

Blueprint for Public Health Excellence

WORKFORCE CREDENTIALS

FEBRUARY 2020

*In June 2019, the Special Commission on Local and Regional Public Health (SCLRPH) released its final report, **Blueprint for Public Health Excellence: Recommendations for Improved Effectiveness and Efficiency of Local Public Health Protections**. The report documents the Commission's findings and makes recommendations for strengthening local public health services across the Commonwealth.*

This sheet addresses the SCLRPH charge to “evaluat[e] the workforce credentials of the current and future public health workforce as to educational standards, credentialing and training.”

SCLRPH FINDINGS

- The Massachusetts local public health system does not adequately support its workforce with standards and credentials that align with the capacity to meet current mandates and future standards.
- While there is an emerging effort to set national workforce standards, many states already have minimum qualifications for some members of the local public health workforce. In Massachusetts, minimum qualifications exist for other municipal officials such as building commissioners and library directors.

WHAT ARE LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH WORKFORCE CREDENTIALS?

Local public health workforce credentials are state-level guidelines for education, training, or other preparation. These may apply to staff such as directors or commissioners, assistant or deputy directors/commissioners, health officers, inspectors or sanitarians, public health nurses, clerical staff, and boards of health members.

WHY ARE WORKFORCE CREDENTIALS IMPORTANT?

A 2018 study by the National Association of County and City Health Officials found that the comprehensiveness of a local health department's response to modern and complex issues is linked to the skills and training—both basic and continuing—of their workforces.

SCLRPH RECOMMENDATIONS

Set education and training standards for local public health officials and staff and expand access to professional development while ensuring diversity by:

- Implementing the local public health workforce credentialing standards adopted by the Commission,
- Making training available and accessible to local public health departments, and
- Developing a system to track and monitor workforce credentialing.

WHAT IS THE COMMONWEALTH DOING TO HELP LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENTS WITH WORKFORCE CREDENTIALS?

Massachusetts' over one hundred colleges and universities do not currently offer undergraduate majors or programs in municipal health or place students in local public health internships. However, once someone has become part of the local public health workforce, there are dozens of voluntary training programs to choose from, including free and low-cost online options.

The Commission recommended the formation of the Local and Regional Public Health Advisory Committee to monitor progress on implementation of its recommendations: www.mass.gov/service-details/local-and-regional-public-health-advisory-committee. The Advisory Committee includes a workforce credentials working group.

WHAT ARE OTHERS DOING LOCALLY AND NATIONALLY?

Other states, such as Colorado, Connecticut, Illinois, New Jersey, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Texas, Washington, and Wisconsin, have a licensing and credentialing process for some local health department positions, generally the director/chief health officer, the environmental health inspector, and nurses. Some states require state approval for hiring a health director at the municipal, county, or health district level.

WHERE CAN I FIND MORE INFORMATION?

- Department of Public Health Office of Local and Regional Health Resources: www.mass.gov/dph/olrh
- Local Public Health Institute of Massachusetts: <http://sites.bu.edu/masslocalinstitute/>
- Local Public Health Institute of Massachusetts (February 2010). Competency Report: <http://sites.bu.edu/masslocalinstitute/files/2012/04/MA-Competency-Report-rev-Dec-2010.pdf>

The Commission's report, **Blueprint for Public Health Excellence: Recommendations for Improved Effectiveness and Efficiency of Local Public Health Protections**, is available on the Office of Local and Regional Health web site: www.mass.gov/dph/olrh.

PROPOSED MASSACHUSETTS LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH WORKFORCE STANDARDS

EDUCATIONAL, TRAINING, AND CREDENTIALING RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SPECIAL COMMISSION ON LOCAL AND REGIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH – JUNE 2019

POSITION	REQUIRED AT HIRE	REQUIRED AFTER HIRE	RECOMMENDED
MANAGEMENT e.g., Director, Assistant Director, Deputy Director <i>Management position does not do inspections but supervises those who do.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Registered Sanitarian or equivalent eligible* (<i>see next page</i>) Master's in relevant field or BA/BS with 5 years of relevant experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RS or equivalent within a year* Foundations for Local Public Health Practice ("Foundations") course within one year of hire CHO within 3 years of hire Complete Master's within 5 years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health Association membership LPHI Managing Effectively in Today's Public Health Environment ("Management") course Three years of experience in local or state public health MAVEN training within one year
MANAGEMENT/AGENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Registered Sanitarian or equivalent eligible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foundations course within 18 months RS within 18 months of hire Specific certifications for inspections performed, such as soil evaluator, system inspector, food inspector training, housing inspection training, certified pool operator/certified pool inspector, lead determinator within one year of hire 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health Association membership LPHI Management Course CHO within 3 years of hire
INSPECTOR/SANITARIAN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High School Diploma or equivalent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RS within 6 years of hire Foundations course within 18 months Specific certifications for inspections performed, such as soil evaluator, system inspector, food inspector training, housing inspection training, certified pool operator/certified pool inspector, lead determinator within 1 year of hire 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health Association membership LPHI Management Course CHO within 3 years of hire
PUBLIC HEALTH NURSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) Registered Nurse (RN), current MA license Microsoft Office (or similar) applications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MAVEN trained within 6 months Foundations course within one year of hire 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MAPHN Membership
CLERICAL STAFF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Microsoft Office (or similar) applications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modified Foundations course (Foundations course for Clerical Workers) within one year of hire 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On-line permitting
BOH MEMBER <i>(NOTE: IF DOING INSPECTIONS MUST MEET REQUIREMENTS ABOVE)</i>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Orientation to Public Health within 3 months Foundations course within one year

INSPECITON TYPE	REQUIRED	RECOMMENDED
FOOD PROTECTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ ServeSafe or similar ■ Massachusetts Public Health Inspector Training (MA PHIT) Food Inspection Class ■ Field Component 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Food and Drug Administration/Office of Regulatory Affairs - University (ORAU)
HOUSING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ MA PHIT Housing Class ■ Housing Court training (TBD) ■ Lead Determinator ■ Field Component 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Relevant LPHI Modules
TITLE 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Soil Evaluator ■ System Inspector ■ MA PHIT Wastewater ■ Field Component 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Relevant LPHI Modules
POOLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Certified Pool Operator or Certified Pool Inspector with Field Component 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Relevant LPHI Modules
RECREATIONAL CAMPS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ MA PHIT Camps (TBD) with Field Component 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Relevant LPHI Modules
TANNING/BODY ART	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ MA PHIT (TBD) with Field Component 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Relevant LPHI Modules
NUISANCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ MA PHIT (TBA) with Field Component 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Relevant LPHI Modules

- All personnel should have at least ICS 100/NIMS 700 within one year of hire. Those who might have a leadership role should have ICS 200 and above.
- Boards of health may have stricter requirements, but must meet these requirements.
- Boards of health with current staff who have worked for local or state public health for at least 10 years, but who do not meet these requirements, may request a waiver except for inspectional trainings.
- Membership in professional organizations is deemed as critical for professional growth and development, for leadership and mentoring opportunities, and for opportunities for sharing best practices. This is recommended, but not required.

*Management positions should meet the requirements as set forth in this document for the position. However, a request may be submitted by the board of health to waive the Registered Sanitarian (RS) requirement if

1. the health department has a management position and a separate fulltime environmental health director and
2. the environmental health director has an RS, oversees the inspectors, and reports directly to the management position.