

Dear Milwaukee Community,

We reach out to you today with urgent and concerning news: the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) under the Trump Administration has terminated critical funding to the Milwaukee Health Department (MHD). This funding officially ended on **March 25, 2025**, leaving our community short of nearly **\$2.7 million** in resources that were already committed to lifesaving health initiatives.

These weren't just line items—they were lifelines. This is more than a budgetary decision. This is a blow to the very programs that were designed to reduce racial and economic health disparities—programs that were born out of the devastating lessons of COVID-19.

The sudden and premature termination of this grant has forced us to halt major initiatives that were either in progress or just beginning. Among the hardest hit:

1. **Indoor Air Quality Projects** at two local shelters—the Salvation Army on North 7th Street and the Milwaukee Women's Center—are now in limbo, despite \$320,000 of planned work left unfinished. These upgrades would have provided safer, healthier environments for vulnerable residents.
2. **Community Health Worker Training** through the Milwaukee Area Health Education Center, a \$250,000 investment into building a trusted, local, front-line public health workforce, is now suspended.
3. Our innovative **Neighborhood Nursing Program**, designed to bring public health nurses and social workers directly into Milwaukee communities, is now at risk. We had allocated \$1 million to staff this effort, which aimed to rebuild trust and improve preventive care access at the neighborhood level.

Unfortunately, this isn't the only funding cut. The CDC has also rescinded **Epidemiology Laboratory Capacity (ELC) funding**—another major grant—by **\$2.4 million** dollars. This will impact essential lab operations, including the launch of a new Laboratory Information System and the continuation of COVID-19 testing and supply purchasing. These systems are critical to our ability to respond to public health emergencies now and in the future.

The impact of these cuts isn't hypothetical—it's immediate, measurable, and deeply harmful to Milwaukee families. What's more, we fear this may be the first of several funding losses. We are actively monitoring the status of other essential programs, including:

- **Women, Infant and Children (WIC), Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program, Public Health Emergency Preparedness**, which keeps us ready for the next public health crisis.
- **Lead hazard reduction and abatement**, which has driven a steady decline in childhood lead poisoning. We have been actively responding to lead poisoning in our schools, which need significant dedicated support.

Milwaukee deserves better. Our health depends on it. The \$5 million of funding cuts are just the beginning of systematic attack on public health.

We are calling on our community, our elected officials, and all partners to speak up.

- Attend local meetings
- Contact all your elected officials
- Provide testimony on the importance of public health investments

This isn't just about dollars—it's about people. It's about our collective health and ensuring Milwaukee remains strong, resilient, and prepared for whatever comes next. **Public health is only as strong as its funding.** Without it, we are less prepared, less protected, and less equitable. We need your voice to help restore these investments before more damage is done.

In Solidarity,

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