



Goodhue County
Health and Human Services

426 West Avenue
Red Wing, MN 55066
(651) 385-3200 • Fax (651) 267-4882

DATE: April 13, 2022
TO: Goodhue County Personnel Committee
FROM: Nina Arneson, GCHHS Director
RE: **Provisional Position Request - NEW - .8 FTE Public Health Educator-Data Specialist**

BACKGROUND:

The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated a push for the state of Minnesota, and the US as a whole, to build and strengthen the capacity of the Public Health System. A group of local and state public health leaders developed a framework for what Minnesotans should expect from their state and local public health partnership. This framework represents the work governmental public health must do, and the important work governmental public health does, to meet the unique needs of communities across the state.

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

One part of that effort is the Public Health Infrastructure fund: In 2021, the Minnesota Legislature appropriated \$6 million/year in funding to support efforts to improve, pilot or strengthen approaches to building capacity in four foundational capabilities: communications, community partnerships, data and epidemiology, and health equity.

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/practice/systemtransformation/docs/202112InfrastructureFundPriorities.pdf>

Grant funds will be awarded in two-year agreements (April, 2022 to March, 2024). In the Spring of 2024, MDH will then report progress and lessons learned to the Minnesota Legislature, and there is a chance that promising projects would be approved for another two-year grant cycle. The goal is to strengthen the infrastructure of the Public Health system, so there will be much effort and emphasis on learning and building the system for the long term.

REQUEST:

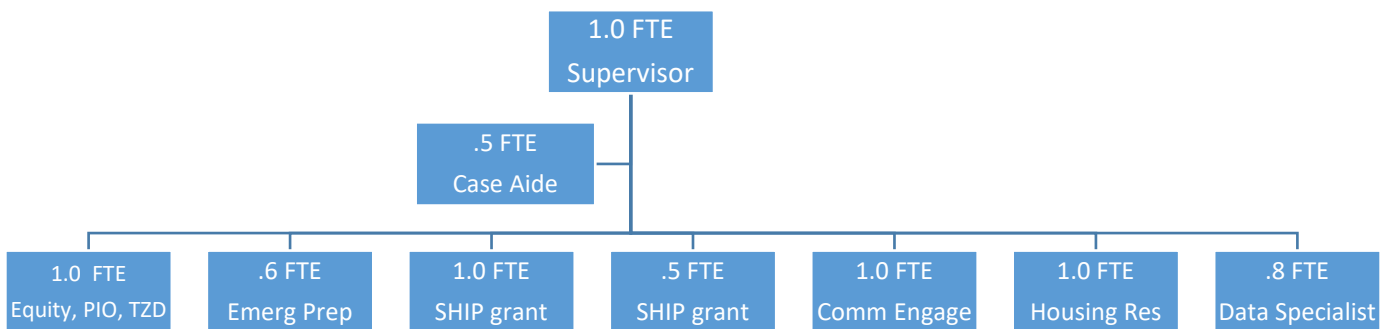
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We are requesting a .8 FTE Provisional Public Health Educator-Data Specialist. This position will be grant funded until March, 2024, with the potential of an additional 2 years of funding. This role will be part of the Healthy Communities Unit.

Our Public Health agency vision is to invest our capacity in all four of the focus areas of this grant: community engagement, equity, communication, and data/epidemiology. Utilizing the lessons learned during the pandemic, we recognize the need to engage with the community, especially those at highest risk of poorer health outcomes. We have also learned that effective communication with the community is vital to ensure that the public has the capacity to address their health needs.

To that end, in 2021 we reassigned a Public Health Educator to spend approximately 50% of her time as a Community Engagement Specialist with a focus on developing and expanding community partnerships and collaboration. Additionally, in 2021 we reassigned another Public Health Educator to spend approximately 30% of her time on equity and 30% of her time on communications for the agency. A data specialist would provide the fourth leg of our foundational table, providing the base for focused engagement, intervention, and ultimately health improvements for the most vulnerable members of our community.



The data specialist will have two important areas of focus:

- **Identify, collect and analyze data** on the health of the community as it relates to our services and interventions, facilitate the use of this data, by program staff and community leaders, in the development of performance measures, and work backwards toward work plans.
- **Effectively communicate data and its analysis:** provide staff and stakeholders with user-friendly, easily digestible information through a variety of sources (data informatics).

Goodhue County has a handful of staff with introductory training in the Results Based Accountability approach. This proposed work would build capacity by adding a data specialist focused on relating RBA to the health of the community and centering equity in the work.

This position would also collaborate with the Finance Department, including the Fiscal Officer/Data Specialist (if this position is approved). We seek to provide better evidence of the effectiveness of various programs provided by GCHHS.

While this position will be centered in Goodhue County, this position will also allow us to collaborate with Olmsted County, another grant recipient focusing on enhanced data capacity.

	2022	2022
	Single Health	Family Health
Public Health Educator	step 1	step 1
Rate	\$28.12	\$28.12
Gross	\$58,490.00	\$58,490.00
PERA/FICA/Medicare/Life	\$8,916.00	\$8,916.00
Health Coverage/H.S.A.	\$9,039.00	\$19,600.00
Total Cost	\$76,445.00	\$87,006.00

RECOMMENDATION:

The HHS Department recommends approving the following:

1. Move forward immediately to post for 1 provisional Public Health Educator (.8 FTE) utilizing the MN Merit System with hiring at step 1 or step 2. This posting would be for internal and external candidates. If an internal candidate is selected then move forward immediately to back fill that position until an external candidate has been hired to finish the process.
2. Hire after GCHHS Board’s review and approval.