



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:20-7155

Agenda Item Number: 20.

Agenda Date: 1/14/2021

In Control: City Council A Session

DEPARTMENT: Health

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Colleen M. Bridger, MPH, PhD

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: Citywide

SUBJECT:

Authorizing Submission for 2021 CDC Public Health Associate Program Assignees

SUMMARY:

This Ordinance authorizes the submission of eight applications to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Public Health Associate Program (PHAP) and authorizes the assignment of up to eight Public Health Associates in the San Antonio Metropolitan Health District (Metro Health) for a two-year period beginning October 2021 and authorizes the Director to execute all necessary documents. These positions will be funded by the CDC.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Metro Health is committed to developing the future public health workforce. One way this is accomplished is through a 12-year partnership with the Public Health Associate Program (PHAP) that is managed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Office for State, Tribal, Local and Territorial Support. The mission of PHAP is to "train and provide experiential learning to early career professionals who contribute to the public health workforce." PHAP's comprehensive curriculum focuses on developing associates' proficiencies in key public health areas via formal instruction and mentoring by the CDC and the host site, as well as on-the-job training at the host site. After completing the two-year CDC-funded assignment, associates are qualified to apply for public health positions at local, state, and national offices.

The Public Health Associate Program was founded in 2007 as a pilot program to support the CDC's frontline public health focus and to meet the need for a continual source of field-tested, experienced, and dedicated

public health professionals. In 2010, with the help of funding from the Affordable Care Act's Prevention and Public Health Fund (PPHF), PHAP progressed from a pilot program to nationwide implementation-hiring 65 associates in 2010. To date, PHAP has placed more than 1,100 public health associates in public health agencies and nongovernmental organizations across 44 states, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. territories.

PHAP is geared toward recent baccalaureate and master's level graduates who are interested in a career in public health. Assigned associates are civil service personnel hired by CDC to serve under an excepted service appointment not-to-exceed two years. Assignments are individually tailored to meet local needs in the delivery of public health services such as case investigation, disease surveillance, health promotion, community outreach, and public health policy and accreditation.

Metro Health has been selected as a host site for 12 years - every year the program has been available in Texas since 2008; the program was not funded in 2009. Over these years the department has hosted more than 20 associates, many of whom continued working or studying in public health or studying in other health-related fields after completing their PHAP service. Currently, four associates are working at Metro Health.

Metro Health benefits from being a host site. The bright, intelligent associates are an added resource to Metro Health. They come to San Antonio from many different states, bringing with them different perspectives and experiences that enhance services to the community. During this program, the CDC provides them with professional training that augments their knowledge and skills beyond their local training.

This Ordinance will allow eight Public Health Associates to work in the following Metro Health program areas: SA Kids BREATHE; Violence Prevention; Tuberculosis Prevention and Control; Healthy Neighborhoods; Community Nutrition; Immunizations; STD/HIV prevention; Operations; and, special projects with the Medical Director. If Metro Health is again selected to be a PHAP host site, then 2021 will become the 13th year that Metro Health has successfully been selected.

The CDC PHAP program provides a salary paid directly to the assignee while they complete their two-year field assignments at the health agency. Benefits, including health insurance, vacation, and sick leave, are also paid by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Metro Health will use existing resources to provide the required office space, equipment and associated project-based support, supervisory and mentoring time, and assessment of the assignee's professional development.

ISSUE:

Metro Health is requesting that City Council authorize the submission of applications to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for Public Health Associates and authorize the assignment of said CDC employees in Metro Health for a two-year period beginning October 2021.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention will accept the 2021 Public Health Associate Program host-site applications through February 2021.

Metro Health has identified a need for such individuals and wishes to take advantage of this opportunity to obtain skilled workers that will assist in these critical areas within the department at no cost to the City.

ALTERNATIVES:

If the application submissions are not authorized, Metro Health will not be eligible for the services of trained CDC Public Health Associates to assist in key services within the department at no cost to the City.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This Ordinance authorizes the submission of eight applications to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Public Health Associate Program, authorizes the assignment of up to eight Public Health Associates in the San Antonio Metropolitan Health District for a two-year period beginning October 2021, and allows for the execution of necessary documents. This ordinance will be funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and will have no impact to the City's General Fund.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of an Ordinance authorizing the submission of eight applications to the 2021 CDC's Public Health Associate Program to serve as a host site to highly qualified and trained CDC employees at no cost to the City and authorizes the assignment of said CDC employees in Metro Health for a two-year period beginning October 2021.