

Fiscal impact reports (FIRs) are prepared by the Legislative Finance Committee (LFC) for standing finance committees of the Legislature. LFC does not assume responsibility for the accuracy of these reports if they are used for other purposes.

FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

LAST UPDATED _____

SPONSOR Thomson/Johnson **ORIGINAL DATE** 1/29/24

BILL

SHORT TITLE County and Tribal Health Councils Funding **NUMBER** House Bill 75

ANALYST Klundt

APPROPRIATION*
(dollars in thousands)

FY25	FY26	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
	\$43,000.0	Recurring	General Fund
	\$1,000.0	Recurring	General Fund

Parentheses () indicate expenditure decreases.
*Amounts reflect most recent analysis of this legislation.

Sources of Information

LFC Files

Agency Analysis Received From
Department of Health (DOH)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of House Bill 75

House Bill 75 (HB75) appropriates \$43 million from the general fund for county and tribal health councils statewide. HB75 states that funding may be used to:

- Provide salaries and benefits for staff positions;
- Expand county and tribal health councils’ capacity to provide services;
- Expand county and tribal health council operations and functions;
- Assist in the coordination and navigation of essential services through various collaborations with state agencies, health care management organizations, and organizations that serve Medicaid and Medicare recipients;
- Increase community outreach and engagement programs to improve community awareness and understanding of county and tribal health council services;
- Increase public health intervention, prevention, and education efforts;
- Facilitate collaboration and networking with health care stakeholders across the state;
- Support policy and advocacy efforts aimed at advancing health equity;
- Provide funding for the cost of running county and tribal health councils to include overhead expenses, travel, and supplies; and
- Cover other indirect expenses.

Additionally, HB75 appropriates \$1 million for the Department of Health (DOH) to contract with a nonprofit organization to provide training, technical assistance, and other supports to county and tribal health councils.

This bill does not contain an effective date and, as a result, would go into effect 90 days after the Legislature adjourns if enacted, or June 20, 2025.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriations of \$43 million and \$1 million contained in this bill are recurring expenses to the general fund. Although HB75 does not specify future appropriations, establishing a new grant program and providing support for training and technical assistance could create an expectation that both the program and support will continue in future fiscal years; therefore, both costs are assumed to be recurring. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of fiscal year 2026 shall revert to the general fund. Recurring funding for these purposes is not included in either the LFC or executive budget recommendations.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

DOH notes this bill is connected to previously passed legislation. In 2019, the Legislature passed County and Tribal Health Councils Act to improve health outcomes in New Mexico through community-based health planning councils. These councils identify and address local health needs and priorities while working with DOH.

The County and Tribal Health Councils Act provides health councils responsible for:

- Monitoring health programs and services to identify gaps and reduce duplication.
- Collaborating with partners to develop programs, networks, and coalitions.
- Advising local boards and agencies on health-related policies.
- Facilitating communication between local, state, and tribal entities.
- Identifying additional public and private health resources.

The County and Tribal Health Councils Act also mandated that DOH:

- Develop benchmarks and mechanisms to ensure the long-term viability of health councils;
- Provide training, technical support, and administer funding for health councils' operations; and
- Monitor and evaluate health councils' contracts to ensure accountability.

HB75 requires DOH to contract with a nonprofit for training and technical assistance—tasks already mandated under the County and Tribal Health Councils Act and currently performed by DOH's Health Promotion Program. DOH's Health Promotion Program provides training, technical assistance, and support to health councils. In collaboration with health councils and community partners, DOH reports the department has developed county-specific Community Health Improvement Plans and scopes of work tailored to each health councils' stage of development.

DOH also reports, to ensure accountability and alignment with the County and Tribal Health Council Act, health councils should be required to submit project plans with clear, attainable goals.

Currently, New Mexico has 33 county health councils and 10 tribal health councils, with 42 health councils receiving DOH funding. Budgets range from \$72 thousand to over \$1.1 million, with funding sourced from DOH, counties, grants, and other sources. DOH notes the department is unaware of the methodology used to calculate the \$43 million funding request for health councils, highlighting the need for a transparent and data-driven funding process

KK/SL2/hj