



# OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT & BUDGET

STATE BUDGET OFFICE

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To: The Honorable Marvin L. Abney  
Chairman, House Finance Committee

The Honorable William J. Conley, Jr.  
Chairman, Senate Finance Committee

From: Thomas A. Mullaney *Thomas A. Mullaney*  
Executive Director/State Budget Office

Date: September 21, 2020

Subject: Amendment to Article 1, Section 12 - FTE Authorizations (20-H-7171)

The Governor requests that FTE position authorizations in section 12 of the FY 2021 Appropriations Act be increased for the Departments of Health (Health) and Labor and Training (DLT) and the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts (RISCA) as follows:

## Department of Health

An increase of 15.0 FTE positions from the originally recommended level of 540.6 to 555.6 is requested for the Department of Health. This will bring the FTE position authorization to the level recommended in the Governor's FY 2021 Budget, plus 15 additional FTE positions directly associated with addressing the COVID-10 pandemic.

The original 41.0 FTE position increase requested in the Governor's recommended budget will support programs such as Overdose Data to Action, Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Prescription Drug Monitoring. The 15.0 new positions that were not contemplated or accounted for in the recommended FY 2021 Budget will focus on addressing various aspects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

As the State's lead agency for the COVID response, Health has assumed significant, increased responsibility related to testing, case investigation, contract tracing, and COVID-related public health guidance, compliance, data analytics, and policy. The 15 new positions span four critical functions:

1. Three FTE for high level, operational leadership, including a COO for COVID to perform the day to day management of the new RIDOH COVID functions, a dedicated project manager for highest priority COVID initiatives, and a chief of operational monitoring and evaluation to help ensure continuous improvement
2. Six FTE to increase the State's testing capacity at the State Health Lab and through system integration
3. Five FTE to support the increase in financial oversight and reporting needed when expanding a state agency's responsibilities

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4. One FTE to support the core public health components of the RIDOH response. This position is a medical director focused exclusively on COVID work

After the pandemic emergency has ended and related funding ends, the 15 positions referenced above would terminate. The 15 new positions will be financed in part by the Coronavirus Relief Fund, along with other COVID-related federal grants received by the Department.

#### Department of Labor and Training

The Governor's FY 2021 Budget recommended an increase of 5.0 FTE positions for the Department of Labor and Training. However, due to the significant increase in UI claims resulting from the shutdown of much of the economy earlier this year and the dramatic increase in unemployment claims because of COVID-19, the Department required additional staffing in FY 2020, which will continue into FY 2021. Initially, the Governor authorized by Executive Order the ability for DLT to hire retired Employment and Training Interviewers to address the increased workload. The Department also recently filled 20.0 additional interviewer positions, putting the agency 15.0 FTE positions above its FY 2020 enacted cap of 390.7. Other positions required to address the additional workload, as well as for regular agency operations, may be filled in the coming weeks thus necessitating a higher FTE position authorization. An additional increase of 35.0 FTE positions from the originally recommended 395.7 to 430.7 is requested for DLT to account for this increased hiring and to allow the Department to continue to fill critical positions as needed. All new positions are being financed with new funding provided by the Federal Government as a result of the state of emergency. As with previous spikes in unemployment, the Department expects additional resources will continue to be provided by the federal government, but as those resources decline, the new positions will end.

#### RI State Council on the Arts

An increase of 1.0 FTE position from 8.6 to 9.6 is requested for the RI State Council on the Arts. RISCA has received permission from the National Endowment for the Arts to use federal funding received under the CARES Act to support a full-time position to work on public engagement and visibility of the arts in Rhode Island. Due to the impact the COVID-19 pandemic is having on the local arts community, RISCA staff has been unable to meet the demands of serving local artists and arts organizations throughout the State. Once the CARES Act funding has been used, RISCA will be able to continue to support this position with its regular annual partnership funding from the National Endowment for the Arts.

TAM: Amend-15

Cc: Dr. Nicole Alexander-Scott, Director, Department of Health  
Scott Jensen, Director, Department of Labor and Training  
Randall Rosenbaum, Executive Director, RI Council on the Arts  
Sharon Reynolds Ferland, House Fiscal Advisor  
Stephen Whitney, Senate Fiscal Advisor  
Jonathan Womer, Director, Office of Management and Budget