

Health Equity Advisory & Leadership Council Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

What is the purpose of the HEAL Council?

The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) Health Equity Advisory and Leadership (HEAL) Council was created to provide guidance to the Commissioner of Health regarding strengthening and improving the health and wellness of communities most impacted by health inequities across the state. MDH research shows that communities most impacted by health inequities include communities of color, American Indians, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) populations, those impacted by inequities related to geography, and Minnesotans with disabilities.

The MDH HEAL Council's mission is to be a guiding body that works collaboratively with MDH to eliminate health disparities, name and address institutional and structural racism and other social, economic, and environmental injustices that perpetuate health inequity, and create sustainable action for systems and policy change that advances health equity for all.

What role will HEAL Council members have?

The MDH HEAL Council is not a governing board but serves to advise MDH and the Commissioner of Health. Members will be representatives of community groups or professional stakeholder organizations that can have an influence on the health of various populations. MDH will rely on the advisory council to provide forthright and constructive feedback on the strategic direction of MDH in regards to health equity. Goals will include examining short- and long-term MDH health equity strategies and priorities and ensuring that MDH interfaces successfully with communities most impacted by health inequities.

What duties will the HEAL Council have?

The work of HEAL is predominantly internal facing to the agency and will provide guidance on implementation and alignment of health equity efforts across MDH systems and policies. HEAL is responsible for the following:

- 1) Advise the Commissioner of Health on health equity issues and the health equity priorities and concerns of priority populations described above;
- 2) Provide guidance to the agency in efforts to advance health equity, including consulting on specific agency policies and programs, providing ideas and input about potential budget and/or policy proposals, and recommending review of particular agency policies, standards or procedures that may create or perpetuate health inequities;
- 3) Provide guidance to the agency in developing and monitoring meaningful performance measures related to advancing health equity.

Who will comprise the council?

The HEAL Council will consist of members who are **representative of communities most impacted by health inequities** across the state of Minnesota, including: racial and ethnic minority groups including populations of color (Black/African American, Asian American, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, Hispanic/Latino, Arab American); refugees and immigrants; American Indians, Minnesotans living in rural and/or urban; LGBTQ communities; rural Minnesotans; Minnesotans with disabilities; culturally and linguistically specific groups or service providers; faith communities; or any other group the commissioner deems appropriate to facilitate the goals and duties of the council, including designated MDH staff.

What is MDH looking for in a member?

MDH is looking for members who:

- Represent a community, organization/group, network or coalition that works to advance the health of those most impacted by health inequities in the state of Minnesota. This could be a formal or informal group. This could include those working on social determinants of health such as housing, transportation, education, etc.;
- Are accountable to the communities and/or organizations that they represent (via reporting back, soliciting feedback, etc.);
- Are able to articulate needs and issues with respect to advancing health, racial equity and equity at its many intersections (which may include economic justice, disability justice, gender justice, etc.); and
- Are able to bring forth opportunities and resources on behalf of their respective communities.

What will the HEAL Council application and selection process be?

*The application is a two-part process. You **MUST** complete both parts to be considered.*

- **Part 1:** Interested applicants must complete an electronic application through the MN Secretary of State's (MNSOS) Boards and Commissions Open Positions portal. MNSOS applications will be open until **Friday, October 25, 2019**.
- **Part 2:** Upon receipt of the Secretary of State's application, MDH will email a supplemental application form to the email address listed on the MNSOS application. This supplemental MDH application **must also be completed to be considered**. The deadline to submit the MDH supplemental application is **Friday, November 1, 2019**.
- Once the application deadline has passed, a review committee comprised of MDH staff, current HEAL members and external reviewers will review, rank and recommend candidates to the Commissioner of Health. The Commissioner of Health will make final decisions and appointments to the HEAL Council by December 31, 2019.

How long will the terms of service on the council be?

Members may serve up to two consecutive two-year terms.

When will HEAL Council meetings take place?

The HEAL Council will meet every other month (a minimum of six times annually). Meeting frequency may be adjusted as needed after the first year. Meetings will be four hours long and may alternate between work hours (i.e., 9am – 5pm) and evenings (i.e., 3pm – 7 pm). MDH will try to schedule meeting times to accommodate member schedules as much as possible.

Where will meetings take place?

Meetings will take place in person in the metro area in an accessible location. Virtual meeting access for those outside of the metro area will be provided.

Will council members be reimbursed for travel or receive stipends?

- HEAL Council members may be reimbursed for parking expenses and childcare expenses incurred as a result of attending HEAL Council meetings.
- HEAL Council members traveling from further than 100 miles away from their home may be reimbursed for mileage traveled to and from meetings.
- Some additional travel expense reimbursement (lodging, etc.) may be reimbursed on a case-by-case basis.
- Stipends are not available for council members.

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