

**GOODHUE COUNTY
HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES (GCHHS)**



REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION

Requested Board Date:	September 21, 2021	Staff Lead:	Nina Arneson
Consent Agenda:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	Attachments:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Action Requested:	Approve Restructuring - Existing 1 FTE Community Health Educator Position from Provisional to Permanent		

BACKGROUND:

The following request will be brought forward for the Goodhue County Personnel Committee's review on September 21, 2021.

- **Restructuring - Existing 1 FTE Community Health Educator Position from Provisional to Permanent**

Please see the attached Personnel Committee memo. The HHS Department staff will inform the HHS Board of the Personnel Committee's actions at our September 21, 2021 Health and Human Services Board meeting.

RECOMMENDATION: GCHHS Department recommends approval as requested.



Goodhue County
Health and Human Services

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Red Wing, MN 55066
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DATE: September 15, 2021

TO: Goodhue County Personnel Committee

FROM: Nina Arneson, GCHHS Director

RE: **Restructuring - Existing 1 FTE Community Health Educator Position from Provisional to Permanent**

BACKGROUND:

The COVID-19 pandemic has spotlighted the gaps that have long existed in public health infrastructure in Minnesota, and elsewhere. Many public health agencies struggled to perform basic emergency preparedness functions due to years of decrease of funding, and a lack of staffing, training, and technology. As a result, new state and federal funds have been allocated by the legislators to improve public health infrastructure and enhance overall capacity to respond to ongoing community needs, as well as public health crises. The current available funding for this work comes to counties, including Goodhue County from the following three funding sources - **Workforce Development Grant, Local Public Health Grant, and Public Health Infrastructure Grant.**

- 1. Workforce Development Grant:** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has awarded a two-year, time limited (July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2023) Workforce Development grant to Minnesota as part of the American Rescue Plan under our current Crisis Cooperative Agreements. This intent of this grant funding is to strengthen and build the public health workforce for COVID-19 prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery. GCHHS requested and received \$160,000 for two years to enhance capacity for COVID-19 response. The funding was approved to be used in the following two areas:
 - Provide support to one of our key Covid-19 community vaccination, testing, and community outreach partners – C.A.R.E. Clinic to fund two part-time Community Health Workers (CHW). These workers will provide integral support for community members who often have barriers to receiving health care, including COVID-related health care needs. The funds will go directly to the C.A.R.E. Clinic to hire these staff as their employees.
 - Provide training and capacity development of GCHHS leadership and staff on foundational public health capacities, including data management, communications, health equity, leadership, etc.
- 2. Local Public Health Grant:** Minnesota legislature allocated \$7 million increase in the annual Local Public Health (LPH) funds. Goodhue County's allocation was increased by \$50,301 per year with the total allocation being now \$205,980 per year.

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3. **Public Health Infrastructure Grant:** Minnesota legislature also allocated \$6 million per year in new funding that is designated to be used to build public health infrastructure. The legislation that accompanies this funding required the distribution requirements established by State Community Health Services Advisory Committee (SCHSAC) and Minnesota Department of Health (MDH). An additional \$1.5 million will go to MDH to oversee the grant program and study the infrastructure needs of Minnesota's public health system. Currently, this work is taking place, and our County is involved in those discussions. The allocation amounts and requirements have not been decided.

GCHHS is using, and will continue to utilize, the 21st Century Public Health Framework to expand capacity and services with this framework. This is also very much in line with our National Public Health Accreditation. Efforts have been underway for several years in Minnesota to expand public health capacity through the 21st Century Public Health Framework. This framework defines the four core functions of public health the four **foundational areas**:

- Infectious disease prevention and control
- Environmental health
- Prevention and population health improvement
- Access to health services

The framework also defines nine **foundational capabilities**:

- Assessment and planning
- Communication
- Community partnerships
- Data and epidemiology
- Health equity
- Leadership
- Organizational management
- Policy development
- Preparedness and response



<https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/practice/schsac/workgroups/docs/201906StrengtheningANewFramework.pdf>

We have examined GCHHS’ strengths and areas for improvement based on our National Public Health Accreditation, Covid-19 work, our daily experiences, and community needs. We determined that the best way to utilize the additional LPH grant funds is to restructure the duties of a current Public Health Educator so that the primary role of this position will be a Community Engagement Specialist. The person in this role will expand partnerships and bolster GCHHS’ capacity to communicate effectively and understand the health needs and challenges of individuals and groups throughout the County. This would also allow GCHHS to expand the community health assessment process with more extensive community input and engagement. An additional goal is to create a county “dashboard” that provides community health data that would be easily accessible, and this would further our efforts in monitoring progress and health improvements.

We are also using this opportunity to shift the focus of other staff in our Healthy Communities Unit in Public Health Division to further realign with the 21st Century Public Health focus. With the addition of the Community Engagement Specialist, the Healthy Communities Supervisor would have more capacity to focus on performance improvement and data management. In addition, another staff person in the Healthy Communities Unit would have expanded responsibilities in health equity and communication. We will also utilize funding GCHHS received from the CDC - Workforce Development Grant (noted above) for training in the areas of data management, equity, communications, and leadership.

For the Community Engagement Specialist, half of this position’s responsibilities would be as the Child and Family Collaborative Coordinator, which fits perfectly with the foundational capabilities in the 21st Century Public Health Framework. The CFC is an ideal way to build strong community connections because collaborative includes membership from organizations throughout Goodhue County.

Currently, the Child and Family Collaborative (CFC) has a full time coordinator. GCHHS serves as the fiscal agent for the CFC, so the coordinator is already technically a GCHHS employee and the CFC reimburses GCHHS for the full salary of the coordinator. When the pandemic began, GCHHS and the CFC agreed that the CFC coordinator would devote 50% of her time to pandemic duties and 50% of her time to the CFC. This arrangement is still in place, so the CFC has only reimbursed GCHHS for 50% of the coordinator’s time since March, 2020. The other 50% of her position, which is dedicated to COVID response, has been covered by COVID-19 funds.

GCHHS will restructure this arrangement to create a full time permanent Public Health Educator-Community Engagement Specialist utilizing the increased LPH funds.

- .5 FTE Child and Family Collaborative Coordinator (CFC would reimburse County for .5 position)
- .5 FTE Community Engagement Specialist, which would allow GCHHS to expand capacity to provide foundational public health functions, especially in the areas of Prevention and Population Health Improvement, Access to Health Services, and Assessment and Planning.

The Child and Family Collaborative Board fully supports, and agrees with this proposal, and is supportive of the effort to make this arrangement to ensure stability of the position for ongoing community engagement, and collaborations.

	2022	2022	2022
Restructuring from Provisional to Permanent	Child and Family Collaborative	HHS LPH Grant	
Public Health Educator - Community Engagement Specialist	50% Funding	50% Funding	Total Cost
Total Cost	\$37,863.00	\$37,863.00	\$75,726.00
Position is currently being funded by Child and Family Collaborative; LPH fund allocation increased \$50,301 to Goodhue County			

RECOMMENDATION:

The HHS Department recommends approving the following:

1. Move forward immediately to restructure a provisional Public Health Educator (1 FTE) position to a permanent position as a Public Health Educator – Community Engagement Specialists.
2. Finalize position restructuring after GCHHS Board's review and approval.