

**Written Comments by Charlie Hunt with the Johnson County Department of Health & Environment (JCDHE) to
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
March 5, 2025**

Chairman Billinger and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments regarding the Kansas Department of Health and Environment's (KDHE's) budget. JCDHE's mission is to promote and protect the health and environment for all who live, work, and play in Johnson County.

We ask for the following three enhancements:

1. **JCDHE requests for the committee to consider adding \$1,580,000, all via the State General Fund, in FY 2026 for a local health department (LHD) uncompensated care program. This would be ongoing funding.**
 - The funding is for statewide benefit.
 - This number was calculated based off Johnson County's write-off total for 2024¹ and forecast statewide based off our county's share of the state's total population.²
 - This program would be modeled on the existing Community-based Primary Care Clinic (CBPCC) program. Eligibility would be for Kansas LHDs with a policy of non-discrimination in the provision of health services. Services must be open to the entire community in the LHD's service area and include a discounted fee schedule with reasonable charges for those individuals below 200% of the federal poverty level (the schedule must be in writing with patients above 200% charged the full fee and patients below 100% receiving free care or facing only a nominal fee).
 - This uncompensated care program would cover the difference between the full fee and what the client was charged for the service via the discounted fee schedule. This would apply to a variety of LHD services such as colposcopies, family planning, immunizations, post-partum services, maternal health, STI testing/treatment, and early detection programs.
 - We propose this program allocate resources based on population size (percentage of the population of the service area out of the total population of all LHDs that applied to participate).
 - This program is vital to improving access to quality services provided via local health departments. As LHDs are not eligible for CBPCC funding, a program modeled in a similar fashion but available just for LHDs is warranted.
 - Johnson County estimates it would receive approximately \$334,000 via this program.
2. **JCDHE requests for the committee to consider adding \$96,000, all via the State General Fund, in FY 2026 to support tuberculosis (TB) control efforts. This would be ongoing funding.** Currently, this has an approximate SGF budget of \$54,000; this enhancement would

¹ JCDHE write-offs from January 2024 through December 2024 totaled \$335,000.

² Per the 7/1/2024 Kansas certified population figures, Johnson County has a population of 622,237, or 21.16% of the state's total population of 2,940,546. Source: https://budget.kansas.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023_Kansas_Certified_Population-07.01.2024.pdf



raise the total to \$150,000. We propose this enhancement due to the increased caseload of TB now being seen in Kansas coupled with the need for certain testing and drugs that run at a higher cost when the less expensive options are not viable. This is not a specific response to the Kansas City TB cases, but rather to an overall trend in the state. The funding is for statewide benefit. Of this funding, we propose the following split:

- \$110,000 earmarked to support local contracts for indigent grants (the current earmark is \$49,500, making this a \$60,500 increase). LHDs that receive these allocations and have unused funds will have those funds roll back to KDHE's TB program (which is existing practice).
 - Johnson County currently receives \$12,000 for indigent grants and estimates it would receive approximately \$26,000 with this increase.
 - \$40,000 earmarked for KDHE's TB program to use (the current earmark is \$4,500, making this a \$35,500 increase). This funding is used to support various statewide needs for TB patients, namely laboratory supplies and the purchase of medications.
 - Historically, the state tends to see roughly 35 cases of TB per year. In late 2024, there were 112.³
3. **JCDHE requests for the committee to consider adding \$100,000, all via the State General Fund, in FY 2026 to Aid to Local Health Departments for statutory formula distribution as listed under KDHE's Division of Public Health** (the state financial assistance defined in K.S.A. 65-241 through K.S.A. 65-246). **This would be ongoing funding.** The Governor's budget allocates \$5.7 million for such Aid to Local Health Departments in FY 2026. This enhancement would raise the total allocation to \$5.8 million.
- This committee supported a prior aid increase last year, which fully accounted for inflation and population adjustments as part of a multi-year update to this support program. We are asking for this \$100,000 increase to address inflation factors seen over the last 12 months.
 - Johnson County estimates it would receive an additional \$22,000 with this increase.

Thank you for considering these enhancement requests to KDHE's Division of Health budget.

Sincerely,

Charlie Hunt, Director
Johnson County Department of Health & Environment

³ Case count information provided from KDHE on 12/20/2024.