



Board Agenda Item 63

DATE: December 17, 2024
TO: Board of Supervisors
SUBMITTED BY: David Luchini, RN, PHN, Director, Department of Public Health
SUBJECT: Waiver of Extra Help Maximum Hours

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Authorize a waiver of the 28 hours per week and 960 hours per calendar year maximum hours limitation for the Extra-Help positions listed on Attachment A in the Department of Public Health, Org 5620, pursuant to the provisions set forth in Salary Resolution, section 1100 and Personnel Rules 2040 and 4240.

There is no additional Net County Cost associated with the recommended action. Approval of the recommended action will ensure the Department of Public Health (Department) has adequate staffing to assist with vaccine preventable disease projects. If approved, this waiver would be effective January 20, 2025, for the 2025 calendar year. This item is countywide.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):

There is no viable alternative action due to the number of projects stemming from the increase of emergent communicable diseases including H5N1, COVID-19 and Tuberculosis (TB). Should your Board not approve this request, there will be delays in vaccine transportation, clinic preparation, and laboratory processing. There would also be an increased burden on other program staff which could result in adverse impacts to other program areas such as the laboratory's inventory management system, school reporting, Hepatitis B program, and flu vaccine programs. In addition, the public seeking birth and death certificates and accessing the Immunization Clinic will experience delays in response times, longer wait times on the phone and in the clinic, and delays in receiving care.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no increase in Net County Cost associated with the recommended action. Sufficient appropriations and estimated revenues are included in the Department's Org 5620 FY 2024-25 Adopted Budget and will be included in subsequent budget requests. Salary and benefits for the extra-help Public Health Officer and extra-help Public Health Physician are funded with Health Realignment. Salary and benefits for the Laboratory Intern, and the two (2) extra-help Program Technicians (PTs), will be funded by immunization grants and COVID Vaccine funds and/or cost center 1019 which has funding available through May 30, 2026. Salary and benefits for the extra-help Office Assistant will be funded by fees collected by the Vital Statistics program.

DISCUSSION:

The Department is requesting a waiver for one (1) extra-help Public Health Officer, one (1) extra-help Public Health Physician, one (1) extra-help Laboratory Intern, two (2) extra-help PTs and one (1) extra-help Office

Assistant (OA).

Dr. Vohra was appointed as an extra-help Public Health Officer on January 7, 2020. Since his appointment, he has shown strong leadership skills and vast knowledge of public health concerns. He currently provides medical leadership to the Department, serves as the County Privacy Officer and Registrar of Vital Statistics as well as the public health consultant for a variety of agencies, and assists with providing management direction in the enforcement of public health laws and regulations.

As an extra-help Public Health Physician, Dr. Zweifler oversees medical services in the Fresno County Jail and Juvenile Justice Center, completes the required yearly jail inspections, as well as provides support to the Hope Hub.

Although Dr. Vohra and Dr. Zweifler, don't consistently work over the extra-help maximums, the Department would like to have the waiver in place to allow them assist with public health emergencies as necessary.

The Epidemiology Surveillance Data Management Division's (ESDM) extra-help Laboratory Intern works under the supervision of experienced Microbiologists. The specific duties and responsibilities can vary depending on the current need and the focus of the microbiology work being conducted. Some common tasks that Laboratory Interns may perform include performing laboratory techniques and using laboratory equipment, collecting and processing samples and specimens, collecting and analyzing data, and assisting with experiments and safety and quality control procedures.

Due to current workloads, Tuberculosis control, COVID-19 and other vaccine work is beyond what permanent employees can manage. During 2020-2022 resources were redirected to help with COVID response, which adversely impacted and delayed work on other programs. Approval of this item will allow extra-help staff to support reconstruction of these delayed projects. Funding is available on a short-term basis (through 6/30/25) which allows for additional staffing; Since the funding is temporary and the work doesn't consistently require 40 hours per week.

The extra-help PT in the Vaccine Program assists with vaccine transport and storage, vaccine events, and may serve as the lead or point of contact for the county-wide Bridge Access Program (BAP), Flu Partner Program, Outbreak Flu program, and sunseting of the MPOX vaccine program.

Metrics:

- 60-100% COVID Vaccine related work
- 0-40% Vaccine work that may not be specific COVID vaccine
- Expected hours: 28-40 hours/week; expected to fluctuate

The laboratory team requires additional assistance with the implementation of the Inventory Management System. This system represents a significant investment for our laboratory and is essential for enhancing operational efficiency. It will provide comprehensive visibility and real-time updates regarding our inventory. The implementation of this system will streamline inventory management by automating various processes, thus facilitating efficient stock management. Additionally, it will mitigate costs associated with overstocking and shortages that often arise from human error or manual data entry. Therefore, it is imperative that we secure the necessary extra help support for the implementation of the inventory system to ensure that the deployment and subsequent operations proceed seamlessly and without disruption.

The extra-help Office Assistant in the ESDM Division will assist with the general duties of the program allowing Program Technicians to focus on State mandated duties. In addition to alleviating the increase in workload due to the recent implementation of Laserfiche. This extra-help Office Assistant may not go over the 28 hour per week limit but is expected to exceed the 960-hour limit in August 2025.

ATTACHMENTS INCLUDED AND/OR ON FILE:

On file with Clerk - Attachment A

CAO ANALYST:

Ron Alexander