

**DATE:** November 4, 2009

**TO:** Washington State Board of Health Members

**FROM:** Craig McLaughlin, Executive Director

**SUBJECT: PROPOSED 2010 STATE BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING SCHEDULE**

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### **Background and Summary:**

For 2009, the State Board of Health approved a schedule that called for six meetings. This was down from the eight in the couple of years prior. The decision was based on the secretary senior position, which has significant duties related to meeting preparation, being vacant during a hiring freeze and Board members' strong interest in cutting costs because of the state fiscal crisis. The Board also elected to travel less in order to reduce costs, despite a longstanding interest in being accessible to citizens across the state.

The Board will have met seven times in 2009 because of a special meeting in August for a hearing on the school rule. Two of the meetings were reduced to half-day meetings and one of those was held by phone. Several Board members have raised concerns that having fewer has reduced the Board's effectiveness.

The meeting schedule I am proposing for 2010 is attached. To help the Board understand workload issues, the meeting dates being proposed for the Governor's Interagency Council on Health Disparities are also included. The schedule again calls for six regularly scheduled Board meetings. From a financial perspective the Board's current budget could allow it to meet more frequently, but the Governor has already requested another round of spending reductions and the supplemental budget will need to close a roughly \$1.25 billion gap between revenue and spending. How this will affect the Board is unknown. Also, the staffing picture has not changed. It is extremely difficult for remaining staff to prepare for more than one meeting a month between the Board and the Council, and even that frequency puts a strain on staff capacity to do work things other than meeting preparation (for example, rule writing and policy development).

To partially address the Board's concerns about the lack of time together, I am proposing full-day meetings unless agendas turn out to be unexpectedly light, and I am proposing that all meetings be in person. Two months are reserved for additional meetings if they are needed. I am not proposing meeting locations for the second half of the year so the Board can make decisions about where it wants to meet after the supplemental budget has passed.

### **Recommended Board Action:**

I recommend the Board consider, amend as necessary, and approve the proposed 2010 State Board of Health Meeting Schedule submitted this day.