



Improving the Health  
of Pennsylvanians

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**Allegheny County**  
Allegheny County  
Health Department

**Allentown**  
Allentown Health Bureau

**Bethlehem**  
Bethlehem Health Bureau

**Bucks County**  
Bucks County  
Health Department

**Chester County**  
Chester County  
Health Department

**Erie County**  
Erie County  
Department of Health

**Montgomery County**  
Montgomery County  
Office of Public Health

**Philadelphia**  
Philadelphia Department  
of Public Health

**Wilkes-Barre**  
Wilkes-Barre City  
Health Department

**York**  
York City Bureau of Health

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pahealthpolicy.org

June 1, 2020

Governor Tom Wolf  
Office of the Governor  
508 Main Capitol Building  
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Secretary Rachel Levine, M.D.  
Department of Health  
625 Forster Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17102

Re: COVID-19 Funding for Local Public Health Departments

Dear Governor Wolf and Secretary Levine,

The Pennsylvania Health Policy Coalition represents the state's ten county and municipal health departments. The Coalition is following up on its April 27, 2020 letter urgently requesting funding to support COVID-19 response funding in order to safely reopen the Commonwealth's economy. The Coalition is disappointed that it received no response to that letter.

Since the April 27 letter, the Coalition has learned that the Commonwealth has received grants from the CDC totaling \$344,794,856, including a recent award of \$301,036,686.<sup>1</sup> To date, the Commonwealth has distributed just \$10,000,000, or 2.9 percent of CDC funds received, to Coalition members.

This small funding distribution is despite the fact that the ten Coalition members represent over 40 percent of the state's population and over 55 percent of the state's COVID-19 cases. Coalition members are expected to expand contact tracing, increase laboratory testing, and protect vulnerable populations, including nursing home residents, yet members have received just 2.9 percent of the funding allocated to the Commonwealth.

The Coalition is aware that Philadelphia County has received direct funding from the CDC of \$92,417,870 for testing and contact tracing.<sup>1</sup> By considering that funding, Coalition members in total have still received just 26 percent of the total funding allocated to the state, or less than half than it should receive based on population or case count allocation methodologies.

It is our understanding that the Coalition expects our ten jurisdictions to support and implement the Commonwealth's reopening plan. But that support requires resources, and it requires resources urgently. **When will the Commonwealth be distributing appropriate funding to all ten Coalition members for our COVID-19 public health response activities?**

Thank you for your attention to this important issue. We look forward to hearing back immediately. If you have questions, please contact Melissa Lyon, Coalition Co-Chair, at [mlyon@eriecountypa.gov](mailto:mlyon@eriecountypa.gov).

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<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 5/21/2020, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/php/funding-update.pdf>



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Debra L. Bogen MD".

Debra Bogen, M.D.  
Director  
Allegheny County Health Department

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Melissa C. Lyon, M.P.H.".

Melissa C. Lyon, M.P.H.  
Director  
Erie County Department of Health

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vicky Kistler".

Vicky Kistler, M.Ed.  
Director of Health  
Allentown Health Bureau

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Janet Panning, MS".

Janet Panning, M.S.  
Interim Administrator  
Montgomery County Office of Public Health

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kristen Wenrich".

Kristen Wenrich, M.P.H., C.P.H.  
Health Director  
Bethlehem Health Bureau

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas A. Farley, M.D., M.P.H.".

Thomas A. Farley, M.D., M.P.H.  
Health Commissioner  
Philadelphia Department of Public Health

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Damsker, M.D., M.P.H.".

David Damsker, M.D., M.P.H.  
Director  
Bucks County Health Department

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Henry Radulski".

Henry Radulski  
Director  
Wilkes-Barre City Health Department

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeanne E. Casner".

Jeanne Casner, M.P.H., P.M.P.  
County Health Director  
Chester County Health Department

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barbara Kovacs".

Barbara Kovacs, M.P.A.  
Director of Health  
York City Bureau of Health