



**APPLETON
HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

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To: City of Appleton Board of Health
City of Appleton Human Resources and Information Technology Committee

From: Charles E. Sepers, Jr., Ph.D., M.P.H., Health Officer/Director, Health
Kara J. Homan, AICP, Director, Community and Economic Development

Subject: Changes to the Table of Organization for Health and Community and Economic Development

Working to measure and improve the health and wellbeing of the population is one of the most important roles local health departments serve. Community health, is a general focus of local health departments to prevent the onset of disease by addressing the social determinants of health, develop strategies for health promotion, and work collaboratively with community partners to measure the health of the community and develop strategies for addressing critical needs. This role is so vital, that it is identified within the Wisconsin State statute as a requirement for all local health departments in the State.

Additionally, the capacity for conducting robust and statutorily required Community Health Assessments and Community Health Improvements has remained limited. In the past, this critical work has been conducted by public health nursing and administrative staff with competing priorities (e.g., addressing communicable disease) and limited capacity (e.g., a majority of nursing staff are part time). In the most recent compliance audit conducted by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services, the lack of a dedicated community health division within the Appleton Health Department was identified as a clear need in the report. Serving as the Community Health Strategist and diminished capacity for articulating health inequities and inequalities were two specific areas identified in the report that require additional focus by the Appleton Health Department toward the work of community health.

The Coordinated Entry System is a process that matches the most vulnerable homeless residents with available and appropriate housing resources. HUD's primary goals for coordinated entry processes are that assistance be allocated as effectively as possible and that it be easily accessible no matter where or how people present. The Coordinated Entry Specialist is currently housed within the Department of Community and Economic Development. This work, which addresses issues related to the social determinant of health around housing, intersects almost completely with the Appleton Health and Police Departments.

To address these critical needs, we request the creation of a dedicated community health division within the Appleton Health Department through the modification of the Health Table of Organization. Specifically, we request the following changes to the Appleton Health Department Table of Organization:

- Creation of a new Community Health Supervisor position at 1.0 FTE. This position will report to the Health Officer.
- Move the Coordinated Entry Specialist position under the supervision of the Community Health Supervisor. Additionally, this position will be physically located within the Appleton Police Department's Community Resource Unit to increase collaboration efficiency within the coordinated entry system.



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The advantages of these changes include:

- Better adherence to Wisconsin Department of Health Services statute 140 compliance, as identified within the latest site visit report.
- Increased capacity to perform activities related to community health.
 - Surveillance: Routinely collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data on health conditions, risks, and resources.
 - Planning and Implementation: Designing and executing health programs to meet local health needs and reduce disparities.
 - Collaboration: Coordinating with healthcare providers, community organizations, and government agencies for integrated health initiatives.
 - Education and Advocacy: Promoting health education and advocating for health policies that address local health issues.
- Integration of Coordinated Entry into a social determinants of health framework, rather than an economic development framework.

Financial impact:

- The Community Health Supervisor position is currently funded through 2026 using new, external funding. Additional revenue will be sought over the next three years to offset this expenditure and permanently fund this position.
- The Coordinated Entry Specialist would continue to use external funding already secured.

Respectfully submitted by,

Charles E. Sepers, Jr., Ph.D., M.P.H.

Kara J. Homan, AICP