



California Department of Public Health
MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 21, 2023

TO: Local Health Department Directors and Health Officers

FROM: Susan Fanelli, Chief Deputy Director of Health Quality & Emergency Response

SUBJECT: Public Health Workforce Career Ladder Education and Development Program (PH-Career Ladder) Awards

Background:

In December 2022, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) released the Career Ladder Funding Application in accordance with funding appropriated in the 2022 State Budget Act (AB 179, Chapter 249, Statutes of 2022) to create the California Public Health Workforce Career Ladder Education and Development Program (PH-Career Ladder). The memo required applications to be submitted by local health jurisdictions (LHJs) to CDPH by January 31, 2023. The purpose of these funds is to support worker upskilling to improve retention of the existing public health workforce and help incumbent workers develop their skills to meet future public health demands.

The 2022 Budget Act provided \$3.2 million each year for four (4) years for PH-Career Ladder to support state and local public health workforce upskilling. The original plan was to divide these funds 70 percent to local health jurisdictions (LHJs) and 30 percent to CDPH.

The Administration's January budget plan proposed a reduction to current year funding and elimination of funding for the next 3 years for this program. While the Administration's proposed funding reversion is still under consideration by the California Legislature, at this time CDPH is only able to allocate \$2.6 million in one-time funds to this program all of which will be allocated to LHJs. If funding is maintained at the 2022 Budget Act levels, CDPH will use the calculated scores to allocate funding to awarded LHJs for additional years. Depending on available resources, additional projects may be awarded.

Eligible Uses of Funding: The following activities were considered eligible uses of the funding for the PH-Career Ladder program.

- Providing stipends to eligible employees to offset the loss of compensation for up to 12 hours per workweek for eligible educational pursuits. Stipends shall be up to \$600 per week per eligible employee for up to 12 weeks per year. An individual can receive stipend payments each year of the program.
- Hiring additional employees to support the goals of the program, such as covering employees while they participate in eligible educational pursuits.

- Reimbursing for educational costs for eligible employees, such as tuition, registration fees, or other related educational expenses when participating in eligible educational pursuits.
 - Allowable costs include but are not limited to continuing education for nurses and other disciplines, payment of licensure costs, examination fees, educational programs including certification and degree programs in public health, environmental health, or related fields such as social services or behavioral health, and wellness and trauma informed training.

Please note, loan repayments were not considered an eligible use of funding.

Applications Submitted:

CDPH received 38 applications from local health jurisdictions. The majority of applications contained 3 or more projects, while some applications grouped several items into a single project. The cost of projects ranged from a few thousand dollars to several hundred thousand dollars. Projects focused on a range of activities from advanced education to broad-based training.

Scoring:

The application package identified several funding considerations for awarding projects. CDPH worked with staff from CHEAC, HOAC/CCLHO, and SEIU to determine the scoring criteria. All submitted applications were reviewed and scored exclusively by CDPH reviewers.

Scoring Criteria 1 – Upskilling

Projects were first scored based on the level of upskilling for existing staff that would be provided. Given the limited funding, the CDPH in collaboration with CHEAC, HOAC/CCLHO, and SEIU decided to prioritize projects that focused on true upskilling to prepare staff for promotions instead of proposals that focused activities to help employees do their current job better. The upskilling scale was as follows:

- 0-Not Upskilling
- 1-Limited Upskilling
- 2- Broad-based current job training
- 3-Licensing and certification costs, continuing education units for retainment
- 4-Upskilling, includes stipends
- 5-Extensive Upskilling+/Novel

Projects that scored a 3 or above were granted the associated points. Projects scoring less than 3 were not funded.

Scoring Criteria 2 – Additional Considerations

Up to 5 additional points were allocated, up to 1 point each, if the LHJ:

- Is considered a rural/central valley jurisdiction

- Provided a justification for the project's prioritization
- Addressed a hard to fill classification
- Had an overall high vacancy rate
- Included projects with reasonable costs

To ensure an accurate review, applications were first reviewed by an initial CDPH team. The scores were then presented to a second panel of CDPH reviewers which reviewed the scores for consistency across the projects. Due to the proposed funding reduction, CDPH modified the total awarded for projects to stay within the reduced funding totals.

Awards:

33 LHJs received funding for one or more of their proposed projects. Projects are funded at 100% in Year 1. In order to stay within available funds, all projects requesting year 2 funding are funded at 88%. The funding allocations are as follows:

LHJ	Year 1	Year 2 (88%)	Total
Alameda	90,000	0	90,000
Amador	23,425	36,285	59,710
Butte	17,460	39,825	57,285
Calaveras	8,760	6,089	14,849
Colusa	52,000	72,570	124,570
Del Norte	50,000	44,250	94,250
El Dorado	15,000	15,488	30,488
Glenn	10,000	13,275	23,275
Humboldt	0	30,975	30,975
Imperial	0	72,747	72,747
Inyo	38,500	34,073	72,573
Kern	139,535	95,098	234,633
Lassen	57,600	50,976	108,576
Long Beach	4,000	26,550	30,550
Los Angeles	200,000	177,000	377,000
Madera	6,920	885	7,805
Mariposa	17,530	14,318	31,848
Merced	125,000	110,625	235,625
Modoc	6,850	9,602	16,452
Mono	11,249	5,098	16,347
Monterey	15,250	46,463	61,713
Pasadena	27,479	13,874	41,353
Plumas	25,810	24,222	50,032
Sacramento	50,800	2,536	53,336
San Diego	61,875	54,759	116,634
San Joaquin	0	36,285	36,285

Shasta	16,680	55,472	72,152
Siskiyou	30,000	35,400	65,400
Sonoma	25,042	50,980	76,022
Sutter	3,470	13,917	17,387
Tuolumne	114,000	100,890	214,890
Trinity	0	29,499	29,499
Ventura	31,080	2,456	33,536
TOTALS	1,275,315	1,322,479	2,597,794

Recommendations:

While broad based training programs were not considered high level upskilling, there are several other funding sources that are available to conduct these trainings, including current year Future of Public Health funds, federal workforce development funds, and CDC Infrastructure funding (CASPHI – California Strengthening Public Health Initiative). LHJs are encouraged to use these available funds for these important trainings.

Next Steps:

During the week of April 24th, CDPH will contact each of the LHJs that have been awarded funding to let them know the specific projects funded and to gather any needed information to complete the grant award package. CDPH will also confirm that the LHJ is able to use the awarded funds during the funding period through June 30, 2024.

Since all funds are Year 1 funding, CDPH plans to award all funding once grant awards are signed by the LHJ. CDPH is prepared to expedite the issuance of these awards. Awarded LHJs are encouraged to notify CDPH if their award will require Board of Supervisors or City Council signature or whether they have delegated authority to sign these awards based on the level of funding.

As CDPH finalizes the scope of work (SOW) for the grant awards, we will utilize the local submissions to prepare a summary of the projects and share with all LHJs.

Reporting Requirements:

CDPH requires awarded LHJs to report annually on the use of the funds and activities conducted. At a minimum, LHJs will be required to report:

- The number of individuals participating in eligible educational pursuits.
- Summary of types of credentials and skills attained through the program.
- Number of employees hired to provide coverage for employees attaining educational opportunities

Questions:

If your LHJ has questions about the PH-Career Ladder funding opportunity, please contact Kristen.Guerrero@cdph.ca.gov.