

**Washington State Board of Health
Policy & Procedure**

Policy Number: 2001-004
Subject: Letters of Support from the Washington State Board of Health
Approved Date: March 14, 2001 (Revised June 13, 2012)

Policy Statement

The Washington State Board of Health is authorized to explore ways to improve public health and the health status of the people of Washington. In some instances this is accomplished through public statements in support of programs, policies, grant or funding initiatives proposed by other governmental units or private non-profit entities. This policy provides a set of criteria to assist Board members in their decisions related to issuing letters of support.

Procedure

Any state, local, or tribal government or any private non-profit entity with a mission related to public health, health care, or the social determinants of health may ask the Board for a letter of support for a program, policy, grant or funding initiative. For the purposes of this policy and procedure providing a letter of support may also include adding the Board's name to a letter signed by multiple organizations. Recognizing that requests for letters of support often need to be acted upon in a short time frame, the Board authorizes the Chair to approve or deny a request on behalf of the Board. The Chair may consult with individual members or submit the request to the entire Board for its consideration. The Chair or Executive Director will notify Board members when letters of support are approved by the Chair. Board staff may follow up with the requester to obtain more information about the proposal to assist the Board with decision making.

The Chair or Board may consider the following criteria when approving or disapproving a request:

- The program, policy or funding initiative is consistent with one or more of the Board's approved priorities, or the project advances the public's health in a way the Board finds to be particularly important because of some emerging public health threat or inadequately addressed health issue, and;
- In the Board's opinion, the requester's proposed program, policy or budget initiative is thoughtfully conceived, contains realistic goals and outcome targets, and seems within the requester's capability to accomplish.

The Chair or Board may approve more than one request for a letter of support for a competitive grant, as long as each request satisfies the criteria for approval. Requests that contain conflicts of interest as described in RCW 42.52.020 are not eligible for approval.