

Proposed Standards & Activities for the NC Local Health Department Accreditation Program

Updated September 2024

A local health department shall complete the following activities:

Standard A: Assessment & Surveillance

1. Conduct a community health assessment process
2. Collect and use a variety of data to guide LHD programs and services
3. Collect and use a variety of data to describe the health and well-being of the community
4. Provide or assure that the LHD has access to laboratory services for disease surveillance reportable and reference and detection
5. Conduct surveillance of emerging health issues and threats by reporting public health data to federal, state, local, and tribal public health agencies in accordance with G.S. 130A

Standard B: Community Partnership Development

1. Involve community partners to develop and implement LHD and programs and services,
2. Identify and consult representatives of populations experiencing health disparities or lacking access to care
3. Consult community representatives and partners in a community health improvement process

Standard C: Communications

1. Provide communication about public health issues and topics to the community
2. Tailor and distribute communications to reach target audiences in the LHD jurisdiction
3. Share data about the health and well-being of the LHD jurisdiction with the public and community partners
4. Maintain communication and media partnerships to promote public health messages
5. Implement a health education strategy that promotes community well-being
6. Maintain a strategy to communicate urgent public health risks to the community

Standard D: Emergency Preparedness & Response

1. Maintain and test emergency preparedness and response plans
2. Activate LHD personnel and communications systems in the event of a declared emergency in coordination with response partners
3. Maintain LHD continuity of operations during a local incident or declared emergency
4. Enforce orders issued under the authority of the local health director as set forth in G.S. 130A
5. Have a written plan that describes how the local health department can be reached by phone, email, or other form of communication and be notified of hazards on a 24 hours per day seven days per week basis

Standard E: Equity

1. Develop LHD strategies and metrics that address structural or social determinants of health
2. Implement structural or social determinant of health strategies within the Foundational Areas
3. Provide LHD workforce training on structural or social determinant of health-related topics

Standard F: Organizational Workforce Development & Human Resources

1. Comply with applicable state and county human resource laws and policies related to local health department employee grievances, performance review, and job qualifications
2. Develop and implement a workforce development plan to recruit and retain a qualified public health workforce
3. Identify and address barriers to the workforce development plan
4. Provide professional development to the LHD workforce, including opportunities for on-the-job training and continuing education

Standard G: Organizational Leadership, Governance, & Legal Services

1. Share identified public health needs with local/state elected officials and partners
2. Define a strategic direction and priorities for LHD services, programs, and initiatives
3. Educate governing entities on their public health roles, responsibilities, and legal authority
4. Ensure access to legal services
5. Demonstrate how the LHD develops and implements a plan to include community representation or input for decision-making on public health issues related boards, councils, or community groups

Standard H: Organizational Facilities

1. Be open and accessible to meet the need for services, programs, or emergency response
2. Written protocols for the security of local health department facilities
3. Maintain equipment in accordance with manufacturing requirements
4. Implement tobacco-free facilities

Standard I: Organizational Finance & Information Technology

1. Maintain a budgeting, auditing, billing, and financial policy
2. Seek resources to support programs, services, and interventions based on identified needs
3. Comply with information and technology security standards as set forth in applicable federal, state, and local law and policy

Standard J: Accountability & Performance Management

1. Establish and maintain LHD organizational administrative policies and operational procedures
2. Comply with applicable federal, state, and local law
3. Maintain performance management methods to improve LHD services and programs
4. Identify and use public health evidence-informed practices to improve LHD services and programs; and
5. Use quality improvement methods to optimize organization efficiency

Standard K: Policy Development & Support

1. Enforce applicable laws and rules
2. Review local ordinances, Board of Health rules, or policies to improve the health of the community
3. Demonstrate involvement in the review, revision or adoption of state laws, rules, and initiatives
4. to improve the health of the community