

The Futures Initiative: the 10 Essential Public Health Services

Revising State and Local Laws and Regulations Citing the 10 Essential Public Health Services

December 2020

Introduction

As the 10 Essential Public Health Services (EPHS) Task Force met to advise the refreshed framework, it was acknowledged that several state and local health departments have the previous framework referenced in state or local laws, rules, and regulations. This tip sheet is provided as guidance to those who reference the EPHS generally and those who cite the EPHS specifically. The tips have been separated into those two categories below.

Jurisdictions with the Essential Public Health Services Generally Referenced

State and local jurisdictions that have the EPHS framework generally referenced in their laws, rules, and/or regulations may not need to open their public health enabling legislation for the 2020 refreshed EPHS framework to apply. However, it is prudent to educate state and local elected officials and policy makers on the changes reflected in the 2020 version in order to be transparent in the expectations associated with the rules and authorities of the jurisdictional health authority. Tips for educating those groups can be found in the toolkit (<http://ephs.phnci.org/toolkit>).

- Ensure that your website, social media, and graphics are consistent with the revised framework.
- Use the short version of the PowerPoint presentation to educate and inform your policy makers about the new version.
- Use the alignment document to craft your messages about the changes from the original version in the refreshed version. Those comparisons have been done already and are located at <https://phnci.org/uploads/resource-files/EPHS-Alignment-RevisedEssentialServicesvsOriginalEssentialServices.pdf>.
- Of particular interest to policy makers could be the new language in EPHS 10, “Build and maintain a strong organizational infrastructure for public health,” since it reflects the management of the public health organization.
- Work with your policy makers to determine whether the language in your existing statutes/rules/regulations have to be changed in order to better reflect the refreshed framework.
- If your language also references the core functions of public health, those have not changed.
- If no changes are needed, the final step is to ensure that your citations of the framework in all of your official documents have been updated to reflect the 2020 refreshed version.

Jurisdictions with the Essential Public Health Services Specifically Referenced

State and local jurisdictions that have the EPHS framework specifically referenced in their laws, rules, and/or regulations will need to consider opening the relevant legal document to make appropriate changes to the enabling authority. An assessment conducted by Hoss, Menon, and Liza Corso (2016) in the Journal of Public Health Management and Practice reported that 18 states reference fundamental public health activities in their laws, and 13 states list the 10 EPHS specifically. Eight of these jurisdictions also mention the three core functions. For these jurisdictions to keep their laws updated, it is important to begin developing strategies to be successful in changing those enabling authorities. PHNCI understands that, given the current political climate related to COVID19, jurisdictions may or may not want to open their public health authorizing legislation if that is where the EPHS framework is included. PHNCI does recommend, however, that jurisdictions carefully plan their approach to updating their legislation.

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The following tips are provided for these jurisdictions to consider as they carefully plan this work.

- It is prudent to educate policy makers prior to any attempts to change legislation. Tips for educating those groups can be found in the toolkit (<http://ephs.phnci.org/toolkit>).
- Use the short version of the PowerPoint presentation to inform and educate your policy makers about the new version.
- Use the alignment document to craft your statute/rule/regulation changes. <https://phnci.org/uploads/resource-files/EPHS-Alignment-RevisedEssentialServicesvsOriginalEssentialServices.pdf>.
- Develop supportive messages to your policy makers regarding the need for your jurisdiction to be aligned with the refreshed national framework. If you need legal consultation regarding your process for accomplishing your plan, an excellent resource is the Network for Public Health Law, <https://www.networkforphl.org/>
- For those health departments that are accredited, please remember to document your process for updating your authorities and jurisdictions so you can use that documentation in your accreditation/reaccreditation process.
- For jurisdictions that also have Foundational Public Health Services in statutes/rules/regulations, PHNCI has provided an alignment document for your use in comparing that language with the refreshed EPHS framework. <https://phnci.org/uploads/resource-files/EPHS-Alignment-EPHSvsFPHS.pdf>
- The final step is to ensure that your citations of the framework in all of your official documents have been updated to reflect the 2020 refreshed version.

References

10 Essential Public Health Services Futures Initiative Task Force. 10 Essential Public Health Services. September 9, 2020. <https://phnci.org/uploads/resource-files/EPHS-English.pdf>

Hoss A, Menon A, Corso L. State public health enabling authorities: Results of a fundamental activities assessment examining core and essential services. *Journal of Public Health Management and Practice*. 2016; 22(6):529-536.

Public Health Law Network. <https://www.networkforphl.org/>