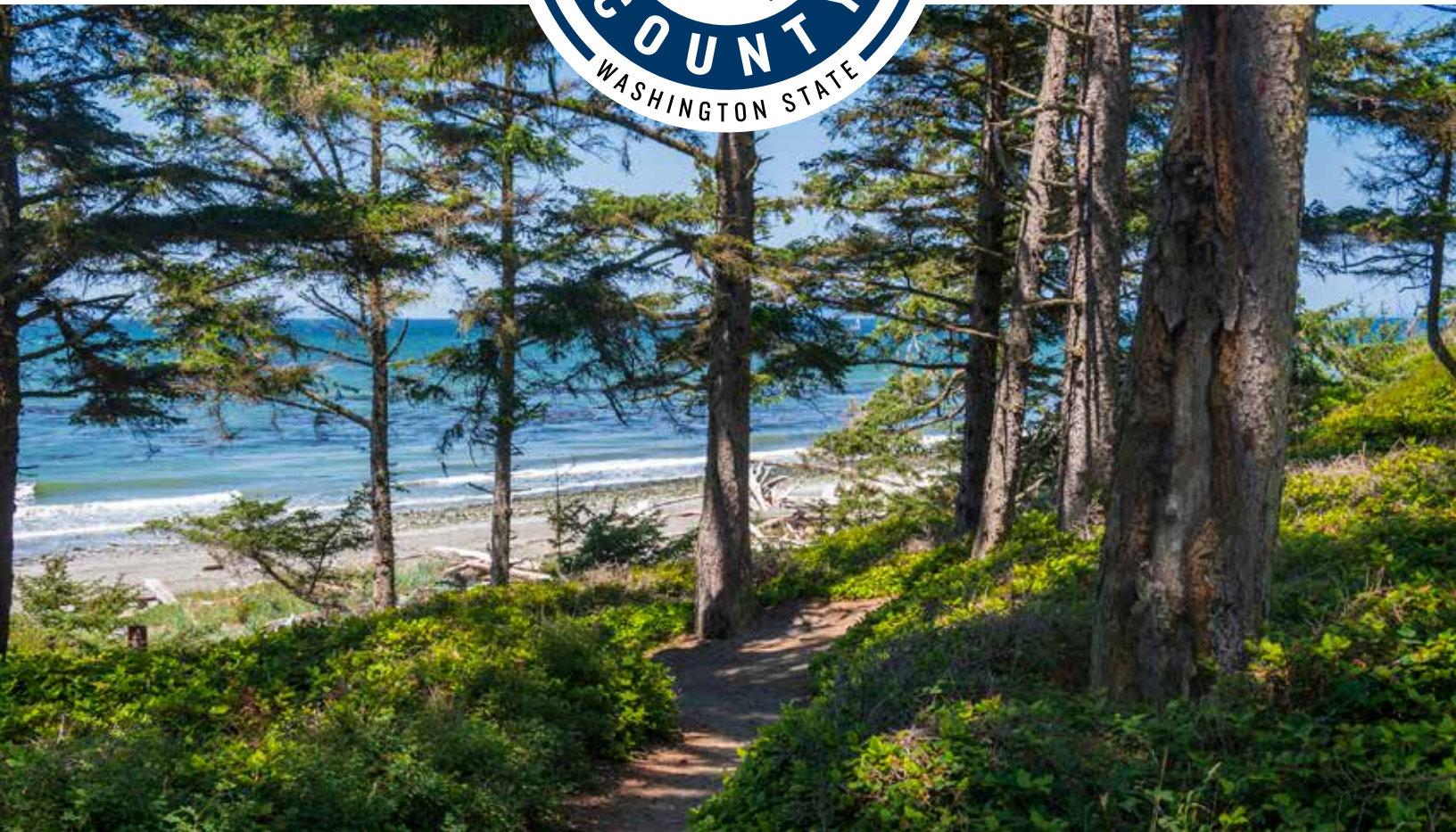




Strategic



Vision 2024



Our Mission

Island County Public Health is committed to improving the well-being of our unique island communities and environments through innovative programs and partnerships. Working in close partnership with the communities we serve, our dedicated teams deliver essential services, advance drivers of well-being, and strategically plan health improvement.



Our Organization

ISLAND COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH IS COMPOSED OF FOUR DIVISIONS
THAT WORK TOGETHER TO ACHIEVE OUR MISSION



Natural Resources

Supports ecosystem health, biodiversity, and environmental justice through climate adaptation, conservation, restoration, outreach, and planning.



Community Health

Advances a continuum of prevention services, improving health outcomes related to maternal child health, communicable disease, nutrition, chronic disease, and preventable injuries.



Assessment

Develops a comprehensive understanding of health in our communities to guide community decision-making, integrating community voice and values through participatory methods.



Environmental Health

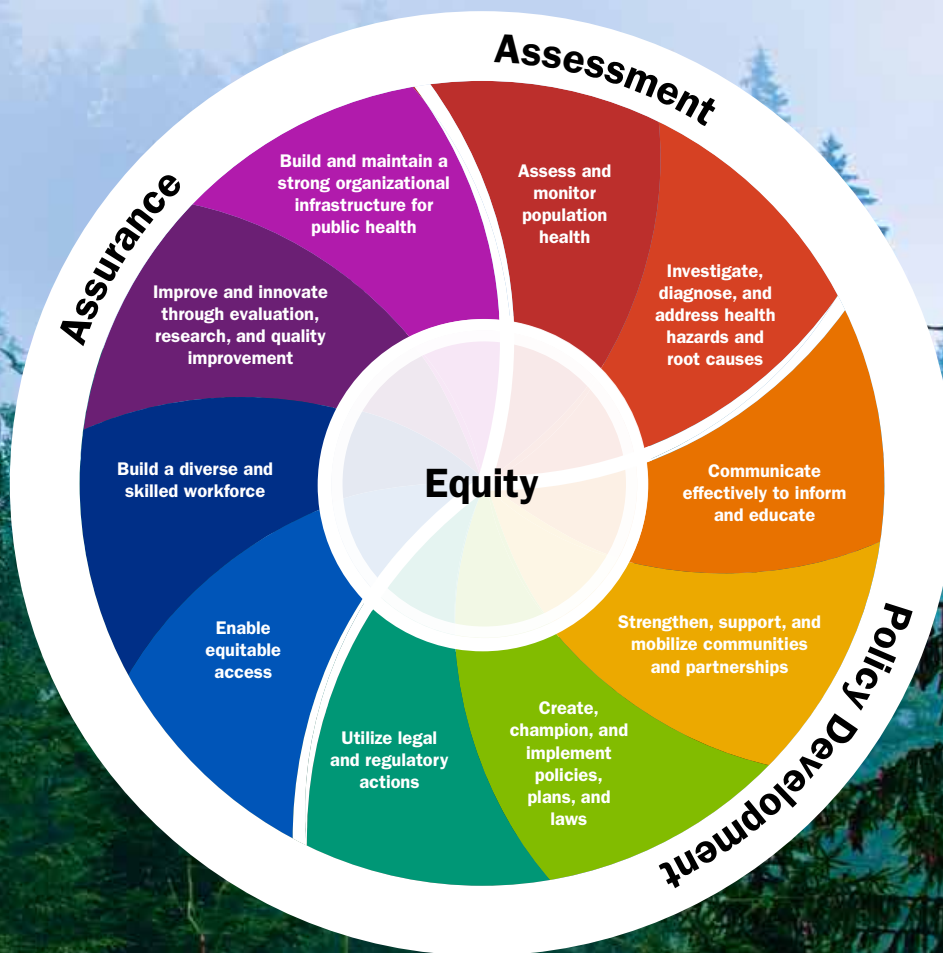
Ensures healthy natural & built environments through outreach, permitting, and regulation, focusing on water resources, septic infrastructure, building safety, food safety, and pollution prevention.

10 Essential Public Health Services

TO PROTECT AND PROMOTE THE HEALTH OF ALL PEOPLE IN ALL COMMUNITIES

The 10 Essential Public Health Services provide a framework for public health to protect and promote the health of all people in all communities. To achieve optimal health for all people in all communities. To achieve optimal health for all, the Essential Public Health Services actively promote policies, systems, and services that enable

good health and seek to remove obstacles and systemic and structural barriers, such as poverty, racism, gender discrimination, and other forms of oppression, that have resulted in health inequities. Everyone should have a fair and just opportunity to achieve good health and well-being.



“With rare exceptions, all of your most important achievements on this planet will come from working with others — or, in a word, partnership.”

DR. PAUL FARMER, PARTNERS IN HEALTH



Guiding our Approach to Community Health Assessment & Improvement

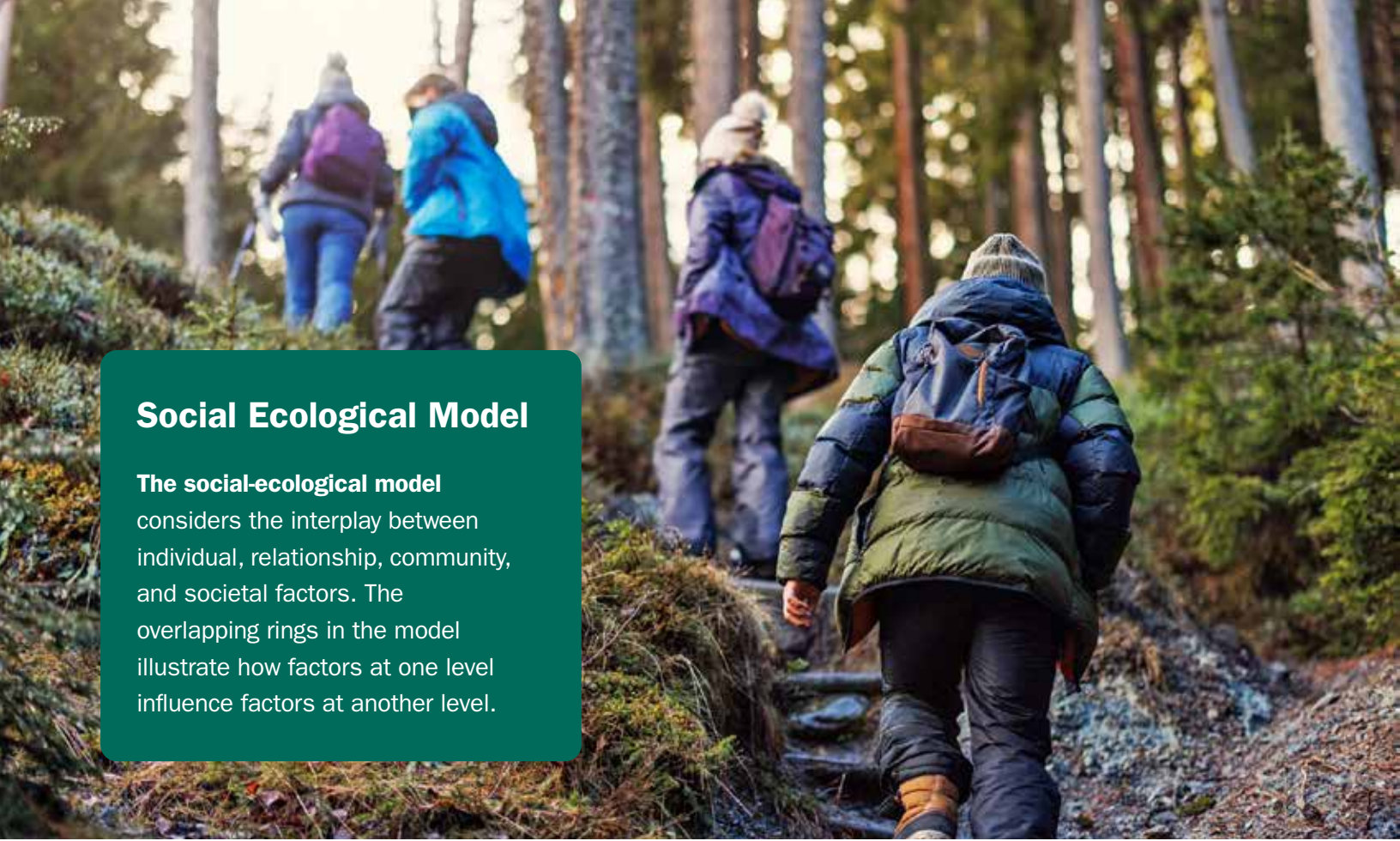
UNDERLYING FRAMEWORKS

Drivers of Well-Being

The social drivers of well-being are the conditions in which people are born, live, learn, work, play, age, and worship. This includes educational access and quality, healthcare services, economic stability and opportunity, environmental quality, housing availability and quality, healthy nutrition, social and community cohesion, and other factors (Healthy People, 2030). Public health plays a key role advancing drivers of well-being through delivery of foundational services and through collaborative partnerships.

Learn more about the social drivers of well-being <https://health.gov/healthypeople/priority-areas/social-determinants-health>





Social Ecological Model

The social-ecological model considers the interplay between individual, relationship, community, and societal factors. The overlapping rings in the model illustrate how factors at one level influence factors at another level.



Environmental Justice

Environmental justice focuses on advancing equity in the distribution of environmental benefits and burdens, and in the policies that determine those distributions. Our environments provide a range of benefits supporting physical and mental health, including recreational opportunities, drinking water, and biodiversity. At the same time, environmental pollutants, climate health impacts, and other factors create health risks. It's essential that we address disparities related to both environmental benefits and challenges, supporting healthy environments for all community members.

One Health

One Health is a collaborative approach with the goal of achieving optimal health outcomes for humans, animals, and ecosystems. A One Health approach recognizes the interconnection between people, animals, plants, and our shared environments.

Learn more about One Health here:

<https://www.cdc.gov/onehealth/index.html>



Community-Based Participatory Approaches

Participatory approaches build on collective strengths and shared resources, engage trusted community members, facilitate partnerships, involve long-term commitment, and share information, data, and findings with all participants through inclusive practices.



Health Literacy

Health literacy is the degree to which individuals can find, understand, and use information and services to inform health-related decisions and actions for themselves and others (Healthy People 2030).



Health in All Policies

Health in All Policies (HiAP) is an approach to public policy that systematically considers the health implications of decisions, seeks synergies, and avoids harmful health impacts to improve population health and health equity.



Our Priorities for Thriving Communities

PRIORITY 1

Optimal Health Systems and Workforce Support

VISION

A responsive public health system that integrates community voice into policy and practice, while promoting transparency, engagement, and trust. Our teams are made up of a diverse and skilled workforce equipped with the tools, support, and knowledge to effectively address public health challenges and drive equity.

COMMITMENT

We will practice continual improvement, working to align skills, resources, and partnerships to strengthen our capacity to deliver responsive and innovative programs and services. We will be guided by the voices and values of our diverse communities and center health equity in all policy recommendations, planning, and service delivery. We renew our commitment to effective external and internal communication, while serving as responsible stewards of public resources. We value and prioritize developing and maintaining a diverse, engaged, and skilled workforce, recognizing that our dedicated employees are at the heart of our work.



Key Strategies

- ✓ Apply a Health in All Policies framework to policy recommendations, planning, and strategic initiatives, actively integrating community voice through participatory approaches.
- ✓ Integrate direction from the Board of Commissioners and Board of Health, informed by the Community Health Advisory Board, into all programs, services, and approaches.
- ✓ Ensure fiscal responsibility and sustainable resource management across programs through competent contract management, while prioritizing and allocating resources intentionally to communities impacted by inequities.
- ✓ Integrate trauma-informed organizational principles into our approach, ensuring collaboration, trust, choice, and equity-based management. Foster a healthy, resilient, and safe workplace by cultivating a culture of wellness and supporting the unique needs of our staff. Integrate diversity, equity, and inclusion principles across teams and procedures.
- ✓ Support the recruitment, development, and retention of a qualified, inclusive, and diverse public health workforce, investing in our teams and integrating best practices for organizational design.
- ✓ Provide effective public health information to stakeholders and the public. Strengthen our communications approach, applying principles of community-led design, cultural humility, and health equity to provide timely, locally relevant communications across our program areas in multimedia formats.

Key Strategies

- ✓ Support climate adaptation through conservation, outreach, regulatory programs, and multisector partnerships, centering equity and One Health.
- ✓ Revitalize community advisory boards by expanding inclusive engagement and adopting project criteria related to environmental justice and social drivers of health, considering the distribution of environmental benefits and burdens based on income, race, gender, and other factors.
- ✓ Strengthen adaptive management approaches to water quality and habitat health, adopting best-available science and proactive practices for preventing contamination, with a focus on incentives for achieving voluntary compliance and sustainable infrastructure development.
- ✓ Take a service-oriented approach to permitting and regulation, providing community members with resources and guidance. Consider the downstream impacts of permitting decisions while helping applicants achieve their goals, supporting sustainable development.
- ✓ Center equity and engage in effective outreach for programs that support safe communities, including food safety, solid waste compliance, mobile home inspections, and outdoor burn permitting.
- ✓ Ensure efficiency and consistency with the permitting process. For regulatory changes, involve stakeholders early and often. Improve communications and outreach related to planned changes, using participatory approaches.
- ✓ Strengthen financial assistance programs for clean water needs. Provide technical assistance to partners to expand access to supportive housing, economic opportunity, and healthy environments for recreation.



PRIORITY 2

Vibrant Ecosystems and Healthy Built Environments

VISION

We support vibrant ecosystems and healthy built environments by planning initiatives, guiding policy, and delivering programs and services that achieve optimal outcomes for human, animal, and ecosystem well-being, recognizing our increasingly interconnected environments.

COMMITMENT

We support our unique island communities by supporting climate resilience, natural resources conservation, and social drivers of health. We apply an environmental justice lens, expanding social drivers of health with attention to inequities in the distribution of environmental benefits and burdens. In all our work, we consider the interrelatedness between human, animal, and ecosystem well-being. We take a consistent, well-coordinated, and equitable regulatory approach, emphasizing education and voluntary compliance.

PRIORITY 3

Thriving Communities Across the Lifespan

VISION

We practice innovative disease prevention and deliver essential health services to address critical gaps. We work across sectors to ensure community members have access to the vital conditions needed to thrive, including healthcare access, nutritious foods, health guidance, supportive housing, recreational opportunities, and other social drivers of health.

COMMITMENT

We lead upstream initiatives that improve health outcomes by promoting behavior change, expanding access to social drivers of health, and enhancing health literacy. We commit to a holistic understanding of health outcomes, working with cultural humility while serving diverse communities. We work hand in hand with community members to design, implement, and evaluate strategies that address nutritional health, access to care, and overall physical health across the lifespan. We work with coalitions and partners, recognizing that upstream prevention and optimal outcomes requires multi-sector, community-rooted approaches that center health equity.



Key Strategies

- ✓ Advance a continuum of community-based prevention initiatives to improve health and wellness behaviors related to nutritional health, family health, chronic disease, physical activity, and injury prevention, looking upstream at key factors and applying principles of cultural humility.
- ✓ Expand our focus on health literacy and education by tailoring evidence-based curricula and resources for community delivery, using best available practices outlined by implementation science.
- ✓ Engage multi-sector partners and people who have lived experience to expand population scale strategies that improve the conditions in which people live, work, play, and age. Support sustainable, community-rooted approaches to advancing the social drivers of health.
- ✓ Proactively address emerging diseases and serve as a resource for community partners, including long-term care, schools, childcare, and healthcare providers.
- ✓ Specifically develop partnerships and collaborative models with primary care providers, using approaches outlined in “The Practical Playbook” (CDC) to develop communities of practice, cross-team coordination, and shared health improvement strategies and campaigns.
- ✓ Strengthen community partnerships and deliver essential early intervention services for children and families with cultural humility, recognizing that the well-being of our children is of the utmost importance.



Key Strategies

- ✓ Align public health assessment activities with planning driven by our partners, streamlining engagement and cross-department efforts, while integrating participatory approaches.
- ✓ Advance data-driven evaluation approaches across programs to map intended outcomes, consider potential harmful impacts, define measurable goals, track progress, and revise approaches.
- ✓ Ensure fairness and equity in data practices by integrating FAIR data principles, optimizing the accessibility and democratic use of data to meet community needs.
- ✓ Proactively advance equity by applying a Health in All Policies and social justice lens to policy and planning, integrating equity principles in data practices, systems, and engagement strategies.
- ✓ Develop visually engaging content that is accessible to a diverse range of community members when sharing data reports, including health assessments, improvement plans, and impact reports.
- ✓ Continually improve staff readiness to prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies through planning and workforce development.
- ✓ Integrate the needs of people with disabilities, older adults, people with chronic disease, children with special healthcare needs, and pregnant mothers into all public health emergency planning.



PRIORITY 4

Engage Assessment and Emergency Response

VISION

Our communities have the information needed to advance health equity and outcomes. Community voice guides our assessment strategies and policy process. We proactively cultivate meaningful, trusted relationships with diverse populations. We envision a trained and coordinated team well-positioned to prepare for, respond to, and recover from public health emergencies.

COMMITMENT

We commit to a community-driven approach to data collection, evaluation, and dissemination. We intentionally strengthen trusted relationships with marginalized communities to develop meaningful assessment strategies and inclusive practices. We provide locally relevant, accessible, and transparent information to guide community decision-making. To foster resilience, we apply the lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic to better plan for, respond to, and recover from emergencies and hazards.



Looking to the Horizon

Local public health plays an essential role in developing collaborative, creative, and community-centered solutions to complex challenges. In all our efforts, we are committed to working in partnership with the communities we serve. Our teams live and work in our communities, and we are guided by a shared desire to make a difference for current and future generations. As we work to build trust, support our teams, enhance services, and improve health outcomes, we commit to acting with care, transparency, and inclusivity.



We are always working for safer and healthier communities.



CONTACT US

Shawn Morris, ND

Public Health Director
s.morrisnd@islandcountywa.gov
(360) 679-7345

Megan Works, RN

Community Health Manager
m.works@islandcountywa.gov
(360) 678-8281

Heather Kortuem

Environmental Health Manager
h.kortuem@islandcountywa.gov
(360) 678-7910

Melissa Overbury-Howland

Public Health Office Lead
M.Overbury-Howland@islandcountywa.gov
(360) 678-7860

Jen Schmitz

Natural Resources Manager
J.Schmitz@islandcountywa.gov
(360) 679-7352

Taylor Lawson, MPH

Assessment Supervisor
t.lawson@islandcountywa.gov
(360) 678-7936