

Overview of the New State Epidemiologist Job Series

**Public Health Council
November 18, 2015**



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Brief history

- 1980s Single Bachelors-level epi position
- 1990s Advocacy for expanded series yielded Epi I and II positions
- Early 2000s Repeated advocacy for a four-step series unsuccessful
- 2009-2014 Work towards expanded series renewed
- July 29, 2015 Four-step series established; MOU signed between Human Resources Division, DPH, and Massachusetts Organization of State Engineers and Scientists (MOSES)

Rationale for a four-step series

- Epidemiology has emerged as a distinct scientific vocation with its own academic, technical, and professional preparation
- Skills grow over time and with experience
- Need for more sensible supervisory structures
- Challenges of recruitment, retention, attrition
 - Lack of a lifelong career ladder for state epidemiologists
 - Competition for staff from academia, industry, other states (most states have 4-7 epidemiologist levels)
 - 50% turnover of epidemiologists in past 5 years



Overview of steps, duties, and minimum entrance requirements

- Epi I Entry-level epi position; conduct disease investigation; exposure assessment; review/analyze data; contribute to reports; receive supervision

MERS: Four years experience in field
or Bachelors plus two years experience
or Masters plus one year experience



Overview of steps

- Epi II Fully competent, independent epi position; may supervise Epi I; more advanced or specialized work projects; implement disease control measures; provide leadership to others

MERS: Five years experience in field
or Bachelors plus three years experience
or Masters plus two years experience



Overview of steps

- Epi III Seasoned technical expert; project team leader; senior supervisor (second level); more complex work, independent exercise of judgement; interpretation of policies, standards, and procedures; assist in development of new disease control methods

MERS: Six years experience in field
or Bachelors plus four years experience
or Masters plus three years experience



Overview of steps

- Epi IV Senior scientist; performs advanced epidemiologic work; expert in their area; designs studies and analyses; serves as research principal investigator; contributes to policy development

MERS: Eight years experience in field
or Masters plus five years experience
or Doctorate plus four years experience



Summary

- As a result of this long hoped-for job series expansion, we anticipate:
 - Competitive recruitment of new staff
 - Appropriate job classifications and salaries for epi staff based on duties, preparation, and experience
 - More logical supervisory systems
 - Better job satisfaction and retention

