



Public Health Accreditation Board  
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## **Public Health Accreditation Board Releases Updated Standards and Measures for Governmental Public Health Departments**

*Updated version lays the groundwork for future advancements in public health*

**Alexandria, VA** — The Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) today announced it has released changes to the national standards and measures for public health department accreditation. PHAB Standards and Measures Version 1.5, released January 24, improves them by clarifying the requirements for national public health department accreditation. Additionally, the updated standards and measures include a number of noteworthy public health issues that are emerging as important forces in the advancement of public health. PHAB is the independent organization that administers the national public health accreditation program, which 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.

“PHAB standards are intended to advance the collective public health practice by health departments across the country,” said Bud Nicola, MD, chair of PHAB's Accreditation Improvement Committee, the committee charged by the PHAB Board of Directors with guiding the revision of the standards and measures. “Health departments that work to meet these standards and measures demonstrate a commitment to quality improvement and accountability to the communities they serve.”

Though PHAB believes that Version 1.5 is a significant improvement, Version 1.5 is not a complete overhaul of the Standards and Measures, Version 1.0, said PHAB Chief Program Officer Robin Wilcox, MPA.

“These revisions are based on having used the Standards and Measures, Version 1.0, and identified areas in need of clarification or emphasis,” Wilcox said. “PHAB does not intend to revise the standards and measures frequently. The next revisions will be limited to address specific topics as new information becomes available and a change is indicated.”

PHAB's standards and measures are intended to build quality improvement in health departments, reflect emerging public health issues and opportunities, and promote effective internal and external collaborative partnerships. The standards and measures apply to all sizes of health departments and all forms of governance structures, and establish the same standards, though not measures, for Tribal, state, and local health departments.

Content changes in the revised standards and measures focus on five emerging public health issues that the public health field requested be emphasized or added:

- **Public health communication science**, including requiring the maintenance of relationships with the media and the use of a variety of media.
- **Public health informatics**, including requiring the capacity to use data from multiple data sources for decision-making.

- **Public health workforce development**, including requiring staff professional development and a supportive work environment.
- **Emergency preparedness**, including adding the concept of “community resilience.”
- **Health equity**, including requiring efforts to address factors that contribute to specific populations’ higher health risks and poorer health outcomes.

Content changes in the revised standards and measures also address public health ethics, including a process and strategy for making decisions relative to ethical issues. Also under the revised standards and measures, health departments that address access to care must consider emerging issues in public health, the health care system, and health care reimbursement.

To keep the field informed of how the revisions in Version 1.5 will lead to future expectations, PHAB will release briefing papers for each emerging issue content area.

PHAB staff began the development of proposed revisions to the standards and measures in late 2012. Revisions were based on information obtained through feedback and questions received from health departments and site visitors; a series of think tanks and expert panels; and materials obtained from health departments, meetings, conferences, and readings. The PHAB Accreditation Improvement Committee held its first meeting in June 2013 and adopted proposed changes. The proposed changes were released during the summer of 2013 for a 30-day public comment period. PHAB received a total of 419 comments. The Accreditation Improvement Committee held its second meeting in October 2013. The committee reviewed the information obtained from the vetting and proposed a final Version 1.5. The PHAB Board of Directors adopted the Standards and Measures, Version 1.5, during their December 2013 meeting.

Version 1.5 becomes effective on July 1, 2014. However, health departments may still be assessed under Standards and Measures Version 1.0 if they submit their applications by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on June 2, 2014.

The new and revised standards and measures are available on PHAB’s website at [www.phaboard.org](http://www.phaboard.org). For more information, contact Teddi Nicolaus at (703) 778-4549 ext. 118, or email [tnicolaus@phaboard.org](mailto:tnicolaus@phaboard.org). Learn more about PHAB and accreditation at [www.phaboard.org](http://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](http://www.phaboard.org).