# Brief Description of Proposed Priority Options

## Human Health, Safety and Welfare Technical Working Group

## DRAFT

### HHSW 1 – Health Impact Assessments

Require Health Impact Assessments be conducted for adaptation and mitigation options selected for implementation under the Maryland Climate Change Action Plan to ensure that they promote human health across all sectors of the population. Where options compromise or diminish human health, they will be modified.

### HHSW 2 - Inter-governmental Coordination

Develop a plan to coordinate county and city level adaptation options to ensure consistency in response to health emergencies across county boundaries. Recognize and account for differences in response capacity between counties and recommend mitigation and augmentation options to minimize disruption in services due to lack of capacity.

### HHSW 3 - Uniform Data Standards

Develop uniform indicators, metrics and data systems to monitor climate change-related health impacts. Share those standards between all levels of government. Determine thresholds for action based on uniform data and criteria. Ensure monitoring systems evaluate overall efficacy of actions, alignment of actual results with expectations and overall cost-effectiveness of selected actions.

### HHSW 4 - Surge Capacity Support

Develop a plan to address insufficient surge capacity in dealing with issues of human health during and following extreme events such as flooding, storms and storm surges. Capacity must be present, consistent and effective in analyzing the safety of drinking water, monitoring for the appearance of vectorborne diseases and providing acute care for persons suffering from effects of the events. Issues to be addressed may include financial, human, and institutional capacity at all levels of government and institutional service providers.

.

### HHSW 5 – Disaster Response Plans

Require all municipalities to have written and operational disaster response plans that are updated at least every 5 years, and that address all aspects of potential sea-level rise. Likewise, these plans should include consideration of likely changes in the frequency and intensity of extreme events due to climate change, particularly as related to sea level rise. Public health agencies should play an active role in disaster planning and response.

### HHSW 6 – Early Warning Systems

In collaboration with appropriate stakeholders, identify effective approaches to communicate early warnings for adverse public health events associated with climate change. Of particular

concern are communication systems and plans that address low-income and under-served populations and other vulnerable groups. Ensure that municipalities that lack capacity to plan, develop or implement these systems are provided viable options to overcome those barriers.

## HHSW 7 – Education and Training for Emergency Medical Services Personnel

Provide appropriate training to emergency responders at all levels and locations that will assist them in making correct choices and in coordinating effectively with other units within the emergency medical system. Ensure that periodically tests are conducted of the emergency response system.

Train emergency services personnel in how to implement evacuation plans for those who lack the ability to respond appropriately and fully to evacuation orders, including those without automobiles or handicapped populations. Provide training and coordination capacity to implement alternatives if major highways are blocked or otherwise unusable.

## HHSW 8 – Protection of Service and Security Infrastructure

Work with managers of hospitals, public buildings and infrastructure that provide emergency security, communications and health services to reduce the vulnerability of critical activities and equipment during an extreme event. Ensure that emergency services personnel are apprised of the location and sensitivities of these infrastructure components. Assess the feasibility of assigning prioritization codes to infrastructure requiring protection to ensure human health and security before, during and after a severe event.

## HHSW 9 - Vectorborne Surveillance and Control Programs

Augment existing surveillance and control programs for vector-borne diseases that are likely to become more common or widespread with climate change. Guide local municipalities in designing programs to monitor for the appearance of vector- and waterborne diseases following floods and storms. Develop new strategies to control vector breeding sites in swales, storm water drainage systems, ponds, and agricultural ditches.

## HHSW 10 – Vector- and Waterborne Disease Awareness and Education

Develop educational programs to increase awareness of the risks of vector- and waterborne diseases. Develop innovative delivery systems to ensure that diverse populations understand how to identify and appropriately respond to indicators of vector- and waterborne diseases. Education efforts should include school children, focusing on prevention techniques.

## HHSW 11 – Heatwave Awareness and Early Warning

Develop programs to inform care givers, pharmacists, churches, and others who work with vulnerable groups of the risks of and effective responses to heatwaves. Where risk of mortality is high during heatwaves, develop early warning and response systems.