



Board Agenda Item 43

DATE: October 22, 2019

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBMITTED BY: Jean M. Rousseau, County Administrative Officer
David Pomaville, Director, Department of Public Health

SUBJECT: Retrospective Appointments of two Deputy Public Health Officers

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Confirm appointments of Dr. Rajeev Verma and Dr. Rais Vohra to the position of Deputy Public Health Officer on an extra-help basis pursuant to the Fresno County Charter, Sections 12 and 16, providing them with the authority to act on behalf of the County Health Officer in his/her absence, sharing coverage with Dr. Kenneth Bird, retrospectively effective October 21, 2019.

Approval of the recommended action will confirm both Dr. Rajeev Verma and Dr. Rais Vohra as Deputy Public Health Officers on an extra-help basis and allow them to act on behalf of the County Health Officer in his or her absence. The coverage of the position would be shared between the two doctors and the existing extra-help Deputy Public Health Officer, Dr. Kenneth Bird. This item is countywide.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):

Should your Board choose not to confirm the appointments, the County would continue to lack sufficient coverage for the Deputy Public Health Officer duties.

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 of Public Health Org 5620 FY 2019-2020 Adopted Budget.

DISCUSSION:

Pursuant to Sections 12 and 16 of the Fresno County Charter, with your Board's approval of the recommended action, the appointments of Dr. Rajeev Verma and Dr. Rais Vohra to the position of Deputy Public Health Officer will be confirmed.

On June 7, 2019, the former Deputy Public Health Officer resigned from the County to join the private sector. Since then, the Department has engaged in discussions with physicians interested in the position.

On June 18, 2019, your Board confirmed Dr. Kenneth Bird as a Deputy Public Health Officer in extra-help capacity; therefore, the position is covered for a limited number of hours.

After four months, the Department has determined that deputizing two more physicians in an extra-help capacity would provide sufficient coverage in the Health Officer's absence.

Dr. Rajeev Verma serves as a Public Health Physician in an extra-help capacity, hired by the Department on September 26, 2016, after approximately 28-years working in private practice. Dr. Verma is assigned to the Department's Children's Medical Services Program, as a medical consultant for case review and a community liaison. His deep-rooted community knowledge has increased awareness and reliable medical care for underserved children in the County. Your Board's confirmation of his appointment will not impact his current duties.

Dr. Rais Vohra was hired on October 7, 2019 as an extra-help Public Health Physician and provides medical leadership to the Department's Community Health and Environmental Health Divisions, assisting with providing overall leadership and management direction for the Department in the enforcement of public health laws and regulations. His specialty is Emergency Medicine and Toxicology and has been affiliated with both Clovis Community Medical Center and Community Regional Medical Center, practicing for approximately 18-years. Dr. Vohra is an Associate Professor at UCSF Fresno. Your Board's confirmation of his appointment will not impact with his current duties.

Once your Board confirms the two added extra-help Deputy Public Health Officers, the three will share coverage of the following:

- Assisting with planning and directing medical aspects of the Department's programs.
- Providing consultation and assistance to the medical community in the diagnosis and investigation of suspected communicable disease cases.
- Advising and recommending on matters relating to the quality and scope of medical services provided by the Department.
- Developing and approving medical protocol for the Department's programs and services.
- Discussing and facilitating the discussion of health issues with community members and groups.
- Representing the County in meetings with the Board of Supervisors, commissions, committees, community and regulatory agencies, and other public groups.
- Initiating investigations of diseases including but not limited to examination, diagnosis, prescription and administration of treatment to certain patients with communicable diseases.
- Assisting with advising and consulting the preparation of departmental program budgets and reviewing reports.
- Collaborating with and being the public health consultant for a variety of agencies at the local, regional, and State level.
- Assisting in ensuring that public health services comply with State, Federal, and local requirements, regulations, and policies.
- Assisting with analysis of public health data, policies, programs and procedures, and preparing reports and correspondence.
- Assisting in assuring the enforcement of applicable public health orders, ordinances and statutes.
- Assisting in evaluating existing programs and initiating changes in programs.
- Assisting in acting as a consultant to professional staff members and members of the medical profession on problems concerning public health.
- Assisting in training and supervising physicians who provide medical services to the public.

REFERENCE MATERIAL:

BAI #52.1, June 18, 2019

BAI #35.1, April 9, 2019

CAO ANALYST:

Sonia M. De La Rosa