



## SUMMARY REPORT

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**Agenda Date:** 10/14/2025

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**To:** County of Sonoma Board of Supervisors

**Department or Agency Name(s):** Department of Health Services

**Staff Name and Phone Number:** Nolan Sullivan, 707-565-4774; Amelyn Olson, 707-565-2696

**Vote Requirement:** Majority

**Supervisorial District(s):** Countywide

**Title:**

Public Health Staffing - Environmental Health

**Recommended Action:**

Adopt a Resolution amending the Department of Health Services Department Allocation List, to add a 0.80 full-time equivalent Senior Environmental Health Specialist and to delete a 0.85 full-time equivalent Environmental Health Specialist II, effective October 14, 2025

**Executive Summary:**

The Department of Health Services, Environmental Health Section, is requesting approval to add 0.80 full-time equivalent Senior Environmental Health Specialist. The addition of this position will provide support across all Environmental Health programs to enhance community education and outreach to both existing and aspiring business operators. The Senior Environmental Health Specialist will develop public facing and simplified pathways to assist entrepreneurs in navigating the complex regulatory frameworks, providing targeted education and outreach, enhancing educational resources, and coordinating with partner agencies such as Permit Sonoma, the Auditor-Controller, Economic Development Collaborative, Community Development Commission, and various City departments to streamline processes and foster better communication between businesses and regulatory bodies.

The Department is also requesting to delete 0.85 full-time equivalent Environmental Health Specialist II allocation, which is currently vacant.

**Discussion:**

Following a comprehensive review of Environmental Health programs, mandated services, and the current staffing structure, the Department of Health Services (hereinafter "DHS" or "the Department") has identified a shift in workload allocation among journey-level staff - Environmental Health Specialist (EHS) Trainee, EHS I, EHS II. Increased staffing stability, resulting from the successful onboarding and certification of several EHS Trainees as Registered Environmental Health Specialists (REHS) has improved operational efficiency and workflow.

Historically, Environmental Health has struggled to meet regulatory service demands due to a statewide shortage of REHS-qualified candidates, often relying on EHS Trainees to fill positions designated for EHS IIs. Recent advancements in staff qualifications and the filling of vacancies to meet these service demands has now positioned the Department with the opportunity to address deferred priorities, including:

- Enhanced community education and engagement
- Increased coordination with partner agencies
- Increased educational resources and website development to provide clearer pathways towards permitting
- Development and implementation of program improvements
- Standardization of staff training and program delivery
- Process improvements to enhance efficiency and consistency
- Targeted enforcement and education to address unpermitted food vending

The proposed addition of a Senior Environmental Health Specialist position is essential to meet the evolving demands for service, allowing senior-level staff to provide leadership in program development, support journey-level staff by serving as the program lead, ensure consistency across services, assist with difficult inspections or regulatory changes, and support the continued professional growth of newly registered staff. The Department requests approval to add a 0.80 full-time equivalent (FTE) Senior Environmental Health Specialist to support key functions and expanding program needs to improve service delivery for both existing and potential operators. This position will assist Environmental Health to sustain momentum to improve service delivery, expand outreach and education, protect the health of the community and environment, and ensure long-term compliance with regulatory mandates.

As a program lead, this position will serve as a central liaison between new or aspiring business operators and regulatory authorities throughout the County. It will provide individualized support to entrepreneurs, helping them navigate the complex regulatory framework associated with opening and operating a new business. Key responsibilities will include delivering targeted education and outreach, facilitating communication between stakeholders, and coordinating with partner agencies such as Permit Sonoma, the Auditor-Controller, the Economic Development Collaborative, the Community Development Commission, and various city departments. In coordination with the [PASOS <https://sonomacounty.gov/pasos/>](https://sonomacounty.gov/pasos/) program, which offers a step-by-step guide to starting a food business, this role aims to streamline processes, improve understanding, and reduce regulatory barriers for new businesses. The position will be housed within the Environmental Health Section and report directly to the Supervising Environmental Health Specialist.

**Strategic Plan:**

N/A

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

No

**Prior Board Actions:**

On June 10, 2025, the Board adopted the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Budget

**FISCAL SUMMARY**

<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>FY25-26 Adopted</b>	<b>FY26-27 Projected</b>	<b>FY27-28 Projected</b>
Budgeted Expenses			

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Additional Appropriation Requested			
<b>Total Expenditures</b>			
<b>Funding Sources</b>			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal			
Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance			
General Fund Contingencies			
<b>Total Sources</b>			

**Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:**

The Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Adopted Budget includes sufficient appropriations to support the requested staffing change: the addition of 0.80 FTE Senior Environmental Health Specialist and the deletion of a vacant 0.85 FTE Environmental Health Specialist II position. This change will result in an estimated net zero effect for the department budget.

Funding and expenditures for future years will be included through the annual budget process.

<b>Staffing Impacts:</b>			
<b>Position Title (Payroll Classification)</b>	<b>Monthly Salary Range (A-I Step)</b>	<b>Additions (Number)</b>	<b>Deletions (Number)</b>
Senior Environmental Health Specialist	\$8,934.61-\$10,859.98	0.80	0.0
Environmental Health Specialist II	\$8,409.35-\$10,223.41	0.0	0.85

**Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):**

There are no staffing impacts associated with the deletion of the vacant 0.85 FTE Environmental Health Specialist II and the addition of the 0.80 FTE Senior Environmental Health Specialist. DHS will work with Human Resources to conduct a recruitment to fill the addition of the position.

**Attachments:**

Attachment 1 - Personnel Resolution

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

None