

## Quarterly Community Update

### RECENT HAPPENINGS

#### The Board met in January and March.

In January ([watch the recording](#)) highlights included welcoming a new Board Member, [Peter Browning](#), and a new staff policy advisor, [Ashley \(Ash\) Noble](#).

Among other things, the Board:

- Invited partners from the Department of Health (Department), Washington State Association of Local Public Health Officials, and the American Indian Health Commission to share their priorities for the Legislative Session
- Adopted a motion directing Board staff to [initiate rulemaking for WAC 246-290-315](#), to continue to clearly maintain the drinking water state action levels (SALs) and associated requirements until the federal standards are effective, or the Board completes its revision of the permanent rule
- Received updates on various rulemaking work including Auditory Screening, Newborn Screening, and the School Rule Project.

In March, ([watch the recording](#)) among other things, the Board:

- Received an update from the [Tacoma Pierce County Public Health Department](#).
- Reviewed and approved [recommendations](#) from the Newborn Screening Technical Advisory Committee to update the Newborn Screening Process.
- Received updates on the [Shellfish rulemaking project](#) and the [School Rule project](#).
- Discussed the process and timeline for the 2026 State Health Report.
- Welcomed communications consultant, [Marcus DeHart](#) and administrative assistant, [Crystal Ogle](#) to Board staff positions.

### WITH APPRECIATION

The Board is [grateful to Member Dimyana Abdelmalek](#) for her service. She has served on the Board since 2022 as a Local Health Officer representative, and has been the Chair of the Board's Health Promotion subcommittee. In this role, she provided leadership and guidance on critical health promotion topics, including newborn screening, communicable disease prevention, maternal health, oral health equity, and more. We wish her the best in her next steps and are grateful for her continued commitment to health and wellbeing.



### SANITARY CONTROL OF SHELLFISH

The Board is considering changes to [Chapter 246-282 WAC](#). This chapter helps ensure shellfish are safe to eat. These rules explain how to grow, harvest, process, and sell shellfish. The Board recently held Rules Advisory Committee meetings with shellfish partners. At these meetings, we reviewed draft rule language and gathered feedback. Now the Board is updating the draft based on feedback. Next, the Board will host an informal comment period with the entire shellfish industry and the public. Please see our [website](#) for more information.

If you would like to learn more about the Board or be involved in our work, contact [Hannah Haag](#), Board Community Outreach Coordinator.

## NEWBORN SCREENING UPDATE

The Board is responsible for creating rules to screen babies born in Washington for certain health conditions. The Board has set up a Newborn Screening Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) which **recommended** updating how the state decides which conditions are added to the screening panel. At the Board's meeting on March 12, they reviewed the TAC's recommendations on how to evaluate conditions for the newborn screening panel.



The Board also considered the TAC's review of **branched chain ketoacid dehydrogenase kinase deficiency**, where the TAC recommended to not include this condition in the mandatory screening panel.

The TAC will **meet virtually on March 26** to finish reviewing congenital cytomegalovirus and vote on whether to recommend adding it to the newborn screening panel. Additional conditions the Board plans to review include Wilson's Disease, 3MCC, Krabbe Disease, Hunter syndrome (MPS-II), and congenital hearing loss.

To get involved or learn more, contact **Kelly Kramer**, Board Policy Advisor.

### UPCOMING MEETINGS:

**Board:**

April 9  
 June 11

**Health Promotion Subcommittee:**

May 1

**Environmental Health Subcommittee:**

May 8

## BOARD OPENINGS

Apply to serve on the Board for one of three openings: **someone with experience in health and sanitation, someone who is a local health officer, or someone who is a city official serving on a local board of health.**

These positions are appointed by the Governor for a three year term, with the possibility of reappointment. Please contact **Hannah** for questions, more details, or support in the application process.

## OPPORTUNITIES TO BE INVOLVED

**Upcoming Meeting: April 9, 2025**

**Physical meeting location:** Cedarbrook Lodge (Cedar I and II Rooms)  
 18525 36th Avenue South | SeaTac, WA 98188

**Zoom** information is posted on our **website** two weeks before the meeting.

**Participation in Our Work:**

- The Board wants your feedback on **proposed updates** to the rules for **hearing screening** in Washington's schools (**Chapter 246-760 WAC**) by Monday, April 14, 2025. This is your chance to **suggest changes, ask questions, or share your ideas**. If you need help with the form, have questions, or want to submit feedback by email, contact: **[schoolauditoryscreening@sboh.wa.gov](mailto:schoolauditoryscreening@sboh.wa.gov)**.
- The Board is requesting informal feedback on draft revisions to **WAC 246-282 – The Sanitary Control of Shellfish** by Tuesday, April 15, 2025, at 11:59pm. We are making editorial and technical revisions along with other updates to the rule. Email your comments to **[shellfish@sboh.wa.gov](mailto:shellfish@sboh.wa.gov)**.

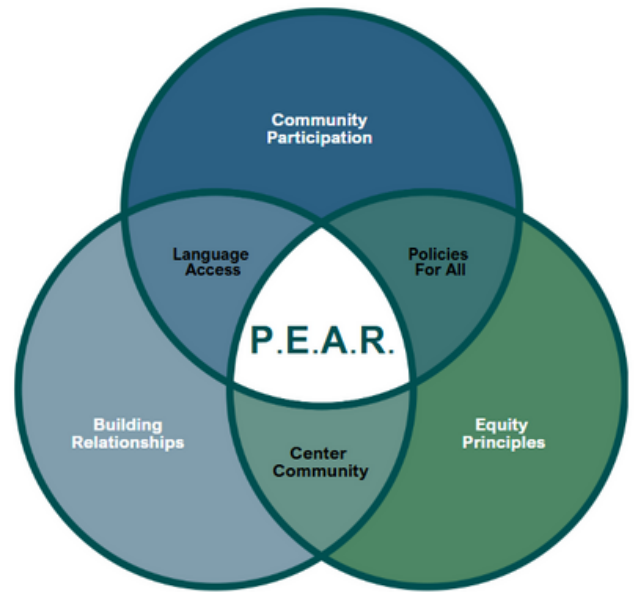
If you would like to meet with staff to share your experiences with how these topics impact the health of your community, please contact **Hannah**. **Email the Board** anytime with public comment on any of our work or issues that matter to you.

## PEAR PLAN

The Board has its [first Pro-Equity Anti-Racism Strategic Action Plan](#) in place. The plan is often called the PEAR plan. The PEAR plan aims to remove barriers to participation in government activities. State agencies identified areas that could improve outcomes for Washingtonians. The Board's internal PEAR team has looked at gaps and opportunities in Board practices. Staff were able to share the plan with representatives of community-based organizations for feedback. The Board views the plan as the foundation for equity work. This plan highlights the importance that our community members have in policy development.

The Board's plan focuses on three key areas.

- Create avenues for communities to participate and inform Board activities
- Build relationships with Tribes, community-based organizations, and Washingtonians
- Ensure hiring and professional development activities increase Board and Board staff understanding of equity and anti-racism principles



You can read the [PEAR plan here](#). If you would like to take part in updating our plan, please let us know by emailing [wsboh@sboh.wa.gov](mailto:wsboh@sboh.wa.gov).

## COUNCIL OPENING

[Apply to serve](#) on the [Governor's Interagency Council on Health Disparities](#).

The vacancy is for a member of the public who does not have financial ties to the healthcare industry. This position is appointed by the Governor and serves a three-year term, with the possibility of reappointment.



## SCHOOL RULE PROJECT

The [School Environmental Health and Safety Rule Project](#) team held additional listening sessions throughout the state. The goal of these sessions was to hear from Washington families, students, and school staff about concerns they have for school environmental health and safety. The team held these additional sessions in Tri-Cities, Auburn, and online. The comments from the sessions and the informal comment period have been summarized and presented to the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC).

The committee has met five times this year to finalize language, prioritize topics, and review informal comments for the draft proposed rule [WAC 246-370](#). They met once more in March to review the fiscal analysis. The committee will meet with the Board on April 9, 2025, to discuss the draft rule. For more information on how to get involved, contact [Andrew Kamali](#), Project Manager.