



2021 Budget and Legislation Proposals

January 2021

Agency Request Legislation

COVID-19: Ensure privacy of case and contact records

Fiscal year 2021: N/A

Biennium 2021-23: N/A

The ability to effectively investigate COVID-19 cases and contact anyone who has been exposed to the disease is a critical strategy necessary to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Effective case and contact tracing relies on public trust that that government will not lose or abuse its personal information. While the public records act protects this sensitive information, the Department of Health is proposing additional safeguards to protect private information and ensure public trust in the process.

Modernize Boards and Commissions

Fiscal Year 2021: N/A

Biennium 2021-23: \$33,000 Health Prof. Account

Health profession boards and commissions protect the public and promote quality care by establishing requirements for professions and taking disciplinary action in cases of misconduct. Certain boards and commissions are facing challenges related to their size and composition that affect their ability to carry out their regulatory work in an efficient manner. This proposal modifies membership and quorum requirements for the following regulatory bodies: the Dental Quality Assurance Commission, the Veterinary Board of Governors, the Board of Physical Therapy, the Board of Massage, and the Board of Nursing Home Administrators.

Providing for certain certified Emergency Medical Services (EMS) personnel to work in diversion centers

Fiscal year 2021: N/A

Biennium 2021-23: N/A

Diversion centers have emerged as an innovative model to providing temporary shelter and linkage to treatment and social services to adults experiencing substance use or mental health disorders. Current law limits use of emergency medical technicians (EMT) in diversion centers due to requirements that EMTs must work only for licensed ambulance or aid services as well as only certain other organizations that do not require licensure. The department proposes legislation to modify the Emergency Medical and Transportation Services statute (chapter 18.73 RCW) to address this limitation.

Preserve Federal FDA Grant Funds

Fiscal year 2021: N/A

Biennium 2021-23: N/A

The Public Health Laboratories (PHL) performs food and feed radiation monitoring in order to protect the health and safety of communities across the state. The PHL has received funding from the U.S. FDA since 2006 to do this work. This bill grants the PHL a limited exemption from Washington's Public Records Act (RCW 42.56), applicable only to specific FDA grant funded activity protected under federal public disclosure law, so that the PHL can enter into a 20.88 confidentiality agreement with the FDA and continue to receive these important federal funds.

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Maintenance Level Funding Requests

Serve Additional Families in the Women, Infant and Children (WIC) Nutrition Program

Fiscal Year 2021: 9.7 million General Fund-Local

Biennium 2021-23: \$19.4 million General Fund-Local

The Governor proposes additional local spending authority to cover unexpected additional infant formula rebates coming into the WIC Program. The additional rebate revenue will be used to provide 123,279 eligible participants per month with access to nutritious food. This will be in addition to the services already provided through existing federal grants and will promote positive impacts on pregnancy outcomes and children's health.

Backfill Medicaid Fraud Account

Fiscal Year 2021: \$1.4 million GF-State

Biennium 2021-23: \$1.4 million GF-State

The Medicaid Fraud Penalty Account (MFPA) funds various programs at the Attorney General's Office, the Washington State Health Care Authority, and the Department of Health. The MFPA is currently projected to be out of balance, therefore agencies who receive these funds are requesting to exchange MFPA spending authority in its 2021-23 biennium carry forward balances with General Fund-State.

Increase Fees to Maintain Services

Fiscal Year 2021: N/A

Biennium 2021-23: \$1.3 million GF-Local and \$461,000 Health Prof. Account

The Governor proposes additional fee-based spending authority to maintain current levels of service. Additional revenue to support this extra spending authority will be generated by increases to several groups of fees. Currently these fees are not sufficient to support agency activities to protect and improve the health of Washingtonians, promote health behaviors, and maintain high standards for quality healthcare delivery.

Correct Technical Issues

Fiscal Year 2021: N/A

Biennium 2021-23: \$165,000 GF-State; \$3.0 million other

The Governor proposes corrections on a number of expenditure authority issues. These corrections to the 2021-23 biennium carry forward level range from fixing negative spending authority to aligning appropriations with published fiscal notes for bills passed in the 2019-21 biennium.

Policy Level Funding Requests

Contain the Spread: COVID-19

Fiscal Year 2021: \$125.9m GF-State; \$100.0m GF-Fed

Biennium 2021-23: \$387.4m GF-State; \$50.6m GF-Fed

This investment supports a comprehensive strategy that allows the public health systems to reduce and contain the spread of COVID-19. It provides funding for diagnostic testing, case investigation and contact tracing, outbreak response activities, care coordination, community outreach, disease surveillance, and information technology and operation needs.

COVID-19: Administer Vaccines

Fiscal Year 2021: N/A

Biennium 2021-23: \$9.6 million GF-State

The Department of Health must scale its vaccine operations and IT system in order to quickly and successfully deploy a COVID-19 vaccine once it is made available. A new vaccine creates new work to manage inventory, distribute vaccine across the state, and to support the Washington State Immunization Information System (WAIS) to track vaccinations. Resources are also necessary for Local Health Jurisdictions to refresh and implement vaccine response plans on the local level, a public health education campaign, add vaccinators, and additional supplies.

Maintain Core Public Health Data

Fiscal Year 2021: N/A

Biennium 2021-23: \$18.4m GF-State; \$4.0m GF- Fed

The Governor supports the development, maintenance, and operations of core public health information systems upon the expiration of federal funding from the Health Information Technology for Economic Clinical Health (HITECH) Act of 2009. These systems have proven to be critically important during the current COVID-19 pandemic.

Fund Foundational Public Health Services (FPHS)

Fiscal Year 2021: N/A

Biennium 2021-23: \$142.6 million FPHS-State

For years, the local, tribal, and state governmental public health system has struggled to provide the most basic, core public health services necessary to adequately protect and promote the health of all Washingtonians. The impact of this shortfall has become clearly visible during the COVID-19 pandemic. Stable and ongoing funding is necessary not only to respond to this current pandemic, but to also

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address and prepare for system shortcomings across the public health spectrum. This proposal takes a phased approach to fully funding the FPHS gap of \$450 million each biennium, starting with funding communicable disease, environmental public health and assessment services.

Sustain the Child Profile Health System

Fiscal Year 2021: N/A

Biennium 2021-23: \$1 million GF-State

The availability of federal funds historically used to support the Child Profile Health Promotion System is no longer able to fully support the program. The 2020 legislature provided one-time funding through fiscal year 2021. It also required the department to review its processes for efficiencies and possible technological advances to reduce costs, along with a report due to the legislature by December 2020. The proposal requests funding for the Child Profile program through fiscal year 2022 while the legislature deliberates on how to best support the program long term.

Support Suicide Prevention

Fiscal Year 2021: N/A

Biennium 2021-23: \$4.6 million GF-State

Suicide rates continue to rise alarmingly in Washington State and are much greater than the national average. Past experience has shown the risk for suicide increases in times of economic hardship. It is anticipated that depression, suicidal ideation, suicide attempts, and other emotional distress will increase as the pandemic and subsequent economic downturn continues. Additional resources are needed to meet increasing workloads and to implement recommendations from the Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention (AASP), including investments in suicide prevention, intervention, treatment, and postvention to support individuals and families and prevent future deaths by suicide.

Support Recommendations for Community Health Workers (CHW)

Fiscal Year 2021: N/A

Biennium 2021-23: \$1.23 million GF-State

As part of the COVID-19 response, Community Health Workers (CHW) provide coordination for case contact and tracing and resource coordination for individuals in isolation and quarantine. CHWs are key to health

promotion and improve the program's accessibility, cultural appropriateness and regional relevance, critical to responding to COVID-19. The Governor proposes funding to implement the 2018 Community Health Workers Task Force recommendations to provide statewide guidance for CHW training to ensure employers, training participants and community members have a shared understanding of CHW skills, roles and abilities.

Support HIV Clients

Fiscal Year 2021: \$11.4 million GF-Local

Biennium 2021-23: \$26.9 million GF-Local

While the health and economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic are challenging for us all, people living with HIV (PLWH) face the additional burden of achieving and maintaining viral suppression. The Governor proposes to use HIV drug rebate funds to provide support services to people living with HIV who have lost access to care and resources as a result of COVID-19.

Maintain HEAL-WA Web Portal

Fiscal Year 2021: N/A

Biennium 2021-23: \$1.1 million Health Prof. Account

The Governor proposes additional spending authority to maintain the web portal for the Health Electronic Resources for Washington (HEAL-WA). Operations costs are increasing as the number of users increases. Though administered through the University of Washington, DOH provides the funding to support the portal's ongoing maintenance to ensure this valuable tool continues to allow healthcare providers to access professional literature and clinical research.

Maintain Developmental Screening

Fiscal Year 2021: \$151,000 GF-State

Biennium 2021-23: \$2.1 million GF-State

The Governor proposes funding to support the ongoing operations and maintenance of the new Universal Developmental Screening (UDS) data system that will be completed in the fall of 2021. Children with developmental or behavioral disabilities benefit greatly from early intervention, but fewer than half are identified before starting school, which interventions are most effective.

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Complete the Healthcare Enforcement and Licensing Management System (HELMS)

Fiscal Year 2021: \$299,000 GF-State; \$1.6 million Other Biennium 2021-23: \$15 million Health Prof. Account

The 2019 legislature provided the Department of Health with authority to replace its health licensing system with a modern solution that will benefit over a half million health care providers and facilities, business that employ health providers, and the public. However, proposals from vendors to provide system integration services using the Department of Enterprise Services master contract list came in above the budgeted level for this work. Changes in market conditions since the original feasibility study was conducted is believed to be the factor. This proposal both requests expenditure authority from the Health Professions Account to complete this project as well as restructuring the funding model from a surcharge added to each license to an existing fund balance approach. This proposal is not anticipated to result in license fee increases.

Fruit and Vegetable Incentive Program

Fiscal Year 2021: N/A

Biennium 2021-23: \$3 million GF-State

The Governor proposes funding to support the Fruit and Vegetable Incentive Program which provides low-income families with vouchers to purchase fresh produce. This provides more nutritious food for families while also supporting local food producers.

Provide Staff to Expedite Nursing License

Fiscal Year 2021: \$504,000 Nurse Resource Account

Biennium 2021-23: N/A

The Governor proposes funding from the Nursing Resource Center Account to add 15 additional staff in fiscal year 2021 to assist in expedited nursing licensure. The volume of nurse

licensing applications has increased considerably during the pandemic.

Reduce Public Health Spending

Fiscal Year 2021: (\$2.4) million GF-State

Biennium 2021-23: N/A

The department was required to submit decision packages that identified budget reduction options equal to 15 percent of its GF-State maintenance level budgets. In fiscal year 2021, the Governor proposes to limit the agency's reductions to only those that could be accomplished without legislative action, which were primarily generated from furloughs and the cancellation of cost of living increases for some staff. In the 2021-2023 biennium, the Governor did not take any of the reduction options the department submitted.

Reduce Compensation through Future Furloughs and Freezes on Cost of Living Adjustments

Fiscal Year 2021: N/A

Biennium 2021-23: (\$4.0m) GF-State; (\$16.3m) Other

The Governor proposes one furlough day a month and a freeze on cost of living increases for the entire 2021-2023 biennium.

Regionalize Public Health

Fiscal Year 2021: N/A

Biennium 2021-23: \$3.2 million General Fund-State

Funding is requested to support nine regional public health directors as a component of regionalizing public health districts.



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