

# Five Recommendations for Enhancing Governmental Public Health Workforce Recruitment and Hiring



## 1. Efficient and Effective Recruitment and Hiring Policies and Processes

### Governmental Public Health Actions

- Apply quality improvement methodology to improve high-priority processes (creation, posting, promotion, interviewing, overall time to hire, etc.).
- Nurture relationships with central HR or other governmental agencies that control or impact the hiring process to make system-wide improvements.
- Modernize legacy policies and practices to be equitable and competitive with the market (e.g., flexible work conditions, hybrid and remote work options).
- Reconsider educational requirements for jobs, match requisites with lived experience and/or skills needed.
- Examine policies and practices for unintentional bias and make revisions as needed.
- Offer equitable, fair, and competitive compensation packages for open/vacant and current positions.
- Ensure new and existing managers have access to tools and training on the latest processes.
- Use data (e.g., onboarding, stay interview, or exit interview) to inform decisions and planning.
- Partner with policymakers to expand limits to full-time equivalent (FTE) caps.
- Ensure application and hiring processes are easy to access and understand.

### Potential Indicators

- Time-to-hire
- Vacancy rates
- Employee satisfaction
- Employee referrals to agency
- Market salary and benefit comparisons
- QI project before and after measures
- Staff retention rate

### Supports

- PH-HERO Workforce Resource Center
- ASTHO Workforce Planning Guide
- PHAB Workforce Plan Template
- PHAB Public Health Workforce Calculator
- ASTHO Profile of State and Territorial Public Health
- NACDD State Health Department Organizational Self-Assessment for Achieving Health Equity
- NACCHO National Profile of Local Health Departments
- PH WINS

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## 2. Internal and External Candidates are Qualified and Reflect the Community

### Governmental Public Health Actions

- Develop and publicize aspirational goals related to hiring staff that reflect the community.
- Ensure diverse interviewer panels.
- Actively promote vacancies on a range of modern, non-traditional platforms and networks.
- Engage in intentional recruitment practices for candidates from rural, intercity, and other specialized locations.
- Engage formally or informally with HBCUs, non-HBCUs, and academic programs in areas in traditional and non-traditional areas (communications, social work, health professionals, etc.) by participating in career fairs and serving as adjunct faculty/lecturers, internship preceptors, and/or hosts for experiential education.
- Promote, establish, expand scholarship and loan repayment programs.
- Establish or strengthen entry-level and pathway programs such as internships, fellowships, and apprenticeships.
- Seek industry/public recognitions as preferred employer.
- Recruit community health workers, promotores de salud, and health navigators for community-based positions.
- Utilize current staff as promoters and “recruiters.”

### Potential Indicators

- Candidate demographics compared to the community
- Employee/workforce demographics
- Hiring manager survey data
- Vacancy rates

### Supports

- PH WINS Data
- PHF Academic Health Department Resources and Learning Community
- PublicHealthCareers.org
- AmeriCorps and Public Health AmeriCorps
- Public Service Loan Forgiveness program
- ASTHO Community Health Worker technical package (The Role of State and Territorial Health Agencies in Supporting and Hiring Community Health Workers)
- Rural Health Information Hub
- Colorado Blueprint for Innovative Public Health Workforce Development (example)

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## 3. Established Skill and Career Advancement Opportunities

### Governmental Public Health Actions

- Offer workshops/trainings and actionable tools that create shared understanding of the causes of inequity, racism, and bias as related to human resources.
- Provide training on cultural competency/humility.
- Provide development, career ladder, and advancement information openly and fairly.
- Identify and offer stretch assignments and temporary growth experiences to junior staff.
- Implement succession planning.
- Provide leadership development, mentorship, and executive coaching opportunities.
- Encourage and provide financial support for development opportunities to promising leaders from diverse backgrounds.
- Train hiring managers on conscious and unconscious bias.
- Offer flexible educational/training requirements to accommodate access issues that may occur in rural or traditionally underserved areas.
- Train staff on multigenerational preferences and work styles.

### Potential Indicators

- Internal advancement or succession goals met
- Retention rates
- Employee satisfaction with development and training opportunities

### Supports

- PH WINS Data
- Regional Public Health Training Centers
- CDC TRAIN Learning Network
- NNPHI Public Health Learning Navigator
- National, state, and local professional associations
- ASTHO-delivered or -facilitated leadership learning opportunities
- DELPH leadership development program

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## 4. Engaging and Appealing Candidate and New Hire Experiences

### Governmental Public Health Actions

- Use enticing and plain language in messaging about vacancies, even if the job description language itself is prescribed.
- Communicate job benefits (health and wellness, savings, scholarships, benefits calculators, etc.) in ways that resonate with potential applicants.
- Include agency equity and/or DEI goals, values and/or competencies in job descriptions and performance review processes.
- Connect deliberately and personally in routine interactions with candidates and new hires.
- Ensure potential candidates have specific information about the position and what to expect in the hiring process.
- Keep candidates abreast of the status of positions for which they are candidates.
- Understand the potential candidate interests and briefly highlight happenings at the agency (e.g., employee resource and affinity groups, mentorship program, leadership development opportunities, training, lactation space, etc.).
- Ensure a strong core onboarding experience for all new hires.

### Potential Indicators

- Candidate and new hire experience satisfaction
- Employee satisfaction and engagement
- Hiring manager experience/feedback data

### Supports

- Region 2 PHTC Recruitment Toolkit
- ASTHO Onboarding Tool
- NACCHO's 5 Strategies to Strengthen Marketing of Local Health Department Recruiting Efforts
- SHRM
- The Social Workplace Employee Lifecycle Stages and Engagement Strategies

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## 5. Adequately Staffed Surge Incidents

### Governmental Public Health Actions

- Join interstate licensure compact programs.
- Retain/expand regulatory flexibility for licensing and credentialing of health professionals, including students, retired providers, international clinicians, and community-based paraprofessionals.
- Assess benefits/confirm availability of National Guard or military personnel.
- Train all staff, potential temporary workers, and contractors in current incident command processes.
- Plan ahead for just-in-time training and knowledge transfer.
- Maintain open memorandums of agreement agreements and/or short-term contracts with temporary staffing agencies.
- Maintain active engagement with the Medical Reserve Corps and/or unpaid volunteer groups.
- Engage with academic institutions to train and engage surge teams.
- Utilize CDC and CDC Foundation field assignee programs (i.e., Preparedness Field Assignee program, Career Epidemiology Field Officers program).
- Transition surge staff into new public health roles post-response.

### Potential Indicators

- Number of interstate compacts/ shared service/third party staffing agreements
- Number of active MRC volunteers
- Percentage of staff that is up-to-date in ICS and/or preparedness training

### Supports

- NIMS ICS training
- Administration for Strategic Preparedness and Response MRC
- CDC Foundation Workforce Solutions
- CDC Field Staff Services
- Council of State Governments National Center for Interstate Compacts
- The Center for Sharing Public Health Services
- ASTHO's Inspire Readiness tool