



Public Health Accreditation Board  
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**For Immediate Release:**  
Friday, May 27, 2016

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## **Transformational Benefits of Public Health Department Accreditation Now Reaching More than Half the Nation**

### ***54 Percent of U.S. Population Now Served by a PHAB-Accredited Public Health Department***

**Alexandria, VA, May 27, 2016** — Every second of every day, the work of state and local public health departments touches every community in the United States. From preventing diseases and injuries to promoting healthy behaviors, preparing for and responding to public health emergencies and ensuring access to safe food, water and clean air, public health departments work in the foreground and often in the background to assure the conditions in which their communities can be healthy. Through the efforts of a national accrediting program, many governmental public health departments are now having their work reviewed against national standards, bringing new levels of transparency, credibility, and recognition to their mission.

The Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) today announced it has awarded national accreditation status to 17 state and local governmental public health departments, bringing the benefits of this crucial credential to another 13 million people in the United States. Since the launch of PHAB's national accreditation program in 2011, 134 public health departments and one integrated local public health department system have achieved accreditation through PHAB, which aims to improve and protect the health of the public by advancing and ultimately transforming the quality and performance of the nation's state, local, Tribal and territorial public health departments. The recent accreditation decisions mean that the transformational benefits of being served by a PHAB-accredited health department are now reaching 167 million people, or 54 percent of the U.S. population.

"This cohort of accredited health departments represents the broad array of health departments serving our country's communities," said PHAB President and CEO Kaye Bender, PhD, RN, FAAN. "Serving populations of just a few thousand to over a million, these health departments have demonstrated a commitment to excellence in serving their jurisdictions. Preparing for and achieving accreditation is hard work, but they have achieved their goal and we congratulate them for their efforts."

To receive national accreditation through PHAB, a health department or integrated local public health department system must undergo a rigorous, multi-faceted, peer-reviewed assessment process to ensure it meets or exceeds a set of public health quality standards and measures.

Francisco Garcia, MD, MPH, director and chief medical officer of the newly accredited Pima County Health Department in Tucson, Arizona, said the department's accreditation journey "has been a long and extensive process that has strengthened the department and the services we provide for our community. I am so proud of the level of leadership, commitment and support our staff and community partners have contributed to this great accomplishment."

The benefits of achieving accreditation through PHAB are far reaching. According to a survey conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago, accreditation stimulates quality improvement and performance management opportunities, stimulates greater accountability and transparency, strengthens management

processes, and helps health departments document their capacity to deliver critical public health services to their communities.

“Accreditation is a key driver for public health departments to continuously improve their performance and the quality of the public health services they deliver, and it demonstrates our commitment to Nebraskans and helping them live healthier lives,” said Courtney Phillips, chief executive officer of the newly accredited Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services in Lincoln, Neb.

The May decisions bring the number of PHAB-accredited state health departments to 19 and the number of PHAB-accredited local health departments to 115. In all, 42 states plus the District of Columbia now have PHAB-accredited health departments within their borders.

National accreditation status was awarded May 17, 2016 to:

- Arkansas Department of Health, Little Rock, AR
- Austin/Travis County Health and Human Services Department, Austin, TX
- Carson City Health and Human Services, Carson City, NV
- Columbia/Boone County Department of Public Health and Human Services, Columbia, MO
- County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency, San Diego, CA
- Fairfax County Health Department, Fairfax, VA
- Kendall County Health Department, Yorkville, IL
- Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Augusta, ME
- Maricopa County Department of Public Health, Phoenix, AZ
- Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, Lincoln, NE
- Orange County Health Care Agency, Santa Ana, CA
- Panhandle Public Health District, Hemingford, NE
- Pima County Health Department, Tucson, AZ
- Preble County General Health District, Eaton, OH
- Rush County Health Department, Rushville, IN
- Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department, Tacoma, WA
- Wood County Health District, Bowling Green, OH

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).