

Project Public Health Ready Alternative Cohort Model



What is PPHR?

Project Public Health Ready (PPHR) is a competency-based training and recognition program that assesses preparedness and assists local health departments (LHDs), or groups of LHDs collaborating as a region, to respond to emergencies. The PPHR criteria are nationally recognized standards for local public health preparedness. Each of the three PPHR project goals—all-hazards preparedness planning, workforce capacity development, and demonstration of readiness through exercises or real events—has a comprehensive list of standards that agencies must meet to achieve PPHR recognition. PPHR builds preparedness capacity and capability through a continuous quality improvement model that can be maintained within the participating LHD and region after recognition is achieved.

By working with response partners to develop and enhance their plans and processes to meet the PPHR criteria, agencies strengthen working relationships and improve their integration within the preparedness community. For more information, visit www.naccho.org/pphr.

PPHR Cohort Model

In order to further the goal of a stronger, more integrated preparedness community, all new agencies seeking PPHR recognition must do so as part of a cohort. A cohort consists of three or more agencies applying to the program simultaneously that formally communicate and collaborate while developing their applications. Historically, cohorts have all come from the same state, an approach known as the PPHR “state-supported model.” Key benefits of this model have included the following:

- Encourages collaboration and coordination between state and local health departments for emergency preparedness planning, as well as between LHDs in the same state.
- Assists in identifying resources and resource gaps within the state.
- Provides a framework for the state to measure progress and ensure that local public health preparedness is meeting national standards.
- Aligns with federal plans and guidance, including CDC’s public health preparedness capabilities, the National Incident Management System (NIMS), the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP), the Operational Readiness Review (ORR) Tool, and the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB)
- Demonstrates return on investment of federal and state funding.

State-Supported vs. Alternative Cohort Models

The state-supported model requires that the PPHR application process for all LHDs within the state be coordinated by a state-level entity, such as a state health department or State Association of County and City Health Officials (SACCHO).

Vision

The vision of this project is that LHDs will be fully integrated into the response community and prepared to respond to any emergency.

If your LHD belongs to a state that already participates in the state-supported model, that is the easiest pathway to participation in PPHR. NACCHO supports and works with LHDs to implement the state-supported model in new states.

If it is not possible to gain state-level support for PPHR, NACCHO recognizes that many of the benefits of the state-supported model could, under certain circumstances, also apply to other groups of LHDs applying at the same time as a cohort. Therefore, NACCHO will consider requests on a case-by-case basis for applicants that have formed cohorts based on other criteria. To be considered for PPHR participation, a cohort must meet the following requirements:

- The cohort consists of at least 3 interested applicants.
- Interested applicants already formally engage with one another on preparedness planning activities.
- Interested applicants can demonstrate that a cohort approach to PPHR will benefit preparedness planning efforts.

Some examples of potential cohorts could include:

- Major cities located in different states wanting to collaborate on planning challenges unique to large urban areas;
- LHDs in different states that plan together as part of a single CRI region; or
- LHDs engaged in formal regional planning efforts in a state not participating in PPHR's state supported model.

NACCHO may also require that the cohort identify an application coordinator to take on what would typically be the role of a state lead. The responsibilities of an application coordinator would vary based on the cohort and who is selected to serve in this role. Some of the key duties of this role include serving as primary point of contact between NACCHO and cohort members, coordinating monthly phone calls with applicants, disseminating relevant NACCHO communications to applicants, and ensuring the timely submission of PPHR applications, forms, and fees.

Resources and Support

NACCHO provides extensive resources and opportunities for support to assist all cohorts in their pursuit of PPHR recognition:

- NACCHO organizes quarterly calls and annual in-person meeting of all state leads and application coordinators to share challenges and best practices.
- NACCHO staff attend the monthly calls with applicants organized by the state lead or application coordinator to answer applicant questions directly.
- NACCHO staff are available for technical assistance questions regarding PPHR application content or processes.
- NACCHO continuously shares guidance, updates, and reminders with state leads and application coordinators.
- NACCHO maintains a SharePoint site where resources can be accessed at any time.

If you are interested in pursuing an alternative cohort approach please contact NACCHO staff to further discuss your unique situation and the process for formalizing PPHR participation.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

Rachel Schulman, MSPH, CPH

Senior Program Analyst, Public Health Preparedness
202-507-4203
rschulman@naccho.org

Sarah Summers, MPH

Program Analyst, Public Health Preparedness
202-507-4203
ssummers@naccho.org

Madison Ferraro

Senior Program Assistant, Public Health Preparedness
202-507-4239
mferraro@naccho.org

Tanya Maslak, MPH

Senior Director, Public Health Preparedness and Resilience
202-507-4218
tmaslak@naccho.org