



COUNTY OF SONOMA

575 ADMINISTRATION
DRIVE, ROOM 102A
SANTA ROSA, CA 95403

SUMMARY REPORT

Agenda Date: 7/8/2025

To: County of Sonoma Board of Supervisors
Department or Agency Name(s): Department of Health Services
Staff Name and Phone Number: Nolan Sullivan, 707-565-4474; Gabriel Kaplan, 707-565-6622 **Vote Requirement:** 4/5th
Supervisory District(s): Countywide

Title:

Amendment to Agreement with Dr. Karen Smith for Interim Health Officer Services

Recommended Action:

- A) Authorize the Director of Health Services to execute an amendment to the agreement with Dr. Karen Smith to provide Interim Health Officer services, increasing the original contract amount by \$28,696 for a new total not-to-exceed amount of \$152,312, and extending the contract term through September 30, 2025.
- B) Adopt a budget resolution, authorizing budgetary adjustments to the fiscal year 2025-2026 adopted budget to reflect additional revenues and expenditures in the amount of \$28,696 associated with the costs of the Interim Health Officer for the final three months of the service agreement. (4/5th Vote Required)

Executive Summary:

The Board of Supervisors appoints the County Health Officer in accordance with California Health and Safety Code Section 101000. The Health Officer reports to the Board through the Director of the Department of Health Services (hereinafter, "DHS" or "the Department"). The County Health Officer provides leadership for the protection of public health, enforcement of public health regulations, and serves as an advisor to elected and appointed officials, members of the medical profession, and the public on matters affecting health and safety. The COVID-19 Pandemic exemplifies the importance and criticality of a well-qualified Health Officer who is knowledgeable in infectious diseases and demonstrates excellent leadership.

The previous County Health Officer resigned from the position effective October 28, 2024, and on October 22, 2024, your Board appointed Dr. Karen Smith to the position of Interim Health Officer for the County of Sonoma effective October 28, 2024, and approved the execution of an agreement with Dr. Smith for a total not-to-exceed amount of \$123,616 reflecting approximately nine months of service, providing time for the County to recruit a permanent replacement to this position.

The Department has not finalized a recommendation for a new appointment; therefore, DHS is requesting the Board authorize the Director of DHS to execute an amendment to the existing agreement with Dr. Karen Smith to provide Interim Health Officer Services, extending the contract term through September 30, 2025, and increasing the original contract by \$28,696, for a new total not-to-exceed amount of \$152,312.

Discussion:

The Sonoma County Board of Supervisors appoints the County Health Officer in accordance with California

Health and Safety Code Section 101000, and the Health Officer reports to the Director Health Services. The County Health Officer provides leadership for the protection of public health, enforcement of public health regulations, and serves as an advisor to elected and appointed officials, members of the medical profession, and the public on matters affecting health and safety.

Dr. Tanya Phares, who was appointed County Health Officer on November 14, 2023, resigned that position effective October 28, 2024. The Board appointed Dr. Karen Smith to the position of Interim County Health Officer on October 22, 2024, for a contract term ending on July 28, 2025, and a not-to-exceed value of \$123,616. This interim agreement was needed to maintain the critical services and expertise provided by this position while a national recruitment process was completed and administered by the Department of Human Resources consistent with Civil Service requirements. No final candidate has emerged as a result of this recruitment process. As such, the recruitment continues to search for an ideal candidate.

Dr. Karen Smith has agreed to extend her contracted position up to two (2) additional months to maintain uninterrupted expert services, in anticipation of final candidate selection. The Department is asking your Board to authorize the DHS Director to execute an amendment to extend Dr. Smith's current agreement from July 29, 2025, through September 30, 2025, and adding an additional \$28,696 to cover the additional term, culminating in a new total not-to-exceed contract value of \$152,312.

The County Health Officer is responsible for the development of medical protocols for DHS; serving as an advisor to elected and appointed officials, members of the medical community, and the public; and providing an integral role in the development of reports on the health status of the community. The Health Officer is responsible for ensuring medical oversight and enforcement of public health laws, regulations, and ordinances across the jurisdictions of Sonoma County. The Health Officer will collaborate on the implementation of the DHS Strategic Plan, will work to develop and implement health policies that improve community health in Sonoma County, and will ensure that Board of Supervisors' priorities are addressed. The Health Officer will work with community partners on local initiatives including, but not limited to, the local food system, water and environmental quality, dental health for children and adults, and the health care delivery system integration supporting the "Triple Aim" of improved care, decreased cost, and increased access.

Strategic Plan:

N/A

Racial Equity:**Was this item identified as an opportunity to apply the Racial Equity Toolkit?**

No

Prior Board Actions:

October 22, 2024, the Board adopted a resolution appointing Dr. Karen Smith to the position of Interim Health Officer for the County of Sonoma effective October 28, 2024; and authorized DHS Director to execute a professional services agreement with Dr. Karen Smith to provide Interim Health Officer services in an amount not to exceed \$123,616 through July 28, 2025.

November 7, 2023, Health Officer Appointment of Dr. Tanya Phares effective November 14, 2023.

August 1, 2023, the Board appointed Dr. Karen Smith to the position of Interim Health Officer effective August 5, 2023.

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY25-26 Adopted	FY25-26 Projected	FY26-27 Projected
Budgeted Expenses	\$12,362		
Additional Appropriation Requested	\$28,696		
Total Expenditures	\$41,058		
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal	\$41,058		
Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance			
General Fund Contingencies			
Total Sources	\$41,058		

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

The Department's FY 2025-26 adopted budget included \$12,362 in appropriations to fund salaries and benefits for remainder of the original contract. The department is requesting additional appropriations of \$28,696 to cover costs associated with the Interim Health Officer for the final two months of the extended service agreement.

Staffing Impacts:			
Position Title (Payroll Classification)	Monthly Salary Range (A-I Step)	Additions (Number)	Deletions (Number)
Health Officer	\$23,421-\$28,466	0	0

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

There will be no staffing impacts. Dr. Karen Smith will be filling an existing allocation in an interim capacity pending the recruitment for a permanent fill of the allocation.

Attachments:

Attachment 1 - Budget Resolution

Attachment 2 - Amendment

Related Items "On File" with the Clerk of the Board:

None