Tacoma-Pierce County
Board of Health

Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department
Healthy People in Healthy Communities

Regular Meeting Agenda
May 7, 2025
3 - 5 p.m.

Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department - Auditorium
Hybrid Format with in-person and remote attendance

Dial in: 253 215 8782 Meeting ID: 852 6383 2261
Passcode: 038473
Webinar Link:
https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85263832261?pwd=a1crSUJscWFkTFhJcGl0N0VkSjZDZz09

3629 South D Street, Tacoma, WA 98418
Board of Health Clerk, (253) 649-1502

Board Members
Joe Bushnell
Paul Herrera
Jani Hitchen
Ryan Mello
Dave Olson
Nicholas Rajacich, MD
Sandesh Sadalge
Bryan Yambe

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ROLL CALL

III. COMMENTS BY THE PUBLIC

The Board will consider written and oral public comments. Submit written comments any time prior to when a Board of Health meeting adjourns at director@tpchd.org. Written comments we receive prior to noon on the date of a Board of Health meeting will go to Board members before the meeting.

Oral comments can be in person or remote. To make oral comments remotely call 253 215 8782 and use Meeting ID: 852 6383 2261 Passcode: 038473 when you join the meeting by phone with the number, meeting ID, and passcode at the top of the agenda. Press *9 to raise your hand and signal you wish to make a comment. You will be announced by your name or the last four digits of your phone number.

Comments unrelated to specific agenda items have a two-minute limit per person. The Chair has the authority to change the time limits as deemed necessary.

All written and oral comments will become part of the meeting record.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of the meeting minutes for **April 2 and April 16, 2025.**

V. REGULAR AGENDA

1. **Resolution No. 2025-4872** – Authorization to increase the aggregate 2024-2025 biennial budget by $3,213,280 from the amended budget of $124,356,340 to $127,569,620. The Board of Health approved FTE remains unchanged at 348.85.
   [Jaime Paulson, Fiscal & Budget Manager]
   Board Chair calls for public comment

2. **Resolution No. 2025-4873** – Authorization to continue the current multi-year license and services agreement for medical billing services with CureMD for an amount up to and not exceeding $150,000 for the period January 1, 2025 to December 31, 2025.
   [Cindan Gizzi, Interim Strengthening Families Division Director]
   Board Chair calls for public comment

VI. COMMENTS BY DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH

[Chantell Harmon Reed, Director of Public Health]

1. **Safe Cookware**
   Reducing toxic chemicals in our bodies and environment
   [Rob Olsen, Environmental Health Supervisor]

VII. COMMENTS BY BOARD OF HEALTH MEMBERS

VIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)(f) to discuss complaints or changes brought against a public officer or employee.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

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Call to Order
Chair Bushnell called the May 7, 2025 Tacoma-Pierce County Board of Health Regular meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

Roll Call,
Board of Health Members Present: Joe Bushnell, Jani Hitchen, Paul Herrera, Ryan Mello, Dave Olson, Nicholas Rajacich, Sandesh Sadalge arrived at 3:03 p.m., Bryan Yambe arrived at 3:01 p.m. Alternate Board Members: Stephen Cook arrived at 3:05 p.m.

Board of Health Members Excused: None.

Comments by the Public (not related to a specific agenda item)

There were no public comments.

Consent Agenda

Approval of the meeting minutes for **April 2 and April 16, 2025.** Chair Bushnell read the title into the record. Vice Chair Hitchen moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Seconded by Board Member Mello.

The motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

Regular Agenda

Resolution No. 2025-4872 – Authorization to increase the aggregate 2024-2025 biennial budget by $3,213,280 from the amended budget of $124,356,340 to $127,569,620. The Board of Health approved FTE remains unchanged at 348.85. The Clerk read the title into the record. Vice Chair Hitchen moved to adopt the resolution. Seconded by Board Member Mello.

Jaime Paulson, Fiscal & Budget Manager, presented the resolution.

There was no public comment.

There were no questions from board members.

The resolution passed unanimously on a voice vote.

Resolution No. 2025-4873 – Authorization to continue the current multi-year license and services agreement for medical billing services with CureMD for an amount up to and not exceeding $150,000 for the period January 1, 2025 to December 31, 2025. The Board of Health approved FTE remains unchanged at 348.85. The Clerk read the title into the record. Vice Chair Hitchen moved to adopt the resolution. Seconded by Board Member Mello.

Cindan Gizzi, Deputy Director; Interim Strengthening Families Division Director presented the resolution. Ms. Gizzi advised board members that 2025 is the fourth year of services in the existing five-year service agreement. She advised board members on the services that CureMD provides.

Discussion followed on the percentage fee for collections. Andy Rohr, Strengthening Families Assistant Division Director advised board members the percentage fee is 3.75 percent. Mr. Rohr shared that it is multi-tier, 3.75 percent of all collections. He shared that the more they collect over a certain threshold the percentage goes down.

There was no public comment.

The resolution passed unanimously on a voice vote.

COMMENTS BY DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH

[Chantell Harmon Reed, Director of Public Health]

Health Officer, Dr. James Miller, provided Director's Comments on behalf of Director Reed who is travelling.

Street Medicine Update

Dr. Miller provided board members with an update on hiring the Street Medicine team. He shared that they explored several different models for clinician staffing and have now moved forward with directly hiring clinicians for the team. They have a nurse practitioner who has accepted a full-time role as well as a physician who has accepted a part-time role, both of whom will start this month. Dr. Miller shared that they also have a second physician who will likely be accepting a part-time role.

He reminded board members the team has had a certified peer navigator providing resources to people living unsheltered in Tacoma since late 2024. Dr. Miller shared through that work, they've connected with more than 500 people and provided things like: prepackaged food, clothing, and other basic needs; housing and social service referrals; mental health, healthcare and substance use referrals; and Narcan.

Dr. Miller shared that In March, they hired a new program manager, replacing their prior program manager who left for a role outside the Health Department. In April they added a registered nurse.

He advised board members that now, with clinicians on board, they'll be able to offer additional medical services to those in need going forward.

Measles

Dr. Miller updated board members about an ongoing measles outbreak in Texas. He shared several other states that have reported smaller outbreaks of measles. Dr. Miller shared there are also large ongoing outbreaks in Canada and Mexico. He advised board members that the health department will continue monitoring things locally.

He advised board members that In Washington, we've seen 5 cases reported so far this year. He shared we have not had one reported in Pierce County. Dr. Miller informed board members that the Department sent out an advisory to local providers last month, urging them to keep an eye out for symptoms and risk factors.

Dr. Miller shared We continue to prepare for the possibility of a measles case or outbreak and work to improve immunization rates. He shared high vaccination levels are critical to prevent measles from spreading. We urge anyone who is not vaccinated to talk with your healthcare provider about getting the protection you need.

Dr. Miller acknowledged there is media attention and national conversation about measles, measles treatments, vaccines. He shared people might be hearing some things that are inaccurate or misleading. Dr. Miller advised board members that as your health department and as your health officer, we want to be a reliable source of information.

He advised board members that if they have questions about measles or other public health topics, please reach out. The Health Department can help answer your questions and direct you to reliable information.

HB 1531 passed

Dr. Miller advised board members on a bill lawmakers passed this session and Governor Bob Ferguson signed into law a few weeks ago. HB 1531, sponsored by Representative Dan Bronoske from Lakewood, which requires public health responses to communicable diseases to be guided by the best available science.

He shared that it It stipulates that state, and local officials must be able to implement and promote evidence-based, appropriate measures to control the spread of communicable diseases, including vaccines and immunizations.

Dr. Miller advised board members that Health Department's Director of Public Health, Chantell Harmon Reed championed this bill early on. He shared Director Reed saw in her home state of Louisiana the role of public health and its ability to communicate with the public being undermined, and did not want to see that happen in Washington.

Because of her support, Governor Ferguson invited Director Reed to the bill signing last month in Olympia.

Dr. Miller shared this is an important step for public health in Washington.

Discussion followed on educating school districts and childcare centers around what to look for in measles and the importance of working with providers. Further discussion followed on high-level symptoms, when vaccines are administered and consulting your provider.

Safe Cookware – Reducing toxic chemicals in our bodies and environment

Rob Olsen, Environmental Health Supervisor in Social, Economic and Environmental Conditions for Health Program updated board members on the program's work around PFAS free cookware exchange and media campaign. He informed board members on what are Poly Fluoro Alkyl Substances (PFAS) and specific first names of related chemicals that fall under the family name PFAS.

Mr. Olsen shared PFAS is used to make waterproof, non-stick and stain resistant materials. It is found in everyday products like nonstick cookware, cleaning products, furniture and upholstery, waterproof clothing, food packaging, cosmetics, and firefighting foam. He advised on PFAS hazards and shared that they do not break down naturally. They build up in the environment, in our bodies and contaminate drinking water.

Mr. Olsen advised board members on compound exposures to overburdened communities. Exposure may lead to lower birthweight, elevated cholesterol, thyroid disease, testicular and kidney cancers, high blood pressure during pregnancy, and liver damage.

Mr. Olsen advised board members he program applied for and was awarded a $400,000 grant from National Estuary Program, administered by WA Department of Ecology. He shared they had an opportunity to focus on one category of PFAS consumer product. The goal is to reduce circulation of PFAS-containing materials, and limit human exposure and environmental degradation. He shared the objectives are education and broad outreach media campaign, and countywide reach.

He shared information on PFAS-free cookware exchange events – open to all PC residents, with emphasis on the health department's Communities of Focus. The Health Department is among the very first to conduct a PFAS cookware campaign. He shared the program wants to educate Pierce County residents about the health effects of PFAS exposure from cookware and empower community to make healthier choices on cookware and hopefully other consumer products.

Ads will run from April through November in English and Spanish. Platforms will be social media: Facebook, Instagram; billboards, audio, print, and video. Mr. Olsen shared the tpchd.org/safecookware webpage. It webpage is curated with helpful PFAS messaging and resources, including information about the program's exchange events, and short animated videos that provide a primer on PFAS. He encouraged board members to look at this resource.

Mr. Olsen advised board members that learnings, ideation and decision-making has been done with knowledgeable partners, including toxicologists, educators and other specialists at Washington State Department of Ecology, Washington State Department of Health, Public Health Seattle King and the program's own Child Lead Prevention, Waste Management and Drinking Water teams.

Mr. Olsen shared that the program wants its PFAS-free offerings to be attractive, high quality, functional, satisfying and safe. He shared the first cookware exchange Event is Saturday, May 17 at Eastside Family Resource Center, 10a – 2p. There are alternative exchange options for folks with limited mobility or schedule conflicts.

He shared their media campaign will continue through summer. They will share findings with Department of Ecology and National Estuary Program.

Discussion followed on how much cookware containing PFAS is in use, how do consumers know, and are PFAS free claims legitimate. Further discussion followed on how PFAS builds up in the body and pathways of exposure.

COMMENTS BY DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Vice Chair Hitchen shared that May is Hunger Awareness Month. She shared ways to donate.

Executive Session

The Board went into executive session at 3:37 p.m. to last 20 minutes for the purpose of discussing complaints or charges brought against a public officer or employee pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)(f). At 4:08 p.m. The Chair extended executive session to last 15 minutes.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:24 p.m.

ATTEST:

Joe Bushnell
Chair, Board of Health
June 4, 2025
Date of Adoption

ATTEST:

Patricia Darden
Clerk, Board of Health