

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SPECIALIST REGISTRATION COMMITTEE

Draft Minutes

Monday, June 10, 2024

10 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Microsoft TEAMS (App Login): Meeting ID : 271 006 328 542

Participant Code: kTpYvL

Microsoft TEAMS (dial in): +1 916-306-8051,78657869#

Phone Conference ID:786 578 69#

Members Present:

Mr. Chris Pace, Chris Pace, Executive Officer, Environmental Management Branch Chief, CDPH

Mr. Steve Munday, MD, MPH, MS, California Conference of Local Health Officers (CCLHO) – Health Officer

Ms. Vicki Jones, MPA, R.E.H.S., Public Sector R.E.H.S.

Mr. Raju Mathew MS, R.E.H.S., Private Industry

Ms. Linda Launer, MS, R.E.H.S., CA Environmental Health Association (CEHA)

Mr. Freddie Agyin, MA, R.E.H.S., CA Conference of Directors of Environmental Health (CCDEH)

Mr. Jaymin Kwon, PhD, R.E.H.S., University Faculty

Mr. Antonio Machado, PhD, R.E.H.S., University Faculty

Members Absent:

Mr. Darryl Wong, R.E.H.S., CA Conference of Directors of Environmental Health (CCDEH)

Vacant, Public Member Appointed by Speaker of the Assembly

Vacant, Public Member Appointed by the Senate Rules Committee

Environmental Health Specialist Registration Program Staff Present:

Betty Ho, R.E.H.S., Program Administrator, CDPH

Jessica Silvermaster, Accreditation Officer and Registration Analyst, CDPH

Opening

Mr. Chris Pace, Chris Pace, Executive Officer, Environmental Management Branch Chief, CDPH

Mr. Pace called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

A quorum was established.

Mr. Pace provided background information and key aspects of the Environmental Health Registration Specialist Committee (EHRSC) to all members present. Mr. Pace also described the impacts of COVID, resulting in a lack of quorum, reduced member participation and delays in convening since the last meeting of 2021.

Background information: The EHRSC is one of the committees appointed by the State Director of Health Services, and its responsibilities are provided for in Health and Safety Code Section 106675. The Committee's function is to make recommendations to the department with respect to the establishment of rules and regulations necessary to ensure the proper administration of the environmental health specialist registration program. Environmental health specialist's duties in public health and environmental health require knowledge and skills in the physical, biological, and environmental health sciences and performance of these duties is necessary for the promotion of life, health, and well-being of the public. The EHSRC has 11 members or seats. The Chief of the Environmental Management Branch (EMB), or the designee of the Chief, shall serve as executive officer of the EHSRC but does not vote. The

remaining 10 voting members are appointed. Eight seats are currently filled. Two seats are currently vacant and there's an ongoing effort to fill those seats. The Committee shall meet at least twice per year. Often, one meeting is held in conjunction with CEHA's Annual Educational Symposium in the spring and the second meeting held later in the year. Meeting locations, when possible, shall be held at locations such as will encourage committee member attendance while minimizing actual and necessary Committee expenses. Subcommittees are organized to make in-depth investigations into specific topic areas and make recommendations to the full committee. The two standing subcommittees are: the Registration Process Subcommittee and the Educational and Professional Standards Subcommittee. Ad hoc committees may be formed as needed.

Each member present was given an opportunity for introductions.

Chair: Duties of the chair are managing the meetings, reviewing the agenda prior to distribution, setting meeting date and location, acting as official spokesperson for the Committee, and additional duties as per Roberts Rules of Order. Mr. Freddie Agyin, MA, R.E.H.S., CA Conference of Directors of Environmental Health (CCDEH), was nominated as chair, the motion was seconded, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

Secretary: Duties of the Secretary are to act as parliamentarian and act as chair in the absence of the elected chair. Ms. Linda Launer, MS, R.E.H.S., CA Environmental Health Association (CEHA), was nominated as secretary, the motion was seconded, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

Environmental management branch staff support role: Betty Ho, R.E.H.S., Program Administrator with back up functions by Jessica Silvermaster, Accreditation Officer and Registration Analyst, shall prepare and distribute agendas of committee meetings, distribute minutes of all committee and subcommittee meetings, provide all secretarial, mailing, and supportive services required by the committee and subcommittees, and provide an updated calendar of events. The Chief of EMB, or the designee of the Chief, shall function as the executive officer of the committee and in that capacity shall coordinate all the activities of the committee with the chair.

CDPH Environmental Management Branch Update

Mr. Chris Pace, Chris Pace, Executive Officer, Environmental Management Branch Chief, CDPH

Mr. Pace provided an update regarding the sections and programs within the Environmental Management Branch (EMB) and the core functions. EMB consists of two sections, The Emergency, Restoration, and Waste Management Section houses the Department of Defense Program, the Medical Waste Management Program, and the Nuclear Emergency Response Program. The Section Chief is Sheetal Singh. The Environmental Health Services Section houses the Institutions Program, the Preharvest Shellfish and Marine Biotxin Monitoring Program, the Radon Program, the Recreational Health Program, and the Registered Environmental Health Specialist (REHS) Program. The Section Chief is Eric Trevena.

Environmental Health Services Section Update

Mr. Chris Pace, Chris Pace, Executive Officer, Environmental Management Branch Chief, CDPH

Mr. Pace updated the members in place of Mr. Trevena who was not present of the Environmental Health Services Section. Mr. Pace introduced the new Program Administrator, Ms. Betty Ho, and the Accreditation Officer and Registration Analyst, Ms. Jessica Silvermaster. Mr. Pace and Ms. Ho provided REHS Program updates.

Update on Website: New, fillable current application and biennial renewals forms were developed and are online for ease of accessibility by all. More updates are forthcoming in the coming weeks to provide the public with ease of access.

Biennial Renewals: REHS Program representatives updated the EMB mailing address and the current renewal process. This addressed mailing concerns and processing times. Program representatives are investigating the possibility of an online payment portal.

Email and Phone responses: Program representatives implemented an auto response message to all emails.

REHS Exams: Program representatives will review and assess the pass/fail rate of the next exam (held in July) and report back to the committee.

Educational and Professional Standards Subcommittee

Mr. Chris Pace, Chris Pace, Executive Officer, Environmental Management Branch Chief, CDPH

Mr. Pace provided background information and key aspects of the Educational and Professional Standards Subcommittee.

Background Information: Subcommittees shall carry out assignments as charged by the Committee chair. Duties of this committee are as follows: review and update the Educational Criteria documents as necessary, review and recommend action regarding the acceptance or denial of courses when requested by EMB, review University environmental health programs as necessary and other charges as assigned by chair. The subcommittee chair shall present the subcommittee reports at the Committee meeting. The subcommittee shall meet as necessary, with dates and locations at the discretion of the subcommittee chairs.

Mr. Freddie Agyin, MA, R.E.H.S., CA Conference of Directors of Environmental Health (CCDEH)

Mr. Agyin facilitated the members present through the voting process for the position of the chair, secretary, and its members.

Chair: Mr. Antonio Machado, PhD, R.E.H.S., University Faculty, was nominated, the motion was seconded, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

Secretary: Ms. Linda Launer, MS, R.E.H.S., CA Environmental Health Association (CEHA), was nominated, the motion was seconded, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

Members: Mr. Steve Munday, MD, MPH, MS, California Conference of Local Health Officers (CCLHO) – Health Officer, Mr. Freddie Agyin, MA, R.E.H.S., CA Conference of Directors of Environmental Health (CCDEH), and Mr. Jaymin Kwon, PhD, R.E.H.S., University Faculty, were nominated and approved as members.

Registration Process Subcommittee

Mr. Chris Pace, Chris Pace, Executive Officer, Environmental Management Branch Chief, CDPH

Background Information: Subcommittees shall carry out assignments as charged by the committee chair. Duties of this committee are as follows: review and approve or disapprove Training and Policy Plan documents as necessary, review and recommend action on difficult experience evaluations when requested by EMB, review Registered Environmental Health Specialist examination results, and other charges as assigned by chair. The subcommittee chair shall present the subcommittee reports at the committee meeting. The subcommittee shall meet as necessary, with dates and locations at the discretion of the subcommittee chairs.

Mr. Freddie Agyin, MA, R.E.H.S., CA Conference of Directors of Environmental Health (CCDEH)

Mr. Agyin facilitated the members present through the voting process for the position of the chair, secretary, and its members.

Chair: Ms. Vicki Jones, MPA, R.E.H.S., Public Sector R.E.H.S., was nominated, the motion was seconded, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

Secretary: Ms. Linda Launer, MS, R.E.H.S., CA Environmental Health Association (CEHA), was nominated, the motion was seconded, all were in favor, and the motion carried. However, a question arose if her current standing as a consultant for REHS exam study is considered a conflict of interest. The REHS program administrator is to convey this information to the Department and have a response, TBD.

Members: Mr. Raju Mathew MS, R.E.H.S., Private Industry and Mr. Freddie Agyin, MA, R.E.H.S., CA Conference of Directors of Environmental Health (CCDEH) were nominated and approved as members.

CCDEH Professional Development & Outreach Committee

Mr. Freddie Agyin, MA, R.E.H.S., CA Conference of Directors of Environmental Health (CCDEH)

Mr. Agyin shared that the CCDEH Directors Conference will be held in September and the CDPH REHS representatives are invited. There are no updates from the CCDEH Professional Development & Outreach Committee at the moment. Mr. Agyin conveyed that the REHS Program has done a phenomenal job after Veronica Mallory vacated the Program Administrator position and that communication from all parties is the key to success. The support of all stakeholders is critical for both ongoing topics and all concerns related to the EHS Program.

Ongoing Items and Announcements

Betty Ho, R.E.H.S., Program Administrator

Ms. Ho provided an update regarding an Option V school seeking approval.

California State University, East Bay – Proposed Option V Curriculum: The university is no longer seeking the approval as an Option V school for the REHS Program as it is undergoing internal audits of low degree conferring programs for discontinuance and aligning with university sustainability concerns. Should the university decide to resume its approval process, this will be brought up to the committee again.

New Business and Discussion *Open to the Committee for discussion*

Synopsis of items brought up: Concerns of exam pass vs. fail rates and the reasons why these rates. Questions about the currentness of the exam questions, exam dates and accessibility to relevant study materials. REHS recruitment issues for both colleges and environmental health departments. Challenges of retaining a good workforce. How can more and better candidates be recruited? Questions regarding the difference between reciprocity and equivalency. Discussion regarding the CEHA symposium and future committee meetings corresponding with the CEHA symposium. Questions regarding potential conflicts of interests and closed-door meetings, further clarification requested from the Department on both. One final takeaway/comment was to keep in mind , “do not downgrade the education. We want intelligent and capable people in our field.”

Next meeting: September 11, 2024; 9:00AM – 12:00PM (VIRTUAL)

Adjourned at 11:50AM