

# Washington: Definition of Foundational Public Health Services

## FOUNDATIONAL CAPABILITIES

- A. **Assessment (Surveillance and Epidemiology).** The foundational definition of this capability includes:
1. Ability to collect sufficient statewide data to develop and maintain electronic information systems to guide public health planning and decision making at the state and local level. Foundational data includes Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (BRFSS), Healthy Youth Survey (HYS), and vital statistics and foundational information systems include PHIMS, PHRED, CHARS, and CHAT. *(state function only)*
  2. Ability to access, analyze, and use data from a minimum of eight specific information sources, including (1) U.S. Census data, (2) vital statistics, (3) notifiable condition data, (4) certain clinical administrative data sets including hospital discharge, (5) BRFSS, (6) HYS, (7) basic community and environmental health indicators, and (8) local and state chart of accounts.
  3. Ability to prioritize and respond to information and data requests and to translate data into information and reports that are valid, statistically accurate, and readable by the intended audiences.
  4. Ability to conduct a basic community and statewide health assessment and identify health priorities arising from that assessment, including analysis of health disparities and the social determinants of health.
- B. **Emergency Preparedness (All Hazards).** The foundational definition of this capability includes:
1. Ability to develop and rehearse response strategies and plans, in accordance with national and state guidelines, to address natural or manmade disasters and emergencies, including special protection of vulnerable populations.
  2. Ability to lead the Emergency Support Function 8 – Public Health & Medical for the county, region, jurisdiction, and state.
  3. Ability to activate public health emergency response personnel in the event of a public health crisis; coordinate with federal, state, and county emergency managers, and other first responders; and operate within, and as necessary lead, the incident management system.
  4. Promote community preparedness by communicating with the public in advance of an emergency about steps that can be taken before, during, or after a disaster.
- C. **Communication.** The foundational definition of this capability includes:
1. Ability to maintain ongoing relations with local and statewide media, including the abilities to write a press release, conduct a press conference, and use electronic communication tools to interact with the media.
  2. Ability to develop and implement a communication strategy, in accordance with Public Health Accreditation Board Standards, to increase visibility of a specific public health issue and communicate risk. This includes the ability to provide information on health risks, healthy behaviors, and disease prevention in culturally and linguistically appropriate formats for the various communities served, including use of electronic communication tools.

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- D. **Policy Development and Support.** The foundational definition of this capability includes:
1. Ability to develop basic public health policy recommendations. These policies must be evidence-based, or, if innovative/promising, they must include evaluation plans.
  2. Ability to work with partners and policy makers to enact policies that are evidence-based (or are innovative/promising and include evaluation plans) and that address the social determinants of health and health disparities.
  3. Ability to utilize cost benefit information to develop an efficient and cost-effective action plan to respond to the priorities identified in a community and/or statewide health assessment.
- E. **Community Partnership Development.** The foundational definition of this capability includes:
1. Ability to create and maintain relations with important partners, including health-related national, statewide, and community-based organizations; community groups or organizations representing populations experiencing health disparities; key private businesses and health care organizations; and key federal, tribal, state, and local government agencies and leaders.
  2. Ability to strategically select and articulate governmental public health roles in programmatic and policy activities and coordinate with these partners.
- F. **Business Competencies.** The foundational definition of this capability includes:
1. *Leadership.* Ability to lead internal and external stakeholders to consensus and action planning (adaptive leadership) and to serve as the public face of governmental public health in the community.
  2. *Accountability and Quality Assurance Services.* Ability to uphold business standards and accountability in accordance with federal, state, and local laws and policies and to assure compliance with national and Public Health Accreditation Board Standards.
  3. *Quality Improvement.* Ability to continuously improve processes, including plan-do-study-act cycles.
  4. *Information Technology Services.* Ability to maintain and access electronic health information to support the public health agency's operations and analyze health data. Ability to support, maintain, and use communication technology.
  5. *Human Resources Services.* Ability to develop and maintain a competent workforce, including recruitment, retention, and succession planning functions; training; and performance review and accountability.
  6. *Fiscal Management, Contract, and Procurement Services.* Ability to comply with federal, state, and local standards and policies.
  7. *Facilities and Operations.* Ability to procure, maintain, and manage safe facilities and efficient operations.
  8. *Legal Services and Analysis.* Ability to access and appropriately use legal services in planning and implementing public health initiatives.

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## FOUNDATIONAL PROGRAMS

**G. Control of Communicable Disease and Other Notifiable Conditions.** The foundational definition of this program includes:

1. Provide timely, statewide, locally relevant and accurate information statewide and to communities on communicable disease and other notifiable conditions and their control.
2. Promote immunization through evidence based strategies and collaboration with schools, health care providers and other community partners to increase immunization rates.
3. Identify statewide and local community assets for the control of communicable diseases and other notifiable conditions, develop and implement a prioritized control plan addressing important communicable diseases and other notifiable conditions such as influenza and hepatitis, seek resources for and advocate for high priority policy and other control initiatives regarding communicable diseases and other notifiable condition.
4. Ability to receive laboratory reports and other identifiable data; conduct disease investigations, including contact notification; and recognize, identify, and respond to cases and outbreaks/clusters of communicable diseases and other notifiable conditions in accordance with national, state, and local mandates and guidelines.
5. Assure the availability of partner notification services for newly diagnosed cases of syphilis, gonorrhea, and HIV according to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines.
6. Assure the appropriate treatment of individuals who have active tuberculosis, including the provision of directly-observed therapy according to CDC guidelines.
7. Assure availability of public health laboratory services for disease investigations and response, and reference and confirmatory testing related to communicable diseases and notifiable conditions.
8. When additional important services are delivered regarding communicable disease and other notifiable conditions, assure that they are well coordinated with foundational services.

**H. Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention.** The foundational definition of this program includes:

1. Provide timely, statewide, and locally relevant and accurate information statewide and to communities on chronic disease (including behavioral health<sup>1</sup>) and injury prevention.
2. Identify statewide and local chronic disease (including behavioral health<sup>1</sup>) and injury prevention community assets, develop and implement a prioritized prevention plan, seek resources for and advocate for high priority policy initiatives.
3. Reduce statewide and community rates of tobacco use through programs that conform to standards set by Washington laws and CDC's Office on Smoking and Health, including activities to reduce youth initiation, increase cessation, and reduce secondhand smoke exposure. Contribute to a reduction in statewide and community rates of alcohol and other drug use by working with partners at the state and local level to identify (1) evidence-based population-based interventions or (2) innovative/promising population-based interventions with valid evaluation studies; and collaborate with partners in generating funding for these interventions.

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<sup>1</sup> Note: In these definitions, Behavioral Health Care includes mental health and chemical dependency.

4. Work actively with statewide and community partners to increase statewide and community rates of healthy eating and active living through a prioritized program of best and emerging practices aligned with national and state guidelines for healthy eating and active living.
5. When additional important services are delivered regarding chronic disease and injury prevention, assure that they are well coordinated with foundational services.

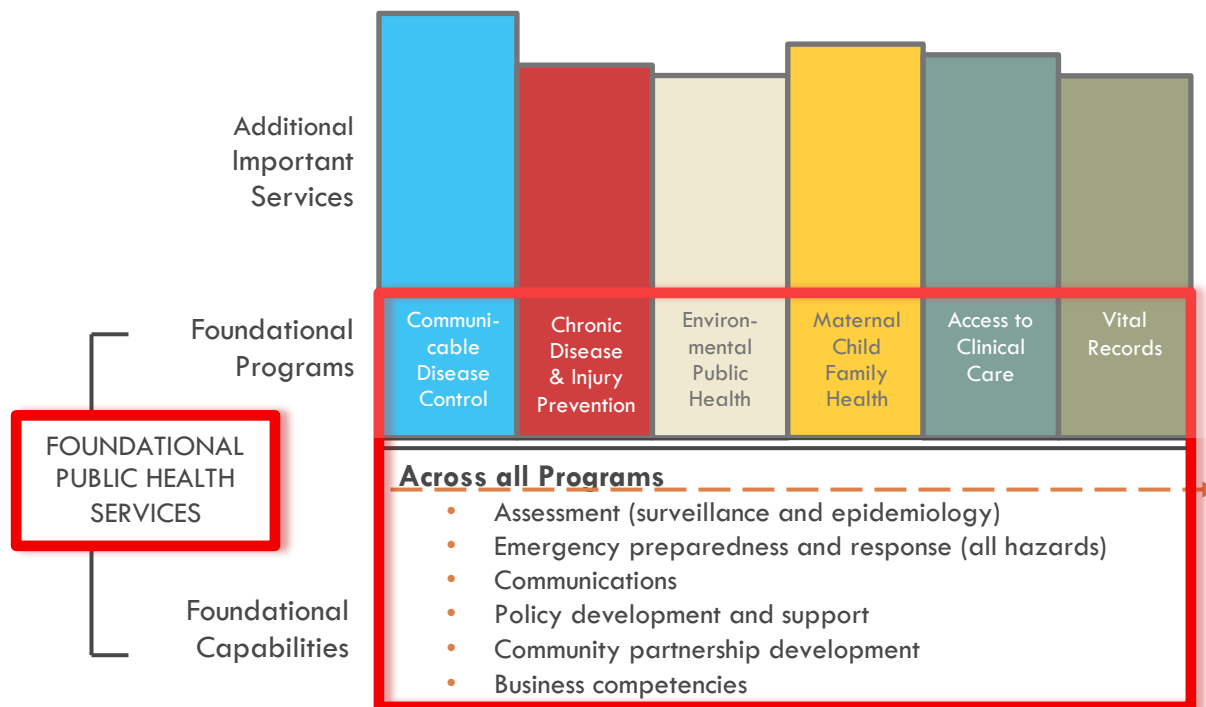
I. **Environmental Public Health.** The foundational definition of this program includes:

1. Provide timely, statewide, and locally relevant and accurate information statewide and to communities on environmental public health issues and health impacts from common environmental or toxic exposures.
2. Identify statewide and local community environmental public health assets and partners, and develop and implement a prioritized prevention plan to protect the public's health by preventing and reducing exposures to health hazards in the environment, seek resources for and advocate for high priority policy initiatives.
3. Conduct mandated environmental public health laboratory testing, inspections, and oversight to protect food, water recreation, drinking water, and liquid and solid waste streams in accordance with federal, state, and local laws and regulations.
4. Identify and address priority notifiable zoonotic conditions (e.g. those transmitted by birds, insects, rodents, etc.), air-borne conditions, and other public health threats related to environmental hazards.
5. Protect the population from unnecessary radiation exposure in accordance with federal, state, and local laws and regulations. *(state function only)*
6. Participate in broad land use planning and sustainable development to encourage decisions that promote positive public health outcomes (e.g. consideration of housing, urban development, recreational facilities, and transportation).
7. When additional important services are delivered regarding environmental public health, assure that they are well coordinated with foundational services.

J. **Maternal/Child/Family Health.** The foundational definition of this program includes:

1. Provide timely, statewide, and locally relevant and accurate information statewide and to communities on emerging and on-going maternal child health trends, taking into account the importance of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and health disparities.
2. Assure mandated newborn screening done by the state public health lab to test every infant born in Washington to detect and prevent the developmental impairments and life-threatening illnesses associated with congenital disorders that are specified by the State Board of Health. *(state function only)*
3. Identify, disseminate, and promote emerging and evidence-based information about early interventions in the prenatal and early childhood period that optimize lifelong health and social-emotional development.
4. Identify local maternal and child health community assets, develop a prioritized prevention plan using life course expertise and an understanding of health disparities, seek resources for and advocate for high priority policy initiatives.
5. When additional important services are delivered regarding maternal, child, and family health, assure that they are well coordinated with foundational services.

- K. **Access/Linkage with Medical, Oral, and Behavioral<sup>2</sup> Health Care Services.** The foundational definition of this program includes:
1. Provide accurate timely, statewide, and locally relevant information statewide and to communities on the medical, oral, and behavioral<sup>2</sup> health care system.
  2. Participate actively in local, regional and state level collaborative efforts regarding medical, oral and behavioral<sup>2</sup> systems planning to improve health care quality and effectiveness, reduce health care costs and improve population health.
  3. In concert with national, statewide, and local health care providers and groups, develop and implement prioritized plans for assuring access to specific clinical services of public health importance such as family planning, key services for pregnant women and their infants (i.e. maternity support, WIC), and STD and HIV testing and treatment; seek resource for and advocate for high priority policy initiatives.
  4. Improve patient safety through inspection and licensing of health\_care facilities and licensing, monitoring, and discipline of health\_care providers. **(state function only)**
  5. When additional important services are delivered regarding medical, oral and behavioral health, assure that they are well coordinated with foundational services.
- L. **Vital Records.** The foundational definition of this program includes:
1. In compliance with state law and in concert with national, state and local groups, assure a system of vital records. **(state function only)**
  2. Provide certified birth and death certificates in compliance with state law and rule.



<sup>2</sup> Note: In these definitions, Behavioral Health Care includes mental health and chemical dependency.