

Workforce planning is vital for ensuring adequate staffing levels, skillsets, and distribution to respond effectively to public health crises, such as pandemics, and to deliver foundational public health and community-specific services. It helps optimize resource allocation, enhances preparedness for emerging threats, and ensures the delivery of quality public health services to communities in need. By engaging in workforce planning, health departments can better align their workforce with strategic goals, identify skill gaps, and proactively address staffing challenges.

This User Guide and Resource Manual (User Guide) accompanies the [Workforce Plan Template](#) (Template) designed for use by state, territorial, local, and Tribal health departments. The Template and User Guide are based on Version 2022 of the PHAB Standards and Measures for Initial Accreditation.

History and Timeline

● 2011	The original Template and User Guide were developed. The work was facilitated by the Ohio State University College of Public Health Center for Public Health Practice (OSU CPHP) with support and guidance from the Association of Ohio Health Commissioners and 16 public health professionals representing local and state public health departments in Ohio.
● 2014	OSU CPHP updated the Template and User Guide to reflect Version 1.5 of the PHAB Standards and Measures for Initial Accreditation.
● 2023	Stewardship of the Template and User Guide was transferred from OSU CPHP to the PHAB Center for Innovation (PHAB CFI).
● 2024	PHAB CFI updated the Template and User Guide to reflect Version 2022 of the Standards and Measures for Initial Accreditation. The Template was expanded to address broader strategic workforce planning efforts. Support was provided by the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO).

Acknowledgments

Contributors

PHAB CFI would like to thank the following individuals for their contributions to the 2024 update:

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How To Use This Template

Template Sections

The Template contains the following sections which can be edited and modified to meet your health department's specific needs. Note that the Template's sections and their associated sub-sections may be deleted if they do not apply to your department (see Accreditation Considerations below). Alternatively, sections, sub-sections, and appendices may be added to further customize based on need.

- Department Profile
 - Workforce Capacity, Recruitment, and Hiring
 - Employee Training and Development
 - Employee Satisfaction and Well-Being
 - Workforce Plan Objectives and Strategies
 - Implementation and Monitoring
 - Appendices
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Editing the Template

The Template is a Word document that is formatted as a series of tables that can be edited. Section breaks were used between pages. Turning on paragraph markers as you edit is encouraged as it will help identify location of section breaks and other important formatting elements.

Document text is in three colors:

- **Black:** Standard language that may not need to be modified.
- **Blue:** Provides instructions/examples for completing each section. All blue text should be edited or deleted to meet a department's specific needs. Text should be changed to black before considering the document final.
- **Brown:** Accreditation related notes for departments wanting to align their plan with the PHAB Standards and Measures for Initial Accreditation. This text should be deleted before considering the document final.

The department may choose to keep or delete the PHAB logo and the note regarding the source of funding to support the development of the Template. Sections and sub-sections may be added or deleted to further customize the plan. Additionally, the footer should be updated to include the name of the file and the current date/version.

Accreditation Considerations

The Template was designed to address workforce-related requirements as set forth in the [PHAB Standards and Measures for Initial Accreditation Version 2022](#). Please note the disclaimer language on page 2 regarding use of this Template. Accreditation-related notes and references are located throughout the Template in brown font. Note that the requirements for reaccreditation or Pathways Recognition may vary. Health Departments are strongly encouraged to consult the appropriate Standards and Measures for guidance as they use this Template.

Resource List

The table below includes a list of resources organized by the Template section, including some general resources for workforce planning. The list is not exhaustive. Health departments should consider local and regional resources that can be leveraged towards this work (e.g., universities, community-based organizations, state health departments, etc.) and may create their own repository of resources to add to those below. If there are additional workforce planning resources that you feel would be helpful to include in this user guide, please email info@phaboard.org with the name of the resource/organization, a description of the resource, and a link.

Plan Section/Topic	Resources and Links
Workforce Capacity, Recruitment, and Hiring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASTHO Profile of State and Territorial Public Health Departments is a summary of information on state, territorial, and freely associated state health departments and their activities, structure, and resources. Profiles are updated every 3 years. • Council on Linkages Academic Health Department (AHD) Learning Community is a national community designed to support the development, maintenance, and expansion of AHD partnerships – formal affiliations of health departments and academic institutions. • NACCHO's National Profile of Local Health Departments is a census of local health departments (LHDs) that provides the largest, most reliable data source on LHD infrastructure and practice. Profile is updated every 3 years. • The National Indian Health Board Public Health in Indian Country Capacity Scan assess the capacity of Tribal health and Tribal public health organizations for delivering public health services. Data are updated every 5 years. • PHAB has several workforce-related resources including: Tools to Support Effective Workforce Development Planning; Workforce Calculator that estimates staffing needs related to the Foundational Capabilities; and the Capacity and Cost Assessment that provides an understanding of costs, expertise, and capacity towards the national FPHS Framework. • PH WINS 2021 National Dashboards is the first and only nationally representative source of data on the people that make up the public health workforce. It captures perspectives on several key topics as well as their demographics. Can be used to ID department specific needs and benchmark. • Public Health Careers.org is a national repository of public health job opportunities across the country. • Public Health Training Center Network Public Health Learning Agenda provides a toolkit to build an adaptive public health workforce. • Region V Public Health Training Center Public Health Model Job Descriptions Project created evidence-based job descriptions and job postings that can be adapted by local, state, Tribal, and territorial health departments.

Resource List

Topic	Associated Resources/Links
Employee Training and Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Center for Disease Control and Prevention Public Health Gateway provides links to a variety of discipline specific competency sets. • Council on Linkages 2021 Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals is considered the primary set of competencies for the public health workforce. • de Beaumont Foundation Adapting and Aligning Public Health Strategic Skills presents a set of cross cutting strategic skills and a cross walk of the definitions with the core competencies. • Montana Public Health Institute's Workforce Development Facilitation Guide for Small Health Departments supports the creation of health department-specific competencies for local and Tribal health departments in Montana. Content may be useful to a broader audience. • National Coordinating Center for Public Health Training (NCCPHT) - NNPHI, is a source for comprehensive, engaging training resources about public health practice and population health improvement. • National licensing boards exist for several public health-related occupations including NCHEC's Certified Health Education Specialist and the National Public Health Credentialing Board's Certified Public Health Practitioner. • PH WINS 2021 National Dashboards (See description above.) • Public Health Foundation's TRAIN Learning Network provides training and other learning opportunities to public health, healthcare, behavioral health, preparedness, and other health professionals.
Employee Satisfaction and Well-Being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASTHO's PH-HERO Initiative Addresses Workforce Wellbeing is designed to address workforce burnout and moral injury and aid in overall retention and recruitment efforts to support a culture of well-being and resilience.
General Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASTHO's Workforce Planning Guide (under development) is a comprehensive online workforce planning guide that provides a systematic approach to workforce planning including supporting resources. • The Association for Talent Development (ATD) is a national organization that serves members and customers who help others achieve their full potential by improving knowledge, skills, and abilities in the workplace. Membership is required to access some resources. • NACCHO's Workforce Development and Training webpage offers a variety of workshops and trainings, supports leadership development and core competency efforts, and engages in national policy discussions to address pressing public health workforce issues. • NNPHI's Public Health Performance Improvement Network (phPIN) is an online learning community and peer exchange network for those providing leadership in performance improvement in public health.

Workforce Plan Checklist

This checklist includes the PHAB Standards and Measures for Initial Accreditation associated with Domain 8: Build and Support a Diverse and Skilled Public Health Workforce. It also includes other Standards and Measures outside of Domain 8 that have workforce-related elements and that you may consider addressing and/or acknowledging within your broader strategic workforce plan. Please note that the use of this checklist does not guarantee conformity, and health departments are strongly encouraged to review the Standards and Measures independently for additional guidance.

✓	Domain 8 Measures	Requirement
	8.1.1S RD1 (State Only)	Ongoing relationship with a school of public health or other academic program to promote public health training careers or enhance training in public health (1 example).
	8.1.1T/L RD1 (Tribal/Local Only)	Participation in a collaborative activity that promotes public health as a career choice (1 example).
	8.1.2A RD1	Recruitment and hiring efforts aimed at securing a qualified and diverse workforce (2 examples).
	8.2.1A RD1	A workforce development plan that includes:
		a. A description of the current capacity of the health department both as a whole and within its sub-unit
		b. An organization-wide assessment of current staff capabilities against an accepted set of core competencies
		c. Findings from an equity assessment that considers staff competence in the areas of cultural humility, diversity or inclusion
		d. Priority gaps identified with an explanation of the prioritization. At least one of the prioritized gaps must related to the findings of the assessments in requirement element a, b, or c
		e. Plans to address at a minimum two of the gaps in requirement element d; for each gap, documentation must include: i. measurable objectives; ii. Improvement strategies or activities with timeframes
	8.2.1A RD2	A list of learning or educational opportunities related to the gaps in capacity, or capabilities identified within the workforce development plan. At least one of the learnings or educational opportunities will include training on equity, diversity, inclusion, or cultural humility.
	8.2.2A RD1	Individualized professional development plans for non-managerial staff and progress towards completion (2 examples).
	8.2.2A RD2	Participation in leadership or management development learning opportunities (2 examples).

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✓	Domain 8 Measures	Description of Requirement
	8.2.3A RD1	A comprehensive policy or set of policies that demonstrate a supportive work environment, which must address, at minimum one provision of each of the following:
		a. Employee wellness
		b. Work-life balance
		c. Employee recognition
		d. Inclusive culture
	8.2.3A RD2	Assessment of staff satisfaction and actions taken (1 example).
		a. Systematically collecting feedback from staff
		b. Drawing conclusions and making recommendations based on the feedback
		c. Taking action based on the conclusions drawn from the staff satisfaction assessment
	8.2.4S RD1 (State Only)	Information sought or reviewed to understand the needs of multiple Tribal and local health departments regarding strengthening the public health workforce (2 examples).
	8.2.4S RD2 (State Only)	Support provided to Tribal or local health department to be responsive to their needs regarding strengthening the workforce (2 examples).
✓	Other Measures	Description of Requirement
	2.2.4A RD1	A schedule for training or exercises to prepare personnel who will serve in response capacity, which includes at minimum basic FEMA trainings on incident command.
	2.2.4A RD2	Proactive or just in time training for individuals involved in response activities.
	6.1.1A RD1	Staff are trained on laws which they are programmatically required to enforce.
	9.1.4A RD1c	Description of QI learning opportunities offered to all levels of department staff.
	9.1.6A RD4	Staff professional development completed in the area of performance management or QI.

Workforce Plan Checklist

✓	Other Measures	Description of Requirement
	10.2.2A RD1	Human resources policies or procedures that address each of the following:
		a. Personnel recruitment, selection, and appointment
		b. Confidentiality of employee information and personnel records.
		c. Salary structure
		d. Benefits package
	10.2.4A RD2	All staff have participated in information security training including password best practices and cybersecurity.
	10.3.2A RD 1	Orientation of new members of the governing entity(ies) and advisory board(s). New member orientation must include:
		a. The responsibilities of the health department, including major programs and public health authorities
		b. The public health responsibilities of the governing entity or advisory group
		c. The health status of the community and priority issues

Training Plan Template

This template can be used to capture training offered to staff. Examples are noted below and can be replaced with health department-specific training. Rows may be added or deleted as needed. **Accreditation Note:** *Measure 8.2.1A requires a list of learning opportunities that relate to the gaps in capacity or capabilities identified within the workforce development plan or the equity assessment. You may also consider addressing other accreditation-related training requirements such as leadership or management development opportunities – Measure 8.2.2A – as an example. Refer to the previous section, Workforce Plan Checklist, for a list of training-related requirements in the PHAB Standards and Measures for Initial Accreditation.*

Title	Description/Learning Objectives	Audience	Format/Date/Time	References/Notes
EXAMPLE: ICS 100	Introduction to the Incident Command System	All new staff	Online, self-study. Complete within first 3 months of hire.	FEMA - Emergency Management Institute (EMI) Course IS-100.C: Introduction to the Incident Command System, ICS 100
EXAMPLE: Public Health 101	Introduction to public health.	All new staff and board members	Online self-study module to be completed within 1 month of appointment/hire.	Public Health 101 (No CE) - Region V Public Health Training Center (mitrainingcenter.org)
EXAMPLE: Annual SACCHO Meeting	Annual meeting for local health department leadership	Health department leadership	In-person annual conference. Held in fall each year.	See SACCHO website.
EXAMPLE: Emerging Leaders Program	Cohort based leadership development program for emerging leaders. Offered through the local university.	Emerging health department leaders	Hybrid cohort-based offered annually starting in January each year.	Participants must be nominated by supervisors. See local university for schedule/nomination process.
EXAMPLE: Equity Learning Series	Four-part series that addresses needs based on equity assessment results and includes time for application to current work.	All staff	Hybrid. In person working sessions offered 4x per year (Feb, May, Aug, Nov)	