

Detroit Health Department

Memo



To: Councilwoman Latisha Johnson, Detroit City Council District 4

From: Denise Fair Razo, Chief Public Health Officer, Detroit Health Department

Date: April 3, 2023

Re: Responses to Budget Questions

Please find below responses to your questions sent on March 27, 2023, regarding the proposed Fiscal Year 2024 Proposed Budget for the Detroit Health Department.

1. **The Health Department has \$730 thousand and just over 9 FTEs allocated to “Environmental Health” in FY 2024. What efforts does this funding support?**

Our Environmental Health and Food Safety department is comprised of two cost centers: Food Sanitation (250647) and Community-Industrial Hygiene (250646).

Although all staff are crossed trained, the Community and Industrial Hygiene cost center facilitates our non-food inspections, licensing and regulatory functions under City and State regulations including swimming pools & campgrounds (MI Dept of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy), child-care (MI Dept of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs), body art (MI Dept of Health and Human Services/MDHHS), marijuana, hotels/motels, shelters/warming centers/cooling centers, bedding ordinance, as well as investigations of environmental vector illness outbreaks such as Legionella, and West Nile virus. We also provide advice to the Chief Public Health Officer when a public health order may be warranted such as in the case of a methamphetamine or fentanyl lab or vapor intrusion. Under MDHHS guidance, we also assist the Health Officer with providing advice to other City agencies including BSEED and the City Planning Commission under the *Health in All Policies* approach. Staffing includes a supervisor (Environmental Health Specialist III), a clerical position (Admin. Asst. III), and 7 inspectors (Environmental Health Specialists I’s and II’s).

Our Food Sanitation cost center is authorized by the State food law and City Food Safety Ordinance to enforce both licensing of food establishments, inspection, investigation of complaints, and foodborne illness outbreaks (grocery stores, party stores, distributors and smaller processors are regulated by the MI Dept of Agriculture and Rural Development/MDARD, processors that distribute out of state by the federal government).

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2. **How is the Health Department spearheading lead hazards prevention measures, especially related to children. Is the Department collaborating or data sharing with BSEED to identify and mitigate lead hazards in residential rental properties?**

The Health Department employs lead hazards prevention measures, especially related to children by:

- a. Screening and Testing – Reducing lead exposure through early detection—by performing blood lead testing on children. By identifying elevated blood lead levels and intervening early and performing comprehensive follow-ups, we can prevent prolonged exposure.
- b. Community Education – The department partners with Detroit schools (public, private, and charter), faith-based institutions, community-based organizations, and other partners to provide lead education and testing. Information provided related to lead, lead hazards, and lead poisoning prevention.
- c. Provider Education – Our programs engage healthcare providers serving children living in Detroit as active partners in childhood lead poisoning prevention, treatment, and advocacy. We provide support, resources, and education to healthcare providers related to lead testing recommendations and follow-up.
- d. Lead Awareness Campaign – Media campaigns are utilized to raise awareness around the hazards of lead for children under 6 years of age and include digital/static billboard and social media ads.
- e. Elevated Blood Lead Level (EBLL) Case Management provided by nurse case managers and lead advocates includes a nursing assessment and plan of care, home visits, education: nutrition, cleaning, and lead hazard identification. Referrals to WIC, Medicaid Health Plan, Healthcare Providers, BSEED, DWSD, HRD-LeadSafe Housing, and MDHHS – Lead Safe Home program ensure children and their families receive continuity of care through wrap around services.
- f. Referrals to HRD LeadSafe Housing program and Lead Safe Home Program (MDHHS) identify and remove lead-based hazards in homes where children under the age of 6 are living, including pregnant persons. Programs provide an environmental investigation and home repairs to eliminate lead-based paint hazards.

Yes, the department has a coordinated effort with BSEED through the following:

- The Lead Prevention Program refers elevated blood lead level (EBLL) cases to BSEED for rental inspection.

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- The Health Department attends Landlord Resource Fairs hosted by BSEED. At the fairs, the Lead Program connects with landlords, property management companies, community organizations and neighborhood associations as partners to strengthen collaboration and address lead hazards negatively impacting children and families in Detroit.
- 3. **Please discuss the Behavioral Health Program. Are there current efforts to partner with DPD and DFD? Is the Department actively seeking grant dollars or funding partnerships to grow this initiative? \$371,000 seems VERY low for something this important.**

Currently, the Behavioral Health program operates with approximately \$483K in grant funds from Federal, State, and philanthropic funds. As the department works to improve program infrastructure, we will look to seek future grant funds to aid in the expansion of programmatic services. The Ceasefire Initiative will operate on a \$775K budget.

Focus areas for the program include harm-reduction, outreach, prevention and education. A key component of our program is harm-reduction which is focused on engaging with residents that misuse or abuse substances to prevent overdoses, infectious disease transmission and referral to support programs to assist with improving their physical, mental and social wellbeing.

Additionally, we have and continue to partner with DPD to greatly increase the synergy that exists between our entities on projects such as the opioid response, the Crime Violence Initiative, and Ceasefire. We recognize that DPD Neighborhood Police Officers (NPO's) are interconnected to the community. By increasing our collaboration with NPO's, this will provide connections to neighboring business, community influencers and organizations to increase our visibility within the community and increase awareness and education about substance abuse and mental health. Furthermore, we have engaged in discussions with EMS & DFD regarding the creation of a referral system for residents who experience overdose and integration for post-overdose response from our program.