



Goodhue County
Health and Human Services

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DATE: January 21, 2025
TO: Goodhue County Board
FROM: Nina Arneson, Goodhue County HHS Director
RE: Out of State Travel Request

BACKGROUND:

The Response Sustainability Grant (RSG) will cover the cost for Jill Ekstrom, GCHHS Case Aide, to participate in the NACCHO Preparedness Summit on April 29 - May 2, 2025, in San Antonio, TX. In October 2024, an Out of State Travel Request was approved for Jessica Seide, GCHHS Communication Specialist, to attend this same conference. Jessica's conference expenses (excluding staff time) are being covered by a \$2500 scholarship from the Local Public Health Association.

The conference is hosted by National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO). It is the longest-running national public health preparedness conference. This conference is attended by all levels of governmental public health (federal, state, and local) as well as emergency managers, volunteer organizations, healthcare coalitions and researchers.

The conference theme is "Pathways to Recovery in the Aftermath of Disasters." It features sessions, demonstrations, research findings, best practices, tools and other resources. This training will give Jill a deeper understanding of the scope and the goals of public health emergency preparedness work, as well as give her an understanding of current best practices in the field. Jill will apply the knowledge she learns at the conference to assist with preparedness work plan activities and grant duties at GCHHS. As a case aide, there are a wide variety of grant duties Jill can assist with, such as completing risk assessments, maintaining memorandum of understandings with response partners, maintaining contact lists used by GCHHS, and participating in drills and exercises. In an emergency response, her duties could also include assisting with risk communication and social media.

The MDH RSG funds were allocated by the state legislature in 2023 and are ongoing, base funding. The Response Sustainability Grant will cover Jill's staff time and her conference costs, including conference registration, travel (airfare and travel to/from the airport), hotel, and meals.

RECOMMENDATION: The GCHHS Department recommends approval of this request.