

Untapped Potential: The Powers and Duties of Local Boards of Health



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What is NALBOH?

- The voice of boards of health throughout the United States
- Non-profit 501(c)(3) organization established in 1992



NALBOH Regions

West Region

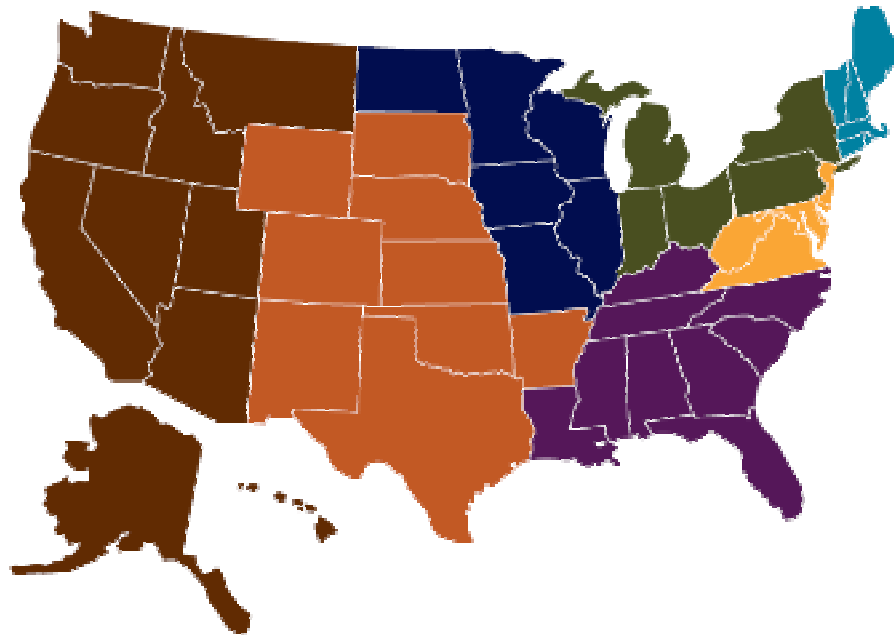
(AK, AZ, CA, HI, ID, MT, NV, OR, UT, WA)

Midwest Region

(AR, CO, KS, NE, NM, OK, SD, TX, WY)

West Great Lakes Region

(IA, IL, MN, MO, ND, WI)



New England Region

(CT, MA, ME, NH, RI, VT)

East Great Lakes Region

(IN, MI, NY, OH, PA)

Mid Atlantic Region

(DC, DE, MD, NJ, VA, WV)

Southeast Region

(AL, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, SC, TN)

Mission

To prepare and strengthen boards of health, through education, training, and technical assistance, to promote and protect the health of their communities.

Vision

Representing the grassroots of public health, engaging and serving the public by empowering boards of health through education and training. NALBOH will continue to expand its influence on public health policy, increase resource allocation, and improve the clarity and volume of its national voice for our members.

What are Boards of Health?

- Governing, policy making, or advisory body for public health agencies
- Over 3,200 boards of health nationwide
- Over 20,000 citizen volunteers

Smoking Ban Approved for Madison County, KY

The Lexington Herald-Leader
The **Madison County Board of Health** approved a countywide smoking ban on April 11, 2007. The Clean Indoor Air Regulation, approved 7 to 1, prohibits smoking in all enclosed public places and places of employment countywide, including Richmond and Berea. The ban will take effect in 60 days. Madison County will be the 13th community in the state to impose tougher restrictions on smoking since Lexington began enforcing its ban in 2003. It also is the first time a board of health, as opposed to an elected body such as a city council, has enacted a local smoking ban in Kentucky.

King County Board Of Health To Reduce New HIV Infections

King County Board of Health endorsed a Strategy to reduce new HIV infections in King County by 25% by 2015. There are approximately 370 new HIV infections in King County each year, and the Board resolved to support a strategy that places the greatest emphasis on people at highest risk for HIV infection. The goal is to reduce new infections to 280 cases per year within eight years.

With Grace Period Over, Compliance Is Seen With Trans Fat Ban

<http://cityroom.blogs.nytimes.com>

When the **New York City Board of Health** adopted, in December, the nation's first major municipal ban on the use of all but tiny amounts of artificial trans fats in restaurant cooking, the move was widely opposed by the restaurant industry and hailed by health advocates.

Board of Health Authority

- Hire and evaluate health officer
- Make recommendations on policies and regulations
- Set policies
- Adopt and enforce regulations
- Approve budget allocations
- Serve as liaison with elected officials & constituents
- Set health department goals
- Review progress toward established goals

State by State Guide to Legal Authority for Local Boards of Health

- Locus of responsibility for identifying qualified board members,
- description of appointment or election process,
- terms and composition of a local board of health,
- legally mandated role(s)
- and the powers and duties
- limitations

Selecting Board Members

- Appointed? Elected?
- Locus of Authority for Appointments
- Ex officio appointments

Terms of Office

- 4+ years in at least 20 states
- 3 years in 10 states
- Remainder 1 or 2, or not specified in statute

Board Composition

“...County Board of health (under 800,000): 7 Members: 1) chief executive officer of the governing authority of the county 2); county superintendent of schools; 3) a physician or an actively practicing licensed nurse or dentist; 4) a consumer, a representative of a consumer, or a person from an advocacy agency or group; 5) a person interested in promoting public health who is a consumer or a nurse; 6) a consumer member who will represent on the board the county's needy, underprivileged, or elderly community and; 7) the chief executive officer of the governing authority of the largest municipality of the county...”

Georgia Code § 31-3-2.1

Board Composition

“... District Boards of Health, with 8 counties: All members shall be chosen with due regard to their knowledge and interest in public health and in promoting the health of the citizens of the state and the public health district. Representation shall be assured from rural as well as urban population groups...”

Idaho Code § 39-411.

Emergency Preparedness depends on **local** governance

- Identifying needs
- Setting priorities
- Planning
- Acquisition/allocation of resources
- Administration and finance

Board of Health Roles in Emergency Preparedness

- Assess current preparedness levels
- Develop policies, procedures, and guidelines
- Isolation and Quarantine
- Assurance

Board of Health Role: Assessment

- Develop measurable objectives, based on those of CDC or state health agency
- Evaluate regularly
- Allocate resources

Board of Health Role: Policy Development

- Policies, procedures and guidelines
- Provide a policy/procedures manual
- Protocols for health agency staff--
 - communication procedures,
 - agency response procedures,
 - public information dissemination

Board of Health Role: Assurance

- Allocate the necessary resources
 - staff
 - technology
 - training and education
 - public relations

Board of Health Powers

“...The city board of health may: 1, abate nuisances; 2, establish a temporary isolation hospital or quarantine station when an emergency demands the isolation or quarantine of a person(s); 3, restrain, quarantine and disinfect any person(s) sick with or exposed to any contagious or infectious disease which is dangerous to public health; 4, appoint quarantine officers when necessary to enforce a quarantine...”

Nevada Code § 439.470.

Board of Health Powers

“A board of health may: ... adopt confinement, decontamination, and sanitary measures; 6, make and enforce an order in a local matter if an emergency exists... 8, conduct a search or seize material located on private property to ascertain the condition of the property as the condition relates to public health and safety and subject to a warrant (except in case of emergency); 9, abate or remove any nuisance, source of filth, or cause of sickness; 10, supervise any matter relating to preservation of life and health of individuals, including the supervision of any water supply and sewage system...”

North Dakota Code §23-35-10.

Next steps: Enhancing knowledge and competencies

- Appointing authorities
- Board of Health Members

Next steps: Reaching Vulnerable Populations

- **Advocacy:**

Increase representation of various segments of the community on local boards of health, and in the appointing process

- **Education:**

Raise and maintain awareness among current Board members and those who appoint them, on priority issues in the community

Next steps: NALBOH

- Training materials for Boards of Health
- Public perception of Board of Health credibility and authority
- Trends in legal authority for Local Boards
- State Preemption of Local Control

Contact

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