

Public Health in Washington State FACT SHEET

Overview

The public health network in Washington State provides critical programs and services for all people in the state—from drinking water protection to disease prevention. Public health services help communities to be healthy places to live, work and play, serve as a resource for reliable health information and protect communities from hazards in the environment.

A Local, Statewide and National Network

Public health coordinates at the local, statewide and national levels to provide essential services for improving health.

- **Local:**
 - **35 local health jurisdictions** serve the 39 counties of Washington
- **Statewide:**
 - **The Washington Department of Health**
The Department of Health is responsible for preserving public health; monitoring health care costs; maintaining minimal standards for quality health care delivery; and planning activities related to the health of its citizens. The secretary of health is appointed by the governor.
 - **Washington State Board of Health**
The State Board of Health serves the citizens of Washington by working to understand and prevent disease across the entire population. The Board provides leadership by suggesting public health policies and actions, by regulating certain activities, and by providing a public forum. The governor appoints ten members who fill three-year terms.
 - **University of Washington School of Public Health and Community Medicine**
The School of Public Health and Community Medicine (SPHCM) prepares professionals in Biostatistics, Environmental Health, Epidemiology, Health Services and Pathobiology, as well as providing ongoing continuing education to Washington's public health workforce. The combination of discipline-oriented academic programs and strong interdisciplinary research provides a setting for faculty and students to apply in-depth expertise to broad public health problems.

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- **National:**
 - **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)**
 - **The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)**
 - **US Department of Health and Human Services**

The Work of Public Health

- **Essential programs for improving health:** Programs such as immunizations, communicable disease prevention, and chronic disease and injury prevention help individuals and communities stay healthy.
- **Information that works:** Resources such as educational and training programs, community health reports and statewide health and safety information provide individuals and communities information they can use to make good decisions.
- **Protecting you and your family every day:** Services such as drinking water and air quality monitoring, septic system inspections, restaurant inspections, disease prevention and planned community crisis response ensure individual and community health and safety.