

**WALLA WALLA COUNTY
POSITION DESCRIPTION**

JOB TITLE: Public Health Officer

DEPARTMENT: Health Department

REPORTS TO: Community Health Director and the Board of County Commissioners

PAY RANGE: Contract

SUMMARY: Serve as the chief medical officer for Walla Walla County. Enforce applicable health statutes, rules, regulations, policies, and ordinances. Maintains sound medical practices, directs medical operations to assure optimal public health/preventive services and assists with controlling costs.

SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITY: Cooperative oversight with the Public Health Administrator for the department.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS: Performs applicable duties in part as delineated in [RCW 70.05.070](#): The public health officer shall be an experienced physician licensed to practice medicine and surgery or osteopathic medicine and surgery in this state and who is qualified or provisionally qualified in accordance with the standards prescribed in RCW 70.05.051 through 70.05.055 to hold the office of local health officer.

- Provide medical oversight of clinical programs; reviews, revises or writes standing orders and protocols for clinical services and oversees clinical laboratory procedures and compliance with regulations.
- Participates in administrative appeals regarding environmental health permit denials.
- Confers and informs Public Health Administrator on county-wide health concerns, issues, and services being provided for citizens.
- Participates in health policy development, recommendations, and implementation for issues affecting the health of Walla Walla County citizens.
- Participates in planning, training, and response in public health emergencies.

EXAMPLE OF DUTIES:

Participates in developing, recommending, and implementing agency long-term and short-term program goals and objectives.

- Educates the community on public health issues to control and prevent the spread of dangerous, contagious, or infectious diseases; provides medical direction to nursing staff. Participate in assessing health status of the community. Provides oversight on comprehensive studies of potentially systemic threats to public health; researches, analyzes, compiles, prepares and presents conclusions, reports, and recommended actions. Evaluates the causes of communicable diseases; determines appropriate evaluation and intervention strategies; and chairs the communicable disease outbreak team.
- Consults and collaborates with the medical community, hospital medical staff, other health care professionals, policy and advisory boards, and the public on issues of public health concern; assists in public health emergency preparedness and response.
- Recommends, plans, and/or provides training to ensure compliance with established goals, regulations, and standards, and to meet the needs of the population served.

WORKING ENVIRONMENT/PHYSICAL ABILITIES: The Health Officer is not required to work onsite. Work is in office or clinic setting and at a variety of other locations throughout the community. Is on call and may work outside of normal hours and on weekends. May be exposed to a variety of environmental or chemical allergens. Wears personal protective equipment (PPE) when required to meet universal health precaution requirements. Follows established work safety policies, practices, and procedures.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES:

Requires in-depth knowledge of:

- Public health principles, including epidemiology and environmental health; general and preventative medicine; and clinical protocols.
- Major types of services performed and responsibilities in public health and environmental health activities.
- Applicable laws, rules, regulations, ordinances, and policies.
- Safety precautions, practices, and procedures applicable to public health.
- Familiarity with major types of tests performed in public health laboratories; public health activities and responsibilities; techniques of sanitation and environmental health inspection and enforcement.

Requires ability to:

- Communicate effectively, both orally and in writing, in clear, concise language appropriate for the purpose and parties addressed, including oral presentations before groups on a variety of complex and sensitive public health issues.
- Use tact, discretion and courtesy to gain cooperation of others and establish and maintain effective working relationships and rapport with physicians, attorneys, media representatives, co-workers, volunteers, representatives of other agencies and businesses, other departments, officials and diverse members of the public.
- Maintain high standards of personal and professional integrity and commitment to quality patient care at the highest level consistent with standards and regulations.
- Read, understand, interpret, and apply appropriately the terminology, instructions, policies, procedures, legal requirements, and regulations pertinent to area of assignment.
- Work effectively in a multi-task environment; take appropriate initiative; apply good judgment and logical thinking to obtain potential solutions to problems; resolve complex public health problems.
- Proficiently operate standard office equipment and software including personal computer, fax machine and photocopier.
- Work independently or cooperatively as a member of a multi-disciplinary team.
- Maintain confidentiality.

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE: Minimum of five (5) years' experience as a licensed practicing physician OR an equivalent combination of education, training and experience that provides the required skills, knowledge and abilities as prescribed in [RCW 70.05.051](#). A Master of Public Health is preferred.

LICENSES, CERTIFICATES & OTHER REQUIREMENTS:

- A current license to practice medicine and surgery or osteopathic medicine and surgery in the State of Washington AND current registration with the Drug Enforcement Agency for prescription of controlled substances.
- A driving record that meets County requirements and a valid driver's license.
- Provide documentation of immunization status, proof of immunity to vaccine preventable diseases, or sign an exemption and participate in the employee health program.
- Must successfully pass a background check and a driving record check.

- Membership, participation, and communication with the state-wide professional health officer association and the State Department of Health are desirable.

**THIS POSITION DESCRIPTION DOES NOT CONSTITUTE A CONTRACT FOR
EMPLOYMENT**