

Deputy Secretary, Community and Public Health

Position Description

OFFICIAL

Position number	DH/ CPH/00720162
Division	Community and Public Health
Classification	Senior Executive Service 3
Employment term	Five (5) year executive employment contract
Employment type / FTE	Full-time (38.0 hours per week), 1.0 FTE
Total Remuneration Package	\$430,741 - \$573,328 p.a. including employer superannuation
Position reports to	Secretary, Department of Health
Work location	Melbourne CBD
Date of revision	February 2026

Role Purpose

Reporting to the Secretary, the Deputy Secretary, Community and Public Health is the department's senior executive role charged with leading and directing :

- public health functions, including health promotion, prevention and protection;
- community health activities, including leading government's women's health agenda and interactions with the primary health care system;
- the maternal and child health system and parenting support services; and
- emergency management responsibilities, including response role during emergencies.

The Deputy Secretary is a member of the department's Executive Board, supporting the Secretary and Ministers to implement government policy and deliver the department's health services.

The Deputy Secretary is responsible for providing advice to the Secretary, Minister and Government on all public and community health matters – drawing on expertise and translating and balancing technical inputs for decision-makers. The role is also responsible for leading complex and sensitive reform projects and improvement activities.

The Deputy Secretary leads the division – ensuring work is high quality and delivered in a manner consistent with the culture and values of the department and Victorian Government. The role has financial responsibility to ensure sustainable operations and efficient use of public resources.

Executive Board membership

The Deputy Secretary is a member of the department's Executive Board. In this capacity, the Deputy Secretary is accountable, with the entire Board, for:

- Setting the strategic direction of the organisation.
- Driving performance across the department.
- Making investment decisions consistent with departmental strategic directions and priorities.
- Leading and fostering an appropriate organisational culture consistent with the department's purpose and strategies.

Department of Health

At the Victorian Department of Health, we want a future where: Victorians are the healthiest people in the world, where our children and people thrive, where our workplaces are productive and safe, and where our communities are more connected.

We see it as our job to support Victorians to stay healthy and safe, and to deliver a world-class healthcare system that ensures every single Victorian can access safe, quality care that leads to better health outcomes for all. For further information please visit <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/about>.

Values and behaviours

Department of Health employees are required to demonstrate commitment to:

The public sector values and behaviours – responsiveness, integrity, impartiality, accountability, respect, leadership and human rights.

Recordkeeping – The department is committed to good record keeping and requires all staff to routinely create and keep full and accurate records of their work-related activities, transactions and decisions, using authorised systems.

Diversity – The department promotes diversity and equal opportunity in employment. If you are from a diverse background, are an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander applicant, or if you have a disability/condition, and require advice and support with the recruitment process, please contact our Inclusion Unit at inclusion@health.vic.gov.au.

For further information, please visit <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/about/our-values>

Leadership Charter

The department's Leadership Charter is an important part of shaping our culture and guides expectation for leadership in our senior management roles.

For further information please visit <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/leadership-charter>

Community and Public Health

The Community and Public Health Division leads service delivery, provides specialist advice and strategic input to the department and other key stakeholders such as portfolio Ministers, other departments and funded agencies

The division comprises of four branches:

Chief Health Officer

The Chief Health Officer reports to this Deputy Secretary, together leading government health protection functions. This includes monitoring, understanding and responding to environmental and communicable health risks and issues, either directly or in partnership with other entities such as local governments.

It also includes leading a statewide network of Local Public Health Units to track and respond to emerging health hazards and promote good health and wellbeing in communities.

Prevention and Health Promotion

The Prevention and Health Promotion Branch leads the department's efforts to reduce preventable poor health, including those driven by lifestyle factors such as smoking. This is done in partnership with key portfolio agencies and partners. The Branch also leads prevention functions which include playing a leading role ensuring high rates of vaccination in the community.

Community and Women's Health

The Victorian Government's ambitious women's and children's health agenda is led by the Community and Women's Health Branch. This includes commissioning new service delivery to ensure improved access to care for women and girls, as well as leading research and care innovation to improve equity of health outcomes.

This responsibility also encompasses oversight of Victoria's universal maternal and child health service system. Principally delivered in partnership with local governments, this responsibility involves delivery of a crucial foundational service system to ensure the good health and wellbeing of mothers and babies.

The Branch also leads engagement with primary and community healthcare, including focusing on oral health through programs like Smile Squad, and driving reform activities, such as non-admitted care innovations like the Chemist Care Now program.

Emergency Management

This Branch is responsible for the department and government's health responses before, during and after emergencies. This includes preparing for and responding to environmental hazards like fires, floods, extreme heat and epidemic thunderstorm asthma. The Branch also leads continuous improvement for our health system to ensure it is well-positioned to manage emerging threats and risks.

Key Selection Criteria

Role accountabilities

<p>Service delivery: Lead public and community health services</p>	<p>Oversee successful delivery of all core public health functions, including statutory responsibilities. This should include activities directly delivered by the division, as well as those commissioned through partners and other agencies.</p>
	<p>Oversee successful delivery of all community health functions, including maternal and child health services. This delivery will often be in partnership with primary health providers and/or local governments.</p>
	<p>Ensure all operations are financially and operationally sustainable and delivered in accordance with appropriate policy and funding guidelines.</p>
<p>Advice: Advise Ministers, Government, Secretary and Executive Board</p>	<p>Provide authoritative and strategic advice to Ministers, the Secretary, and department leaders on policy and delivery related to public and community health.</p>
	<p>Ensure technical expertise, relevant research and data inputs and specialist knowledge is accessed and fully utilised by government in making informed decisions and balancing priorities.</p>
	<p>As a member of the Executive Board, support the Secretary and provide high-level advice on operational, policy, strategic and corporate matters to ensure the effective delivery of the department's services.</p>
<p>Reform: Lead strategic projects for Government and the department</p>	<p>Successfully lead reform activities aligned to government priorities as articulated through key policy and strategic documents, including budget decisions and election commitments.</p>
	<p>Oversee high-quality project management to ensure reform activities are delivered on time and in accordance with government expectations. Proactively manage risks and effectively communicate about progress and risk mitigations with senior decision-makers.</p>
	<p>Lead departmental strategic thinking to identify and develop new policy and service reforms. Oversee integrated approaches that enhance delivery of department and state-wide priorities, making judgements and managing complex risk in the context of uncertainty and innovation.</p>
<p>Culture and performance: Drive a high-performing and positive culture in the division</p>	<p>Drive strong performance within the division, setting high standards and championing a culture of excellence and quality in all outputs. Lead the division to continuously improve how it works and develop its people to always deliver at the highest level possible.</p>
	<p>Ensure a productive and positive culture in the division, ensuring staff wellbeing and high performance are driven together. Ensure all work is delivered in accordance with Victorian Public Sector values and principles. This should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • leading and supporting individuals to achieve their potential while maximising their contribution to achieve their goals and outcomes

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • modelling behaviours integral to good people management and departmental values • providing employees with relevant information and access to safe systems of work.
Influence: Stakeholder engagement and negotiation	Effectively represent the department's interests in high-level discussions and negotiations on department-wide project initiatives on behalf of the Secretary with state government departments, health services, other jurisdictions, service providers and within the department.
Departmental leadership: Support effective operation of the department, including outside of divisional responsibilities.	<p>Contribute to shaping the department's strategic vision and culture as a member of the senior executive and take full responsibility for developing the strategic agenda and plan for the Community and Public Health Division, integrating a range of activities, programs and functions to ensure the translation of government priorities and reform objectives into the department's strategic planning.</p> <p>Champion and preserve the department's values and positive working culture, including driving a relentless focus on ensuring the highest possible integrity in all financial decisions and oversight.</p>

Required Capabilities

Knowledge and skills	Capability Description
Leadership	Builds team commitment by demonstrating personal conviction; translates organisational strategy into meaningful long-term plans and objectives for own area of responsibility; motivates others to deliver against goals.
Strategic planning and thinking	Thinks at the big picture level, entertains wide-ranging possibilities in developing a vision for the future, works across a number of time frames, translates strategic direction into day-to-day activities and clearly translates the Government's and department's vision, directions and guiding principles into practical approaches and outcome.
Project Management	Actively champions projects, provides guidance and support to project managers to identify risks and overcome obstacles, quickly sums up complex options and recommends a clear way forward, monitors overall project performance against project plans, has a keen eye for detail.
Influencing and Negotiation	Develops long-term, complex and multi-phased plans to influence others; implements complex strategies to build buy-in and support from key internal and external clients or stakeholders; uses a variety of different influencing approaches tailored to different clients.
Decisiveness	Takes rational and sound decisions based on a consideration of the facts and alternatives; makes tough decisions, sometimes with incomplete information; evaluates rational and emotional elements of situations; makes quick decisions where required; commits to a definite course of action.

Personal qualities	Description
Vision	Focuses on the future, and clearly translates the Government's and department's vision, directions and guiding principles into practical approaches and outcomes.

Political acumen	Is politically aware and astute and builds cross-government partnerships.
Conceptual and analytical ability	Deals with concepts and complexity comfortably, uses analytical and conceptual skills to reason through problems, has creative ideas and can project how these can link to innovations.
Relationship skills	Demonstrates sophisticated interpersonal skills and builds productive relationships with people at all levels within and outside the department.

Qualifications / Specialist Expertise

Qualification(s)	An appropriate tertiary qualification in public administration, executive leadership and/or public and community health would be well regarded.
Specialist expertise	Possesses a fundamental understanding and knowledge of contemporary public health issues and trends.
	Has led or made a significant contribution to major cultural change initiatives and driving continuous improvement within a large and complex organisation.
	Has successfully led reform of complex policy and service delivery systems.
	Proven ability to work in a large-scale service delivery network organisation or adapt to distributed decision making or public sector environments.

How to apply

The Department is partnering with **SHK Asia Pacific** on this search. **Applications are to be submitted online** by visiting <https://www.shk.com.au/jobs>, then scroll to the role advertisement, which is also the application point.

You are **not required to separately address** the Key Selection Criteria. Your **CV** (résumé) must **demonstrate achievements** commensurate with the position description.

To apply, submit your **(1) Resume (CV)** or no more than five pages and **(2) a concise cover letter** (one page or an email), broadly addressing your proposition for the role, through the SHK advertisement/application point.

Please note:

- Direct and third-party applications will be forwarded to SHK. There is a **concurrent search**
- Candidates may be contacted by **email or phone**, including voicemail messages.
- Applicants should keep a **copy of the position description** as it cannot be accessed once the job has closed.
- See the advertisement for the applicable **close date**.

Full details of SHK's **privacy policy** may be found online at <https://www.shk.com.au/privacy-policy>

Assessment process

All applications submitted will be carefully reviewed by SHK and raised with the Department. Please note, **selection processes may take some time**, and may include multiple panel interviews and meetings. You may be invited for a further conversation or invited to an interview with the Consultant, who will share information with the Department and Selection Panel. The Selection Panel will be making decisions on progression stages.

If you are shortlisted and invited to meet with Panel, you will be provided with advice on the Panel format.

Referees will be formally requested **at the appropriate stage**, after Panel interviews.

Probity documentation and proof of qualifications, as required by the Victorian Government, may be requested prior to a candidate being recommended for appointment. **All probity requirements must be met.** All decisions remain confidential until they are final.

Communications may include **email and voicemail messages**. We will contact you if we need further information. Please note, there may be delays in communications on your status in this process, due to decision making at each step and requirements of formal appointments and approvals. Candidates will be notified of their status at the appropriate stage.

Further information

For more information after reviewing this position description, please contact Penny Wilson, Senior Partner, SHK, on penny.wilson@shk.com.au (preferred) or +61 434 589 284. An SMS (text) message is welcome.

If you are **unable to apply online**, please email your application (CV and cover note) to penny.wilson@shk.com.au **quoting reference # 3541691 and the role title in the subject line**. Please **check on email receipt** if there is no reply in **five working days**, due to strict email security filters around attachments.

Other relevant information

Mobility

The Department highlights that the work required of a modern career public service is not static but always changing, due to factors such as new government priorities, population growth, the pace and scale of technological advancement, changing community service delivery expectations and the need to respond to evolving complex public policy problems or crises.

In accordance with the *Public Administration Act 2004 (Vic)* and the *Victorian Public Service Agreement 2020* (and any relevant successor agreement), employees may be deployed to priority projects or programs based on their core skills and capabilities.

Commencement salary

The Department of Health's Commencement Salary Policy stipulates that salary upon commencement is paid **at the base of the salary range for the relevant grade**. Any above base requests require sign off by an executive delegate and will be by exception only or where required to match the current salary of a Victorian Public Service employee transferring at-level.

Emergency management

The Department is a key emergency management partner and contributes significantly to Victoria's emergency management arrangements. As part of a whole of government agreement, employees may be required to undertake training in emergency management and support functions during an emergency and may be redeployed to facilitate this need.

To receive this document in another format, email Executive Employment at executive.employment@health.vic.gov.au

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