	April – Jun 2023	Jan – Mar 2023	Eligibility
Driver 1	400 rides	0 rides	400 rides	400 rides	Eligible
Driver 2	400 rides	375 rides	375 rides	375 rides	Not Eligible
Driver 3	200 rides	600 rides	600 rides	200 rides	Not Eligible

- a. **Only Driver 1 is eligible in the examples listed above. MassCEC’s goal is to target drivers that will remain consistent on the TNC platforms after receiving the VFH rebate. The number of miles may also be used to verify eligibility. A TNC driver must complete either 400 rides or 1,800 miles in individual quarters to be eligible. MassCEC anticipates that the milage consistency requirement will allow more rural drivers to qualify for the program.**

Question 20. To account for seasonality of TNC trips in certain parts of Massachusetts (i.e. Cape and Islands – exemplified by Driver 3 above), may TNC drivers demonstrate “consistency” across quarters, instead of in each of three (of four) quarters?

- a. **TNC drivers demonstrating consistency across quarters instead of individual quarters will typically not be eligible for this program. MassCEC is open to working with the Awardee and the TNCs to further discuss the consistency requirement.**

Question 21. The RFP states that the “VFH-Own Program’ is designed to build on the existing MOR-EV program.” To be eligible to the VFH-Own Program, must a driver also be eligible (and receive) the MOR-EV rebate?

- a. **Yes, the driver must submit proof of receipt of the MOR-EV rebate to be eligible for this program. We hope that this will reduce some administrative burden on the Awardee.**

Question 22. If a TNC driver must also receive the MOR-EV rebate, does the income (below \$75,000 for single person) and price restrictions on applicable vehicles (\$40,000 or less) on rebates for used EVs also apply to the VFH-Own Program? Many TNC drivers use TNC trips to supplement income from other employment. For TNC drivers interested in purchasing a used EV, are they ineligible for the VFH-Own Program if their annual income exceeds \$75,000? Many TNC drivers also use SUVs and luxury vehicles to be eligible for premium TNC services. Can TNC drivers purchase a used EV whose price exceeds \$40,000, or a new EV whose price exceeds \$55,000, and be eligible for VFH-Own Program?

- a. **Eligible vehicles under the VFH Incentive Program must meet the MOR-EV price requirements to be eligible:**
 - i. **New Vehicles – total MSRP may not exceed \$55,000**
 - ii. **Used Vehicles – final purchase price may not exceed \$40,000**
- b. **Regarding income eligibility, the income barrier exists only for the MOR-EV+, for low-income applicants, and the MOR-EV Used programs.**
- c. **Several MOR-EV eligible vehicles allow drivers to participate in the premium services provided by Uber and Lyft. Uber and Lyft provide lists of eligible vehicles on their websites.**
- d. **More information on MOR-EV eligibility can be found [here](#).**

Question 23. A MOR-EV rebate of \$3,500 is now available for the purchase of both new and used EVs. The price of some of the most popular used EV models (e.g., Tesla Model 3) can exceed \$30,000. Why is there such a large disparity between the proposed incentive for new EVs (\$6,500) compared to used EVs (\$2,500)?

- a. **MassCEC selected the incentive amounts based upon a review of the current EV market. We believe that the used VFH-Incentive, in combination with MOR-EV and the Federal EV Tax Credit, will be sufficient to incentivize EV adoption.**
- b. **This program has been designed in two phases. MassCEC and the Awardee may adjust incentive amounts under Phase 2 based upon Phase 1 findings. The goal of this pilot program is to gather learnings to inform potential future iterations of the program.**

Question 24. The proposed design of the VFH-Own and VFH-Rental Program requires TNC drivers to submit “proof of eligibility” after they purchase or rent an EV. How will this program incentivize the switch to EVs if TNC drivers are uncertain about their eligibility at the time of their rental/purchase? Can the program allow for a determination of eligibility before a TNC driver makes a significant financial commitment to the purchase/rental of an EV?

- a. **Yes. Drivers can receive pre-approval for the program before purchasing an EV. The proposed program process, including this step, is outlined in Figure 1 of the RFP.**

Question 25. How will the Awardee receive information from the TNCs to verify program eligibility?

- a. **We anticipate that the Awardee will submit a list of applicants to the TNCs. We expect that the TNCs will verify driver eligibility from this list on a weekly basis.**