

**RCW 43.70.020 Department created.** (1) There is hereby created a department of state government to be known as the department of health. The department shall be vested with all powers and duties transferred to it by chapter 9, Laws of 1989 1st ex. sess. and such other powers and duties as may be authorized by law. The main administrative office of the department shall be located in the city of Olympia. The secretary may establish administrative facilities in other locations, if deemed necessary for the efficient operation of the department, and if consistent with the principles set forth in subsection (2) of this section.

(2) The department of health shall be organized consistent with the goals of providing state government with a focus in health and serving the people of this state. The legislature recognizes that the secretary needs sufficient organizational flexibility to carry out the department's various duties. To the extent practical, the secretary shall consider the following organizational principles:

(a) Clear lines of authority which avoid functional duplication within and between subelements of the department;

(b) A clear and simplified organizational design promoting accessibility, responsiveness, and accountability to the legislature, the consumer, and the general public;

(c) Maximum span of control without jeopardizing adequate supervision;

(d) A substate or regional organizational structure for the department's health service delivery programs and activities that encourages joint working agreements with local health departments and that is consistent between programs;

(e) Decentralized authority and responsibility, with clear accountability;

(f) A single point of access for persons receiving like services from the department which would limit the number of referrals between divisions.

(3) The department shall provide leadership and coordination in identifying and resolving threats to the public health by:

(a) Working with local health departments and local governments to strengthen the state and local governmental partnership in providing public protection;

(b) Developing intervention strategies;

(c) Providing expert advice to the executive and legislative branches of state government;

(d) Providing active and fair enforcement of rules;

(e) Working with other federal, state, and local agencies and facilitating their involvement in planning and implementing health preservation measures;

(f) Providing information to the public; and

(g) Carrying out such other related actions as may be appropriate to this purpose.

(4) In accordance with the administrative procedure act, chapter 34.05 RCW, the department shall ensure an opportunity for consultation, review, and comment by the department's clients before the adoption of standards, guidelines, and rules.

(5) Consistent with the principles set forth in subsection (2) of this section, the secretary may create such administrative divisions, offices, bureaus, and programs within the department as the secretary deems necessary. The secretary shall have complete charge of and supervisory powers over the department, except where the secretary's authority is specifically limited by law.

(6) The secretary shall appoint such personnel as are necessary to carry out the duties of the department in accordance with chapter 41.06 RCW.

(7) The secretary shall appoint the state health officer and such deputy secretaries, assistant secretaries, and other administrative positions as deemed necessary consistent with the principles set forth in subsection (2) of this section. All persons who administer the necessary divisions, offices, bureaus, and programs, and five additional employees shall be exempt from the provisions of chapter 41.06 RCW. The officers and employees appointed under this subsection shall be paid salaries to be fixed by the governor in accordance with the procedure established by law for the fixing of salaries for officers exempt from the state civil service law.

(8) The secretary shall administer family services and programs to promote the state's policy as provided in RCW 74.14A.025. [1992 c 198 s 8; 1989 1st ex.s. c 9 s 103.]