

**Date:** June 13, 2018

**To:** Chair and Members of the Board of Health for Madison & Dane County and the Dane County Personnel & Finance Committee

**From:** Janel Heinrich, Director

**Subject:** Approval to fill 3 vacant positions #2696, #2848 and #1406 (Public Health Nurses)

County Ordinance 29, 52(16) requires the Personnel & Finance Committee, along with the County Executive to approve filling positions that are new or have been vacant longer than six months.

**What is the nature of the work or what is the essential function of the position?**

We are requesting to fill two PHN positions (#2696, 2848) to work in the Nurse Family Partnership Program. An evidence based nurse home visiting program providing services to first time moms. First-time moms enter the program before the 28<sup>th</sup> week of pregnancy and are engaged with NFP until their child turns two years old. The goals of NFP include:

- Improved pregnancy outcomes by helping women engage in good preventive health practices, including thorough prenatal care from their healthcare providers, improving their diets, and reducing their use of cigarettes, alcohol and illegal substances;
- Improved child health and development by helping parents provide responsible and competent care; and
- Improved the economic self-sufficiency of the family by helping parents develop a vision for their own future, plan future pregnancies, continue their education and find work.

The third PHN position (#1406) will be assigned to the tuberculosis, communicable disease and immunization programs to support the delivery of mandated services. The goal of these programs include:

- Reduce and control the transmission of acute and communicable diseases
- Case management support to individuals with an acute or communicable disease to return to a state of well-being.

**How has this function been fulfilled without his position?**

The NFP program has not been able to receive all referrals to the program since February of this year. High-risk clients were provided the opportunity to participate in a less intense PHMDC program, Prenatal Care Coordination. (PNCC). However, both programs were at capacity with waiting lists.

Regarding the Acute and Communicable Disease, Tuberculosis and Immunizations programs, we re-assigned PNCC staff to temporarily provide support and reduced follow-up methods as identified in our COOP. Additionally, PHNs from various programs have been experiencing high volumes of workload by

providing back-up coverage in immunizations and communicable disease follow-up. Seasonally, we will soon be experiencing increased enteric and vector born illnesses which will demand additional capacity. Finally, we have engaged a LTE to temporarily assist with our shortages.

**What will be the impact on the Department's function and mission if the position remains vacant?**

Regarding the PHN that will provide support to the Tuberculosis; Acute and Communicable Disease; and Immunization program -if this position is not filled we will not be able to fulfill current and imminently mandated services which could result in the increased spread of communicable disease.

All Wisconsin local health departments are mandated to follow-up on most communicable diseases, including active Tuberculosis. Previously, this has not included Latent Tuberculosis Infections (LTBI). However, effective July 1, 2018 all WI health departments will now be required to follow-up on these cases. Based on 2017 data, this will increase the department's case load by at least 300/year (Prior to July 1, 2018 reporting of LTBI was not mandatory, this could result in more than 300 annual reported cases).

Not filling the two PHN positions assigned to the NFP program will require us to continue to operate on a wait list status and could have the impact of reduced access to services for first time moms leading to poorer birth and pregnancy outcomes.

Please let me know if you have additional questions.