
Sponsor: Public Health

Meeting Date: 7/23/2024

Title: Personnel Complement Increase in the Public Health Department through the Response Sustainability Grant.

File Number: 2024-301

Background and Rationale:

In the 2023 legislative session, Community Health Boards (CHBs) and Tribes received the first-ever state committed funding for public health emergency preparedness and response (EPR) work. This occurred through the establishment of the Response Sustainability Grant (RSG), which requests that all CHBs and Tribes permanently increase staffing to maintain EPR responsibilities. The state of Minnesota, through statute 145A.135, is empowered to provide this funding to Saint Paul-Ramsey County Public Health.

Saint Paul- Ramsey County Public Health received \$368,256 in fiscal year 2024 and \$378,229 in fiscal year 2025. The Response Sustainability Grant period is December 1, 2023 through June 30, 2027. The purpose of this annual funding is to support a robust response to emergencies through planning, training, exercises, and response at the local level, and intended to increase and maintain a public health workforce. The grant includes three areas of focus:

1) workforce capacity; 2) sustainability; and 3) health equity. Each area of focus has associated grant duties (11 total) that all CHBs are required to complete. The requested increase in personnel complements will satisfy grant duties for all three areas of focus.

The 3 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) positions Public Health is requesting include one public health nurse (PHN), one health educator program assistant (HEPA) and one communications associate (CA). All positions will build on and sustain the existing community engagement work facilitated by Public Health's Emergency Preparedness & Response team and continue to address health access needs of Ramsey County residents. The PHN position will support community immunization work with local partners and support the epidemiology program in responding to communicable disease investigations. The HEPA position will continue to engage with community members on emergency preparedness and response work including the public health impacts of climate emergencies. Additionally, the HEPA position will assist epidemiologists with vaccine preventable disease investigations when community outreach is needed. The communications associate will support the department's ongoing communications needed for prevention and control of infectious disease, emergency preparedness, medical reserve corps and Trusted Messenger initiatives.

Recommendation:

The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners resolved to:

Approve an increase in the personnel complement of the Public Health department by 3.0 Full Time Equivalents for the duration of the grant.

A motion to approve was made by Commissioner Frethem, seconded by Commissioner Reinhardt. Motion passed.

Aye: - 7: Frethem, Martinson, McGuire, Moran, Ortega, Reinhardt, and Xiong

By: 
Mee Cheng, Chief Clerk - County Board
