

MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 23, 2019
TO: Personnel and Finance Committee
FROM: Janel Heinrich, Director, PHMDC
SUBJECT: Approval to fill vacant Clerk III Position #2843

County Ordinance 29.52(15) requires the Personnel and Finance Committee and the County Executive to approve filling positions that are vacant longer than six (6) months. Position #2843 (Clerk III supporting environmental health programs) has been vacant for longer than six months.

What is the nature of the work or what is the essential function of the position?

This Clerk III position works primarily in the public health laboratory and provides support to other environmental health programs. This position provides administrative support (Data entry, customer service) for the water testing of beaches, pools, Dane County Zoo pools, public water systems, groundwater, surface and non-stormwater. In 2018, we conducted more than 16,538 that required data entry and customer notification. The Clerk III also provides customer service and data entry for Dane County residents testing their private well water (1,852 tests in 2018).

How has this function been fulfilled without this position?

The Clerk I-II, who works in the licensed establishments and animal services programs and who has been trained as a back-up in the lab, has been doing his best to maintain some degree of support to all three programs ever since the lab position became vacant May 2018. Additionally, the supervisors and other staff of these programs have had to take on some administrative duties in the interim. We were able to hire a LTE during the busy summer season, but that proved to be unsustainable due to the amount of training required and the temporary nature of LTEs. Further delay in hiring will have an impact on the customer service response of all these programs.

What will be the impact on the Department's function and mission if the position remains vacant?

The lab, licensed establishments, and animal services programs will all be impacted if this position continues to remain vacant. Lab hours for Dane County residents may have to be reduced and notifications may be delayed as this position plays an integral role in communicating beach closures to the public. Additionally, applications for licensed establishments (restaurants, hotels etc.) may be delayed, which could delay the opening of these businesses.

This position is also responsible for maintaining our Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS), which includes data entry and sending results to residents that had PHMDC analyze their private water system. The Clerk III is also responsible for managing the day-to-day supply needs of the laboratory, which is a supply intensive program. Delays in ordering supplies may extend the analysis time of submitted samples. PHMDC often receives requests for our water testing data and this position responds to these requests. If left vacant, PHMDC will need more time to get information into the hands of many organizations that rely on this data to support water remediation efforts, monitoring of chloride levels in municipal well and in support of research studies that focus on improving the quality of our water.