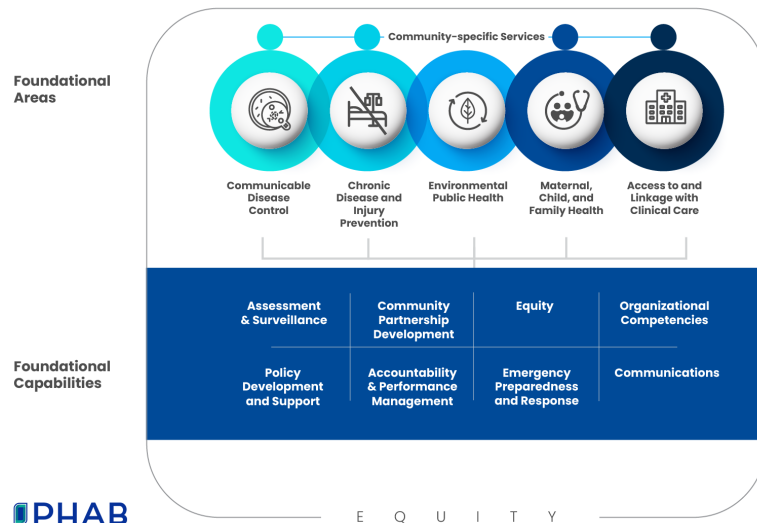# Foundational Public Health Services

PHAB

Health departments have a fundamental responsibility to provide public health protections and services in a number of areas, including: preventing the spread of communicable disease; ensuring food, air, and water quality are safe; supporting maternal and child health; improving access to clinical care services; and preventing chronic disease and injury. In addition, public health departments provide local protections and services specific to their community's needs.

Health departments serve their communities 24/7 and require access to a wide range of critical data sources, robust laboratory capacity, preparedness and policy planning capacity, partnerships with community, and expert staff to leverage them in support of public health protections.

The Foundational Public Health Services framework outlines the unique responsibilities of governmental public health and defines a minimum set of Foundational Capabilities and Foundational Areas that must be available in every community.

Foundational Public Health Services Framework

Community-specific Services

Foundational Areas

| Communicable Disease Control | Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention | Environmental Public Health | Maternal, Child, and Family Health | Access to and Linkage with Clinical Care |

Foundational Capabilities

| Assessment & Surveillance | Community Partnership Development | Equity | Organizational Competencies |
| Policy Development and Support | Accountability & Performance Management | Emergency Preparedness and Response | Communications |

EQUITY

PHAB

Community-specific Services are local protections and services that are unique to the needs of a community. These services are essential to that community's health and vary by jurisdiction.

Foundational Areas

Public health programs, or Foundational Areas, are basic public health, topic-specific programs and services aimed at improving the health of the community. The Foundational Areas reflect the minimum level of service that should be available in all communities.

Foundational Capabilities

Public health infrastructure consists of Foundational Capabilities that are the cross-cutting skills and capacities needed to support basic public health protections, programs, and activities key to ensuring community health, well-being and achieving equitable outcomes.

Foundational Capabilities

There are eight Foundational Capabilities that are needed in Public Health Infrastructure.

Assessment & Surveillance

- Ability to collect timely and sufficient foundational data to guide public health planning and decision making at the state and local level, including the personnel and technology that enable collection.

- Ability to collect, access, analyze, interpret, and use data from a variety of sources including granular data and data disaggregated by geography (e.g., census tract, zip code), sub-populations, race, ethnicity, and other variables that fully describe the health and well-being of a community and the factors that influence health.

- Ability to assess and analyze disparities and inequities in the distribution of disease and social determinants of health, that contribute to higher health risks and poorer health outcomes.

- Ability to prioritize and respond to data requests and translate data into information and reports that are valid, complete, statistically accurate, and accessible to the intended audiences.

- Ability to conduct a collaborative community or statewide health assessment and identify health priorities arising from that assessment, including analysis of root causes of health disparities and inequities.

- Ability to access 24/7 laboratory resources capable of providing rapid detection.

- Ability to participate in or support surveillance systems to rapidly detect emerging health issues and threats.

- Ability to work with community partners to collect, report and use public health data that is relevant to communities experiencing health inequities or ability to support community-led data processes.

Community Partnership Development

- Ability to create, convene, support, and sustain strategic, non-program specific relationships with key community groups or organizations representing populations experiencing health disparities or inequities; private businesses and health care organizations; relevant federal, Tribal, state, and local government agencies; elected and non-elected officials.

- Ability to leverage and engage partnerships and community in equity solutions.

- Ability to establish and maintain trust with and authentically engage community members and populations most impacted by inequities in key public health decision-making and use community-driven approaches.

- Ability to convene across governmental agencies, such as departments of transportation, aging, substance abuse/mental health, education, planning and development, or others, to promote health, prevent disease, and protect community members of the health department's jurisdiction.

- Ability to engage members of the community and multi-sector partners in a community health improvement process that draws from community health assessment data and establishes a plan for addressing priorities. The community health improvement plan can serve as the basis for coordination of effort and resources across partners.

Equity

- Ability to strategically address social and structural determinants of health through policy, programs, and services as a necessary pathway to achieve equity.

- Ability to systematically integrate equity into each aspect of the FPHS, strategic priorities, and include equity-related accountability metrics into all programs and services.

- Ability to work collaboratively across the department and the community to build support for and foster a shared understanding of the critical importance of equity to achieve community health and well-being.

- Ability to develop and support staff to address equity.

- Ability to create a shared understanding of what creates health including structural and systemic factors that produce and reproduce inequities.

Organizational Competencies

- **Leadership & Governance:** Ability to lead internal and external stakeholders to consensus, with movement to action, and to serve as the face of governmental public health in the department's jurisdiction. Ability to directly engage in health policy development, discussion, and adoption with local, state, and national policymakers, and to define a strategic direction for public health initiatives, including the advancement of equity. Ability to prioritize and implement diversity, equity, and inclusion within the organization. Ability to engage with appropriate governing entities about the department's public health legal authorities and what new laws and policies might be needed. Ability to ensure diverse representation on public health boards and councils.

- **Information Technology Services, including Privacy & Security:** Ability to maintain and procure the hardware and software needed to access electronic health information to support the department's operations and analysis of health data. Ability to support, use, and maintain communication technologies and systems needed to interact with community members. Ability to have the proper systems and controls in place to keep health and human resources data confidential and maintain security of IT systems.

- **Workforce Development & Human Resources:** Ability to develop and maintain a diverse and inclusive workforce with the cross-cutting skills and competencies needed to implement the FPHS effectively and equitably. Ability to manage human resource functions including recruitment, retention, and succession planning; training; and performance review and accountability.

- **Financial Management, Contract, & Procurement Services, including Facilities and Operations:** Ability to establish a budgeting, auditing, billing, and financial system and chart of expense and revenue accounts in compliance with federal, state, and local standards and policies. Ability to secure grants or other funding (governmental and not) and demonstrate compliance with an audit required for the sources of funding utilized. Ability to procure, maintain, and manage safe facilities and efficient operations. Ability to leverage funding and ensure resources are allocated to address equity and social determinants of health.

- **Legal Services & Analysis:** Ability to access and appropriately use legal services in planning, implementing, and enforcing, public health initiatives, including relevant administrative rules and due process

Policy Development and Support

- Ability to serve as a primary and expert resource for establishing, maintaining, and developing basic public health policy recommendations that are evidence-based and grounded in law. This includes researching, analyzing, costing out, and articulating the impact of such policies and rules where appropriate, as well as the ability to organize support for these policies and rules and place them before an entity with the legal authority to adopt them.

- Ability to effectively inform and influence policies being considered by other governmental and non-governmental agencies that can improve the physical, environmental, social, and economic conditions affecting health but are beyond the immediate scope or authority of the governmental public health department.

- Ability to effectively advocate for policies that address social determinants of health, health disparities and equity.

- Ability to issue, promote compliance with or, as mandated, enforce compliance with public health regulations.

Accountability & Performance Management

- Ability to perform according to accepted business standards in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local laws and policies and assure compliance with national and Public Health Accreditation Board Standards.

- Ability to maintain a performance management system to monitor achievement of organizational objectives.

- Ability to identify and use evidence-based or promising practices when implementing new or revised processes, programs and/or interventions.

- Ability to maintain an organization-wide culture of quality and to use quality improvement tools and methods.

- Ability to create accountability structures and internal and external equity-related metrics to measure the equity impact of a department's efforts and performance.

Emergency Preparedness and Response

- Ability to develop, exercise, and maintain preparedness and response strategies and plans, in accordance with established guidelines, and to address a range of events including natural or other disasters, communicable disease outbreaks, environmental emergencies, or other events, which may be acute or occur over time.

- Ability to integrate social determinants of health, and actions to address inequities, including ensuring the protection of high-risk populations, into all plans, programs, and services.

- Ability to lead the Emergency Support Function 8 — Public Health & Medical for the county, region, jurisdiction, and state.

- Ability to activate the emergency response personnel and communications systems in the event of a public health crisis; coordinate with federal, state, and local emergency managers and other first responders, and private sector and non-profit partners; and operate within, and as necessary lead, the incident management system.

- Ability to maintain and execute a continuity of operations plan that includes a plan to access financial resources to execute an emergency and recovery response.

- Ability to establish and promote basic, ongoing community readiness, resilience, and preparedness by enabling the public to take necessary action before, during, or after a disaster, emergency, or public health event.

- Ability to issue and enforce emergency health orders.

- Ability to be notified of and respond to events on a 24/7 basis.

- Ability to access and utilize a Laboratory Response Network (LRN) Reference laboratory for biological agents and an LRN chemical laboratory at a level designated by CDC.

Communications

- Ability to maintain ongoing relations with local and statewide media including the ability to write a press release, conduct a press conference, and use electronic communication tools to interact with the media.

- Ability to effectively use social media to communicate directly with community members.

- Ability to appropriately tailor communications and communications mechanisms for various audiences.

- Ability to write and implement a routine communications plan and develop routine public health communications including to reach communities not traditionally reached through public health channels.

- Ability to develop and implement a risk communication strategy for communicating with the public during a public health crisis or emergency. This includes the ability to provide accurate and timely information and to address misconceptions and misinformation, and to assure information is accessible to and appropriate for all audiences.

- Ability to transmit and receive routine communications to and from the public in an appropriate, timely, and accurate manner, on a 24/7 basis.

- Ability to develop and implement a proactive health education/health communication strategy (distinct from risk communication) that disseminates timely and accurate information to the public designed to encourage actions to promote health in culturally and linguistically appropriate formats for the various communities served, including using electronic communication tools.

Foundational Areas

There are five Foundational Areas, also known as Public Health Programs. Social determinants of health and actions to address health inequities should be integrated throughout all activities.

Communicable Disease Control

- Provide timely, statewide, and locally relevant and accurate information to the health care system and community on communicable diseases and their control.

- Identify statewide and local communicable disease control community partners and their capacities, develop, and implement a prioritized communicable disease control plan, and ability to seek and secure funding for high priority initiatives.

- Receive laboratory reports and other relevant data; conduct disease investigations, including contact tracing and notification; and recognize, identify, and respond to communicable disease outbreaks for notifiable conditions in accordance with local, national, and state mandates and guidelines.

- Assure the availability of partner notification services for newly diagnosed cases of communicable diseases according to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines.

- Assure the appropriate treatment of individuals who have reportable communicable diseases, such as TB, STIs, and HIV in accordance with local and state laws and CDC guidelines.

- Support the recognition of outbreaks and other events of public health significance by assuring capacity for the identification and characterization of the causative agents of disease and their origin, including those that are rare and unusual.

- Coordinate and integrate categorically-funded communicable disease programs and services.

Chronic Disease & Injury Prevention

- Provide timely, statewide, and locally relevant, complete, and accurate information to the health care system and community on chronic disease and injury prevention and control.

- Identify statewide and local chronic disease and injury prevention community partners and their capacities, develop, and implement a prioritized prevention plan, and ability to seek and secure funding for high priority initiatives.

- Reduce statewide and community rates of tobacco use through a program that conforms to standards set by state or local laws and CDC's Office on Smoking and Health, including activities to reduce youth initiation, increase cessation, and reduce secondhand exposure to harmful substances.

- Work actively with statewide and community partners to increase statewide and community rates of healthy eating and active living through a prioritized approach focusing on best and promising practices aligned with national, state, and local guidelines for healthy eating and active living.

- Coordinate and integrate categorically-funded chronic disease and injury prevention programs and services.

Environmental Public Health

- Provide timely, statewide, and locally relevant, complete, and accurate information to the state, health care system, and community on environmental public health threats and health impacts from common environmental or toxic exposures.

- Identify statewide and local community environmental public health partners and their capacities, develop, and implement a prioritized plan, and ability to seek and secure action funding for high priority initiatives.

- Conduct mandated environmental public health laboratory testing, inspections, and oversight to protect food, recreation sites, and drinking water; manage liquid and solid waste streams safely; and identify other public health hazards related to environmental factors in accordance with federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

- Protect workers and the public from chemical and radiation hazards in accordance with federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

- Participate in broad land use planning and sustainable development to encourage decisions that promote positive public health outcomes and resilient communities (e.g., housing and urban development, recreational facilities, transportation systems and climate change).

- Coordinate and integrate categorically-funded environmental public health programs and services.

Maternal, Child and Family Health

- Provide timely, statewide, and locally relevant, complete, and accurate information to the health care system and community on emerging and on-going maternal child health trends.

- Identify local maternal and child health community partners and their capacities; using life course expertise and an understanding of health disparities, develop a prioritized prevention plan; and ability to seek and secure funding for high priority initiatives.

- Identify, disseminate, and promote emerging and evidence-based early interventions in the prenatal and early childhood period that promote lifelong health and positive social-emotional development.

- Assure newborn screening as mandated by a state or local governing body including wraparound services, reporting back, following up, and service engagement activities.

- Coordinate and integrate categorically funded maternal, child, and family health programs and services.

Access to & Linkage with Care

- Provide timely, statewide, and locally relevant, complete, and accurate information to the health care system and community on access and linkage to clinical care (including behavioral health), healthcare system access, quality, and cost.

- Inspect and license healthcare facilities, and license, monitor, and discipline healthcare providers, where applicable.

- In concert with national and statewide groups and local providers of healthcare, identify healthcare partners and competencies, develop prioritized plans for increasing access to health homes and quality health care, and seek funding for high priority policy initiatives.