

2017-19 Biennium Budget Decision Package

FINAL

Agency: 303 Department of Health

Decision Package Code/Title: C4 Mitigate Environmental Health Risks

Budget Period: 2017-19

Budget Level: PL-Performance Level

Agency Recommendation Summary Text: The Department of Health requests funding to create a Climate & Public Health position focused on enhancing the Department’s ability to mitigate, systematically anticipate, and manage environmental health risks and potential impacts, especially to vulnerable populations, caused by changing environmental factors.

Fiscal Summary: Decision package total dollar and FTE cost/savings by year, by fund, for 4 years. Additional fiscal details are required below.

Operating Expenditures	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021
Fund 001-1	140,000	140,000	140,000	140,000
Total Cost	140,000	140,000	140,000	140,000
Staffing	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021
FTEs	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3
Object of Expenditure	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021
A - Salaries and Wages	83,000	83,000	83,000	83,000
B - Employee Benefits	29,000	29,000	29,000	29,000
C - Personal Service Contracts	0	0	0	0
E - Goods and Services	21,000	24,000	24,000	24,000
G - Travel	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
J - Capital Outlays	3,000	0	0	0
N - Grants, Benefits & Client Svc	0	0	0	0
T - Intra-Agency Reimb	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000

Package Description

Climate change mitigation efforts underway in Washington are designed to move towards a low carbon future. Public health has an underdeveloped role in lowering carbon. This decision package

will bring the Department of Health (DOH) to the climate mitigation table and bring additional health benefits to Washingtonians.

Environmental changes are one of the biggest human health threats we face today. Already in the United States, we have observed climate-related increases in: our exposure to elevated temperatures; more frequent, severe, or longer-lasting extreme weather events; degraded air quality; increased diseases transmitted through food, water, and disease vectors (such as ticks and mosquitoes); and stresses to our mental health and well-being. These threats, among others, are expected to worsen if we idly stand by.

Here in Washington State, we have already seen this change take its toll on shellfish safety. In 2011, illnesses caused by Diarrhetic Shellfish Poisoning (DSP) were found in Washington – the first ever confirmed in the U.S. Now this toxin is found throughout our marine waters on a routine basis. As the planet's oceans warm, coastal regions are seeing more and more algae blooms. These algae can close beaches and the toxins released can poison shellfish and make people who eat the shellfish sick. What was once considered a summer time matter is now a year round issue.

Another concern is insects that carry diseases. These insects are very sensitive to habitat, and as that changes, they will likely change their range. That could mean migration of species into the state that we currently do not have here, such as the mosquito *Aedes aegypti*, and *Aedes albopictus*, which are carriers of Zika virus. There are other pathogens in the environment that may change their range due to climate. Valley Fever, which is a soil-borne fungus that recently emerged in south central Washington, for example, has fairly specific ecological needs in desert environments. It is unclear how it got here, but if environmental factors changed to be dryer and hotter, it may continue to change its range.

Public health has a role in mitigating the impacts of a changing environment that are often overlooked. For example, we work with communities to support, develop, and evaluate strategies to promote physical activity, including active transportation systems that reduce our reliance on fossil-fuel burning vehicles while also reducing obesity, heart disease, stroke, and cancer. We promote healthier nutrition, working with families to increase consumption of fruits, vegetables, and grains and reduce consumption of processed foods, which may reduce our dietary carbon footprint while lowering risk for cancers, heart disease, and diabetes.

Many built environment investments have implications for both health and energy consumption. For example, some science suggests that street trees may have benefits for health by providing protection from traffic and increasing shade, while also increasing carbon sinks. Public health supports community decision-making about the built environment by providing information about which strategies evidence the greatest benefits for health. As more communities begin investing in strategies to reduce carbon emissions, public health needs to be able to provide information about the health co-benefits of those carbon reduction strategies. A Climate & Public Health position would review the science on carbon reduction strategies and health co-benefits, identifying those mitigation options that provide the greatest benefits to public health and translating that into public health practice at the state and local level.

To support this effort, DOH requests funding for a full-time Public Health Advisor 4 to address the current environmental, climate and public health mitigation and preparedness gap in Washington State. This position would help state and local communities mitigate the health impacts that

changing environmental factors will have on public health. This effort will incorporate both short and long range projections into public health planning, creating emergency response plans that address climate/environmental-related hazards and public health issues, completing an assessment of local capacity to respond, and working together with partners to ensure that water re-use is a viable option for Washington State.

Contact Information:

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Base Budget: If the proposal is an expansion or alteration of a current program or service, provide information on the resources now devoted to the program or service. Please include annual expenditures and FTEs by fund and activity (or provide working models or backup materials containing this information).

There is no current base budget for this program.

Decision Package expenditure, FTE and revenue assumptions, calculations and details: Agencies must clearly articulate the workload or policy assumptions used in calculating expenditure and revenue changes proposed.

DOH is requesting 1.0 FTE Public Health Advisor 4 to establish the partnerships and infrastructure necessary to plan and build a public health climate assessment, mitigation, readiness and response program. In addition to the partnership work, this position will provide planning, communication, and vulnerability assessment activities, as well as apply for additional grant funding as opportunities arise. 0.3 FTE will also be needed to assist with increased division and agency workload. Total costs, including salaries, benefits, associated goods, services, and travel are \$140,000 per fiscal year (FY) beginning in FY 18 and on-going.

Decision Package Justification and Impacts

What specific performance outcomes does the agency expect?

Describe and quantify the specific performance outcomes the agency expects as a result of this funding change. ([results washington link](#))

This proposal is linked to Results Washington Goal 4: Healthy and Safe Communities.

The specific outcome will be having a public health climate assessment, readiness and response program focused on enhancing DOH's ability to systematically anticipate, manage and prevent or reduce the health burdens imposed by changes in the environment.

Performance Measure detail:

Is this DP essential to implement a strategy identified in the agency's strategic plan?

Goal 1: Protect everyone in Washington from communicable diseases and other health threats.

Objective 4: Describe, plan for, track and begin mitigating and adapting for the public health impacts of climate change.

Fully describe and quantify expected impacts on state residents and specific populations served:

Funding this work will ensure:

- Emergency response plans for issues related to changing environmental risk factors will be created and implemented. Examples would be plans for zoonotic diseases, smoke from wildfires, floods, and drought.
- Local governing bodies and others will have access to data to inform specific planning and response in their communities
- The State will have options to address impacts on the water supply for all Washingtonians.

What are other important connections or impacts related to this proposal? Please complete the following table and provide detailed explanations or information below:

Impact(s) To:		Identify / Explanation
Regional/County impacts?	Yes	Identify: Planning for the projected impacts of environmental changes in their comprehensive plans.
Other local gov't impacts?	Yes	Identify: Developing response plans for climate and environmental-related health emergencies in their jurisdictions.
Tribal gov't impacts?	Yes	Identify: Support this work in responding to ongoing impacts to tribal life
Other state agency impacts?	Yes	Identify:
Responds to specific task force, report, mandate or exec order?	No	Identify:
Does request contain a compensation change?	No	Identify:
Does request require a change to a collective bargaining agreement?	No	Identify:
Facility/workplace needs or impacts?	No	Identify:
Capital Budget Impacts?	No	Identify:
Is change required to existing statutes, rules or contracts?	No	Identify:

Is the request related to or a result of litigation?	No	Identify lawsuit (please consult with Attorney General's Office):
Is the request related to Puget Sound recovery?	No	If yes, see budget instructions Section 14.4 for additional instructions
Identify other important connections		

Please provide a detailed discussion of connections/impacts identified above.

The Climate & Public Health position would assist counties in incorporating planning for the projected impacts that changes in environmental risk factors have on their comprehensive plans. It will help local health jurisdictions in developing response plans for related environmental and health emergencies in their jurisdictions.

Tribes have, so far, been affected more severely by changes to the environment. This program will work with Tribes to learn from work already done by tribal nations as well as to support them in responding to ongoing climate impacts on tribal life.

What alternatives were explored by the agency and why was this option chosen?

DOH anticipated applying for a cooperative agreement, Building Resilience Against Climate Effects (BRACE), from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), but found that the CDC's next round of BRACE grants is limited to currently funded states. Washington is not one of those states. Investment in a core climate change program here and now is necessary to leverage external funds into the future to expand this work. Therefore, DOH chose to request general fund state to establish a sustainable core capacity program that can be flexible and adaptable moving forward.

What are the consequences of not funding this request?

Not funding this request would reduce DOH's ability to identify, plan for, and respond to public health issues that arise from environmental health related incidences, such as wildfires, drought, and floods.

How has or can the agency address the issue or need in its current appropriation level?

DOH has some federal resources available only related to drinking water supplies and availability.

Other supporting materials: Please attach or reference any other supporting materials or information that will help analysts and policymakers understand and prioritize your request.

Information technology: Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, services (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?

- No 
- Yes Continue to IT Addendum below and follow the directions on the bottom of the addendum to meet requirements for OCIO review.)