

10/31/18

Honorable Milwaukee Common Council Members:

On behalf of the Wisconsin Public Health Association (WPHA), thank you for your thoughtful consideration of budget priorities. During this important planning process, we request you to prioritize an increase in the City of Milwaukee Health Department (MHD) budget.

We want to see investment at all levels of government to address pressing public health issues. We work with many local health department leaders from all over Wisconsin, as well as across sectors to address social determinants of health – housing, income stability and employment, criminal justice reform, early childhood education, and much more, all of which need local health department leadership and public health support. All of these are real issues that many of Wisconsin State Citizens are facing, but especially those in the City of Milwaukee.

We at the Wisconsin Public Health Association were excited to see Dr. Jeanette Kowalik chosen to lead the City of Milwaukee Health Department. She was a previous member of WPHA's before heading to Washington DC, and many of our members, colleagues and friends have worked with her. We also recently had her as the featured presentation for the WPHA Southeast Regional Event and received wonderful reviews. Under Dr. Kowalik's competent and optimistic leadership, we have high hopes for MHD's ability to improve health outcomes for Milwaukee's citizens, particularly with adequate staffing and fiscal resources.

It is necessary to restore some of the 89 positions that have been cut over the past 14 years. We acknowledge the reality of tightening state support resulting in austerity measures for all city departments. However, it is time to reverse this trend. Please invest in MHD to help Dr. Kowalik and her additional management staff and team succeed.

Thank you for your consideration of prioritizing this important department in your budget proposal.

Sincerely,



*Kristen Grimes*  
WPHA President

# Wisconsin Public Health Association At-A-Glance

With almost 600 members, the *Wisconsin Public Health Association* is the largest statewide association of public health professionals in Wisconsin. Established in 1948, WPHA is the collective voice for public health in Wisconsin and is committed to building a healthier, safer state through policy, partnership and professional development of our members.

## WE NEED YOU:

Join the Wisconsin Public Health Association and help us advocate for our newly adopted 2019-2020 legislative priorities. These themes will be incorporated into all of our efforts:

- Building and retaining public health infrastructure through public health funding.
- Infusing health and equity in all policies.
- Improving public health workforce succession planning to support consistent and efficient delivery of services.



## 2019-2020 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

### EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Fully fund School Breakfast Program.

### CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM

Increase treatment alternatives and diversion program (TAD) funding for mental health and substance abuse issues.

Increase funding allocated to counties for juvenile justice services to fund all costs associated with bringing 17-year-old first time juvenile offenders back to the juvenile justice system.

### INCOME STABILITY & EMPLOYMENT

Supporting and expanding Paid Family Leave.

Increase Earned Income Tax Credit and move from one time to monthly payments.

Establish tax credit for family caregivers.

Increase workforce training/ transitional jobs.

### HOUSING

Expand low income housing tax credits for developers and rental assistance vouchers for renters.

Funding for programs to eliminate / abate lead paint, soil and pipes, including but not limited to a statutory provision requiring that lead remediation dollars be used for that dedicated purpose.

### MEMBER BENEFITS!

- Monthly Electronic Newsletter
- Online Resources
- Access to Member Directory
- Professional Opportunities and Connections
- Legislative Updates
- Discounted Rates to WPHA Conferences and Events
- Mentor/Mentee Opportunities
- And Much More!

Visit [www.wpha.org](http://www.wpha.org) to join today!

## EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

**2019 Annual Conference**  
Wisconsin Dells | May 21-23

**2019 Public Health in Practice**  
Stevens Point | August 6 & 7

**Fall Regional Meetings**

**Online Webinars**

**Mission:** Building a healthier, safer Wisconsin through policy and partnership.  
**Vision:** WPHA is the largest and most recognized membership association for public health professionals in Wisconsin.

