

Setting the Standard in Health Care Excellence

June 18, 2024

Board of Supervisors
County of Ventura
800 South Victoria Avenue
Ventura, CA 93009

Subject: Approval of, and Authorization for the County Purchasing Agent or Designee to Sign, the Agreement for Public Health Laboratory Director with Thomas Rush, DrPH, Effective July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025, With the Option for Monthly Extensions Thereafter Until December 31, 2025, for Amounts Not-to-Exceed \$95,100 for FY 2024-25, and Not-to-Exceed \$47,550 for FY 2025-26.

Recommendation:

Approve and authorize the County Purchasing Agent or designee to sign the agreement for Public Health Laboratory Director with Thomas Rush, DrPH (Exhibit 1) for the period of July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025, with the option for monthly extensions thereafter until December 31, 2025, for amounts not to exceed \$95,100 for FY 2024-25, and not-to-exceed \$47,550 for FY 2025-26.

Fiscal/Mandates Impact:**Mandatory:** Yes**Source of Funding:** General Fund**Funding Match Required:** None**Impact on Other Departments:** None

Summary of Revenues and Costs:	<u>FY 2023-24</u>	<u>FY 2024-25</u>
Revenue:	\$ -0-	\$ -0-
Costs:		
Direct	\$ -0-	\$ 95,100
Indirect-Dept.	\$ -0-	\$ -0-
Indirect-County CAP	\$ -0-	\$ -0-
Net Costs	\$ -0-	\$ 95,100
Recovered Indirect Costs	\$ -0-	\$ -0-

Sufficient appropriations are included in the FY 2024-2025 Preliminary Budget for Unit 3111-Lab and Vital Records to support this action.

Strategic Plan Priority:

The item presented in this Board letter aligns with the Healthy, Safe, and Resilient Communities strategic priority of the County Strategic Plan as it is designed to meet the goal of providing equitable and timely access to quality public health services. It also aligns to the Diverse and Innovative Workforce Dedicated to Service Excellence strategic priority as we invest in public health leadership and staff development.

Discussion:

Thomas Rush, DrPH (Dr. Rush), has served as the Public Health Laboratory Director since January 9, 2022. Dr. Rush notified Public Health leadership of his intention to resign in June 2024, but his services are still needed in the Public Health Laboratory serving as the Public Health Laboratory Director until the department hires a replacement. The Public Health laboratory is licensed under the federal Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments (CLIA) issued by the California Department of Public Health. A CLIA license sets standards for certain laboratory testing to ensure accuracy, reliability, and timeliness of test results. The Code of Federal Regulations and CLIA standards require that public health laboratories operate under the license of a qualified laboratory director. Laboratory director duties and oversight may be performed on site or virtually. These duties include oversight of the laboratory operations, ensuring compliance with regulations, and developing and implementing quality control procedures. Dr. Rush's continued oversight of the Public Health laboratory, in a contracted capacity, will allow for continuity of operations while the department focuses on succession planning efforts as a qualified replacement is identified.

Dr. Rush brings many valuable skills needed to plan, direct, and evaluate services provided within the Public Health Laboratory. He has subject matter expertise in disease surveillance, detection, and best practices for testing including quality assessment and quality management systems. He brings previous laboratory management experience working for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), where he was involved in global disease detection for infectious and communicable diseases such as HIV and Tuberculosis programs. He also brings experience in training and developing laboratory staff and fellows. He has done extensive work with the Ventura County Public Health Laboratory in creating a training program for microbiologists, as well as ongoing oversight of the renovation and expansion of the Public Health Laboratory that is currently underway.

The proposed new contract before your Board will continue Dr. Rush's services effective as of July 1, 2024, for an initial period of 12 months, through June 30, 2025. The contract may be extended monthly thereafter, through December 31, 2025. The contract will be subject to receipt of all necessary budgetary approvals by your Board.

This letter has been reviewed by County Counsel, the Auditor-Controller's Office, County Executive Office, and the General Services Agency-Procurement Services. If you have any questions regarding this item, please call Rigoberto Vargas at (805) 981-5101.


RIGOBERTO VARGAS
Public Health Director


BARRY ZIMMERMAN
Health Care Agency Director

Attachment:

Exhibit 1 – Agreement for Public Health Laboratory Director Thomas Rush, DrPH