

# Department of Public Health & Environment

## 2021 Summary

Each day the Weld County Department of Public Health and Environment provides for the health, safety and welfare of Weld County citizens through the seven core public health services established by the State Board of Health. Our organizational culture is built around providing high-quality, cost-efficient, and readily accessible services to residents and businesses in Weld County. The Health Department strives to be a recognized leader in the state by driving initiatives that enhance and strengthen our community and positively impact the lives of the citizens we serve.



Looking toward the future, the department is in the process of developing a new three-year strategic plan that will clearly define the organization's direction and provide our many stakeholders the ability to visualize where we are going, how we are going to get there and how the plan will affect everyone. More importantly it will align organizational priorities with our mission and vision and provide a mechanism to evaluate, redirect programs, initiatives and services, if necessary, and improve performance, efficiency and accountability.

The Department's 2021 proposed budget is \$12,453,704 with a net county cost of \$5,708,281. The Department's available funding is allocated among the Department's five divisions; Administration [including Vital Records], Environmental Health Services, Health Education, Communication and Planning, Community Health Services [including Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response] and Public Health Clinical Services.

Budgetary goals for 2021 emphasize controlling costs and meeting budget targets amid high uncertainty while ensuring adequate resources will be available to efficiently and effectively provide core functions and deliver essential services to the continually increasing number of residents and businesses in Weld County. The department's budget request anticipates the unprecedented financial and operational challenges we are facing due to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. It also reflects an acute awareness of the increased need for reallocations and savings while supporting Weld County's priorities of transparency, accountability, and legitimacy as we deliver superior public health services to the citizens of Weld County.

Highlights of changes in the 2021 budget include:

- Revenue. At this time, revenues across the department are projected to decrease by less than 1% in 2021. The overall outcome department-wide is a small net decrease, with revenue shifting from one source to another among and within the divisions. Again, we are predicting slight increases in fee income generated from vital records issuance. Revenue is expected to decrease in environmental health services in the retail food establishment program primarily due to reductions in revenue from assessed civil penalties as a result of new legislation that changed the enforcement process in 2020. There have also been retail food establishment closures in 2020 due to COVID-19 that will likely reduce revenue from retail food licenses. Revenue from septic permits is expected to decline as we anticipate that development will slow down due to COVID-19 and its associated economic impacts. At the time this budget is being developed, our revenue for health education and clinical services is projected to increase due to federal and state grant revenue increases in contracted programs. We also anticipate seeing increased immunization revenues in our clinic when a viable COVID-19 vaccine is developed and approved for distribution in the United States, hopefully in early 2021. Due to the uncertainty of the COVID-19 response, the department may ultimately see grant funding decrease as federal and state budget shortfalls are determined and program cuts are made, but we have not received any guidance as to how deep those cuts may be. As such, we are very likely to see additional reductions in department revenue materialize in 2020 and 2021, causing budgeting during the crisis to become a continuous reactive process.
- Personnel Services. A decrease of a half percent (0.52%) is projected for 2021 personnel costs. This is the net result of relatively small increases in salaries and fringe attributable to scheduled step increases in 2021, which is offset by the reduction of 3.475 FTE primarily due to the loss of a long-time program in the Department, Healthy Communities (with 3.0 FTE), as part of state spending cuts implemented in 2020. Key projections for the changing workload and reallocation of personnel resources in the coming year are factored into this budget, anticipating the need to hire educated and trained epidemiologists, contact tracers, case investigators and other health support personnel to directly assist with the COVID-19 response as we migrate through the pandemic's response, mitigation and recovery stages.
- Supplies & Purchased Services. Pursuant to the directive to maintain a flat budget, our total projected supplies and purchased services expenditures are increasing by an extremely modest 1.56%. As we endeavor for fiscal constraint while striving for an agile and responsive budget to sustain uncertain spending needs, careful analysis of historical spending and future needs allows us to recategorize expenditures, shifting spending as we plan for increases in one area and budget reductions in other areas.
- Equipment (Small and Capitalized). In 2021, the department's small and capitalized equipment costs will increase only incrementally as we work toward implementing a more formal replacement schedule for equipment that becomes worn and outdated.
- Contra-Expenditures. The department is projecting a decrease of 8.72% in contra-expenditures in 2021. This is due to the reduction of expenditures (primarily personnel costs) in the Weld County Oil and Gas program.

As always, the department takes a conservative budgeting approach with a goal of long-term fiscal discipline and sustainability that will better serve our constituents. This strategy continues to allow us to provide and maintain essential support services and give the residents of Weld County a healthy community in which every resident enjoys the best possible state of health and well-being.