**The Council on Linkages
Between Academia and
Public Health Practice**

## Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals Report

### May 25, 2021

*Overview*
The Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals (Core Competencies) reflect foundational or crosscutting skills for professionals engaged in the practice, education, and research of public health and are used in education, training, and other workforce development activities across the country. The current version of the Core Competencies was released by the Council on Linkages Between Academia and Public Health Practice (Council) in June 2014, with a simplified Modified Version of the Core Competencies released in June 2017. The Core Competencies are currently undergoing revision, with an updated version anticipated to be available in October 2021.

*Core Competencies Use*
The Core Competencies continue to be widely used within public health workforce development. Recent data from the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials, National Indian Health Board, and National Association of County and City Health Officials show that approximately 80% of state health departments, 60% of Tribal health organizations, 45% of local health departments, and 25% of territorial health departments use the Core Competencies. Since the last Council meeting in October 2021, the Core Competencies and resources and tools designed to support implementation have been accessed online more than 40,000 times. Council staff have responded to nearly 40 requests for assistance with the Core Competencies, serving 26 organizations in 16 states, one territory, and Japan.

*Core Competencies Workgroup*
Council efforts related to the Core Competencies are guided by the Core Competencies Workgroup, which includes more than 100 members representing a variety of practice and academic organizations and interests within the public health field. Since the revision of the Core Competencies was initiated during the October 2020 Council meeting, more than 40 people have joined the Workgroup to help with that effort. The Workgroup has held three meetings focused on the revision, and four Subgroups have been created to focus on various aspects of the revision.

*Core Competencies Revision*
The Core Competencies are regularly reviewed and revised to keep pace with changes in the field of public health and ensure they continue to meet the needs of the public health workforce. The current revision of the Core Competencies was begun in October 2020 and is anticipated to be completed in October 2021.

Revision of the Core Competencies is heavily informed by the public health community, with the initial stages of the revision process involving an open comment period to hear feedback on the Core Competencies. This open comment period occurred from October 2020-March 2021 and led to 1,400 engagements. Feedback was welcomed by email, online through website comments or an anonymous comment box, through social media, and during virtual meetings. Council staff and Core Competencies Workgroup leadership participated in 17 virtual town hall and other meetings to request and hear feedback. Approximately 1,000 participants joined these meetings from at least 49 states, DC, and two territories. In addition to the feedback shared, more than 100 resources were gathered to inform the revision.

Feedback on the Core Competencies highlighted a need to create better harmonization between efforts that impact the workforce and workforce development, add content in a variety of topic areas, and make it easier to use the Core Competencies. Major topic areas suggested for strengthening in the Core Competencies included cultural competency, health equity, racism, and social justice; environmental health, climate change, and sustainability; emergency preparedness, management, and response; policy, advocacy, and lobbying; and administration and management. Subgroups of the Core Competencies Workgroup reviewed the feedback and provided recommendations related to each of these first four areas.

Council staff are working to incorporate the Subgroup and other Workgroup recommendations with additional edits based on the feedback received and resources identified to develop a first draft of the revisions to the Core Competencies. Potential changes to the Core Competencies being considered focus on improving clarity, making the competencies more current and inclusive of the areas suggested for enhancement, and adjusting how the Core Competencies are structured to better support the variety of audiences who use them and ways they are used.

A first draft of the revisions is planned to be publicly available at the beginning of June, and a second open comment period will occur over the summer to hear additional feedback, which will be used to further refine the Core Competencies. The same mechanisms to share feedback as during the first open comment period will be available to the public health community, including the invitation to participate in virtual town hall meetings. Two town hall meetings have already been confirmed for the [Public Health Improvement Training](#) on June 8th and the [National Association of Local Boards of Health Conference](#) in August.

More information about the Core Competencies revision process, including feedback notes from the town hall meetings, is available on the [revision webpage](#). Additional information about activities related to the Core Competencies can be found through the [Core Competencies](#) section of the Council website or by contacting Kathleen Amos at [kamos@phf.org](mailto:kamos@phf.org).