

Position description

Water Sector Senior Health Scientist

OFFICIAL

Position number:	DH/PH/65499
Branch/Division/Team:	Health Protection Branch, Public Health Division
Work location:	Level 14, 50 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne, VIC 3000
Classification:	VPS5
Salary Range:	Value range 1: \$102,637 - \$113,410 plus superannuation Value range 2: \$113,412 - \$124,183 plus superannuation
Employment status:	Ongoing, Full-time (76 hours per fortnight)
Position reports to	Manager Water Sector Risk and Prevention
Position contact:	Carmela Luisetto 0408 395 406 E: Carmela.Luisetto@health.vic.gov.au
Closing date:	26 th October, Tuesday

Role purpose

The position is an authorised officer responsible for administration of the *Safe Drinking Water Act 2003* and associated regulations. The position has a regulatory function and liaises with the Victorian water agencies. Responsibilities include matters relating to water agencies compliance, response to issues affecting the safety or aesthetics of drinking water and overseeing risk management from catchment to tap for drinking water supplies. The position provides authoritative, scientific, evidence-based and informed advice and makes recommendations regarding human health risks from water related issues including microbial and chemical risks. This position will be responsible for reviewing scientific literature and keeping abreast of emerging risks related to drinking water to inform a proactive and preventive public health response.

The position is also responsible for providing leadership within the Water Sector Risk and Prevention team and develops and implements drinking water related policy and initiatives and monitors, assesses and reports on issues, incidents, investigations and emergencies regarding drinking water quality and human health risks. The role also provides stand-by duty out-of-business hours on a rotating roster responding to water quality incidents and emergencies.

Department of Health

The Department of Health (DH) has been established to advance the government's policy priorities in improving patient outcomes and experience for all Victorians.

DH is responsible for the Health and Ambulance Services, Mental Health and Ageing portfolios. We also lead the government's public health response and recovery of the COVID-19 pandemic.

DH will remain at the very heart of Victoria's recovery effort – looking after families and taking care of Victorians' loved ones.

A priority for DH will be to deliver ever-better quality healthcare through continuous improvement. We will have Victorians and clinicians at the center of our reforms, continued leadership from our health service executives, and deeper engagement with our academic partners.

Our ultimate vision is to achieve the best health and wellbeing for all Victorians. We will do this through the creation of a department committed to leading an integrated and continually improving healthcare system for health, mental health and aged care.

Public Health Division

The Public Health Division is advancing public health, improving population health and wellbeing outcomes, and leading the response to health threats and broader emergencies.

Public Health Division does this by:

- collaborating at all levels of government, across sectors and with communities to improve population health and wellbeing outcomes and reduce health inequalities through evidence-informed prevention and earlier intervention activity.
- utilising multidisciplinary, technological, regulatory, epidemiological and policy expertise to identify, prevent, reduce and control public health risks and effectively respond to incidents and emergencies
- working proactively to prevent and mitigate the impacts of existing and emerging threats, including those posed by epidemics, pandemics, climate change and antimicrobial resistance
- working across the department and government to lead and coordinate the prevention and response to public health threats including the response of the health system to broader emergencies and community recovery.
- discharging our legislative functions under the Public Health and Wellbeing Act and other legislation.

Public Health Division is comprised of the branch units: Prevention and Population Health, Health Protection (including Communicable Diseases and Environmental Health) under the remit of the Chief Health Officer, and Emergency Management.

Health Protection Branch

Lead by the Chief Health Officer, the Health Protection Branch's role is to reduce the incidence of preventable disease by protecting the community against hazards resulting from or associated with communicable disease, food, water or the environment. Delivery of our work requires strong partnerships with the Department's Regional officers. The Branch's business is primarily focused on reducing preventable disease and protecting the community from public health hazards.

To achieve this we:

- Administer programs to protect the health and wellbeing of Victorians
- Provide and improve health education and promotion for the community
- Maintain and build networks and partnerships to deliver work and address challenges
- Manage public health incidents and emergencies now, and improve our capability to do so in the future
- Maintain relationships with partners in emergency response
- Regulate for Health Protection and administer legislation, including: *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*; *Food Act 1984*; *Safe Drinking Water Act 2003*; *Radiation Act 2005*; *Health (Fluoridation) Act 1973*

Victoria's Chief Health Officer is responsible for the provision of public health advice to the Minister, the Department of Health and Human Services and the Victorian community including the exercise of statutory powers under the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*.

Key accountabilities

Accountabilities

Operating at value range 1, you will:

1. Provide authoritative advice, reasoned recommendations and innovative solutions to complex and sensitive issues based on comprehensive research.
2. Develop policy initiatives that meet government and departmental objectives within resourcing, timeline and budget parameters.
3. Monitor and report on high priority issues, risks and trends and prepare and present reports, ministerial briefs, Cabinet and agency submissions.
4. Establish and maintain effective working relationships and facilitate the flow of information across the department and also with key external stakeholders at the Commonwealth and State levels.
5. Maintain an understanding of Commonwealth and State legislative and policy reform directions to influence policy development.
6. Represent the department on key stakeholder committees and groups concerned with achieving government and departmental objectives and contribute to relevant committee and governance processes at the Commonwealth and State levels.
7. Undertake complex independent work and assessment of public health risks for drinking water-related public health issues, incidents, emergencies and policies.
8. Provide authoritative evidence-based advice and recommendations on health risk communication and management to the Health Protection Branch, the Chief Health Officer and other stakeholders to ensure the protection of Victorians from hazards in drinking water, including pathogens and chemicals in water. Key areas of responsibilities include undertaking human health quantitative risk assessments relating to chemicals in drinking water, informing the management of chemical risks in water.
9. Administer department operational policies in relation to the *Safe Drinking Water Act 2003*, *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*, *Health (Fluoridation) Act 1973* and other related health legislation.
10. Develop policy and initiatives that meet government and departmental objectives within resourcing, timeline and budget parameters to address specific public health-related water issues, contributing to a 'whole of government' approach to meeting broader Victorian objectives for drinking water.
11. Evaluate technical documents and data relating to the public health aspects of drinking water and prepare detailed, comprehensive reports, Ministerial briefings, agency committee submissions and presentations on policy options and issues.
12. Keep accurate and complete records of your work activities in accordance with legislative requirements and the department's records, information security and privacy policies and requirements.
13. Take reasonable care for your own health and safety and for that of others in the workplace by working in accordance with legislative requirements and the department's occupational health and safety (OHS) policies and procedures.
14. Demonstrate how the actions and outcomes of this role and work unit impact clients and the department's ability to deliver, or facilitate the delivery of, effective support and services.

Operating at value range 2, you will perform all the above together with increasing involvement to:

15. Operate within increased level of autonomy and accountability in delivering within broad strategic directions.

16. Provide professional leadership and guidance to the Water Sector Risk and Prevention team.
17. Make decisions that establish precedents.
18. Manage stakeholders through effective negotiation and influence.
19. Manage cross-functional delivery of departmental policies and services impacted by sensitive and complex issues.

Key selection criteria

Technical and specialist expertise

Demonstrated understanding of water quality risk management principles and water treatment plants including their processes and performance and ability to analyse and interpret microbiological, chemical and other water quality data.

Demonstrated expertise or experience in human toxicology and quantitative risk assessment, communication and management.

Knowledge and skills

1. Policy skills: formulates and communicates public policy options and recommendations; keeps up-to-date with a broad range of contemporary issues; scans for links and potential implications of proposed policy options; liaises with stakeholders.
2. Problem solving: seeks all relevant information for problem-solving; liaises with stakeholders; analyses issues from different perspectives and draws sound inferences from information available; identifies and proposes workable solutions to problems; implements solutions, evaluates effectiveness and adjusts actions as required.
3. Planning and organising: sets clearly defined objectives and priorities and operates accordingly, reviewing and adjusting as required; identifies processes, tasks and resources required to achieve a goal; establishes systems and procedures to guide work and track progress; recognises actual and potential barriers and finds effective ways to deal with them.
4. Self-management: invites feedback on own behaviour and impact; uses new knowledge or information about self to build a broader understanding of own behaviour and the impact it has on others; understands strong emotional reactions and seeks ways to more effectively manage them.
5. Written communication: prepares complex briefs, letters, emails and reports using clear, concise and grammatically correct language; edits written communications to ensure they contain the information necessary to achieve their purpose and meet needs; ensures appropriate styles and formats are used.

Personal qualities

6. Drive and commitment: enthusiastic and committed; demonstrates capacity for sustained effort and hard work; sets high standards of performance for self and others; enjoys a vigorous and dynamic work environment.
7. 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.

8. Creativity and innovation: generates new ideas; draws on a range of information sources to identify new ways of doing things; actively influences events and promotes ideas; translates creative ideas into workplace improvements; reflects on experience and is open to new ways to improve practice.
9. Relationship building: establishes and maintains relationships with people at all levels; promotes harmony and consensus through diplomatic handling of disagreements; forges useful partnerships with people across business areas, functions and organisations; builds trust through consistent actions, values and communications; minimises surprises.
10. Teamwork: cooperates and works well with others in pursuit of team goals; collaborates and shares information; shows consideration, concern and respect for others' feelings and ideas; accommodates and works well with the different working styles of others; encourages resolution of conflict within the group.

Qualifications

A tertiary qualification in relevant fields related to engineering, science, toxicology, health risk assessments and public health.

Important information

This role requires work-related travel across metropolitan and regional Victoria, on occasion at very short notice. The department will consider all reasonable adjustments for candidates with a disability.

The salary range for this position is set out in Schedule B of the *Victorian Public Service Enterprise Agreement 2020*. For further information refer to [Department of Treasury and Finance](https://www.dtf.vic.gov.au/home) <<https://www.dtf.vic.gov.au/home>>).

The Department of Health's 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 staff transferring at-level.

Individuals who have received a Voluntary Departure Package from a Victoria Public Service department/agency are ineligible for re-employment for a minimum period of three calendar years from the date of separation.

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.

The department is committed to providing and maintain a working environment which is safe and without risk to the health of its employees.

Pre-employment checks

All appointments to the Department of Health are subject to reference checks, pre-employment misconduct screening and national criminal records checks. Some positions may also be subject to a 'Working with Children Check'.

Applicants who have lived overseas for 12 months or longer in one country in the last 10 years are required to provide an international police check. Applicants can obtain this from the relevant overseas police agency – further information can be sought from the Department of Home Affairs website 'character and policy

certificate requirements' page. Alternatively, applicants can obtain a check through an organisation which provides international policy checks via an internet search.

Values and behaviours

The 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 values an inclusive workplace that embraces diversity and strongly encourages applications from Aboriginal people, people with disability, people from the LGBTQI+ community, and people from culturally diverse backgrounds.

Further information

For further information visit [About the Department of Health](https://www.vic.gov.au/health/about-us) <<https://www.vic.gov.au/health/about-us>>

To receive this document in another format, [email People and Culture](mailto:careers@dhhs.vic.gov.au) <careers@dhhs.vic.gov.au>.

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In this document, 'Aboriginal' refers to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. 'Indigenous' or 'Koori/Koorie' is retained when part of the title of a report, program or quotation.

Available at careers.vic.gov.au <<https://careers.vic.gov.au/>> and [Jobs and Skills Exchange](https://jse.vic.gov.au) <<https://jse.vic.gov.au/>>

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