



Public Health

During the 2022 legislative session, the General Assembly considered numerous bills related to public health, including bills related to service providers and equipment, rare diseases, environmental quality, and data collection.

Service Providers and Equipment

Under *House Bill 22-1285*, a critical access hospital licensed and certified by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) is prohibited from pursuing a collection action against a patient owing debt if the hospital was not in material compliance with federal hospital price transparency laws on the date that the items or services were provided to the patient. A patient is allowed to file suit to determine if the hospital was out of compliance.

Senate Bill 22-053 specifies exceptions to a patient's right to private and unrestricted communication with any person for patients of a skill nursing or intermediate care facility. Health care facilities are required to allow patients and residents to have at least one visitor of their choosing and must have written policies and procedures concerning visitation.

House Bill 22-1199 was a similar measure that did not advance from committee.

Senate Bill 22-079 requires CDPHE and the Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (HCPF) to promulgate rules requiring nursing homes, assisted living

residences, and adult day care facilities to provide dementia training for staff providing direct care services.

Senate Bill 22-154 directs the State Board of Health to promulgate rules and specific enforcement actions for assisted living residences related to involuntary discharge notices, the grievance process for residents, education and experience for administrators, and background checks for employees.

Senate Bill 22-225 requires ambulance operators to be licensed by CDPHE and creates the Emergency Medical Services Sustainability Task Force. It covers requirements for state licensing of ambulance operators as well as local oversight.

House Bill 22-1251 creates the Office of Sudden Cardiac Arrest Management in CDPHE and authorizes the State Board of Health to promulgate rules related to the work of the office.

House Bill 22-1352 requires the Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management in the Department of Public Safety (DPS) to procure and maintain stockpiles of essential materials to be available for distribution after the Governor has declared a disaster emergency. Essential materials include personal protective equipment, ventilators, and any other items the DPS determines are necessary to respond to a disaster emergency. DPS, in consultation with CDPHE, may

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distribute the essential materials to state agencies, schools, local public health agencies, hospitals, or other health-care providers, or to others in need.

Rare Diseases

Senate Bill 22-186 creates the Colorado Rare Disease Advisory Council in CDPHE to study and make recommendations concerning the needs of individuals with rare diseases. The bill outlines the council membership, lists the activities the council must perform, and establishes meeting and reporting requirements for the council.

Environmental Quality

By May 31, 2023, *House Bill 22-1358* requires that eligible schools, child care centers, and family child care homes, to test drinking water sources by having a state-certified laboratory measure the lead content of water drawn from each drinking water source. The testing must be done in accordance with the latest federal guidance. Results, as well as any remediation plans, must be posted on the facilities website and submitted to the Water Quality Control Commission within 30 days of receipt. The CDPHE must provide training, technical assistance, and funds to help schools and child care facilities comply. The bill provides ways for family child care centers to opt out of the water testing requirements. Certain child care centers and eligible schools are exempt from the bill's requirements.

House Bill 22-1244 creates a new program in CDPHE to regulate toxic air contaminants based on adverse health effects. Toxic air contaminants (TAC) are defined by the Air Quality Control Commission. An initial list of TAC's must be designated by October 1, 2022.

Senate Bill 22-193 offers a set of initiatives to address Colorado's air pollution, including

funding for electric school buses and ebikes and a clean air grant program to reduce air pollution from industrial and manufacturing options. Additionally, it creates the Cannabis Resource Optimization Cash Fund, which creates incentives to encourage sustainable practices in cannabis operations. The bill also modifies definitions, reviews form and filling requirements, addresses hearing deadlines, and makes changes to the legislative review process.

Although it did not pass committee, *House Bill 22-1134* was introduced to reduce single-use meal accessories which has been a hot topic for several years. *House Bill 22-1159* creates the Circular Economy Development Center in CDPHE including reporting requirements to create a sustainable circular economy for recycled commodities and compost in Colorado.

House Bill 22-1355 creates a producer responsibility statewide recycling program and requires the Executive Director of CDPHE to select a nonprofit organization to implement the program. The program must provide recycling services to residences, businesses, schools, hospitality services, government buildings, and public spaces. Producers of packaging materials and paper products will pay annual dues to fund the project.

Data Collection

Under *House Bill 22-1157*, CDPHE must expand the collection of health data to include certain volunteer demographic information concerning race, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, and gender identity. CDPHE must provide direct and technical assistance for entities that collect the data. The bill establishes a data advisory working group to advise the Health Equity Commission in carrying out its duties related to the data collection required by the bill.