



AN ACT CREATING A PILOT PROJECT TO HELP LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCIES UNDERTAKE ACTIVITIES RELATED TO MEETING NATIONAL GUIDELINES; PROVIDING FOR AN ALLOCATION OF FUNDS; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, Montana law gives local public health agencies the authority and responsibility to undertake efforts to protect the public health and educate the public on health-related issues; and

WHEREAS, funding for local public health agencies varies widely across the state because of variations in local funding resources; and

WHEREAS, the National Association of County and City Health Officials, American Public Health Association, National Association of Local Boards of Health, and Association of State and Territorial Health Officials recognize that local public health agencies across the country are served by a system unique to each agency based on available financial, medical, and other resources; and

WHEREAS, these national public health organizations are developing a national accreditation program to guide the basic activities that local public health agencies should carry out regardless of the makeup of their local health systems.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

Section 1. Pilot project for implementing national public health standards. (1) Subject to available funding, the department of public health and human services shall administer a pilot project to assist local public health agencies, as defined in 50-1-101, with preparing for national accreditation by using nationally recognized public health standards and guidelines that are based on the 10 essential public health services as outlined by the national association of county and city health officials, the centers for disease control and prevention, the public health accreditation board, and other national public health organizations. The public health standards and guidelines include but are not limited to the operational definition of a functional local health department and the national public health performance standards.

(2) The department shall:

(a) develop grant application and review criteria in accordance with this section;

(b) establish protocol, policy, goals, strategies, and timelines for the local public health agencies selected for the pilot project;

(c) establish evaluation criteria for the pilot project;

(d) provide materials and training to pilot project counties; and

(e) complete and submit a final report to the 2011 legislature as provided in 5-11-210.

(3) To the extent that it receives applications that meet grant review criteria established by the department in accordance with this section, the department shall award grants to eight local public health agencies, including a tribal health department. The grant awards must be made, in consultation with the public health system improvement task force established by the department, to:

(a) two local public health agencies in counties with populations of 40,000 or more residents;

(b) one local public health agency in a county with a population of between 20,000 and 40,000 residents;

(c) two local public health agencies in counties with populations of 5,000 to 20,000 residents; and

(d) three local public health agencies in counties with populations of fewer than 5,000 residents.

(4) A local public health agency selected for a grant shall demonstrate, through the application process, how it will use the funds to:

(a) prepare for national accreditation using the types of nationally recognized public health guidelines and standards described in subsection (1);

(b) effectively participate in a self-assessment of the local public health agency's capacity to deliver the 10 essential public health services as outlined in the nationally recognized public health guidelines and standards described in subsection (1);

(c) work with the department and the public health system improvement task force to ensure proper use of the grant, including participation in a process to evaluate the pilot project efforts; and

(d) complete measurement criteria established by the department and the public health system improvement task force.

(5) The department and the public health system improvement task force shall:

(a) serve as a resource for the local public health agencies selected for the pilot project as they prepare for national accreditation using nationally recognized public health standards and guidelines as described in

subsection (1). In this capacity, the task force shall participate in:

- (i) regularly scheduled conference calls; and
- (ii) at least two meetings a year that are held in one of the counties in which the pilot project agencies are located;
- (b) ensure that the technical assistance and training needs of the pilot project agencies are met; and
- (c) assess the results of the pilot project.
- (6) The public health system improvement task force and the pilot project agencies shall report the following information to the appropriate interim committees of the legislature by September 15, 2010:
 - (a) the estimated costs of becoming accredited agencies through the national accreditation program, based on their experiences in the pilot project, including information that explains how the costs were determined;
 - (b) their assessments of the ability of Montana's local public health agencies serving jurisdictions with varying population sizes in becoming accredited agencies through the national accreditation program, including funding and other resource management issues and challenges they encountered;
 - (c) suggestions for preparing local public health agencies for national accreditation that are relevant to the populations each pilot project agency serves;
 - (d) the public health benefits created by the pilot project activities for residents within each pilot project agency's jurisdiction;
 - (e) how their efforts met the nationally recognized public health standards and guidelines described in subsection (1); and
 - (f) recommendations for improving the local public health system and creating a sustainable model for local public health agencies in Montana.

Section 2. Allocation of available funds. (1) If funds are made available for the program in [section 1], then the funds must be allocated as follows:

- (a) grants of \$25,000 a year in each year of the biennium to each of eight local public health agencies selected as provided in [section 1]; and
- (b) \$50,000 for the biennium to pay for the department's expenses in administering the grant program, providing technical assistance to the local public health agencies, and reimbursing the costs of travel for members of the public health system improvement task force as provided in 2-18-501 through 2-18-503.

(2) If less than \$450,000 is available for the program provided for in [section 1], then the funding must be prorated on the basis of the allocations in subsection (1).

Section 3. Notification to tribal governments. The secretary of state shall send a copy of [this act] to each tribal government located on the seven Montana reservations and to the Little Shell Chippewa tribe.

Section 4. Effective date. [This act] is effective July 1, 2009.

- END -

I hereby certify that the within bill,
HB 0173, originated in the House.

Chief Clerk of the House

Speaker of the House

Signed this _____ day
of _____, 2009.

President of the Senate

Signed this _____ day
of _____, 2009.

HOUSE BILL NO. 173

INTRODUCED BY G. HENDRICK

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