Tacoma-Pierce County
Board of Health

Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department
Healthy People in Healthy Communities

Study Session Agenda
June 18, 2025
3-5 p.m.

Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department - Auditorium

Hybrid Format with in-person and remote attendance
Dial in: 253 205 0468 Webinar ID: 879 2956 5840
Passcode: 593189

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. Proposed 2026 – 2027 Biennial Budget
[Chantell Harmon Reed, Director of Public Health]
[Jaime Paulson, Fiscal and Budget Manager]

III. Bridging to Community: Centering Community Engagement and Fostering Equity-Driven Partnerships Across Pierce County
[Sebrena Chambers, Special Projects/Community Engagement Division Director]

IV. Executive Session

V. Adjournment

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Call to Order
Board Chair Bushnell called the June 18, 2025 Tacoma-Pierce County Board of Health Study Session to order at 3:00 p.m.

Members Present:	Joe Bushnell, Paul Herrera, Jani Hitchen, Ryan Mello arrived at 3:01 p.m., Dave Olson, Bryan Yambe. **Alternate Board Members:** None.
Members Excused:	Nicholas Rajacich, Sandesh Sadalge.
Also, present:	Chantell Harmon Reed, Director of Public Health; James (Jay) Miller, Health Officer; Cindan Gizzi, Deputy Director; Jodi Dyer, Chief of Staff; Ingrid Payne, Finance Director; Jessica Gehle, Environmental Health Division Director; Nigel Turner, Disease Prevention Management; Kenny Via, Communications & Community Relations Director; Charles Parker, Director of Organizational Learning and Change; Benjii Bittle, Business Development Manager; Brian Moore, Technology Director; Gregory Jacoby, General Counsel.

Proposed 2026 – 2027 Biennial Budget

Chantell Harmon Reed, Director of Public Health and Jaime Paulson, Fiscal and Budget Manager, provided board members with a high-level preview of the Health Department's proposed 2026 – 2027 biennial budget.

Director Reed shared some of the factors that led the Department to this budget and provided a review of the Department's essential priorities. She shared an overview of the budget landscape and advised that the Department has incomplete funding information, which means these numbers will likely continue to change.

Director Reed shared an example of Foundational Public Health Services (FPHS) funding, knowing it will decrease statewide, but not certain exactly how much that will affect the health department. She shared that the proposed budget reflects the tightening of revenue streams and planning for uncertainties.

Director Reed shared a breakdown of costs driving the budget. She shared the largest driver is salaries and benefits accounting for 81% of the proposed budget. Director Reed advised board members that 2026 and 2027 estimated

wage adjustments, class and compensation study estimates, and a medical insurance benefit cost estimate are included in the budget.

Director Reed advised board members that the focus is on essential priorities; they've worked throughout this process and are making decisions based on three starting points: the Department's core public health services; Strategic Plan initiatives; and what is the Department legally required to do.

Jaime Paulson led board members through a breakdown of the Department's total proposed budget for the 2026 – 2027 biennium. She advised board members that the budget is $102,899,820. Ms. Paulson shared this is a decrease of nearly $25 million from the Department's current biennium budget of $127,569,620. She shared a breakout of those numbers.

Ms. Paulson provided board members with a breakdown of where the Department's revenue comes from, expenses by category, projected budgeted FTEs, and budget versus actuals from 2016 to 2027. Ms. Paulson shared charts that showed the 2026–2027 budget breakout for each division of the health department (Environmental Health, Disease Prevention & Management, Strengthening Families, Administrative Services).

Ms. Paulson shared a timeline and advised board members on what's next:

- July 2 – Board of Health Regular meeting - proposed recommendations.
- July 15 – Submit Health Department budget to Pierce County and City of Tacoma.
- November – Pierce County budget adoption.
- December 3 – Board of Health biennial budget resolution.
- Ongoing – Staff engagement, messaging, meetings.

Discussion followed on are any programs being scaled back or ending, performance metrics and are there any new initiatives. Further discussion followed on FTE, attrition, eliminating vacant positions, and early retirements.

Discussion occurred regarding Cost-of-Living allowance (COLA) and how did the Department settle on this number. Further discussion followed on FTE and what the decision-making process is for this. Discussion continued around reductions, loss of funding and vacancy rate.

Ms. Paulson responded to board member questions regarding what will be in the reserves if the board approves the budget, discretionary/flexible spending. Discussion followed on impacts by division.

Bridging to Community: Centering Community Engagement and Fostering Equity-Driven Partnerships Across Pierce County

Sebrena Chambers, Special Projects and Community Engagement Division Director updated board members on the Department's Bridging to Community work. Ms. Chambers advised board members on how this work links to the Strategic Plan and provided an overview of Bridging to Community initiatives.

Ms. Chambers shared program goals and guiding values. She advised board members on who the team includes – the people behind Bridging to Community (BTC). Ms. Chambers shared core activities and advised on measuring success in community engagement.

Ms. Chambers provided board members with a snapshot of the program's work in 2024. She shared a map that provided a visual snapshot. The map depicted events where health department staff were present from health fairs, vaccination clinics, school events, cultural gatherings and town halls.

Ms. Chambers shared that the events were captured through the health department's Community Events Tracking Tool.

Board members shared their appreciation for the presentation.

Executive Session

There was no Executive Session.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:04 p.m.

ATTEST:

Joe Bushnell
Chair, Board of Health

July 2, 2025
Date of Adoption

ATTEST:

Patricia Darden
Clerk, Board of Health