

Epidemiologist
Great Meadows Regional Public Health Collaborative

Background:

Local health support for Covid-19 case investigation and contact tracing

In September 2021, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, awarded grants to municipalities of the Commonwealth to build capacity, ideally through a shared services framework, to fully assume Covid-19 case and cluster investigation, contact tracing, isolation and quarantine support, and associated public health reporting responsibilities starting Q2 of FY2022. The Town of Wayland was granted 2 years of grant funding to hire an epidemiologist who will be an employee of the Town and work for the Great Meadows Regional Public Health Collaborative (GMRPHC) that includes the towns of Wayland, Sudbury, Weston, Lincoln, Concord, Carlisle, Bedford. Resources will be made available to these local boards of health to build epidemiologic, clinical, and community health worker staff capacity to meet these responsibilities as the Community Tracing Collaborative scales down its staff complement and concludes in December 2021. These resources are expected to be available through June 20, 2023, with any extensions dependent on federal carryforward funds availability.

Purpose

The Town seeks a motivated candidate to serve as an Epidemiologist to conduct case management and contact tracing related to epidemiologic investigations of Covid-19 and other communicable disease clusters and outbreaks by interviewing cases and contacts, and communicating with local health departments in the GMRPHC. The individual will work in conjunction with a Public Health Nurse who will also be hired to serve the collaborative.

Supervision

Works under the general direction of the Health Director with input from the Public Health Nurse and collaboration from the GMRPHC, the employee is familiar with the work routine and uses initiative in carrying out responsibilities and tasks independently with specific instruction as needed.

Not required to regularly supervise employees but may oversee volunteers for intermittent identified needs.

Job Environment

Work may be done under typical municipal office conditions, noise level may be moderate. Depending on the needs of the GMRPHC, consideration may be made for some work to be done remotely.

Employee may be required to work beyond normal business hours to address emergency situations or to attend evening meetings depending on regional needs and Covid-19 surges.

Employee operates standard office equipment.

Depending on the needs of the GMRPHC, employee may have ongoing contact with regional contacts, outside agencies, and the public by telephone, email, in person or in writing.

Confidentiality

Employee has access to confidential information in accordance with the State's Public Records Law such as department and client records related to communicable diseases. Employee must also follow requirements laid out in HIPAA.

Duties and Responsibilities (these are a general summary and are not all inclusive):

- Works with the Great Meadows Public Health Nurse to oversee case management and contact tracing, epidemiological data analysis and communication to inform public health messaging and decision making for towns within the collaborative. Casework will be done with completeness, timeliness, adherence to exclusion policies, and institution of control measures.
- Participates in the Massachusetts Virtual Epidemiologic Network (MAVEN), Massachusetts Immunization Information System (MIIS), Public Health Region 4AB (Send Word Now) and the Health and Homeland Area Network (HHAN).
- Answers general questions from the collaborative about communicable diseases affecting the public health and communicates the risks, prevention, and control measures associated with communicable diseases.
- Assists the Great Meadows Regional Health Collaborative in establishing and maintaining communicable disease surveillance systems.
- Reviews surveillance data on an on-going basis to establish baselines and identify trends, outbreaks and clusters of communicable diseases.
- Drafts summaries and final reports on investigations of communicable disease, participates in the development of advisories, press releases, alerts for the public, schools, and healthcare facilities.
- Participates in working groups related to specific disease response areas by attending meetings and participating in conference calls to set policy and discuss response efforts.
- Prepares and delivers educational materials and lectures to professional and public groups in order to maintain awareness and understanding of disease epidemiology and control.
- Interprets the General Laws and Regulations regarding communicable diseases and advises health professionals and the public.
- Stays informed of current trends and data in the epidemiology of infectious disease, by reviewing the professional literature and by attending, when feasible/appropriate, seminars, courses and conferences.
- Responds to infectious disease emergencies by determining appropriate control methods in order to alleviate the crisis, may include off business hours depending on the regional needs and Covid-19 surges.

Required Qualifications:

- Knowledge of the principles and practices of epidemiology.
- Knowledge of the principles of biology and disease processes.
- Knowledge of the methods of statistical and scientific report writing.
- Knowledge of MAVEN, and/or must attend MAVEN training within 6 weeks of hire
- Ability to prepare and use charts and diagrams.
- Ability to maintain accurate records.
- Ability to establish rapport and deal tactfully with others. Ability to establish and maintain harmonious working relationships with others.
- Ability to exercise sound judgment.
- Knowledge of epidemiologic research methods and techniques.
- Ability to analyze and determine the applicability of epidemiologic and demographic data to draw conclusions and make appropriate recommendations.
- Ability to calculate age-adjusted, crude, age, and sex-specific rates of disease or exposure.

Preferred Qualifications:

- Keen understanding of issues pertaining to confidentiality when working with personally-identifiable health information.
- Demonstrated experience with data management and analysis, research methods, and presentation of public health/epidemiologic data including statistical report writing, survey design and development.
- Proficient use of graphics and statistical analysis data management software including SAS, Access, Word and Excel.
- Capacity to adjust to changing situations to meet emergency or changing program or production requirements.
- General knowledge of laboratory testing techniques/methods including collecting specimens and cultures for laboratory testing.
- Keen ability to read and interpret such documents as testing methods, test results, and what they mean.
- Ability to utilize computers and applications.
- Strong written and oral communication skills with proficiency establishing and maintaining harmonious working relationships with others.

Pre-Hire Process:

A criminal background check will be completed on the recommended candidate

Education, licensure and certifications will be verified in accordance with the Wayland Human Resources Hiring Guidelines.

Qualifications

Applicants must have at least (A) four (4) years of full-time, or equivalent part-time, professional or technical experience in epidemiology, biology, biostatistics, toxicology, environmental science, environmental health, ecology, public health, chemistry, virology, immunology, bacteriology, microbiology, or statistics and (B) of which at least one (1) year must have been in a professional capacity or (C) any equivalent combination of the required experience and the substitutions below.

I. A Bachelor's degree with a major in epidemiology, biology, biostatistics, toxicology, environmental science, environmental health, ecology, public health, chemistry, virology, immunology, bacteriology, microbiology, statistics, or other health-related field may be substituted for a maximum of two (2) years of the required (A) experience.

II. A Master's degree with a major in epidemiology, biology, biostatistics, toxicology, environmental science, environmental health, ecology, public health, chemistry, virology, immunology,, bacteriology, microbiology, statistics,, or other health-related field may be substituted for a maximum of three (3) years of the required experience.

Equivalent combinations of experience and education that provide the necessary skills will be considered.

Supplemental Information

This is a full-time position with the Town of Wayland. Salary will range from \$66,000 to \$87,000 depending on qualifications and experience.

Applicants should send a letter of interest and their resume to the Wayland Health Department: health@wayland.ma.us.