



Public Health Accreditation Board
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Benefits of National Accreditation Reaching More Communities

Population Served by a PHAB-Accredited Health Department Now Totals 111 Million

Alexandria, VA — Demonstrating the capacity to provide the highest quality of services to their communities, six more public health departments have been awarded national accreditation by the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB). This week's decisions bring 40.5 million more people into the growing family of communities that can be assured their health departments are meeting important national standards. The decisions also mark new milestones as the first local health departments in Maryland and Texas were awarded accreditation this week, and the state health department in California is now the PHAB-accredited health department serving the largest population.

PHAB, the non-profit organization that administers the national public health accreditation program, aims to improve and protect the health of the public by advancing the quality and performance of the nation's Tribal, state, local, and territorial health departments. Since the program's launch in 2011, 60 health departments have been awarded five-year accreditation status, bringing the total population now served by a PHAB-accredited health department to more than 111 million.

National accreditation status was awarded Dec. 9, 2014 to:

- California Department of Public Health, Sacramento, California
- Frederick County Health Department, Frederick, Maryland
- Green River District Health Department, Owensboro, Kentucky
- Houston Department of Health and Human Services, Houston, Texas
- Salt Lake County Health Department, Salt Lake City, Utah
- Worcester County Health Department, Snow Hill, Maryland

“In addition to meeting the national standards for public health performance, these health departments demonstrated strengths in many areas, including fostering a culture of quality, professionalism, and service that is evident throughout the whole health department,” said PHAB President and CEO Kaye Bender, PhD, RN, FAAN. “These health departments also demonstrated strong fiscal management, organizational cultures that foster skill and dedication to protecting the health of their communities, and ongoing commitments to community partnerships, among many other strengths.”

Public health departments play a critical role in protecting and improving the health of people and communities. Across the nation, health departments provide a range of services aimed at promoting healthy behaviors; preventing diseases and injuries; ensuring access to safe food, water, clean air, and life-saving immunizations; and preparing for and responding to public health emergencies.

To receive accreditation, a health department must undergo a rigorous, multi-faceted, peer-reviewed assessment process to ensure it meets or exceeds a specific set of standards and measures. The peer-review process provides valuable feedback to inform health departments of their strengths and areas for improvement so that they can better protect and promote the health of the people in the communities they serve.

Serving approximately 38 million people, the California Department of Public Health this week became the PHAB-accredited health department serving the largest U.S. population.

“While the accreditation process reflects on what the California Department of Public Health has done well, we know the real value of accreditation is for every community in California,” said Ron Chapman, MD, MPH, California State Health Officer and Director of the California Department of Public Health. “Accreditation means that key community health problems are being tackled and that we are better prepared to deliver the highest quality public health services in the 21st century.”

Elsewhere around the nation, PHAB marked additional milestones this week as Texas and Maryland joined the growing list of states boasting at least one PHAB-accredited health department.

“We had been tracking the progress on the development of the accreditation process, as we immediately recognized the value in achieving external validation of what we do and how we do meeting national standards,” said Barbara Brookmyer, MD, MPH, Health Officer of the newly accredited Frederick County Health Department in Frederick, Maryland. “After having gone through the accreditation preparation and process, all involved agree that we are providing an even better service to our community.”

Serving a population of more than 51,400, the Worcester County Health Department in Snow Hill, Maryland, also achieved accreditation this week.

“As Health Officer for Worcester County, it is very rewarding to be one of the first health departments in the state of Maryland to be accredited,” said Deborah Goeller, RN, MSN. “It is an honor to have our health department publicly recognized for our commitment to quality in our efforts to protect and improve the health of our community.”

For more information, contact Teddi Nicolaus at (703) 778-4549, ext. 118, or email tnicolaus@phaboard.org. Learn more about PHAB and accreditation at www.phaboard.org.

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About the Public Health Accreditation Board

The Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) was created to serve as the national public health accrediting body and is jointly funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The development of national public health accreditation has involved, and is supported by, public health leaders and practitioners from the national, tribal, state, local, and territorial levels. Learn more about PHAB or sign up for the PHAB e-newsletter by visiting www.phaboard.org.