



SUMMARY REPORT

Agenda Date: 10/26/2021

To: County of Sonoma Board of Supervisors
Department or Agency Name(s): Department of Health Services
Staff Name and Phone Number: Robert Gonzalez, 565-4416
Vote Requirement: Majority
Supervisorial District(s): Countywide

Title:
Department of Health Services Public Health Staffing Allocation

Recommended Action:
Adopt a personnel resolution amending the Department allocation list for the Department of Health Services to add 1.00 full-time equivalent (FTE), time-limited, Assistant Public Health Laboratory Director position through July 31, 2023, effective October 26, 2021.

Executive Summary:
The Department of Health Services must be prepared to respond to all emergencies, from large-scale disasters to potential illness outbreaks that occur. The Public Health Laboratory provides clinical, environmental, and specialty testing services as mandated by Health and Safety Code 101150 and as part of response to public health emergencies, including disaster response and communicable disease outbreaks. In order to be ready to respond to the events that affect the community, appropriate levels of staff must be dedicated to the program so that it can successfully respond when needed.

The Department of Health Services is requesting the addition of 1.0 FTE, time-limited, Assistant Public Health Laboratory Director to help continue disaster response, aide in the quality improvement process with upcoming data related projects as part of the COVID-19 response plan, and add an additional leadership support role to the Public Health Laboratory Director and the laboratory team. The \$201,666 funding required to increase staffing capacity is available in the \$17.8 Million Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity (ELC) Expansion Grant awarded to Sonoma County in February 2021. Other primary grant uses include COVID-19 section staffing, Public Health COVID-19 laboratory activities, communications, outreach and case management, emergency financial assistance, COVID-19 Federally Qualified Health Centers' Vaccination Clinics, and other COVID-19 ancillary costs.

Discussion:
The Department of Health Services must be prepared to respond to all emergencies, from large-scale disasters to potential illness outbreaks that occur. The Public Health Laboratory provides clinical, environmental, and specialty testing services as mandated by Health and Safety Code 101150 and as part of response to public health emergencies, including disaster response and communicable disease outbreaks. In order to be ready to respond to the events that affect the community, appropriate levels of staff must be dedicated to the program so that it can successfully respond when needed.

This request comes from several operational needs in the Public Health Laboratory.

- With the exception of the Laboratory Director, there are no other management employees on staff;
- The last 18 months volume of work and oversight is significant. In 2020, over 115,000 COVID-19 related tests were performed by lab staff. With recent outbreaks, the volume continues to remain increasingly steady.
- The Public Health Lab has expanded hours and days of operation by both regular and extra help staff.
- As part of a COVID Enhancement grant, a new data management system and COVID variant tracking assay are being implemented requiring support and oversight of these important projects.
- It is administratively difficult for the Laboratory Director to participate in all operational meetings and provide full oversight and support to the lab.

The funding for the allocation has been approved as part of the Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity (ELC) Expansion Grant. The allocation, with benefits, will cost \$201,666 in fiscal year 2021-2022, \$242,000 in fiscal year 2022-2023, and \$24,200 in fiscal year 2023-2024. The total Sonoma County grant award received in February 2021 is \$17.8 Million. Other primary uses such as COVID-19 section staffing, Public Health COVID-19 laboratory activities, communications, outreach and case management, emergency financial assistance, COVID-19 Federally Qualified Health Centers' Vaccination Clinics, and other COVID-19 ancillary costs totaling \$17.3 Million have either been including in the fiscal year 2021-2022 adopted budget or will be programmed into future budgets, as the grant requirements must be satisfied by July 31, 2023.

The Department is proposing a nearly two-year, time-limited term and secured funding is available from the ELC Expansion Grant. The request for a time-limited allocation, versus extra-help, is based on the recruitment difficulty in obtaining high-level technical and licensed positions such as microbiologists, supervising nursing positions, and supervising environmental health positions.

Prior Board Actions:

None

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY 21-22 Adopted	FY 22-23 Projected	FY 23-24 Projected
Budgeted Expenses	201,666	242,000	24,200
Additional Appropriation Requested			
Total Expenditures	201,666	242,000	24,200
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal	201,666	242,000	24,200
Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance			
Contingencies			
Total Sources	201,666	242,000	24,200

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

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The estimated cost of the Assistant Public Health Laboratory Director is \$201,666 for FY 21-22, \$242,000 for FY 22-23, and \$24,200 for FY 23-24 through July 31, 2023. The allocation is part of the approved ELC Expansion Grant funding through July 31, 2023.

Staffing Impacts:			
Position Title (Payroll Classification)	Monthly Salary Range (A-I Step)	Additions (Number)	Deletions (Number)
Assistant Public Health Director	\$8,129 - \$9,883	1.00	0.0

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

This is a new position and the Department will work with the Human Resources Department to begin the recruitment process for the position listed in this item as soon as the position allocation becomes effective.

Attachments:

Personnel resolution

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

None