

MercerVIP

Frequently Asked Questions

Description of the Solution

MercerVIP is a digitized vendor intelligence platform with dynamic search functionality that gathers all employer-related health and benefits vendor solution information into one place for Mercer consultants to use in their research and evaluation.

Registered Vendors will have access to create their own company and solution profiles and update them at any time. MercerVIP also will contain standardized RFX (RFP/RFI) capabilities through an integration with a best in class proposal management platform to streamline the RFX process between Mercer and health and benefits vendors and carriers (for non-insured solutions), reducing the amount of repetitive requests. MercerVIP participants will also have access to data and analytics from the platform, with a Premium subscription.

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Vendor Platform Access & Vendor Solution Maintenance

1. How do I sign up?

- A. Instructions on how to register, including the terms and conditions accepted when registering, can be found on mercervip.mercer.com.

2. Can I export the questions to work on them offline?

- A. You are able export the RFX questions to work on them offline, but you will need to copy and paste the answers into the online form when complete. There is no capability to upload the questions from the Excel export automatically. Discovery questions are currently not exportable offline and must be answered in the platform directly. The capability of exporting the questions to excel is currently unavailable. To request the question sets, please email mercervip@mercer.com. You can then copy and paste the answers into the online form.

3. How often do I need to update my company profile and solution information?

- A. It is highly recommended vendors refresh solution pages to ensure they're up-to-date at least twice a year, but no less than once a year, per the Terms of Use. However, you're encouraged to update as often as necessary, as information changes in real time.

4. Can multiple people from my company have access to MercerVIP? Do I have to pay extra for additional users?

- A. Your company administrator can manage an unlimited number of users. There is no cost for additional users.

To learn how to add and maintain your company's user profiles, you may utilize the training materials available in the **Learn More** section of the MercerVIP website at mercervip.mercer.com.

5. What happens if I can't or don't answer all of the questions?

- A. While we strongly encourage you to answer all the questions that you can, the required questions are marked with an asterisk (*). All the remaining questions are valuable, but optional. You are required to walk through each section of questions applicable to your product and complete any required questions before you will be given the option to publish it.

If we come across a solution page that isn't complete to our standards, we may unpublish it (but will not delete it) and reach out to provide feedback for recommended changes.

Completing the answers on the system will make the process of responding to a client-specific RFP more efficient as the questions will be pre-populated with the answers you provided.

6. Is there a “due date” to enter my solution information in the platform?

- A. There is no specific due date since the platform does not “close” to data entry. You can make updates/changes at any time. That being said, the sooner you complete the information, the sooner Consultants can learn about your company and its solutions.

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Cost

7. How much does it cost to have my company and solution information in MercerVIP?

- A. There is no cost to participate in MercerVIP. Any vendor who currently offers health and benefits solutions and products to employers can:

- (1) Create a company profile and solution pages
- (2) Respond to RFx (RFP/RFI requests) in MercerVIP

There are optional premium features that give you access to data reporting and analytics and additional Mercer services for an annual fixed fee (referred to as MercerVIP Premium Packages). Details are posted to mercervip.mercer.com.

8. Will we be able to preview the Premium features (data analytics and reporting) before deciding to buy an annual subscription?

- A. A free preview window is not available at this time, but the MercerVIP team can provide sample screenshots of the features.

9. Are there any other costs for MercerVIP?

- A. Other than fees for MercerVIP Premium, which are optional, there are no other costs to host your information on MercerVIP.

10. Who do I send my terms and conditions exceptions to?

- A. While we are happy to answer questions you have on the terms and conditions, Mercer is unable to accept individual exceptions and execute individual agreements. Not only is it administratively prohibitive to manage individual agreements, it is critical all vendors are on the same level playing field for equity.

To register for MercerVIP, you must be able to accept the terms and conditions as they are written.

3 Solution Organization

11. How will vendors/carriers be organized?

- A. The platform is organized by solution type. You will have a company page, and then can create an unlimited number of solution pages under that company page. In each solution, you will be able to provide what locations/regions that solution can support.

Consultants are able to filter based on the location preferences of their respective clients. If you want a preview of the Consultant Experience, check out the **MercerVIP Overview & Training** document found on the MercerVIP homepage.

12. Is Mercer open to feedback on the categories?

- A. We are open to feedback on the categories; however, we cannot commit to implementing all feedback. We anticipate reviewing all feedback collectively and determining whether changes are necessary. This review process is conducted on an annual basis.

13. To get my solution(s) to show up in the most searches, should I check all the solution boxes so it shows up in all searches?

- A. Not necessarily. MercerVIP ranks search results based on best match. Solutions which are broadly categorized (i.e. have many categories selected) don't usually perform as well in searches compared to those that are more focused. The reason is most users usually search for solutions that match 1 to 2 categories, so the search algorithm considers excess functional coverage to be detrimental to the user.

The limit for category selection is two (2) main categories per solution – however, you are not limited in the number of solutions you add. If solutions are created with more than two (2) main categories selected, feedback will be provided asking you to re-visit your category selection. To help you narrow down your category selection, the intent behind selection of categories is you only select categories that:

- i. The main categories and subcategories is the focus of the solution, not a component

Example: The only companies who should be selecting advocacy are companies who do broad advocacy, regardless of condition.

- ii. The services could be sold standalone.

Example: A cancer solution likely has a telemedicine and advocacy component, but that company would not sell just the telemedicine or advocacy components as a standalone feature without the broader solution.

Remember: If you have multiple standalone services, you can and should create multiple individual solution pages in the platform.

15. My company is an insurance carrier. How do we participate?

- A. Carriers can input information on standalone, non-bundled products. This should not include core products like medical, dental, vision, and leave and disability insurance. It can include solutions like an unbundled behavioral health or a diabetes solution that is available if an employer does not purchase an insurance product from you.

16. Why can I only put non-bundled solutions as an insurance carrier?

- A. Initially, we tried to make MercerVIP available for any non-core solution; however, based on the current categories of vendors available, it is in everyone's best interest if we only include non-bundled solutions in the platform.

Carriers still have other methods of communicating their solutions to Mercer consultants through the Carrier Relations Team.

Even more, by having your non-bundled solutions on the platform, you will still build brand awareness and consultants will be more aware of your bundled solutions.

17. Are PBM solutions included?

- A. PBM solutions are not currently in scope of MercerVIP. Solutions about this topic will be removed. However, Non-PBM services that provide pharmacy-related solutions, such as decision support and transparency services, are in scope for MercerVIP.

18. My non-insured product/solution is a partnership with a vendor. Do I create a solution page on behalf of that vendor?

- A. If your non-insured product or solution is not an in-house product, please do not create a solution page for it. The vendor with whom you have a partnership is welcome to create a solution page and provide relevant information about the partnership with you in their answers.

19. Can I make solution pages for my insured products as well?

- A. Please do not make solution pages for insured products. Information on insured products through carriers is managed through a different process, which is not part of MercerVIP. Pages on insured products will be removed.

20. What are the restrictions for which vendors can be in MercerVIP?

- A. Any health and benefits vendor who has a relevant solution in the vendor categories outlined on mercervip.mercer.com that also offers their services to employers may create a profile on MercerVIP. There is no limit to the number of vendors on the solution. There is also no limit on the size of employer you serve. Even if you only serve a certain size employer, you're welcome in MercerVIP.

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Training

21. What training will be provided?

- A. There is a training deck and video available on mercervip.mercer.com under **Learn More**.

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Audience & Consultant Engagement

22. Who will be able to see my solution information?

- A. Only Mercer consultants and the vendor users for your company will be able to see your solution pages. You cannot see your competitors' information, and they cannot see yours.

23. How will consultants search in the platform?

- A. If you want a preview of the Consultant Experience, check out the **MercerVIP Overview & Training** document located at mercervip.mercer.com.

Consultants will be able to search by vendor, category, or topic; or they can browse our predetermined categories to find the most relevant one. They then will be able to see a list of matched vendors, which they can then filter down further by geography, employer size, etc.

Consultant view demos are not available to vendors as they would show information about other vendors, which we cannot reveal.

- 24. **I've created my solution pages and spent time answering all the questions for Mercer consultant use with clients. I'm still getting the same questions outside of the platform, and I'd prefer the consultants use the answers previously provided. What should I do?**

- A. Please direct the consultant to MercerVIP for the answers already given in MercerVIP. For any custom questions that aren't already addressed in MercerVIP, the consultant may send them via the custom question workflow as part of the MercerVIP RFX or they may send them to you directly by email. Client-specific pricing, responses to PGs, and any other client-specific request will be handled similarly.

Mercer consultants are required to run RFPs through the platform and utilize existing information within the platform first. They may need to engage you directly for information not contained in the platform.

The only exceptions are if a vendor isn't in MercerVIP or the client requirements prevent us from using MercerVIP (e.g. a client has their own procurement system). If a vendor isn't in MercerVIP, only that vendor would receive a manual RFP. In the case client requirements prevent us from using MercerVIP, consultants should still leverage the information in MercerVIP to reduce the effort on everyone's part as much as possible.

If you are still getting manual RFPs, we encourage you to redirect the consultant to MercerVIP or engage us at mercervip@mercer.com and we can ensure the consultant is aware MercerVIP is available.

25. Is it possible a consultant may respond to a client request without engaging us in MercerVIP?

- A. Since MercerVIP only includes pricing ranges and illustrative figures, Mercer cannot run a full RFP process without asking for some information from the vendor. Consultants may share preliminary information with the client without approaching a vendor. A selection, however, cannot be made without requesting pricing, which we expect will be done through the MercerVIP RFP process.

26. Is it common an RFP may have an anonymous client?

- A. It is possible for a client to request that they are anonymous on an RFP. This is not a common occurrence and most RFPs are fully transparent with the client's name.

27. With MercerVIP being open to any vendor that provides a health and benefits solution to an employer, how will consultants know which vendors are better for their clients?

- A. The questions asked in MercerVIP are specifically targeted to surface the information consultants need in order to analyze a vendor value proposition with their client's needs in mind. Consultants will also still engage the appropriate subject matter experts for analysis, as relevant.

28. If we don't join MercerVIP, will we be included in future opportunities?

- A. Participation in MercerVIP is not required to continue receiving RFPs from Mercer consultants. However, MercerVIP will be the consultant's primary source for identifying vendors and issuing RFPs.

Mercer will encourage consultants to search outside of MercerVIP; however, that will require extra steps and you may not be identified and queried by consultants not already familiar with your service especially if they do not find you in their supplemental research.

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Questions / Technical Assistance

29. If I have questions or any technical issues, who can I ask?

- A. Send an email to mercervip@mercer.com with any questions or to request technical support