



## The Oregon Coalition of Local Health Officials

### Local Public Health (LPH) Workforce Incentives Package (WIP) Early Draft : 8/22/22

**Total ask: \$40 million.** This would be considered one time funding/seed money to be spent over the course of 6 years.

We still have some details to work out, but the general outline is as follows:

#### 1. Grow Our Own

Recruit from local communities and provide scholarships and barrier removal for public health focused education - this could be an associate's degree on up -- with a contract that a certain number of years of service to an Oregon LPH would be expected post graduation. The "Scholars for a Healthy Oregon-like" program already exists; we could use the same administrative structure and similar "rural and underserved communities" focus.

This initiative is critically important for several reasons: 1) It relies on folks who ostensibly already have housing in the community and won't add to Oregon's housing shortage; 2) it would seek to increase diversity by reflecting the existing cultures present in the community; and 3) it acknowledges the lesson of COVID in that trusted messengers matter – by utilizing existing community relationships and using those to build trust in public health.

#### 2. Recruit

Recruit folks already graduated by offering loan repayment while in service to LPH. After 10 years, folks would qualify for full forgiveness through the PSLF federal program. The provider incentive fund already exists; we would use the same administrative structure and tack on our program.

#### 3. Retain

Five years from passage, public health employees who have served 5 years would be eligible for a lump sum retention bonus of \$20,000. This could provide a partial or full downpayment on a house, allowing the employee to further establish roots in the community. Because everyone's situation is different, however, it would not be required to use for a home purchase.

This would be a new program, but could also be administered by OHA or the Office of Rural Health (ORH). It could be a simple application process: fill out a form / apply; provide employer info. OHA/ORH calls and certifies your employment is accurate. You are awarded the bonus.

