

Analysis
Oregon Health Authority
Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity

Analyst: Tom MacDonald

Request: Approve the submission of a federal grant application from the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) in the amount of \$20,750,000 over five years to support the prevention and control of infectious diseases and other threats to public health.

Analysis: The Public Health Division requests approval to apply for the Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity (ELC) grant through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). This opportunity would renew funding received by the agency since 2001 and represents a critical part of the existing budget for the Acute and Communicable Disease Prevention (ACDP) program and the Oregon State Public Health Laboratory. Although the grant predominantly reflects a continuation of existing federally-funded activities, the renewal incorporates two separate projects previously funded by the CDC for syndromic surveillance and the management of harmful algal blooms.

Existing ELC Grant Activities: Nearly all of the \$20.75 million grant will support existing epidemiological and laboratory activities to prevent and control infectious diseases and other public health threats. The ELC provides the majority of the ACDP's funding to operate statewide public health surveillance systems, provide technical assistance to local public health authorities, and respond to existing and emerging threats to public health, such as foodborne infections, influenza, Lyme disease, Zika virus, and West Nile. Funding will also continue to support laboratorians at the Public Health Laboratory, equipment and supplies to deliver test results, as well as continual improvements and incorporation of new technologies, such as whole genome sequencing.

Revised Grant Components: OHA currently receives funding for syndromic surveillance under a different CDC grant ending in August 2019. This work, which supports the collection of data to validate and monitor the effects of exposure to diseases and hazardous conditions, is not changing, but funding will now be received through the ELC grant. Consistent with prior awards, the syndromic surveillance component is expected to total \$240,000 per year.

The ELC also incorporates funding to manage health risks from harmful algal blooms (HABs), which were previously supported with CDC funding for OHA's Drinking Water Services program from 2007 through 2013. The CDC has a renewed focus on HABs since the spring 2018 contamination of the City of Salem drinking water supply with cyanotoxins. The new HAB funding will support risk communications, surveillance, and improved reporting of HAB-related illness. OHA intends to request the maximum allowable amount of \$250,000 per year available for this component, but expects to receive less given the limited amount of available funding for HABs.

The federal grant application is due May 10, 2019 for the next five-year grant period starting August 1, 2019. The grant does not require a state match and OHA's budget will not need an increase in Federal Funds expenditure limitation. The agency will carry out grant activities with existing staff.

Legislative Fiscal Office Recommendation: Approve the request.

Oregon Health Authority Nass

Request: Authorization to apply for a five-year Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity for Prevention and Control of Emerging Infection Diseases (ELC) funding opportunity.

Recommendation: Approve the request.

Discussion: The Oregon Health Authority's Public Health Division is requesting approval to apply for the Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity for Prevention and Control of Emerging Infectious Diseases (ELC) funding opportunity. Funding is available through the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and is intended to prevent disease through enhanced surveillance of known and emerging infectious diseases and other public health threats. The Division has received funding from this grant since 2001 to support the epidemiology and health information systems in the Acute and Communicable Disease Prevention Program and has funded Oregon State Public Health Laboratory staff. With this opportunity, two projects that were previously funded by other CDC grants have been moved to ELC funding and the opportunity now includes funding for syndromic surveillance and support for the management of harmful algal blooms.

The Division currently receives grant funding for syndromic surveillance under a different grant that will end in August of 2019. The body of work for syndromic surveillance is not changing, however, funding will be received through the ELC grant as opposed to a separate grant.

From 2007 through 2013, the Division received CDC funding to reduce public health risks from harmful algal blooms. Since 2014, the Division has used state funding to support positions in the Drinking Water Services Program, which provides technical and other expertise related to drinking water and water quality. The CDC funding opportunity reflects a renewed focus on harmful algae blooms since the contamination of the City of Salem drinking water supply in 2018. The additional funding from the ELC funding opportunity for management of harmful algal blooms includes working with partner agencies and waterbody managers to maintain surveillance, detection and reporting of harmful algal blooms; evaluate alternate methods of monitoring early warning of algal blooms, and participate in CDC coordination activities. The work related to the management of harmful algal blooms risks will work in coordination with the Division's Drinking Water Services Program, which enforces the state's monitoring requirements for cyanotoxins at public water systems.

With the added funding for the two new projects within the ELC grant, the amount available is up to \$4.15 million per year for five years; for a total of up to \$20.75 million starting August 1, 2019 through July 31, 2024. The application is due on May 10, 2019 and does not require state matching funds nor a maintenance of effort.



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April 25, 2019

The Honorable Senator Betsy Johnson, Co-Chair
The Honorable Senator Elizabeth Steiner Hayward, Co-Chair
The Honorable Representative Dan Rayfield, Co-Chair
Joint Committee on Ways and Means
900 Court Street NE
H-178 State Capitol
Salem, OR 97301-4048

Dear Co-Chairpersons:

Nature of the Request

The Oregon Health Authority (OHA) Public Health Division requests permission to apply for the limited competition five-year renewal of the Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity for Prevention and Control of Emerging Infectious Diseases (ELC) funding opportunity, which is available only to current recipients and will be used to fund continuing work. This renewal also incorporates a previously funded CDC grant for syndromic surveillance and adds the opportunity to support the management of harmful algal blooms.

The purpose of the grant is to prevent disease through enhanced surveillance, prevention and control of known and emerging infectious diseases and other public health threats. Funding is available through the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases. This cooperative agreement with the funds up to \$4,150,000 a year for 5 years, beginning August 1, 2019, and ending July 31, 2024, for a total of up to \$20,750,000.

The request for proposal was received on March 1, 2019, and the application is due on May 10, 2019. This grant funding requires no state matching funds and does not have a federal requirement for maintenance of effort. All work in the grant will be completed by existing positions.

Agency Action

In Oregon, ELC funds have been used to support the work of epidemiology and health information systems in the Acute and Communicable Disease Prevention

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The Honorable Senator Elizabeth Steiner Hayward
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section, Environmental Health section and laboratorians at the Oregon State Public Health Laboratory to:

- Identify outbreaks of illness from foodborne infections
- Monitor influenza-like illness in outpatient settings,
- Track the appearance each year of mosquito-borne diseases like West Nile and Zika virus in humans and animals
- Detect and prevent multi-drug resistant bacteria in Oregon hospitals
- Manage harmful algal blooms
- Develop health information system capacity to enable laboratories throughout the state to rapidly report infections of public health interest.

Action Requested

The OHA Public Health Division requests permission to apply for the Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity for Prevention and Control of Emerging Infectious Diseases funding opportunity from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Legislation Affected

None.

For additional information, please contact Zintars Beldavs, Acute and Communicable Disease Prevention Manager, at (971) 673-0166 or at zintars.g.beldavs@dhsosha.state.or.us.

Sincerely,



Patrick M. Allen
Director

CC: Ken Rocco, Legislative Fiscal Office
Tom MacDonald, Legislative Fiscal Office
George Naughton, Department of Administrative Services
Kate Nass, Department of Administrative Services