



## ISLAND COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH

---

### AGENDA

#### REGULAR SESSION

May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025, 1:00 p.m.

Commissioners Hearing Room B102

Coupeville Annex Building

Meetings are available remotely. Those interested in attending the meetings by computer, tablet, or smartphone may use the following link: <https://tinyurl.com/IslandCountyBOH> or by telephone: 1-323-433-2396 Meeting ID 971 2319 5885 Pass code: 626749

***Call to Order:*** May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Regular Session of the Island County Board of Health

***Additions or Changes to the Agenda:***

***Approval of the Minutes:***

- March 18th, 2025, *Minutes*

***Public Input/Comments:*** The Board values the public's input. This time is set aside to hear from the public on subjects of a health-related nature, not on the scheduled agenda. All information given is taken under advisement. Unless emergent in nature, no action is taken. To ensure proper recording of comments, state your name and address clearly into the microphone. Limit your comment to two minutes. The Board may entertain public comment on specific agenda items when discussed.

***Letter:***

- Medicaid Advocacy Letter, presented by Dr. Shawn Morris, Public Health Director. – 10 minutes

Review a draft letter from the National Association of Counties (NACo) to congressional leadership elevating the importance of Medicaid Financing. – *Attachment*

*ACTION ITEM: Review and approve the letter on behalf of the Island County Board of Health.*

***Nominations:***

- CHAB Member Nomination – Lauri Johnson-Grimm, presented by Taylor Lawson, Deputy Director of Public Health – 5 Minutes.

Nomination to welcome Lauri Johnson-Grimm as a member of the CHAB representing the Community Stakeholder Sector. – *Attachment*

*ACTION ITEM: Motion to approve CHAB nominee.*

- CHAB Member Nomination – Nic Wildeman, presented by Taylor Lawson, Deputy Director of Public Health – *5 Minutes*.

Nomination to welcome Nic Wildeman as a member of the CHAB representing the Social and Economic Sector. – *Attachment*

*ACTION ITEM: Motion to approve CHAB nominee.*

***Presentation:***

- Health in All Policies Update, presented by Dr. Shawn Morris, Director of Public Health. – *15 minutes*

A discussion on the proclamation signed in 2023 and a review of the progress made to date in terms of a Health in All Policies approach. – *Attachments*

***Presentation:***

- Coordinated Water Systems Plan (CWSP) Update, presented by Dr. Chris Kelley Ph.D., LG, Hydrogeologist. – *10 minutes*

An update about the Coordinated Water Systems Plan. – *Attachment*

***Public Health Updates:***

- Public Health Department Update, presented by Dr. Shawn Morris, Director of Public Health. – *15 minutes – Attachments*
- Legislative Updates, presented by Dr. Shawn Morris, Director of Public Health. – *20 minutes – Attachments*

***Board Announcements:***

A ribbon-cutting ceremony will take place immediately following today's session to unveil Island County's new mobile outreach van. - *Attachment*

***Adjourn:*** The next regular session of the Island County Board of Health will be held on June 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at 1:00 p.m. in the Commissioners Hearing Room (B102) in the Coupeville Annex Building.



# **ISLAND COUNTY BOARD OF**

## **HEALTH**

### **MINUTES**

#### **REGULAR SESSION**

March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025

The Island County Board of Health met in Regular Session on February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025, in the Board of County Commissioners Hearing Room (Room #102B), Annex Building, 1 N.E. 6<sup>th</sup> Street, Coupeville, Washington.

**Members present:** Commissioner Janet St. Clair, Chair  
Commissioner Melanie Bacon  
Commissioner Jill Johnson  
Commissioner Ron Wallin  
Capt. Lund

**Member present by video:** Mayor Ronnie Wright

**Members Excused:**

<b><u>Others present:</u></b>	Taylor Lawson	Shawn Morris
	Melissa Overbury-Howland	JanRose Ottaway Martin
	Kathryn Clancy	Lynda Austin
	Dr. Howard Leibrand	Heather Kortuem (Online)
	Jennifer Schmitz (Online)	Cecily Doyle
	Megan Works (Online)	Keven Graves (Online)

**Call to order:**

Commissioner St. Clair called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m.

**Approval of Agenda:**

A motion to approve the agenda, with the addition of presentation slides from JanRose Ottaway Martin, was approved unanimously.

**Approval of Minutes:**

The February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Regular Session Minutes were approved. Commissioner Wallin abstained.

**Public Input or Comment:**

There was no public comment.

**Presentation:**

Jaime Bodden, Managing Director at WSALPHO, gave an update on Foundational Public Health Services funding.

**Letter:**

Dr. Shawn Morris, Public Health Director, presented a Foundational Public Health Services advocacy letter addressed to the 10th District Legislative Panel advocating for FPHS funding.

MOTION: All members of the Board of Health, with the exception of Captain Lund, approved of the letter following discussions of edits.



# **ISLAND COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH**

## **MINUTES**

### **REGULAR SESSION**

March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025

#### **Letter:**

Dr. Shawn Morris, Public Health Director, presented a letter to the Island County School Board advocating the importance of creating equitable learning environments for all students. Dr. Shawn Morris will share subsequent drafts of the letter with all board members for approval.

#### **Letter:**

Lynda Austin, Human Services Director, presented a letter to the Health Care Authority advocating to provide network adequacy for Mental Health Care in Island County.

MOTION: All members of the Board of Health, with the exception of Captain Lund due to being a liaison, approved of the letter following discussions of edits.

#### **Presentation:**

JanRose Ottaway Martin, Executive Director of North Sound BH-ASO., presented an overview of the Behavioral Health Crisis Services and other state-funded non-Medicaid behavioral health services provided by the North Sound BH-ASO.

#### **Public Health Updates:**

Dr. Howard Leibrand, Public Health Officer, gave a Public Health update on the MMR vaccine.

#### **Board Member Comments and Announcements:**

The Regular Session adjourned at 3:04 p.m.

The next *Regular Session* of the Island County Board of Health will be held on April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at 1:00 p.m. in the Commissioners Hearing Room (B102) in the Coupeville Annex Building.

SUBMITTED BY:

---

Shawn Morris, Director of Public Health

Approved this \_20<sup>th</sup>\_ day of \_May\_, 2025.

BOARD OF HEALTH  
ISLAND COUNTY, WASHINGTON

---

Janet St. Clair, Chair





## Island County Public Health

*Shawn Morris, ND - Director*

1 NE 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Coupeville, WA 98239

Ph: Whidbey 360-679-7350 | Camano 360-678-8261 | N Whidbey 360-240-5554

Email: [Publichealth@islandcountywa.gov](mailto:Publichealth@islandcountywa.gov) | [www.islandcountywa.gov](http://www.islandcountywa.gov)

May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025

The Honorable Rick Larsen,  
United States House of Representatives  
2163 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Larsen,

On behalf of the 85,437 residents of Island County, we are writing to emphasize the critical role county governments play in administering Medicaid, a joint federal, state and local partnership that provides health coverage to over 70 million Americans.

Medicaid is essential to counties and their residents, covering 38 million children, over 40 percent of all births, and serving as the largest payer for long-term care and behavioral health services. It supports rural hospitals, ensures access to care, and helps cover uncompensated costs for local health providers.

Recent proposals to cut the federal matching rate or implement per capita caps could increase costs for counties, leading to millions losing coverage and placing greater strain on local budgets and health systems. Such cuts would undermine the sustainability of Medicaid, particularly in rural areas where hospitals rely on Medicaid funding to serve low-income populations.

Thank you for your dedicated service to Island County. Protecting Medicaid's financing structure is essential to maintaining affordable health coverage for vulnerable populations. We are committed to working with you to support the health, safety, and well-being of our residents.

Sincerely,

---

Commissioner Janet St. Clair, Chair  
Island County Board of Health  
*Island County Commissioner – District 3*



## Island County Public Health

*Shawn Morris, ND - Director*

---

1 NE 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Coupeville, WA 98239

Ph: Whidbey 360-679-7350 | Camano 360-678-8261 | N Whidbey 360-240-5554

Email: [Publichealth@islandcountywa.gov](mailto:Publichealth@islandcountywa.gov) | [www.islandcountywa.gov](http://www.islandcountywa.gov)

### Members of the Island County Board of Health

Commissioner Melanie Bacon

*Island County Commissioner – District 1*

Commissioner Jill Johnson

*Island County Commissioner – District 2*

Dr. Howard Leibrand, MD

*Island County Health Officer*

Commissioner Ron Wallin

*WhidbeyHealth Hospital Commissioner*

Mayor Ronnie Wright

*Mayor of Oak Harbor*

Cc:

Senator Ron Muzzall, 10<sup>th</sup> Legislative District

Representative Dave Paul, 10<sup>th</sup> Legislative District

Representative Clyde Shavers, 10<sup>th</sup> Legislative District

Community Health Advisory Board (CHAB)								
Sector/Group	# of per Group	# of Vac	CHAB Member	City	Appointment Date	Term Expires	Email	Phone
Health Care Access/Quality	4	0	Erin Lavery-Mullins, Chair	Camano Island	2/17/2022	2/17/2025	<a href="mailto:erinlavery@gmail.com">erinlavery@gmail.com</a>	425-373-6429
			Charlotte McRill	Oak Harbor	5/5/2022	5/5/2025	<a href="mailto:cmcrill@frontier.com">cmcrill@frontier.com</a>	360-320-4725
			Heidi Beck	Clinton	2/28/2023	2/28/2026	<a href="mailto:heidi.beck@hca.wa.gov">heidi.beck@hca.wa.gov</a>	360-725-9512
			Nic Wildeman	Greenbank	5/20/2025	5/20/2028	<a href="mailto:nic.wildeman@islandseniorservices.org">nic.wildeman@islandseniorservices.org</a>	206-790-2645
Physical Environment	2	1	Bob Uhrich	Camano	5/5/2022	5/5/2025	<a href="mailto:bobu@nwcleanairwa.gov">bobu@nwcleanairwa.gov</a>	360-982-0664
Social and Economic Sectors	2	1	Nicole Rice	Oak Harbor	6/20/2023	6/20/2026	<a href="mailto:nacees06@gmail.com">nacees06@gmail.com</a>	310-971-3577
Government	2	1	Chris Geiger	Coupeville	9/17/2024	9/17/2027	<a href="mailto:chrisav8@comcast.net">chrisav8@comcast.net</a>	(503) 314-8237
Business Philanthropy	2	0	Michele Aguilar Kahrs, Co Chair	Freeland	2/17/2022	2/17/2025	<a href="mailto:micheleakahrs@gmail.com">micheleakahrs@gmail.com</a>	310-936-1664
			Marian Myszkowski	Langley	10/17/2023	10/1/2026	<a href="mailto:marian@goosefoot.org">marian@goosefoot.org</a>	360-914-1627
Tribal Communities	1	1						
Consumer of Public Health Services	3	2	Alma Johnser	Oak Harbor	2/28/2023	2/28/2026	<a href="mailto:alma.j@tlcwhidbey.org">alma.j@tlcwhidbey.org</a>	702-767-7880
Community Stakeholder	3	1	Lauri Johnson-Grimm	Langley	4/15/2025	4/15/2028	<a href="mailto:ljohnson@sw.wednet.edu">ljohnson@sw.wednet.edu</a>	360) 632-5779
			Melissa Frasch-Brown	Oak Harbor	2/17/2022	2/17/2025	<a href="mailto:melissa_brown@oppco.org">melissa_brown@oppco.org</a>	360-679-6577 x2135
Community Members with Lived Experiences	2	2						
Total VS Vacancies	21	9	Steering Committee is known as the Leadership Committee per Bylaws.					



## Island County Public Health

Shawn Morris, ND - Director

P.O. Box 5000, Coupeville, WA 98239

Ph: Whidbey 360-679-7350 | Camano 360-678-8261 | N Whidbey 360-240-5554

Email: [Publichealth@islandcountywa.gov](mailto:Publichealth@islandcountywa.gov) | [www.islandcountywa.gov](http://www.islandcountywa.gov)

April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025

TO: Island County Board of Health

FROM: Taylor Lawson, MPH; Deputy Director

RE: **Community Health Advisory Board Recommendation: Lauri Johnson-Grimm**

It is with full support from the Island County Community Health Advisory Board, that I present to the Island County Board of Health, the formal recommendation of Lauri Johnson for appointment to sit on the Island County Community Health Advisory Board (CHAB).

Mrs. Johnson-Grimm comes to CHAB with over eighteen years of experience as a family and youth support professional. Lauri's professional experience has ranged from working with Readiness to Learn as a Family Support & Community Engagement Specialist, to currently leading the South Whidbey CARES Coalition as the Community Coalition Coordinator. She is a Prevention Specialist expert (over 2,000 hours of prevention related experience) who is dedicated to advancing youth health and wellness initiatives in her community. In her personal time, Lauri volunteers with the Whidbey Children's Theater and Readiness to Learn. A few of her many skills and qualifications include her adaptive leadership style, group facilitation, organizing community events, and implementing evidence-based programs geared towards youth substance use prevention and mental health promotion.

Mrs. Johnson-Grimm has a strong passion for behavioral health and safety. Mrs. Johnson's vision for a healthier future for Island County is a place where diverse perspectives are recognized and the stories that shaped those perspectives are honored.

The Island County Community Health Advisory Board is pleased to recommend to the Island County Board of Health the appointment of Lauri Johnson-Grimm to sit on the Island County Community Health Advisory Board as a representative of the Community Stakeholder Sector.

Sincerely,

Taylor Lawson



## Island County Public Health

*Shawn Morris, ND - Director*

P.O. Box 5000, Coupeville, WA 98239

Ph: Whidbey 360-679-7350 | Camano 360-678-8261 | N Whidbey 360-240-5554

Email: [Publichealth@islandcountywa.gov](mailto:Publichealth@islandcountywa.gov) | [www.islandcountywa.gov](http://www.islandcountywa.gov)

May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025

TO: Island County Board of Health

FROM: Taylor Lawson, MPH; Deputy Director

RE: **Community Health Advisory Board Recommendation: Nic Wildeman**

It is with full support from the Island County Community Health Advisory Board, that I present to the Island County Board of Health, the formal recommendation of Nic Wildeman for appointment to sit on the Island County Community Health Advisory Board (CHAB).

Mr. Wildeman comes to CHAB with over twenty-five years of as a provider and designer of healthcare systems, with a focus on access to healthcare in rural communities in the Adirondacks and Finger Lakes area of New York. In that capacity, Nic served as an advisor to the New York State Commissioner of Health. He also served with the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Hospitals (now known as "The Joint Commission"). In that capacity, he worked with provider organizations in Florida, Texas, Georgia, California, Ohio and Puerto Rico.

Since moving to Whidbey Island, Nic consulted with WhidbeyHealth as their public affairs consultant through the pandemic, managing advisory communications to the general public. He and his wife also served as leaders of the first-ever levy lift for the Whidbey Island Hospital District, a successful ballot measure.

Nic is a Board Member at Island Senior Resources (ISR) and is temporarily serving as Interim Executive Director. ISR is the Island County's largest basic needs non-profit serving seniors and disabled adults. He is keenly interested in access to healthcare for marginalized populations and hopes to contribute to solutions as a member of CHAB.

The Island County Community Health Advisory Board is pleased to recommend to the Island County Board of Health the appointment of Nic Wildeman to sit on the Island County Community Health Advisory Board as a representative of the Health Care Access & Quality Sector.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Taylor Lawson".

Taylor Lawson, Deputy Director



# Health in All Policies (HiAP)

---

Review of the HiAP Approach to Public Policy

Dr. Shawn Morris, Island County Public Health Director

Island County Public Health



# How do we define health?

- Health is a “holistic” concept encompassing physical, mental, and social-wellbeing, not just the absence of illness or injury
  - World Health Organization, 1948 definition
- Individual and public responsibility
  - Individuals have a role in maintaining their own health
  - Governments have a responsibility for creating conditions that support healthy communities





# What are the social determinants of health?

- Social determinants of health (SDOH) are non-medical factors affecting health
- Includes the conditions in which people are born, grow, work, live, and age
- Expanding access to SDOH improves health outcomes







## What shapes health?

Clinical care is important, but social, economic, and environmental factors are highly influential on health and well-being

# Public health and social determinants

- Public health refers to all organized efforts to prevent disease, promote health and prolong life among the population as a whole
- Focus on entire populations
- Concerned with the total system and not only the eradication of a particular disease





# What is health in all policies (HiAP)?



HiAP is an approach to public policy across sectors that systematically considers the health implications of decisions, seeks synergies and avoids harmful health impacts to improve population health and health equity.

---

WHO (2013) Helsinki Statement on Health in All Policies  
CDC Health in All Policies (HiAP) Resource Center





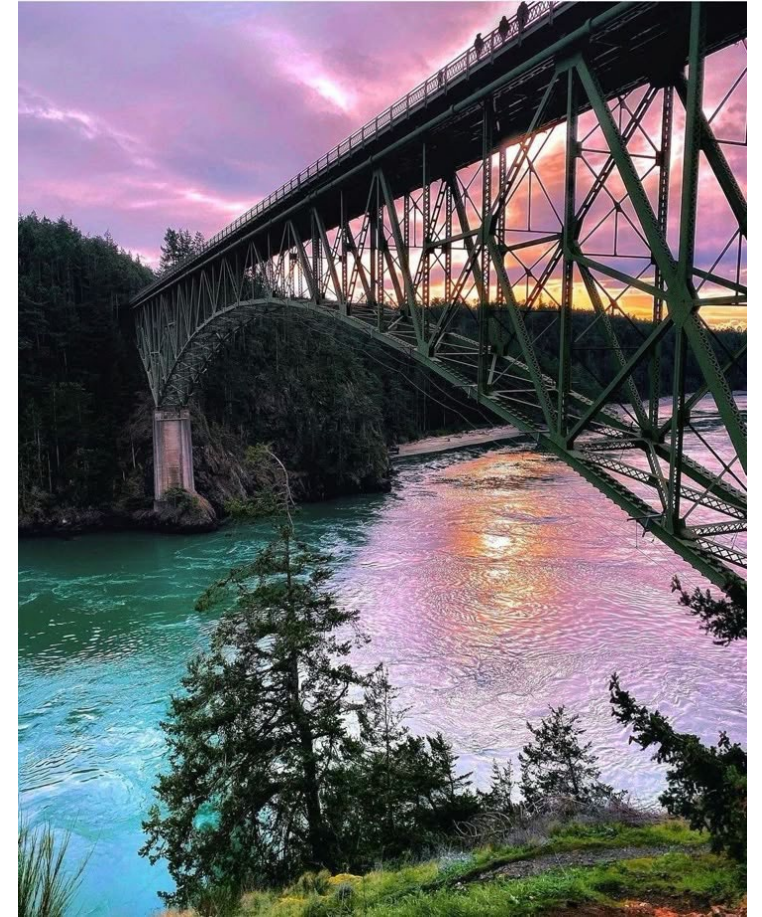
# Revisiting the 2024 HiAP Proclamation

The January 2024 BOH HiAP Proclamation highlights the need for policies that address the root causes of health disparities, promoting comprehensive and coordinated strategies to improve community well-being.

---

Proclamation No. HD-02-23

[Health in All Policies](#)





# Why does HiAP matter?

Health outcomes have **social, environmental, and economic** origins that extend beyond the direct influence of the health sector

---

Public policies in **all sectors** and at different levels of governance can have a significant impact on population health

---

The HiAP approach **protects** and **promotes** health and health equity, particularly where there are competing interests



# Prioritizing Issues for HiAP Action

## Key considerations for prioritizing which issues to address:

Problem or issue is of major public health importance

---

Problem or issue can be effectively addressed: change is feasible

---

Potential solutions are politically, economically, and socially aligned



# Why is multi-sectoral action challenging?

Complex policy issues have multiple factors to consider

---

Action by several government agencies or institutions - working together is required

---

Communication – issues in finding a common language

---

Siloed thinking, conflicting interests



# HiAP Implementation in 2023-2024

## Our teams have advanced HiAP in several meaningful ways:

Extensive review and input into the [Island County Comprehensive Plan](#) update, with a focus on housing, land use, natural resources, water systems, and utility elements.

---

Input for the [Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy \(CEDS\)](#), focusing on goal development related to infrastructure, natural resources, and community health.

---

Participatory and multi-sector approach to the [2023-24 Community Health Assessment \(CHA\)](#), involving collecting input from a range of partners.





# HiAP Next Steps

- Comprehensive Plan Update
- Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP 2025-26)
- HiAP key metrics for outcome tracking and evaluation





# Thank you!

For additional information, please contact:  
Dr. Shawn Morris, Island County Public Health Director:  
[S.Morris@IslandCountyWA.gov](mailto:S.Morris@IslandCountyWA.gov)





**NOW, THEREFORE,**

**BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED**, we, the Island County Board of Health, do hereby proclaim our commitment to the principles and practices of Health in All Policies (HiAP); and

**BE IT FURTHER PROCLAIMED**, we pledge to integrate a HiAP approach into our policymaking, planning, and implementation processes, with particular attention to health equity and the conditions in which people are born, grow, work, live, and age; and

**BE IT FURTHER PROCLAIMED**, we instruct all governmental and public agencies within Island County to join us in this endeavor, working collaboratively to develop policies that prioritize the health and well-being of our communities, while actively advancing equity, justice, and access to social drivers of health.

**APPROVED** this 19<sup>th</sup> day of Dec., 2023

**BOARD OF HEALTH  
ISLAND COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Jill Johnson, Chair**

ATTEST:

  
Shawn Morris, Public Health Director

# Island County Public Health

## Coordinated Water Systems Plan

5/20/2025



## Summary

Island County Public Health is working with FACET, L.L.C., to develop a comprehensive set of recommendations for updating the Island County Coordinated Water System Plan (CWSP) for sustainable water resource management. Below are the latest updates through to April 2025.

### Tasks Completed

- Task 1: Project Administration (Kick-off meeting, set up regular recurring meetings, project timeline and mapping, and tracker tool)

### Tasks Underway:

- Task 2: Research and Data Collection – currently drafting the summary of Data Findings and Gap Analysis
- Task 3: Stakeholder Coordination – meetings with key stakeholders complete, launching surveys for water system purveyors and satellite management agencies now.

### Deliverables submitted in April 2025 include:

- Task 3: Draft Stakeholder Engagement Strategy
- Task 3: Draft Public Water System Purveyor (Owner) Survey
- Task 3: Draft Satellite Management Agency Survey

### Deliverables due through June 2025 include:

- Task 2: Summary of data findings and Gap Analysis
- Task 3: Stakeholder Engagement Strategy and update on stakeholder engagement to date, including survey results.

### Deliverables due between July and November 2025:

- Task 4: Memorandum and matrix of data findings
- Task 5: Comprehensive study report with recommended updates

---

Island County Public Health

*Always working for safer and healthier communities.*

For further information, please contact:

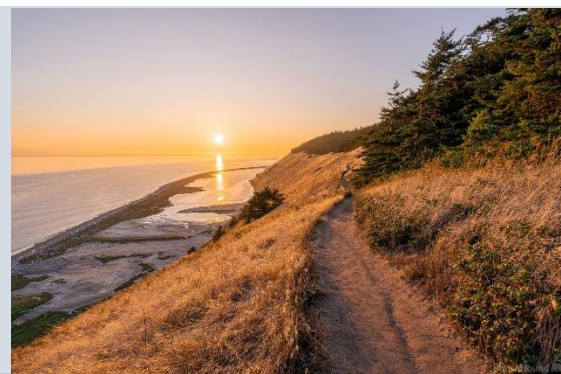
Dr. Shawn Morris at [S.Morris@IslandCountyWA.gov](mailto:S.Morris@IslandCountyWA.gov)



## Island County Public Health

### Board of Health Monthly Update

May 20, 2025



### Budget Update

- **State Operating Budget Update:** The recently concluded legislative session resulted in an operating budget totaling approximately \$78 billion, reflecting \$9 billion in new revenue alongside about \$6 billion in reductions.
- **Foundational Public Health Services (FPHS):** Funding for FPHS final net reduction per fiscal year \$12-\$22 million reduction depends on updated account balance projections. Discussions underway with WSALPHO on priorities for funding reductions for WA DOH and local health.
- **Federal Funding:** Proposed cuts to CDC budget would significantly impact public health emergency preparedness (PHEP) and the Maternal Child Health Block Grant (MCHBG). Closely monitoring Medicaid negotiations to assess local impact.
- To learn more about the specifics of the **2025-2027 biennial budget**, you can consult:
  - o [House budget proposals](#)
  - o [Senate budget proposals](#)

### Health Matters Newsletter

- The current issue of the "[Health Matters](#)" newsletter for 2025 has been published and is available online. We distributed to WhidbeyHealth, Sno-Isle Libraries, and other community locations. If you have upcoming newsletters, we appreciate your support sharing Health Matters!

### SmartGov Training

- Our staff participated in trainings for improved permitting software workflows. This project will digitize our permitting process and improve efficiency and interdepartmental coordination to improve permit review.

### Communicable Disease

- Influenza: **low activity**; COVID-19: **low activity**; RSV activity: **low activity**
- Statewide year-to-date **increase** in **pertussis** (whooping cough) in WA and Island County
- **Childhood vaccine availability:** WhidbeyHealth clinics, Naval Health Clinic, Skagit Regional, PAWI

---

Island County Public Health

*Always working for safer and healthier communities.*

For further information, please contact:

Dr. Shawn Morris at [S.Morris@IslandCountyWA.gov](mailto:S.Morris@IslandCountyWA.gov)







# Health Matters

## DASH Diet: A Heart-Healthy Approach

One way to support heart health is through balanced nutrition. **The Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) diet is a heart-healthy eating plan designed to lower blood pressure and reduce the risk of chronic diseases.**

### Benefits of the DASH Diet

Lowers blood pressure, reduces the risk of heart disease, improves cholesterol levels, promotes weight loss, and may help prevent type 2 diabetes. Getting enough lean protein, fruits and veggies, whole grains, and hydration also can support our mood and energy levels for improved quality of life.

### Sample DASH Diet Meal Plan

Breakfast: Oatmeal with berries and nuts, low-fat yogurt with fruit

Lunch: Salad with grilled chicken, beans, and vegetables

Dinner: Baked salmon with roasted vegetables & brown rice

Snacks: Fruits, nuts, low-fat milk

Along with balanced nutrition, regular physical movement, social connection, stress management, and avoiding risky habits like smoking and excessive drinking also support heart health. Island County residents have slightly higher rates of hypertension and hospitalizations for coronary artery disease when compared to Washington state, which is similar for other rural communities where access to care can be a challenge. Learn more about chronic diseases in



### Key Principles of the DASH Diet

- ✓ Focus on fruits and vegetables
- ✓ Choose whole grains
- ✓ Lean protein sources
- ✓ Low-fat dairy
- ✓ Limit saturated and trans fats
- ✓ Limit sodium

our community [here](#). Keeping up with regular screenings, including annual physicals, can help catch hypertension early.

### Learn more about the DASH Diet with these resources:

[Mayo Clinic: DASH Diet Overview](#)

[Mayo Clinic: DASH Diet Sample Menus](#)

[Healthline: Benefits of the DASH Diet](#)

[NIH: The Science Behind the DASH Eating Plan](#)

U.S. DEPT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

## Salt, Blood Pressure, & Your Health

The best-known effect of sodium on health is the relationship between sodium and blood pressure, according to Dr. Holly Nicastro, a National Institute of Health nutrition research expert. Dozens of studies, in both animals and people, have linked a higher salt intake with higher blood pressure. Reducing salt intake, on the other hand, lowers blood pressure. High blood pressure has been linked to heart disease, stroke, kidney failure, and other health problems.

**There are two blood pressure numbers, written with one above or before the other:**

- Systolic, the first, is the pressure when the heart beats, pumping blood through the arteries.
- Diastolic is the pressure when the heart is at rest between beats.
- The [ideal blood pressure](#) reading is between 90-120 systolic and 60-80 diastolic.

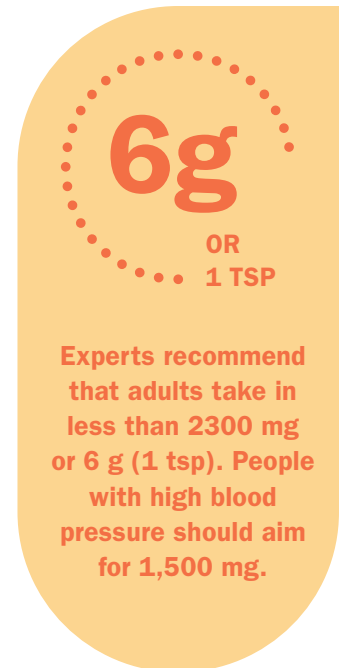


# Reducing Salt

A very modest decrease in the amount of salt, can have dramatic health benefits according to experts. The salt we add to our food accounts for about 10% of our salt consumption. Most of the salt we eat comes from processed foods, restaurants, and fast food.

## Making Changes

Even small salt reductions can affect your blood pressure. If you can't find a low-salt alternative to a particular food, it still helps to pick something that's lower than what you're already consuming.



# Learn about drinking water for your health, well-being

Water is essential for our health and well-being. Most Island County residents get their water from groundwater.

Island County Environmental Health Specialist Tracy Hall invites you to check out the Island County Drinking Water and Hydrogeology webpages, containing up-to-date information.



## Drinking Water Resource

This resource provides comprehensive information for all types of water systems, including troubleshooting tips, disinfection guidance, water quality data, and well protection resources. It also offers step-by-step tools like ICGeoMap, links to helpful documents, and an easy subscription to the quarterly Drinking Water Newsletter.



## Hydrogeology Resource

This updated resource includes a simplified Hydrogeology Map and dashboards with accessible information on wells, aquifer recharge areas, water systems, and seawater intrusion risk. It also offers guidance for well owners, groundwater monitoring details, PFAS information, and links to reports, publications, and data submission forms.

## Fun Facts:



- Around **72% of Island County** residents get their drinking water from groundwater.
- There are nearly **10,000 drinking water wells** in Island County.
- Island County's groundwater is replenished by rain.
- There have been several studies about groundwater in Island County. Check out [Island County Groundwater Publications!](#)



## To protect groundwater resources:

- ✓ Conserve water
- ✓ Properly dispose of unwanted chemicals
- ✓ Safely store potential pollutants (including fertilizers and gas) at least 100 feet away from all wells
- ✓ If you have a well, test the water for bacteria and nitrates yearly
- ✓ If you have a septic system, have it regularly inspected and maintained



# Flu and Older Adults

Each year, millions of people suffer from seasonal influenza, often called the flu. The flu is a respiratory illness caused by viruses that infect the nose, throat, and sometimes the lungs.

## You are more at risk of flu and its complications if you:

- Have certain medical conditions such as asthma, [diabetes](#), or chronic kidney disease.
- Have [heart disease](#) or have had a [stroke](#).
- Live in a nursing home or other long-term care facility.

Learn more about [people at increased risk for flu and its complications](#), and find flu facts from the Washington State Department of Health [here](#).

## How does the flu spread?

The flu is contagious, which means it spreads from person to person. It mostly spreads through droplets in the air when people with flu cough, sneeze, or talk. It can spread from up to six feet away.

It's possible to spread the flu before you feel sick and when you have symptoms. Typically, people with the flu can spread it a day before, and up to a week after feeling sick. People with weakened immune systems may be able to spread the flu for even longer. If you or someone you know is sick with the flu, [take steps to help prevent spreading the disease](#).

## How can you prevent the flu?

Getting a flu vaccine every year can help prevent the flu. The vaccine is safe, effective, and available for little to no cost to you.

## In addition to getting your flu vaccine, you can help stop the spread of flu by:

- Washing your hands
- Covering your mouth when you cough or sneeze
- Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, or mouth

- Staying home when you are sick
- Avoiding close contact with people who are sick
- [Cleaning and disinfecting](#) frequently touched surfaces at home, work, or school

## Recognizing a fever in older adults

Average normal body temperatures in older adults are slightly lower than in younger adults. So, when an older adult is sick, their fever temperatures may also be lower. According to the CDC, the following temperatures in older adults may be signs of an infection, such as COVID-19 or the flu:

- A single temperature reading higher than 100°F
- Multiple temperature readings above 99°F
- A rise in temperature greater than 2°F (1.1°C) above the person's normal body temperature

## Where to get a flu vaccine?

You can get your flu vaccine at a doctor's office. Many grocery stores, drug stores, and pharmacies also offer flu vaccines. Visit [Vaccines.gov](#) to find a location near you. [Current local pharmacy information can be found on the Island County website.](#)

## Why do you need a flu vaccine every year?

You need a flu vaccine every year for two reasons. First, flu viruses change, and the flu vaccine is updated each year to target the flu viruses that are anticipated to spread that year. Second, the protection you get from a flu vaccine lessens with time, especially in older adults.

## What are the side effects of flu vaccines?

[The flu vaccine is safe](#) and cannot give you the flu. Most people have no problems after getting a flu vaccine.



## Reasons the flu is more dangerous for older adults:

- The immune system, which helps your body fight infections, weakens as we age. Because your body is busy fighting off the flu, you might pick up a [secondary infection](#) such as pneumonia.
- A second reason is that older adults are also more likely to have other health conditions, like diabetes, that increase risk for complications from the flu.



**The flu can be very serious and even life-threatening in older adults 65+. It can infect lung tissue and cause secondary pneumonia.**

**[Click here to learn the difference between a cold, the flu, and Covid 19.](#)**

When side effects occur, they are generally mild and go away on their own. The most common side effects are soreness, redness, or swelling at the site where you got the shot. Some people also get a headache, fever, nausea, or muscle aches.

# Let's Beat Colorectal Cancer Together

March was Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month. Colorectal Cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death in men and women combined. **It's important to start screenings at 45 for early detection and prevention.**

## Here's the bottom line:

Colorectal cancer has a 91% survival rate when found early. Regular colorectal cancer screening can find and remove lesions before they become cancer. Talk to your doctor about different screening options here: [Cancer.org](https://www.cancer.org)

If 80% of the eligible population stayed up to date with screening, more than 277,000 colorectal cases and 203,000 deaths could be prevented.

## Screening for Colorectal Cancer

It's recommended that all adults between the ages 45-75 should be screened for colorectal cancer. If you're older than 75, talk to your healthcare provider about getting screened. Several different screening tests can be

used to find polyps or colorectal cancer, including:

### Stool Tests

These tests screen for colon cancer by checking your stool for hidden blood or abnormal DNA. You collect a sample at home and send it to a lab for analysis.

### Colonoscopy

Doctors use a lighted tube to check for polyps or cancer inside the rectum and the entire colon. During the test, healthcare professionals can find and remove most polyps and cancers.

### CT Colonoscopy

Computed Tomography (CT) colonoscopy, also called a virtual colonoscopy, uses X-rays and computers to produce images of the entire colon.

### Flexible Sigmoidoscopy (Flex Sig)

The health care provider puts a short, thin, flexible tube into your rectum and checks for polyps or cancer inside the rectum and lower third of the colon.



## Colorectal Cancer Facts:

72%

In 2022, 72% of Island County residents ages 50-75 years old reported that they had been screened for colorectal cancer.

Cancer screening is for people without symptoms.

When colorectal cancer is found at an early stage before it has spread, the five-year relative survival rate is

90%

Check out Island County Public Health's NEW Social Media Pages



Talk to your healthcare provider on what screening options are right for you.

For more information: [cdc.gov/colorectal-cancer](https://www.cdc.gov/colorectal-cancer).

## Symptoms of Colorectal Cancer:

- Someone could have colorectal cancer and not know it. People do not always have symptoms, especially in early stages.
- Changes in your bowel habits.
- Blood in or on your stool (bowel movement).
- Abdominal pain, aches, or cramps that don't go away.
- Unexplained weight loss.



The 2025 session was long and kept WSALPHO busy navigating several policies throughout session. Ultimately, the association was pleased by the policy outcomes and appreciative that reductions in public health programs and services weren't more severe.

## WSALPHO PRIORITIES



### HB 1947

#### Policy Summary:

HB 1947 lets new Group B public water systems operate on their own—without needing to be run by a satellite system management agency—as long as they meet certain conditions.

**WSALPHO POSITION: SUPPORT**  
**OUTCOME: PASSED**



### SB 5163

#### Policy Summary:

SB 5163 provides important updates to local child fatality review statutes. These reviews identify community strategies that can prevent further death and injury for our youth. Updates include increasing the youth age to 19, aligning privacy and confidentiality to national standards, and emphasizing coordination between local and state agencies.

**WSALPHO POSITION: SUPPORT**  
**OUTCOME: PASSED**

## Foundational Public Health Services Budget

Funding for FPHS was reduced by **\$24 million** for the biennium. This is largely reflected in reductions in General Funds State which totaled **\$44 million** for the biennium (split evenly as **\$22 million** reductions each fiscal year). These reductions are offset by an increase of **\$20 million** of FPHS Account spending authorization. Depending on the total FPHS Account balance, each FY year is reduced **\$12-\$22 million**.

Preserving FPHS funding was a WSALPHO Budget Priority.

# HOUSE BILL HIGHLIGHTS

**WSALPHO POSITION:**  
**SUPPORT**  
**OUTCOME: PASSED**



## Policy Summary:

HB 1531 makes sure that state and local health officials rely on proven methods and the latest scientific research when responding to outbreaks of diseases that can spread from person to person.

**WSALPHO POSITION:**  
**SUPPORT**  
**OUTCOME: PASSED**



## Policy Summary:

HB 1946 clarifies tribal representation for local boards of health, removes the American Indian Health Commission from the appointment process, narrows organizational membership, and directs the State Board of Health to conduct rulemaking on appointment timelines and processes. WSALPHO worked on improvements to the bill that were included in the final version.

**WSALPHO POSITION:**  
**SUPPORT**  
**OUTCOME: FAILED**



## Policy Summary:

HB 1870 authorized counties to implement a property tax solely for the purposes of operating public health clinics such as prevention care, STI clinics, immunization clinics, etc.

**WSALPHO POSITION:**  
**SUPPORT**  
**OUTCOME: FAILED**



## Policy Summary:

HB 1805 created a local sales tax option for counties to fund services for children and families that promote behavioral and mental health, enhance well-being, support parents, and promote early childhood development. This included the ability to fund child care and other direct services to families.

**WSALPHO POSITION:**  
**SUPPORT**  
**OUTCOME: FAILED**



## Policy Summary:

HB 2068 adjusted the tax on tobacco, nicotine products, and vapor products, modified current tobacco and vapor product laws, and banned the sale of flavored tobacco, nicotine, and vapor products.

## School-Based Health Centers Budget

Both Operating and Capital Budgets including support to operate and maintain school-based health centers. These facilities are becoming more critical health care access points for youth behavioral health services, dental clinics, and other preventative primary care services. Total included in the budget:

**\$2.4 MILLION**

**Operating Budget**

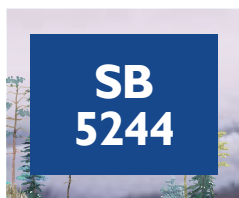
**\$2.6 MILLION**

**Capital Budget**



# SENATE BILL HIGHLIGHTS

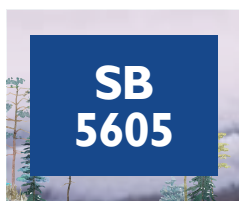
**WSALPHO POSITION:**  
**SUPPORT**  
**OUTCOME: PASSED**



## Policy Summary:

SB 5244 exempts the MA licensure requirements for staff to conduct simple blood tests like finger or heel sticks at WIC clinics as part of the program requirements. This allows for any WIC program staff trained to conduct this screening service. The change provides better customer service for participating families and addresses some workforce challenges that impact the ability to operate local WIC clinics.

**WSALPHO POSITION:**  
**OPPOSE**  
**OUTCOME: FAILED**



## Policy Summary:

SB 5605 would have authorized the operation of private home kitchens to prepare food sold to the public and set permit responsibilities to local health departments and the state board of health. The proposal also exempted home kitchens from several food safety requirements.

## Opioid Response/Support Budget

This year's budget made several reductions in opioid response and overdose prevention, focusing state support and investment on fulfilling state obligations.

- \* Community-based and harm reduction approaches to overdose prevention were removed. These include a naloxone stockpile, community education campaigns, and sustainable funding for a data dashboard.
- \* Funding to support Health Engagement Hubs was reduced by **\$500 thousand**. Hubs are intended to serve as an all-in-one location where people who use drugs can access a range of medical, harm reduction, treatment, social services, and referrals.
- \* **\$2.7 million** is dedicated to launch a tele-buprenorphine hotline that facilitates access to medications for opioid use disorder treatment.
- \* Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics (CCBHCs) are designed to ensure access to coordinated, comprehensive behavioral health care. CCBHCs are required to get people into care quickly and serve anyone who requests care for mental health or substance use — regardless of ability to pay, place of residence, or age. This includes developmentally appropriate care for children and youth. **\$886 thousand** was dedicated to supporting CCBHCs.
- \* The Recovery Care Navigator Program, implemented locally by counties, is an intensive outreach and case management program was reduced by **20%**.

# BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

## Drinking Water Revolving Fund

**\$2.7  
MILLION**

**\$2.7 M**, Department of Health; Expenditure authority is provided from four dedicated accounts for maintenance of drinking water systems to certify water system operators, to implement the federal Safe Drinking Water Act, and to administer safe drinking water loans.

## Home Visiting

**\$6 MILLION  
REDUCTION**

This is a valuable program where nurses and parents work together to strengthen and support a child's first year of life. This program was reduced by **\$6 million**.

## Group B Water Systems

Ongoing funding has supported local health jurisdictions that maintain local Group B programs.

**\$832,000**

This funding was reduced to **\$832 thousand**, a reduction of **\$152 thousand**. These funds are used to support the costs of the development and adoption of rules, policies, and procedures, as well as for technical assistance, training, and other program-related costs.

---

Other chronic disease prevention programs that have been supported in past budgets were removed, including tobacco prevention education, the Fruit and Vegetable Incentive Program, and suicide prevention programming.

---

## Environmental Hazards Reporting

**\$400,000**

Communities impacted by environmental health inequities face disproportionate harms from environmental violations, systemic barriers to reporting, and access to determining whether any enforcement action was taken. The budget (**\$400 thousand**) directs the Department of Ecology to consult with state and local governments and community organizations to develop a report analyzing equity and accessibility considerations for environmental incident reporting.



## ISLAND COUNTY COMMUNICATIONS

---

Cell: 360-682-8085 | Desk: 360-240-5585  
Email: [communications@islandcountywa.gov](mailto:communications@islandcountywa.gov)  
8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Monday - Friday

---

## Press Release

### Island County Taking Health Services on the Road with New Mobile Outreach Van

[ISLAND COUNTY, WA – May 20, 2025] – Island County residents will soon have greater access to public health and human services thanks to a new mobile outreach van unveiled at a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Tuesday, May 20, 2025. The outreach van is designed to directly reach individuals and families across Island County, with a particular focus on underserved communities.

A collaborative effort between Island County Public Health, Human Services, and community partners, the van will expand access to preventive services and health education by meeting people where they live, work, and gather. Funding for this initiative was provided by the North Sound Accountable Community of Health. Research shows that mobile outreach is an evidence-based and cost-effective strategy for extending the reach of services, ultimately reducing healthcare costs and even emergency department visits.

Island County is proactively investing in innovative solutions to expand access, equity, and overall community wellness. The van will serve as a mobile center, delivering services such as mental health resources, care coordination, and health education throughout the county.

“This project represents a significant step forward in our commitment to supporting the health of all Island County residents. By bringing essential services directly to our communities, we can proactively create a healthier county for everyone,” said Dr. Shawn Morris, Public Health Director.

The Island County Board of Health members participated in the ribbon-cutting ceremony, underscoring the county's commitment to this initiative.

“Mobile Outreach helps counties provide accessible services, often to those most at risk, to ensure early intervention and prevention for mental health, substance abuse, and public health concerns,” said Island County Commissioner Janet St. Clair, chair of the Board of Health. “This approach improves health outcomes and increases public safety.”

Residents can find the outreach van at upcoming community events, as well as at various community locations across the island. On the county website, the department will soon share information related to van locations and services offered. Island County looks forward to connecting with more people in our communities and providing convenient access to essential services.

*If you would like more information about this topic, please contact Island County Public Health Director Dr. Shawn Morris at [S.Morris@islandcountywa.gov](mailto:S.Morris@islandcountywa.gov)*