



# Environmental Health Services

● *Healthy Environments = Healthy People* ●

## DEHS Directors' Meeting: 12/02/21

Meeting recording available upon [request](#)

Next conference call February 03, 2022 1:00-2:00PM ET

<b>Alaska:</b>	Denman Ondelacy	<b>Nashville:</b>	Charles Woodlee
<b>Albuquerque:</b>	Carrie Oyster	<b>Navajo:</b>	Donna Gilbert
<b>Bemidji:</b>	<i>Not on call</i>	<b>Oklahoma:</b>	<i>Not on call</i>
<b>Billings:</b>	Darcy Merchant	<b>Phoenix:</b>	Dave Cramer
<b>California:</b>	Carolyn Garcia	<b>Portland:</b>	Chris Fish
<b>Great Plains:</b>	Tim Wildcat	<b>Tucson:</b>	<i>Not on call</i>

**Environmental Health Support Center:** Jeff Dickson

**Rockville:** Kelly Taylor, Molly Madson, Mike Reed, Stephen Piontkowski

### 1. Director's Welcome and Update (Kelly Taylor)

- a. Welcome Charles Woodlee, Director, DEHS, Nashville Area
- b. Official CPO tour complete & getting back to Division work
- c. FAAB meeting is today, 02 December
  - i. [Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act](#)
    - \$3.5B to SFC over 5 years
  - ii. [American Rescue Plan Act](#)
  - iii. [Build Back Better Act](#) pending
    - \$113M allocated to EHSA
  - iv. Keep an eye on these & advocate for funds for your Division as applicable
    - [IHS Dear Tribal Leader Letter, 22 November 2021](#)
- d. COVID-19
  - i. Unsure how Omicron variant will impact the Division
  - ii. Ensure you are vaccinated, including booster
  - iii. Be aware of HHS return to the workplace plan
- e. Continuing Resolution FY22
  - i. Expires 03 December
  - ii. Extended to 08 February 2022
- f. IHS Town Hall with HHS Leadership
  - i. 07 December @ 15:00ET
  - ii. DEHS on the agenda
  - iii. Call info
    - <https://ihs-gov.zoomgov.com/j/1602864902?pwd=bitxRWILVjFCMEF4ZVZsWjc3bE1xQT09>
    - Meeting ID: 160 286 4902
    - Passcode: 441786



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## 2. Area Highlights

### a. Alaska

- i. Tribal budget formulation next week
- ii. Cold temperatures in western Alaska are causing systems to freeze
- iii. Planning for return to workplace in January 2022
- iv. Staffing
  - Denman retiring from USPHS in May 2022
    - Will begin new assignment as Director, Project Management Branch, DES, OEHE in February 2022
    - CDR Ferman will be recommended to cover EHS
    - *It has been a pleasure to work w DEHS & its talented staff who provide valuable services throughout Indian Country*
    - *Farewell CAPT Ondelacy who has been a fantastic advocate for DEHS and will be missed* (Kelly Taylor)

### b. Albuquerque

#### i. Staffing

- Area IEHO vacancy announcement forthcoming
- IEHO vacancy announcement forthcoming
- IPS PD being developed

#### ii. USPHS COERs

- New internal standardized process worked well this cycle
- Contact Carrie for more details

### c. Bemidji – *Not on call*

### d. Billings

- i. Updating FY22 *sanitarian dashboards* for Title I & V tribes
- ii. Updating CY22 *sanitarian dashboards* for direct service tribes
- iii. IP special projects
  - \$70K remains
  - Elder fall prevention
- iv. IEHO providing accreditation support to clinics
- v. Staffing
  - Supporting tribal vacancies: Safety Officer, Blackfeet SU vacancy announcement forthcoming
- vi. Conducting establishment assessments as feasible

- e. California
  - i. Staffing
    - Ukiah Field Sanitarian: reports to duty January 2022; used Pathways
    - Director, OEHE, CAO
      - Announcement closed 29 November
      - Carolyn & Jonathan Rash sharing Acting roles until filled
  - ii. Planning for return to workplace
    - Letters to staff ongoing
  - iii. Elizabeth Fowler site visit to CA Area next week
    - Tim Shelhamer will escort her on tour throughout the Area
- f. Great Plains
  - i. Staffing
    - Chris Allen retires June 2022
    - District EHO vacancy announcement forthcoming
    - Pierre SUEHO and Sioux City SUEHO vacancy announcement forthcoming
  - ii. IEH
    - Greg Calvert earned CIH last month
    - IEHOs assisting SUs PPE burn rates & fulfilling requests as needed
  - iii. IP
    - Area injury profile being developed
- g. Nashville
  - i. Staffing
    - Kit will return May 2022
    - Riley should return to DEHS January 2022
  - ii. Planning for return to workplace
    - Letters to staff ongoing
    - Updating Area Office plan
  - iii. SFC funding
    - Very preliminary conversations to create a joint SFC/EHS position using new funds
  - iv. Developing DEHS program plan
- h. Navajo
  - i. Staffing
    - EHO reported to duty in Gallup
    - EHO reported to duty in Shiprock
    - Three vacancy announcements forthcoming
  - ii. COVID-19
    - Work ongoing
    - EHS staff supporting contact tracing, vaccinations, & community mitigation



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- i. Oklahoma City – *Not on call*
- j. Phoenix
  - i. Staffing
    - LT Hargis PCS to Ft. Yuma SU in November
    - LTJG Park PCS to USCG in February
    - Four EHS vacancy announcements coming soon: 2 at San Carlos, 1 in Parker, 1 in Elko; will be post using Pathways
    - LT Morgan completed OBC in November
    - Three EHS vacancies: 1 coming soon in Parker; 2 in San Carlos
  - ii. LCDR Chung assembled & presented a model wastewater treatment survey training including wastewater treatment plants, lift stations, manholes sewer lagoons & individual septic systems based off the e-survey form
  - iii. Injury prevention
    - Piloting gun safe installation project w 2 tribes to prevent unintentional fire arm injuries
    - CDR Morones & LCDR Tsatoke taught Pilot 1 of online IP course 2 along with Bemidji & Navajo Areas in November; 23 participants
    - LCDR Ampadu & LT Wrona were featured presenters on community opioid intervention strategies at the Arizona Opioid Conference & the Arizona Sanitarians Conference
  - iv. Institutional EH
    - CDR Hansen is hosting quarterly Phoenix Area safety officer webinar on 09 December featuring the new TJC workplace violence standards
    - LCDR Parker is supporting PIMC: they have critical staffing need; he is helping w a variety issues including I-STARs, policy reviews, & OSHA emergency temporary standard
  - v. COVID-19
    - 16.8% positivity rate; hospital census has fluctuated between manageable and full; Arizona has the AZ Surgeline that helps off-load patients to valley hospitals
    - CC deployments
      - One EHO recently returned from a mission (he was in Minnesota, Utah, & New Mexico)
      - Three EHOs contacted for deployments this week
      - CC Pharmacists deployments at PIMC for vaccination clinics demobilized after administering approx 2,500 shots
    - EHOs serving as vaccine couriers
    - Request to Veteran's Administration for nurses at Hopi does not look promising
    - Reopening plans moving forward

k. Portland

i. Staffing

- District EHO vacancy announcement at Yakama forthcoming
- Vacancy announcement for EHS position in the Portland Area Office forthcoming
- The Area has staffing shortages for patient care positions (e.g. nurses) & is working to fill those in a variety of ways (e.g. requests for CC deployments)

ii. Planning for return to workplace

l. Tucson – *Not on call* (updates submitted via email)

m. EHSC

i. IP training courses

- Intermediate IP course pilot #1 in November went very well (23 participants)
- Intermediate IP course pilot #2 in February

ii. Staffing

- Jeff Conner reported as IEHO in October; continues to support ABQ Area COVID-19 mission needs
- DACUM (Developing a Curriculum)
  - EHSC completed DACUM training
  - Purpose is to assure courses are designed for effective presentation skills & effective management of learning behaviors
  - EHSC completed pilot courses w SFC & EHSC staff
  - Contact Jeff if interested in future pilot courses w EHS staff

iii. Share your training needs w Jeff

iv. EHSC not traveling to conduct training courses due to COVID-19 travel restrictions

### 3. HQ Announcements

a. Injury prevention (Molly Madson)

i. IP course schedule

- November 2021: Pilot 1 of online course 2 – complete; 23 participants
- February 2022: Pilot 2 of online course 2
- May/June 2022: Pilot 1 of online course 3
- August 2022: Pilot 2 of online course 3
- November 2022: Pilot 1 of in-person course 1

ii. Holly's retirement

- Terminal leave begins 11 December
- Retirement 01 February 2022
- Tim Wildcat, GPA, will be Acting



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- iii. IP projects
  - Some projects have been delegated to Area and field staff – for more info contact your Area IPS or rep
- iv. TIPCAP
  - First year of 2021-2025 cycle ends December 2021
  - Final Reports due 31 March for July-Dec reporting period
  - Carryover requests for Year 2 should be submitted ASAP
- b. NDECI (Mike Reed)
  - i. Final Prep for rollout in-progress
    - Rollout target date: 03 January
    - QA/Testing - dashboard validation & user guide
  - ii. Development of additional functionality following rollout
    - NCHS data
    - 10 year window (lag by 1 quarter vs. prior calendar year)
    - Automating updates (ICD10, notifiable disease definition, monthly data refresh)
  - iii. Staff access request via email from Mike Reed in December
    - Criteria
      - Federal employee
      - Direct service
      - District level or above (includes IP coordinators)
    - Need
      - First name
      - Last name
      - Email address
      - Login ID (e.g., Mreed)
- c. Due date reminders
  - i. 31 December
    - Staffing report
    - Photo contest pics
  - ii. 08 January
    - [EH Specialist of the Year Award nominations](#)
  - iii. 24 January
    - Project posters
  - iv. 11 February
    - [Gefroh Health & Safety Award nominations](#)
    - [Smith Injury Prevention Award nominations](#)

## 4. Other

- i. None

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