



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Executive Office of Health and Human Services  
Department of Public Health  
250 Washington Street, Boston, MA 02108-4619

**CHARLES D. BAKER**  
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**KARYN E. POLITO**  
Lieutenant Governor

**MARYLOU SUDDERS**  
Secretary

**MONICA BHAREL, MD, MPH**  
Commissioner

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March 30, 2016

Dear Friend of Public Health,

The Department of Public Health and the Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant Advisory Committee are seeking public comment for the priorities for the Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant.

For your information and use in thinking ahead, enclosed you will find a Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant summary, which includes federal fiscal year 2016 program priorities.

We have scheduled an open meeting on April 4, 2016 from 5:00 PM – 6:00 PM in the Public Health Council Room, Department of Public Health, 250 Washington Street, Boston, MA, 02108. Written comments can also be made to:

Christine Gorwood – Preventive Health & Health Services Block Grant Coordinator  
Bureau of Community Health & Prevention  
250 Washington Street, 5<sup>th</sup> floor  
Boston, MA 02108

Email: [christine.gorwood@state.ma.us](mailto:christine.gorwood@state.ma.us)

This hearing provides a forum for Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant funded agencies as well as other public health professionals and consumers to share their thoughts with the Department concerning Program priorities. I encourage you to participate on April 4, 2016.

If you have any questions about the hearing, you may contact me at 617-624-5541 or by email (see above). Thank you.

Sincerely,

Christine Gorwood  
Block Grant Coordinator  
Preventive Health & Health Services Block Grant Program

Enclosure (1)

The Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant was established in 1981 as a flexible way for states to address priority health concerns focused on healthy people objectives and prevention initiatives. The grant has been a key mechanism utilized by Massachusetts to achieve the three Public Health Core Functions: Assessment, Policy, and Assurance. The Block Grant assures the infrastructure is in place both at the state and community level to address the ten Essential Public Health Services. These funds are the foundation upon which other services and initiatives are built. This funding, integrated with both state and other federal funding, assures that Massachusetts can continue to address the disparities which exist in health outcomes and maintain core public health activities such as assessment and sanitation.

The State used the following criteria to solicit project proposals from DPH Offices and Bureaus for allocation of funding in Federal FY2016:

- Healthy people 2020 objectives
- Compliance with Maintenance of Effort requirements
- Focus on primary and secondary prevention
- Consistent with State Health Plan (SHIP)
- Respond to emerging health priorities
- Data driven projects that address racial/ethnic and other health disparities

Program goals are briefly outlined along with proposed allocation of funding:

*Sexual assault prevention* – encourage a climate in which sexual violence is not tolerated, promote and enhance effective and accessible responses and services to all survivors of sexual assault - \$375,000

*Mass in Motion* – support implementation of community-level strategies to increase active living and healthy eating- \$695,277.55

*Local public health capacity building* – invest in local public health training capacity and develop training and support for emerging public health issues - \$550,000

*Healthy communities capacity building* – increase the capacity of individuals, organizations, and teams to build healthier communities across the Commonwealth by providing targeted skill development through customized in-person trainings and webinars, coaching and technical assistance, facilitating targeted networking and connections, and development and distribution of materials to community coalitions and partnerships including prevention programs funded by DPH- \$353,772.7

*Infrastructure investment in public health* – improve public health infrastructure by continuing the Department’s goal of becoming an accredited health department; increasing the core competencies of the public health workforce; and investing in MDPHNet, vital records, and other tools to improve data availability and online access- \$1,377,000.00

*Emerging public health priorities that align with the State Health Improvement Plan* – investment in one-time projects that pilot or meet short-term health needs; projects proposed in 2016 include pedestrian/traffic safety, healthy community design, healthy aging support, falls prevention, trauma system development, and projects to support disparate populations - \$437,950