

Overview: 2025 Fiscal Year Budget for the Georgia Department of Public Health

By Leah Chan, Director of Health Justice

The Department of Public Health plays a vital role in safeguarding the well-being of Georgians, with responsibilities ranging from monitoring infectious diseases and health threats to responding to health-related disasters. Governor Kemp's budget proposal for Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 provides the Department with **\$422 million in state funds**. Of the total \$826 million in proposed funds for the Department, about 48% would come from federal sources. One of the largest sources of that federal funding is earmarked for the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), which provides over 200,000 low-income Georgians with healthy food, nutrition information, breastfeeding support and other services.

Governor Kemp's budget proposal increases the Department's state funding by \$22 million, or 6%, above the original fiscal year 2024 budget. Most of the state funding increase is attributed to the proposed cost-of-living adjustment for staff across the Department's headquarters and the 159 county health departments. Georgia continues to grapple with high rates of preventable death among pregnant and postpartum people, as well as increases in infant deaths. Aside from a small increase in funding for the maternal home-visiting pilot, the proposed budget fails to address these maternal and infant health needs.

Budget Highlights*: By the Numbers

Amended Fiscal Year 2024 Budget

- **\$5.8 million increase** for one-time, \$1,000 bonuses for full-time staff at the Department and its attached agencies
- **\$638 thousand increase** for the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program, an electronic database for tracking controlled substance prescriptions, which received a reduction in federal grant funds
- **\$324 thousand increase** to restore funds for the Clayton County district health director position

Fiscal Year 2025 Budget

- **\$15 million increase** for 4% cost-of-living adjustments for full-time staff (not to exceed \$3,000 each) at the Department and its attached agencies

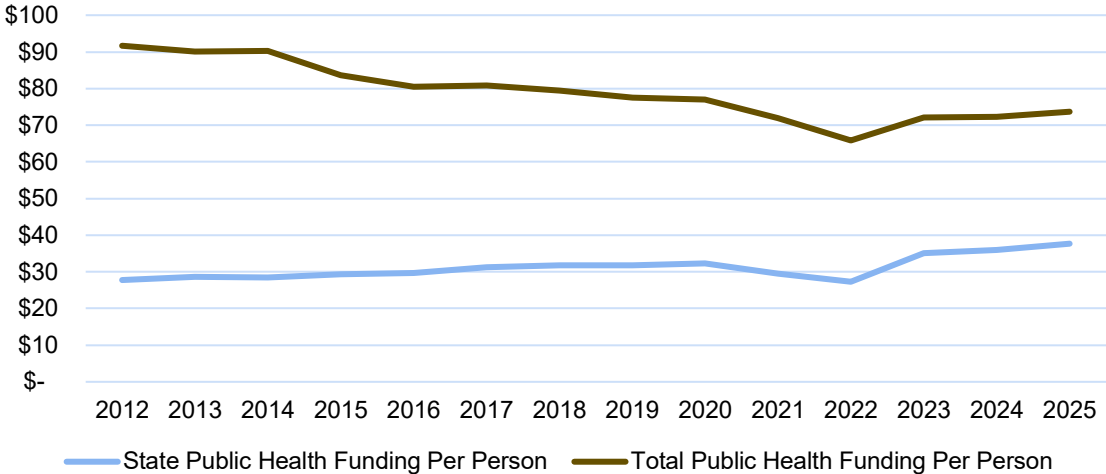
**This is not an exhaustive list; it represents notable budget changes. Budget amounts are rounded to the nearest whole number.*

- **\$1.7 million increase** for personnel, rent and operating costs for an emergency preparedness warehouse
- **\$1 million increase** to expand the maternal health home-visiting pilot initially launched in FY 2024 into more rural counties (utilizes \$686 thousand in existing funds combined with \$314 thousand in FY 2025 funds)
- **\$766 thousand increase** for the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program, an electronic database for tracking controlled substance prescriptions, which received a reduction in federal grant funds
- **\$324 thousand increase** to restore funds for the Clayton County district health director position

State Public Health Funding Per Person Sees Slight Increase After Years of Stagnation

Since the Department became a stand-alone agency in FY 2012, state public health funding per person has remained relatively stagnant. However, starting in FY 2023, per person funding saw a slight bump, which is driven largely by cost-of-living adjustments and limited salary increases over the past few budget cycles. Alternatively, combining both state and federal funding sources, public health funding per person has been decreasing over time. However, there has been a slight bump in recent budget cycles thanks to efforts to address workforce recruitment and retention. While the recent increases are encouraging, continued stagnation in state per person funding and a failure to strengthen the state’s public health infrastructure puts the state’s health security at risk and makes Georgia more vulnerable to inevitable future health threats.

Public Health Funding Per Person, FY 2012 - FY2025 (Adjusted for Inflation)



Source: Governor’s Budget Report Amended FY 2025 and AFY 2024; Office of Planning and Budget’s Budget in Briefs FY 2012- FY 2024