

County of Santa Clara  
Santa Clara Valley Health & Hospital System  
Public Health Department



97951

**DATE:** August 13, 2019

**TO:** Board of Supervisors

**FROM:** Sara H. Cody MD, Health Officer and Public Health Director

**SUBJECT:** Appropriation Modification Related to Adding and Deleting Positions in the Public Health Department

**RECOMMENDED ACTION**

Approve Request for Appropriation Modification No. 24 - \$8,635 transferring funds within the Public Health Department budget, relating to deleting one half-time Graphic Designer II position and one half-time Social Media/Internet Communications Specialist position and adding one Public Communications Specialist position in the Public Health Department.  
(Roll Call Vote)

**FISCAL IMPLICATIONS**

Approval of the recommended action will have no net impact to the County General Fund. The Department is deleting a 0.5 FTE Social Media/Internet Communications Specialist and a 0.5 FTE Graphic Designer while adding 1.0 FTE Public Communication Specialist. This change will result in net increase of \$8,635 in Fiscal Year 2020 and \$9,014 ongoing, which will be offset by reducing appropriation for services and supplies.

**REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

The Communications team within the Office of the Director provides health risk information to the public for urgent needs such as measles outbreaks, other communicable disease issues, and disasters/emergencies. As a result of two recent vacancies, the Public Health Department has had the opportunity to review the needs of the Department and would like to delete two part time positions for a more appropriate full time code. A Public Communication Specialist is the best position to respond to the needs of the program, which can shift substantially and unpredictably from week to week. A Public Communication Specialist position is able to provide marketing publications development and digital publishing support, while also offering flexible surge capacity in news media relations and health risk communications functions.

## **CHILD IMPACT**

The recommended action will have no/neutral implications for children.

## **SENIOR IMPACT**

The recommended action will have no/neutral implications for seniors.

## **SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

The recommended action will have no/neutral sustainability implications.

## **BACKGROUND**

The Social Media/Internet Communications position was created to support the Public Health Department in using new internet technologies. The position sits in the Communications team within the Office of the Director of the Public Health Department. The position primarily worked on writing and posting material to social media and analyzing the results.

The Graphic Designer position was created primarily to support the Public Health Department in creating and arranging the printing of hardcopy material for distribution to the public. The position primarily worked on hardcopy reports, publications, and other printed collateral, and to a lesser extent on material for web publication. The need for printed material has somewhat diminished in recent years.

Part-time County positions in graphic design and communications have proven increasingly difficult to fill in recent years. Viable candidates often withdraw from consideration when they learn the position is half-time, as they are able to secure full-time work in the private sector or elsewhere in the County. The 0.5 FTE Graphic Designer position has been vacant since September 2018, despite several rounds of recruitment.

The recommended action to add an additional Public Communication Specialist to the team would support and advance a flexible and strategic approach to communications needs, with greater capacity to pivot to urgent health risk communications.

The affected unions were notified of and concur with the recommended action.

Employee Services Agency supports the recommended action.

## **CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION**

Failure to approve the requested add-delete may impact the Public Health Department's ability to adequately address urgent need for public information during measles outbreaks, other communicable disease issues, and disasters and emergencies.

## **STEPS FOLLOWING APPROVAL**

The Clerk of the Board of Supervisors is requested to notify Michele Seaton and Phil Hofford of the Public Health Department.

**LINKS:**

- Linked To: 97717 : Adoption of Salary Ordinance No. NS-5.20.13 amending Santa Clara County Salary Ordinance No. NS-5.20 relating to compensation of employees deleting one half-time Graphic Designer II position and one half-time Social Media/Internet Communications Specialist position and adding one Public Communications Specialist position in the Public Health Department.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- FY19-20 F-85 024 BU 410 Public Health Add Public Comm Spec (PDF)