



STATE OF WASHINGTON
WASHINGTON STATE BOARD OF HEALTH

PO Box 47990 • Olympia, Washington 98504-7990

January 11, 2023

Sent via email

Dear John Gehman:

This letter is to inform you that the Washington State Board of Health (Board) reviewed your complaint against Washington's local health officers at its January 9, 2023, meeting. Your complaint alleged the failure of local health officers of the various counties of the State of Washington to carry out the laws, rules, and regulations relating to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Board determined that the complaint did not warrant further investigation and dismissed the complaint for the following reasons. Board Members found your complaint to be overly broad and non-specific in nature. The complaint lacked evidence or specific instances of violations. The Board noted that your reflection of the Secretary of Health's mask order is in error. The Secretary's current order only covers healthcare and long-term care facilities, as well as some correctional facilities, and these facilities are responsible for enforcing this mandate. In summary, the Board interpreted your complaint as being more of an opinion and conjecture rather than an evidenced-based argument that local health officers are violating the law.

Board members noted their observations of, and experience with, local health officers during the pandemic, and reiterated their support for the incredibly difficult work that local health officers (and their agencies) managed during the course of the pandemic.

The Board now considers your complaint closed and will take no further action. Materials related to this matter are available on the Board's website.

Sincerely,

Michelle A. Davis
Executive Director