

January 24, 2024

Dr. Mark Ghaly, Secretary  
California Health and Human Services Agency  
1215 O Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Secretary Dr. Mark Ghaly,

In accordance with the State Leadership Accountability Act (Leadership Accountability), the Department of Public Health submits this report on the review of our internal control and monitoring systems for the biennial period ending December 31, 2023.

Should you have any questions please contact Brandon Nunes, Chief Deputy Director of Operations, at (916) 558-1700, Brandon.Nunes@cdph.ca.gov.

## **GOVERNANCE**

### **MISSION AND STRATEGIC PLAN**

CDPH was established on July 1, 2007, through Senate Bill 162 (Ortiz, Chapter 241, Statutes of 2006). As a subdivision of the California Health and Human Services (CHHS) Agency, CDPH is tasked with administering a wide range of public health programs. Its primary functions include infectious disease control and prevention, food safety, environmental health, laboratory services, patient safety, emergency preparedness, chronic disease prevention and health promotion, family health, health equity, and vital records and statistics.

#### **Mission**

To advance the health and well-being of California's diverse people and communities.

#### **Vision**

Healthy communities with thriving families and individuals.

#### **Strategic Goals and Objectives**

Strategic planning at CDPH is essential for charting the department's course and establishing clear success metrics. This process categorizes high-priority goals that encompass all departmental activities, ensuring resources and actions are in alignment with the mission and vision. Moreover, it dovetails with other department initiatives.

Currently, CDPH is operating from its interim Strategic Map that outlines current strategic priorities while the Department continues to actively develop its full updated plan, demonstrating its dedication to enhancing the health and well-being of California's diverse populations and communities. The interim Strategic Map was implemented with all CDPH

employees on October 24, 2023.

### **Entities Under Your Reporting Responsibility**

CDPH's reporting responsibility includes 8 centers, 3 divisions, and 9 offices collectively responsible for administering more than 200 programs. This reporting structure comprises key reporting relationships:

- The CDPH Director and State Public Health Officer oversees the entire Department, and four crucial entities report directly to the Director, including the Office of Legislative and Governmental Affairs, the Office of Compliance, the Office of Health Equity, and the California Conference of Local Health Officers.
- The Chief Deputy Director of Operations oversees three divisions and one office.
- The Chief Deputy Director of Health Quality and Emergency Response supervises four centers and one office.
- The Assistant Public Health Officer of Population Health oversees four centers.
- The Assistant Director of Policy, Planning and Performance oversees four offices.

## **CONTROL ENVIRONMENT**

### **Integrity and Ethical Values**

CDPH's Directorate team sets the ethical tone at the top for the organization. The department's dedication to integrity and ethical values is articulated through its framework to transform culture and systems.

CDPH follows measures of organization health, culture principles and values to govern and transform the organization. The organizational health metrics include:

1. Equity
2. Health impacts
3. Workforce
4. Safety (staff, clients, patients)
5. Service experience (internal and external stakeholders)
6. Financial stewardship
7. Decision intelligence (transforming data and information into good decisions and actions)

CDPH's cultural principles include:

1. Be a learning, healing, impactful organization (Lean management with Objectives and Key Results (OKRs); Trauma-informed and responsive; equity, antiracism, and health equity)
2. Develop our people (core public health competencies and personal professional development)
3. Tackle key public health challenges (Future of Public Health Initiative, behavioral health promotion, community health improvement, emergency readiness and

pandemic recovery, climate action and community resilience)

And CDPH's Lean values include the following:

1. Respect for people
  - Dignity
  - Equity
  - Compassion
  - Belonging
  
2. Continuous Improvement
  - Challenge: Setting ambitious goals to drive improvement.
  - Go and See: Emphasizing firsthand observation for informed decision-making.
  - Kaizen: Continuous improvement through small, incremental changes.
  - Teamwork: Fostering collaboration and communication for collective problem-solving.

The Public Health Administrative Manual (PHAM) delineates codes of conduct for the department, including its commitment to being an equal opportunity employer, anti-harassment and non-discrimination policies, and instructions for reporting various ethical concerns.

The Office of Compliance (OOC) is responsible for CDPH's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) program, and houses the Civil Rights Unit (CRU), which is responsible to ensure CDPH is in compliance with state and federal regulations to provide a work environment free from discrimination and harassment. Additionally, CDPH offers an intranet page that lists all available channels for reporting various types of complaints.

CDPH also provides staff with the whistleblower hotline notification, which explains the process and procedure for anonymously reporting concerns related to unethical, improper, or questionable behavior by CDPH employees.

The Department provides a range of training programs that emphasize the importance of ethical conduct, including the Office of the Attorney General's online Ethics Training, which is mandatory for state officials and is required every two years.

Furthermore, each duty statement provided to employees upon their hiring includes a reference to the California Code of Regulations (Title 2, Section 172), which states employees are to possess and exercise integrity, honesty, dependability, accuracy, initiative, and good judgment.

### **Oversight and Organizational Structure**

CDPH's internal control system is overseen by the Directorate Team, comprised of the Director and State Public Health Officer (Director), the Assistant Public Health Officer, the Assistant Director, and two Chief Deputy Directors. This team serves as the organization's top leadership. Additionally, the Senior Leadership Team encompasses the Directorate Team and other leaders responsible for various areas within CDPH. Each center, division, and office (CDO)

operates under the guidance and supervision of a Deputy Director, ensuring efficient oversight throughout the organization.

Oversight is conducted through various mechanisms, including probationary reports, annual evaluations, individual development plans, expectations memos, expenditure tracking, review of internal controls, and various types of meetings.

Externally, CDPH is subject to oversight and regulation by numerous entities and stakeholders, including the California Legislature, the Governor of California, the CHHS Agency, federal agencies like the Center for Disease Control, and other public health organizations and advocacy groups at both state and federal levels.

### **Maintaining Documentation of Internal Control System**

CDPH's internal control system is effectively documented in the PHAM, which aligns with the State Administrative Manual. The PHAM serves as a comprehensive repository of the Department's internal control system, encompassing official administrative policies, procedures, delegations of authority, and assignments of responsibility throughout CDPH.

The establishment and maintenance of the internal control system are primary responsibilities of the Director, Assistant Public Health Officer, Assistant Director, and Chief Deputy Directors. They offer strategic oversight and ensure compliance with policies outlined in the PHAM. Furthermore, managers and supervisors play a crucial role in upholding the internal control system by ensuring that their processes align with the policies and procedures detailed in the PHAM.

CDPH operates an Enterprise Risk and Compliance (ERMC) Program administered within OOC in collaboration with other areas of the Department. This program provides the necessary infrastructure and documentation to strengthen the internal control system and ensure compliance with applicable regulations and standards.

### **Maintaining a Competent Workforce**

CDPH is dedicated to maintaining a competent and diverse workforce through multifaceted initiatives that encompass recruitment, professional development, retention, and succession planning. These endeavors aim to create a supportive and inclusive work environment that fosters growth, innovation, and career advancement for employees.

CDPH's Human Resources Division (HRD) has launched a Career Center to support employees in their professional development at any stage in their careers. HRD also hosts events for specific classification areas through a series of recruitment events designed to guide prospective candidates through accelerating their careers with CDPH and navigating the state application and hiring processes.

The Department's Future of Public Health plan outlines CDPH's efforts to build out the statewide public health system to incorporate foundational service areas including workforce development, recruitment, and training.

CDPH has implemented a diversity outreach plan to attract candidates reflective of the served population. The Department actively participates in job fairs and maintains an internship program for students considering careers in public service to promote retention and growth.

CDPH's HEART (Healing, Equity for All, Anti-Racism, Trauma Responsiveness Transformation) initiative is dedicated to transforming CDPH into a healing organization by integrating health and racial equity principals, as well as trauma-informed and healing support into policies, procedures, and workplace culture. The goal of this initiative is to foster a trauma responsive environment that ensures psychological safety for all employees. CDPH provides training opportunities, surveys, and discussions for employees to support this initiative. CDPH also has an intranet page with information regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion for employees.

CDPH has established Public Health Competencies, covering essential knowledge, skills, and behaviors vital for effective job performance in public health. These competencies serve as the foundation for professional development, offering staff the tools to excel in their roles and achieve their goals. They were developed with input from CDPH employees across various fields and influenced by national public health workforce models. CDPH supports staff development of these competencies through various avenues, including online public health training, university trainings, CDC courses, and specialty workshops.

CDPH offers several training programs, including the Supervisors Development Program, the Leadership Development Program, and the Upward Mobility Program to support career advancement.

CDPH promotes a learning culture through job coaching, career center support, exit and stay surveys, mentorship programs, and job rotation opportunities.

CDPH's succession planning efforts encompass leadership development and establish a framework for filling key positions. The identification of competencies essential for succession planning helps address competency gaps. CDPH ensures a strong leadership bench by creating competency profiles for key leadership positions. The upcoming Workforce Development plan will further address current and future workforce needs, aligning with the Department's strategic goals.

Additionally, CDPH provides webinars, coaching, and other resources to support employees in maintaining physical, social, emotional, and financial well-being.

### **Accountability**

Accountability is a cornerstone of CDPH's operations. Each center, division, and office is governed by a Deputy Director with oversight authority. Managers and supervisors play a crucial role in ensuring compliance with policies and employee conduct expectations, ensuring that employees have the necessary resources for their roles without violating standards of conduct. Management effectively communicates expectations of competence, values, philosophies, and operating styles through directives, attitudes, and behavior. Policies on standards of conduct, operating principles, and guidance further reinforce accountability. Onboarding, one-on-one meetings, performance monitoring, formal and informal feedback,

training, and establishing reporting lines and resources are all part of the processes that contribute to maintaining accountability at CDPH.

The Performance Management Unit within HRD assists managers and supervisors in addressing job performance and conduct concerns through preventative measures and progressive discipline. They also provide guidance on managing excessive pressures.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION**

### **Relevant and Reliable Information**

Effective communication is paramount in ensuring CDPH's seamless communication to ensure cohesive operations, efficient collaboration, and informed decision-making.

The CDPH Service NOW (SNOW) system, TEMPO Timekeeping, Cherwell and Administrative Network are robust web-based systems designed to streamline department-wide workflow processes, managing aspects such as the personnel directory, personnel action requests, contracts, purchasing, timekeeping, and IT tickets. Accessible to employees and management, these systems track vital organizational information for informed decision-making and strategic planning with frequent updates aimed at increasing efficiency.

The Public Health Employees Training Tracking System (PHETTS) is a centralized platform that efficiently monitors and records the completion of mandated trainings for CDPH employees, ensuring compliance and employee development management.

The Financial Information System for California (FI\$CAL) serves as the statewide accounting, budget, cash management, and procurement IT system. It combines these operations into a single financial management system, facilitating effective management of CDPH's financial resources. CDPH has designated staff that operate in FI\$CAL under the Financial Management Branch and Program Support Branch. The FI\$CAL Online Reporting Environment (FORE) provides all CDPH employees internet-based access to FI\$CAL's financial information and reports, fulfilling legal requirements for submitting yearly financial statements to the State Controller's Office (SCO) and the Department of Finance. Furthermore, CDPH has implemented an online invoice portal system to streamline invoice submission and tracking, along with an Excel report for monitoring the status of relevant warrants. These initiatives enhance efficiency and transparency of CDPH's financial operations.

### **Internal Communication**

The Department utilizes an internal intranet to promptly share updates on public health advancements, as well as policies and procedures from the PHAM, ensuring employees have the latest relevant information. Various communication channels are utilized to disseminate information, including HR blasts, emails from the Director's office, administrative memos, IT notifications, and newsletters, all conveying important announcements, policy changes, and relevant updates. The Directorate's Corner on the internal intranet provides key communications and messaging from the Director's Office. Key updates are further shared with all of CDPH through regular Town Hall sessions that are open to all employees virtually.

Pertinent information is shared and documented within workgroup, council, and executive meetings, serving as platforms for discussions, decision-making, and knowledge exchange. Outcomes and key points are recorded for future reference, ensuring accessibility and retention.

A skilled Communications Coordinator manages communication and marketing efforts within the organization, focusing on materials that encourage engagement and support professional development among employees. Effective internal communication and information dissemination by the Communications Coordinator contribute to a well-connected and motivated workforce, enhancing the organization's ability to deliver essential services to the community.

### **External Communication**

CDPH employs various channels for effective external communication. The CDPH website serves as an outward-facing platform, disseminating information about public health advancements, media updates, and upcoming events. Community members access and apply for various health programs through the CDPH internet.

CDPH uses the California Health Alert Network (CAHAN), the primary communication tool used in statewide public health exercises and public health emergencies. CAHAN is designed for emergency preparedness information sharing, distribution of pertinent public health related events and alerting materials, dissemination of treatment and prevention guidelines, coordinated disease investigation efforts, preparedness planning, and other initiatives that strengthen state and local preparedness.

CDPH communicates with external stakeholders through media advisories on public health matters and provides stakeholder briefings. Additionally, CDPH offers legislative briefings and subject matter expertise on statewide public health-related issues.

### **Reporting Inefficiencies**

CDPH provides employees with several avenues to report inefficiencies and inappropriate actions to management, leadership or to external reporting entities. When deficiencies are identified, they are appropriately addressed within the oversight processes, as previously mentioned, and reported to the responsible area in alignment with the Department's policies. In cases where deficiencies cross organizational lines or conflict with the interests of direct management, alternative reporting routes are available through CDPH's intranet page under an employee resource that outlines all reporting options based on complaint type.

Operating within the framework of CDPH, the Office of Policy and Planning (OPP) is a proactive team focused on improving the efficiency and effectiveness of public health initiatives to align with CDPH's Continuous Improvement (CI) Plan. This plan serves as the Department's comprehensive roadmap detailing the department's commitment to continuous improvement and organizational development. Leveraging Lean principles, which emphasize minimizing waste and maximizing productivity, OPP seeks to streamline operations and enhance overall performance. Additionally, OPP integrates the concept of Results-Based Accountability (RBA), which underscores the importance of measuring outcomes and the

impact of programs on communities. RBA ensures that initiatives are not only efficient but also deliver tangible and meaningful results for the public.

One of the key tools utilized by OPP is the A3 tool, a problem-solving and continuous improvement approach that encourages a systematic and collaborative method for addressing complex issues. A3 involves breaking down challenges into manageable components, analyzing data, and fostering a culture of continuous learning and improvement. By embracing A3 methodology, OPP aims to foster a culture of innovation and efficiency within CDPH.

The Lean Transformation office (LTO) within OPP serves as the driving force behind the implementation of Lean Principles. LTO not only supports the Quality Improvement Council (QIC) but also plays a crucial role in developing and regularly updating the CI Plan. Furthermore, LTO provides comprehensive resources for employees, including mandatory training on quality improvement in public health, which emphasizes the fundamentals of Lean principles and their significance in achieving public health initiatives.

## **MONITORING**

The information included here discusses the entity-wide, continuous process to ensure internal control systems are working as intended. The role of the executive monitoring sponsor includes facilitating and verifying that the Department of Public Health monitoring practices are implemented and functioning. The responsibilities as the executive monitoring sponsor(s) have been given to: The information included here discusses the entity-wide, continuous process to ensure internal control systems are working as intended. The role of the executive monitoring sponsor includes facilitating and verifying that CDPH's monitoring practices are implemented and functioning. The responsibilities as the executive monitoring sponsor(s) have been given to: Brandon Nunes, Chief Deputy Director of Operations..

## **MONITORING ACTIVITIES**

### **Confirming Effectiveness of Internal Control System**

CDPH places a high priority on overseeing and monitoring the effectiveness of its internal control system. Various methods are employed to ensure its effectiveness. Oversight and monitoring of the internal control system are top priorities for the Directorate, Senior Leadership, the Department Operations Improvement Team (DOIT), and the Policy Committee. These executive level committees actively participate in regular meetings and provide guidance to ensure CDPH's internal control system operates effectively.

The Department conducts regular monitoring activities, including informal reviews, system testing, management and supervisory oversight meetings, and timeline tracking. These practices ensure efficient operations, adherence to standards, and timely project completion, fostering a culture of accountability and continuous improvement.

The Department's established Internal Audit plan under OOC further strengthens internal control measures. The Internal Audits function evaluates the adequacy and effectiveness of the Department's governance, risk management process, system of internal control structure, and the quality of performance in achieving CDPH's strategic goals and objectives. These



routine detailed reviews identify areas of noncompliance and vulnerabilities within the Department. This function reports directly to the Directorate and ensures that the necessary corrective actions are implemented.

OOC also conducts regular detailed reviews through the administration of the ERM program. The Department and OOC conduct comprehensive risk assessments at the enterprise level to identify potential risks that may impact the Department. These risks are reported to the Directorate and closely monitored to ensure the effectiveness of risk management strategies. OOC monitors compliance issues and vulnerabilities reported across the Department, helping identify areas where improvements to the internal control system may be necessary. In addition to risk assessments, OOC provides annual and ad hoc reports to the Directorate, keeping them informed about the ongoing risk management efforts.

### **Comparison of Results Against Objectives**

CDPH employs RBA as a central element of its CI plan, using it to gauge progress and align with organizational goals. RBA shapes strategies by establishing performance measures and utilizing baseline data to facilitate data-driven decision-making. RBA is applied both internally, fostering shared accountability for performance enhancements and operations, and externally to programs.

Internally, regular monitoring and update meetings are conducted for lean projects, ensuring timely progress and adaptation to emerging needs. Additionally, the Department incorporates Hoshin Kanri, a strategic planning methodology, through frequent meetings and working sessions that specifically focus on A3 initiatives, facilitating effective communication and collaboration among leadership. Hoshin Kanri ensures alignment between the strategic goals of the organization and the daily activities of employees, promoting a cohesive approach to achieve long-term objectives. CDPH integrates RBA with its Quality Improvement Program (QIP), Performance Improvement Management Office (PIM), and Daily Management System (DMS), to create a robust continuous improvement system.

### **Ownership and Monitoring Progress**

Ownership for addressing and monitoring internal control vulnerabilities is assigned through routine management reviews, internal audits, executive committee discussions, and other monitoring activities as needed. Responsibility for addressing internal control vulnerabilities rests with the respective program, center, division, office, or unit where deficiencies are identified. For enterprise-wide internal controls, including new policies, programs, or processes, ownership and monitoring are overseen through the ERM program. This approach ensures accountability and facilitates prompt action to rectify deficiencies, strengthening the organization's internal control systems.

### **RISK ASSESSMENT PROCESS**

The following personnel were involved in the Department of Public Health risk assessment process: executive management, middle management, front line management, and staff.

The following methods were used to identify risks: brainstorming meetings, employee engagement surveys, ongoing monitoring activities, audit/review results, other/prior risk assessments, questionnaires, and consideration of potential fraud.

The following criteria were used to rank risks: likelihood of occurrence, potential impact to mission/goals/objectives, timing of potential event, and tolerance level for the type of risk.

## **RISKS AND CONTROLS**

### **Risk: Fiscal Reporting and User Interface**

CDPH may be unable to ensure the quality and integrity of its fiscal data and/or information used to develop CDPH's internal and external financial reports due to potential incomplete and inaccurate financial information provided by the CDOs as well as reporting information shared by the Financial Management Branch (FMB). This may result in misinformed financial decision-making, financial loss, and inefficient resource allocation.

#### **Control: Quality Assurance and Data Integrity Unit**

FMB's QADI Unit Supports FMB by overseeing the development, maintenance, and retention of policies and procedures for the Branch; leading process improvement efforts; and supporting various data reporting capabilities, including advancing technology tools to aid in greater automation and data integrity. QADI is an advocate for Lean methodologies and works to identify and eliminate waste and processes to deliver more value to customers with improved resources, communications, and data/technology improvement initiatives. The QADI unit supports reduction of this risk by continuing to support CDPH staff with financial management information, training, resources, and providing ongoing support and expertise on challenges that arise with accessing financial information and reports.

#### **Control: Enterprise Technology Solutions**

In partnership with the Information Technology Services Division (ITSD), FMB strives to identify and implement enterprise technology solutions to support mitigation of the risk by providing accurate, timely, transparent, and reliable financial information and incorporating the necessary tests and steps to help define a simplistic and uniform system that will meet internal and external stakeholder needs, while upholding the integrity and reliability of the Department's tracking and reporting of financial data.

### **Risk: Staff - Recruitment, Retention, Staffing Levels**

CDPH may be unable to meet critical business functions or maintain service levels due to recruitment and hiring challenges, key person dependencies, lack of advancement opportunities, and ongoing vacancies in hard-to-fill classifications. This may result in increased employee turnover, and decreased morale, productivity, and service quality.

### **Control: Future of Public Health Plan (FoPH Plan)**

This Plan establishes an additional 400+ new positions to support and expand the workforce. This helps to mitigate this risk by placing a focus and priority on recruitment and workforce development to fill and retain key positions across CDPH, and better support a workforce that has been stretched thin due to responding to various statewide emergencies.

### **Control: CDPH Workforce Development Plan (WDP) 2023-2025**

The WFD Plan provides the Department's infrastructure for recruiting, developing, and retaining an engaged, diverse, competent, and productive workforce. CDPH's HRD continues implementation of initiatives and activities under the WDP to gather important information on workforce and succession management gaps to inform strategies to address these. The initiatives, activities, and trainings administered under the WDP support reduction of the risk by providing additional growth and advancement opportunities to sustain a competent workforce.

### **Control: CDPH Public Health Competency Domains**

These CDPH public health competencies describe the knowledge, skills, and behaviors critical to successful job performance in public health. The public health competencies are used in CDPH for professional development initiatives that are designed to enhance the skill and development of the workforce and meet the public health needs of Californians. CDPH uses various methods for providing professional development opportunities to employees such as public health trainings and during daily work, through managerial support, coaching, and mentoring. The public health competencies are a part of the ongoing efforts to foster a CDPH culture of learning and continuous quality improvement. This initiative helps mitigate this risk by creating a competent workforce.

### **Control: HRD Recruitment Team**

This team within HRD helps CDPH attract, hire, and retain an empowered, diverse workforce to achieve individual center/division/office hiring and workforce needs. The Recruitment Team assists programs with outreach efforts by attending events, advertising vacancies, consulting with hiring managers, and reaching out to potential candidates. This team hosts and attends career fairs in multiple formats and locations throughout the year. They also post CDPH jobs on various external pages and platforms. This team helps mitigate this risk by supporting hiring to fill key positions across CDPH.

### **Control: CDPH Career Center**

HRD's Strategic Talent Management and Development Branch oversees the newly established Career Center for CDPH. This team is available to assist CDPH employee's as they navigate the often-confusing landscape of state classifications and the state selection process. The center puts on career events, such as resume workshops and informational meetings to support employee's career development. A SharePoint page has been established and provides information on upcoming events and meetings and

has a portal for staff to sign up for group sessions or individual consultation. This control mitigates the risk by providing support for CDPH's current employee's career development and advancement to support employees in their career planning and retention.

**Control: CDPH Understanding Professional Development Training for Supervisors and Managers**

CDPH has launched a new training for supervisors and managers that helps outline methods and strategies for providing professional development opportunities to employees through trainings and managerial support, coaching, and mentoring. The course is part of the ongoing efforts to foster a CDPH culture of learning and continuous quality improvement. This control mitigates the risk by creating a competent workforce and providing support for CDPH's current employees' professional development and career advancement to support retention.

**Risk: Technology - Compatability**

CDPH may be unable to meet current operational needs due to the ongoing reliance on legacy systems that may be incompatible with ongoing software changes that are needed to support effective operations. This may result in operational and/or service delays, system failures, loss of data, and increased potential for cybersecurity attacks.

**Control: CDPH Security Operations Center (SOC)**

Operating under ITSD, SOC holds responsibility for continuously monitoring and analyzing CDPH's security posture. Its primary objective is to detect, analyze, and respond to cybersecurity incidents. SOC retains its role in managing and overseeing automated solutions. It mitigates this risk by providing cyber threat analysis and remediation efforts, as well as handles cloud security, network and host-based intrusion detection, security information and event management monitoring, and vulnerability scanning and remediation.

**Control: Information Technology (IT) Business Services**

This resource provides IT-related services to support CDPH management with ongoing IT issues. ITSD holds regular meetings with key organizational areas to discuss current business needs and to determine if there are enterprise-level platforms available that could meet the business needs in other areas quickly and effectively. ITSD also provides ongoing IT Solutions and business services by operating a service desk to support CDPH staff with network and technical issues. CDPH's ITSD business services assist CDPH in managing and reducing this risk, as it updates legacy systems and improves compatibility across multiple IT solutions across the Department to improve operational efficiency and enable more streamlined service delivery.

**Control: Information Technology Strategic Business Roadmap Model**

CDPH is undergoing a transformation through the IT/Data Future of Public Health Initiative (FoPH Plan) to modernize its systems and data. This initiative aims to enhance the

efficiency and effectiveness of CDPH's IT infrastructure, enabling better management and utilization of data for improved public health outcomes. By leveraging the FoPH Plan, CDPH is working towards streamlining processes, ensuring compliance, and leveraging technology to address current and future challenges in public health. These initiatives are being implemented and ITSD continues to identify technology platforms that will benefit Enterprise IT modernization efforts and continues to identify, update, or replace systems as needed to meet data processing and analysis needs. These efforts help CDPH to reduce this risk by allowing for long-term planning of technology-based business needs both for business areas and for the organization, but also allows for discussions to determine key short-term needs as well. By leveraging these platforms, the Department aims to improve efficiency, streamline processes, and ensure compliance across the Department.

### **Risk: Employee Wellness and Business Continuity**

CDPH may be unable to meet its many demands within the new hybrid working environment due to lingering negative impacts felt department-wide as CDPH transitions back to normal operations after the Covid-19 pandemic. These impacts include toxic stress, trauma, and harm to overall well-being of CDPH employees resulting from the intense involvement of staff in pandemic response. Possible effects may include business disruptions, increased turnover, and adverse impacts to internal communications and functions.

#### **Control: Healing, Equity for All, Anti-Racism, Trauma Responsiveness Transformation (HEART) initiative**

CDPH's HEART initiative is focused on supporting CDPH to become a healing organization. Through this initiative, CDPH provides trauma responsive training opportunities for staff and conducts surveys with staff to know and better understand the experiences of CDPH employees. CDPH is also facilitating Can We CHAT (Conversations about History, Awareness and Transformation) meetings under this initiative that are designed to advance and deepen conversations about topics related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. This initiative mitigates the risk by focusing on overall employee wellbeing and provides supports to heal from involvement in the pandemic response and/or other traumas or experiences that impact CDPH employees.

#### **Control: Trauma Mitigation and Response (TMR) Unit**

The TMR Unit has been recently put in place and is designed to enhance CDPH's capacity and capability to be trauma responsive. This Unit mitigates this risk by addressing and responding to trauma, which supports employee wellbeing.

#### **Control: Future of Public Health Plan (FoPH Plan)**

The FoPH plan outlines CDPH's efforts to build out the statewide public health system to incorporate foundational service areas including workforce development, recruitment and training, emergency preparedness and response, IT, data science, and informatics, communications, public education, and engagement, community partnerships, and community health improvement. Initiatives under this plan mitigate this risk by improving

CDPH's ability to respond to public health-related events, which supports employee wellness and business continuity.

**Control: Office of Professional Development & Engagement (OPDE) Employee Wellness Program (EWP)**

CDPH's EWP promotes and sustains a culture of wellness that encompasses the whole health of the employee including professional, mental, physical, social, and financial well-being to support happy, healthy, and productive employees. The EWP coordinates the promotion and delivery of wellness webinars, resilience, and support resources, 1:1 coaching, and engagement opportunities to foster and sustain connection. The EWP allows employees, both in person and virtually, to meet their wellness goals so they can lead healthy lives at work and home. This has further mitigated operational and external risks because prior to 2020, in-person only events limited the opportunity for CDPH employees outside of the Sacramento and Richmond campuses to participate.

**Risk: Organizational Structure and Internal Control Monitoring**

CDPH may be unable to ensure effective business productivity and efficiency due to insufficient centralized processes to comprehensively identify and address all its mandated requirements and departmental priorities. This could result in the inability to meet its many demands and continue to ensure the value of public health initiatives and services the department provides.

**Control: Office of Policy and Planning (OPP)**

This newly established Office is an agile strategic team that strengthens CDPH's capacity to address crosscutting priorities defined by public health. OPP aims to involve programs across CDPH, state and local government, and partners to leverage expertise and information through comprehensive assessment, integrated planning, and collective action. OPP conducts a comprehensive State Health Assessment that brings together data and information across population and systems to identify priorities. This office mitigates the risk by ensuring that the Department is working to optimize the utilization of resources and align their efforts with department objectives to minimize waste.

**Control: Lean Transformation Office (LTO)**

An office within CDPH under OPP, which is a newly established area in CDPH that leads and promotes the adoption and use of Lean principles (the Plan-Do-Study-Act-Cycle) for process improvements throughout the Department. The LTO through the council of a Continuous Improvement Council (CIC), helps to oversee the development of and regular updates to CDPH's Continuous Improvement Plan, as well as implementation of the A3 methodological approach to problem-solving to address priorities and issues that arise department-wide. This office mitigates the risk by focusing the Department on optimal utilization of resources aligned with CDPH's objectives and a centralized daily management system to track and monitor these efforts.

### **Control: Office of Compliance (OOC)**

This office conducts ongoing reviews of CDPH's internal controls systems and has recently expanded their Audit and Accountability Branch to increase the Department's auditing capabilities. The work of this office includes a Workplace Violence Prevention Program, Equal Employment Opportunity Program, and investigations of allegations related to workplace violence, discrimination, sexual harassment, retaliation, denials of reasonable accommodations, and whistleblower complaints. Workloads also include the Internal Audit Program, external audit coordination activities, grant compliance reviews for the Center for Preparedness & Response and Office of AIDS' sub recipients, internal investigations, and enterprise risk and compliance management activities. This control mitigates the risk by identifying and improving inefficiencies within CDPH's internal controls systems.

### **CONCLUSION**

The Department of Public Health strives to reduce the risks inherent in our work and accepts the responsibility to continuously improve by addressing newly recognized risks and revising risk mitigation strategies as appropriate. I certify our internal control and monitoring systems are adequate to identify and address current and potential risks facing the organization.

**Tomás J. Aragón, M.D., Dr.P.H., Director and State Public Health Officer**

CC: California Legislature [Senate, Assembly]  
California State Auditor  
California State Library  
California State Controller  
Director of California Department of Finance  
Secretary of California Government Operations Agency