

AGENDA ITEM FOR ADMINISTRATIVE MEETING ( ) Discussion only  
( ) Action

FROM (DEPT/ DIVISION): DA/PH

SUBJECT: Workforce retention/recruitment

<p>Recruitment: Historically, registered nurses, nurse practitioners, certified medical assistants, and Deputy District Attorney positions have been extremely difficult to fill. Signing bonuses are being proposed to be offered as a limited time incentive towards recruitment of qualified personnel.</p> <p>C-19 Public Health Workforce: Workforce development funds were awarded to Local Public Health Authorities for the intention of supporting workforce development and retention. Retention incentives will be distributed to eligible staff for the period July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2023.</p>	<p>Requested Action: Approve (1) incentivized recruitment efforts and (2) utilization of Public Health Workforce Development Funds for staff retention efforts.</p>
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ATTACHMENTS:

Date: ( 12/2/2021 ) Submitted By: Jennifer Blake

\*\*\*\*\*For Internal Use Only\*\*\*\*\*

Checkoffs:

- ( ) Dept. Heard (copy)
- ( ) Human Resources (copy)
- ( ) Fiscal
- ( ) Legal (copy)
- ( ) (Other - List:)

To be notified of Meeting:

Needed at Meeting:

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Scheduled for meeting on: December 15, 2021

Action taken:

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Follow-up:

## Recruitment and Retention Proposal

Goal: To increase recruitment and retention in skilled positions at UCo Health. Traditionally these positions have been difficult to recruit and keep qualified staff. This is due to a high education and training requirement needed to complete these tasks.

### Background:

Licensed/Certified positions are required to adequately serve the health of Umatilla County. By their very nature, these positions have a high standard that limits the candidate pool when trying to hire. These standards are important and cannot be reduced. Attempts to do so would put UCo Health in conflict with State Law, and would reduce the ability of our staff to complete required tasks. To that end, we must find ways to increase our ability to recruit and retain qualified staff members.

### Nursing:

UCo Health has different levels and types of nursing positions that we routinely recruit and utilize.

- Registered Nurses (approx 3 year process) - Serving in our Nurse-Family partnership program, in our clinic, and assisting with communicable disease.
- Bachelors prepared Registered Nurse (Min 4 year process) - A requirement for supervision of the Nurse-Family partnership program.
- Nurse Practitioner (5-6 year process) - An advanced provider level with prescribing abilities. A required component for certification of our Reproductive Health clinic. Also a required position to maintain certification of both School Based Health Centers.

### Other licensed/certified positions:

- Certified Medical Assistant - (1-2 year process) - This position assists the Nurse Practitioner in the School Based Health Center, and allows us to serve additional students with a single provider.
- Registered Environmental Health Specialist/Trainee - (4 year science based education followed by 2 year on the job training process) - Conducts all inspections for Food, Pool, Lodging and Onsite Septic System programs.

UCo Health has struggled to hire and retain Registered Nurses for years, with salary believed to be the main cause. The onset of the pandemic has made this worse, and has increased the burn out of existing staff. Increased wages at other facilities in the area also make it difficult to retain staff. We have gone 11 months without an application for our MCH Supervisor position which requires a Bachelors RN. We have gone 6 months without an application for what is now 2 vacant RN positions, severely impacting the ability of our clinic, and community vaccination events. We have been unable to hire a medical assistant, there have been some applicants, but they have turned down offers. We do currently have a full staffing of REHS/REHST at this point in time. These positions hold an incredible amount of knowledge, including in communicable disease prevention, and it is almost always learned from on the job training. For

this reason, it is extremely impactful on the work and existing staff when an individual chooses to move on to other opportunities and the training process has to begin again. Absences in these positions led to slowdowns and backups in restaurant openings, food safety checks, and house/property sales. This also generated a number of complaints from the community.

Proposal:

Premium pay model - Utilizing workforce development funds passed by US Congress in the American Rescue Plan and awarded to Oregon. Oregon Health Authority has passed these funds down directly to Local Public Health Authorities for the intention of supporting workforce development and retention.

Excerpt from Program Element 51 regarding required use of these funds.

[Section 3: COVID-19 Public Health Workforce](#)

[a. Establish, expand, train and sustain the public health workforce gained during the COVID-19 pandemic. Demonstrate strategies to ensure long-term improvements for health equity and cultural responsiveness, public health and community prevention, preparedness, response and recovery, including improvements for eliminating health inequities. workforce diversity recruitment, retention and workforce development.](#)

Issue \$200/week to licensed/certified medical staff, and \$150/week to REHS staff; when they have worked (Leave/holiday not included) a minimum of 30 hrs in the week, for the duration of the specific funding period. (Retroactive July 2021 - June 2023). Issue \$100/week to designated half time staff who work a minimum of 15 hrs in the week for the same time frame.

Utilize the remaining funds (approx \$25,000) to hire a consultant to evaluate Umatilla County's recruitment procedures, retention strategies, and total compensation. Evaluation should include recommendations to increase diversity of Umatilla County's workforce, and to improve recruitment and retention of employees.