

DEPUTY HEALTH OFFICER

JOB PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

The Health Officer program is intended to provide a unified and systemic approach to delivering regional health officer services to the local health departments serving Clark and other counties contracting with Clark. The program aims to accomplish this through (1) providing high quality health officer services, and (2) participating in a developmental approach to enhancing the departments' capacities to assess community health status, choose appropriate population health priorities and strategies and develop and provide high quality public health services to address these priorities and strategies.

The Deputy Health Officer participates in and provides leadership across a wide range of public health activities through the regional health officer program. The primary purpose of the position is to provide consultation, public health and clinical leadership, and technical direction to the local health departments. This position has major responsibility for control and prevention of communicable disease and planning for and response to bioterrorism and other public health emergencies. The Deputy Health Officer serves as Deputy Medical Officer for the contracted Health Departments and under direction of the Health Officer, as member of the contracted counties' Public Health Department senior management teams. Under direction from the Health Officer, the Deputy Health Officer plays a critical role in department activities through relationships with key entities, particularly the local medical communities in contracted counties; County Boards of Health; local, state and federal public health partners; the media; and the public. Additionally, the Deputy Health Officer is required to help identify priorities and emerging trends, and communicate health data and information in a variety of settings.

KEY OR TYPICAL TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Serves as a member of the regional counties' health department senior management teams and participates in planning, goal setting, problem solving, policy formulation and review, and budget preparation.
- Under direction of the Health Officer, acts as spokesperson for public health in the contracted counties
- Guides community health assessments.
- Provides up-to-date public health alerts, information, training and leadership to the medical community.
- Provides medical/clinical oversight in the investigation of reported or suspected cases or perceived clusters of diseases or conditions considered a threat to public health.

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- Determines appropriate action including initiating disease prevention and infection control.
- Provides technical assistance and direction in surveillance activities and on unusual or particularly sensitive cases.
- Designs and performs studies of potential threats to public health and presents findings and recommendations to the Department Directors and Boards of Health.
- Writes, reviews, and/or revises standing orders and protocols for Departments' nursing staff.
- Provides clinical advice to department nursing staff.
- Encourages department staff professional development, technical competence, high morale and good public relations.
- Enforces public health statutes, rules and regulations of the State Board of Health and State Department of Health and local health rules, regulations and ordinances. Emphasis is on communicable disease control and environmental health.
- Participates in the development of policies and programs to implement community health promotion and prevention priorities.
- Plans for and provides in-service training and evaluates continuing education needs of Department professional staff.
- In consultation with the Health Officer, provides medical direction during public health emergencies; assures public is protected from diseases; assures isolation, quarantine and other control measures are ordered and implemented in accordance with state RCWs and WACs.
- Participates in the Infectious Disease Advisory Committee for community physicians, nurses, infection control practitioners, Health Department staff and other providers for the purpose of enhancing surveillance of communicable disease and optimizing timely response.
- Coordinates debriefing of communicable disease response between environmental health specialists and communicable disease/epidemiology team.

Public Relations and Community Involvement:

- Makes presentations to professional, civic and lay groups to promote community awareness of public health issues, such as emerging infectious diseases and emergency preparedness.
- Provides advice to schools and state and local agencies in developing public health policies.

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- Works with staff in responding to medical questions concerning outbreaks of communicable disease.

QUALIFICATIONS

Education and Experience:

- Possession of or ability to obtain a license to practice medicine and surgery or osteopathic medicine and surgery in the state of Washington.
- Possession of Master of Public Health or equivalent degree plus three years of increasingly responsible experience in public health, epidemiology, preventive medicine or a related area. Persons with three years of experience who do not possess a Master of Public Health or equivalent can qualify for a provisional term, subject to public health in-service orientation and periodic personal review by the Secretary of Health or his or her designee. Any satisfactory equivalent combination of experience and training which ensures the ability to perform the work may be substituted for up to one year of the required experience. Course work and training in public health administration, public administration or a related field is desirable, but not required.
- A valid driver's license

Knowledge of

Competencies in public health, including: preventive medicine, epidemiology, infectious and chronic disease, environmental health, health risk communication and public health law and administration.

Ability to

- Understand, interpret and apply public health law and regulations.
- Use a computer and software applications including epidemiologic software.
- Exercise independent judgment and delegate responsibility.
- Work independently or as part of a team.
- Communicate effectively with policymakers.

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