



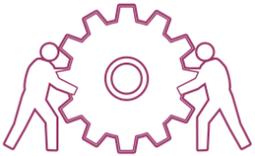
# WSALPHO

WASHINGTON STATE ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICIALS

## 2019 Federal Issues & Priorities

### About Us

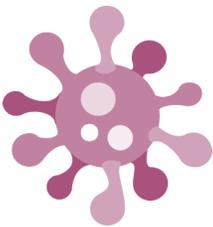
The Washington State Association of Local Public Health Officials (WSALPHO) is a non-profit that represents 35 local health jurisdictions across Washington State. WSALPHO works closely with the WA State Department of Health, WA State Board of Health, Washington State Association of Counties, and the National Association of City and County Health Officials to improve the health of communities by strengthening and advocating for local health departments. Our 2019 federal priorities include:



**Policies that support infrastructure and local health department capacity to participate in health data systems and connect prevention work with health care and human service providers.** In Washington State, this enables local health participation in Medicaid Transformation work and facilitate community initiatives such as suicide prevention programs, homelessness, and responding to the opioid crisis.



WSALPHO supports **tobacco prevention and control efforts, including the regulation of electronic and vapor products.** We also support policies that work to keep tobacco and nicotine products out of the hands of youth, including raising the legal age of purchase to 21 years.



**FY 2020 appropriations to fund CDC infectious disease prevention and control, Immunization Program, and Zoonotic and vector-borne diseases.**

In Washington State, we are seeing increasing rates of Hepatitis C, STDs, and health care acquired infections. We're also experiencing the largest measles outbreak in recent state history, with over 71 cases confirmed—mostly in children under 10 years. This past summer, western Washington had its first ever confirmed case of West Nile Virus in humans. Local health has the responsibility of responding to each of these communicable disease threats through outbreak response, surveillance, and control efforts.

Contact: Jaime Boddien, Managing Director, WSALPHO

[jboddien@wsac.org](mailto:jboddien@wsac.org) | 360-489-3011

206 10th Ave. SE, Olympia, WA 98501 | [www.wsalpho.org](http://www.wsalpho.org)



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**FY 2020 appropriations to support the Maternal and Child Block Grant, and Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting programs.** Local health implement programs such as the Nurse Family Partnership which improves family connectedness, strengthens resiliency, and decreases child abuse and neglect. Washington State also has some of the highest rates of maternal mortality in the country. Local health works to improve birth outcomes for both baby and mother.



WSALPHO supports **policies that address climate and mitigation strategies.** Over the last two years, Washington has had more hazardous air days from wildfires than the last ten years combined. Local health works with schools, fairs, and the public with decision making around outdoor activities during smoke events. In 2017, a algal bloom at Summit Lake, in Thurston County, left residents without water they could use for drinking, bathing, or dishes for over a month. The local response of coordinating access to clean water cost the county over \$80,000. It is becoming increasingly important to recognize the interconnection of climate threats to the environment, human and animal health.



Chronic disease prevention is an important function of local health departments. WSALPHO supports **policies and appropriations that promote healthy lifestyles**, support injury and violence prevention, and ensure access to healthy food through programs such as Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC).



**Establishment of a Public Health Emergency Fund and the passage and implementation of the Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness and Advancing Innovation Act.** These programs will allow local health to immediately access emergency funding when public health disasters or outbreaks occur and will assist local health in building capacity in local readiness and response. This support is absolutely critical when crisis hits. For example, the measles outbreak has already surpassed \$1.5 million dollars in cost. Both state and local response has included over 10,000 staff hours.

Contact: Jaime Bodden, Managing Director, WSALPHO

[jbodden@wsac.org](mailto:jbodden@wsac.org) | 360-489-3011

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