



National Association of County & City Health Officials

*The National Connection for Local Public Health*

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **NACCHO and FDA Announce the Ninth Year of the Retail Program Standards Mentorship Program**

**Washington, DC, February 12, 2020** — [The National Association of County and City Health Officials](#) (NACCHO) has announced the ninth cohort of a mentorship program for retail food regulatory programs. The program is supported by the [Food and Drug Administration's \(FDA\) Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition](#) (CFSAN) and [Office of Regulatory Affairs](#) (ORA).

The peer mentorship program provides an important opportunity to share best practices in food safety and opportunities to learn, share experiences, and acquire tools and resources related to the Voluntary National Retail Food Regulatory Program Standards (Retail Program Standards). The program pairs retail food regulatory program practitioners who are experienced in applying the Retail Program Standards with those newly enrolled and/or looking for assistance, guidance, tools, resources, and recommendations for continued success. This year's cohort consists of 37 participants, including 12 mentors and 25 mentees, from across the country and territories. The following Mentor and Mentee teams will be working together for the 2019–2020 mentorship year:

- **Mentor: Boulder County Public Health, CO**  
Mentees: Marion Public Health, OH; and City of Plano Environmental Health and Sustainability Department, TX

- **Mentor: Fairfax County Health Department, VA**  
Mentees: Prince William Health District, VA; Peninsula Health District, VA; Rappahannock Rapidan Health District, VA; Henrico County Health District, VA; and Fairhaven Board of Health, MA
- **Mentor: Gwinnett, Newton, and Rockdale Health Departments, GA**  
Mentees: Lenowisco Health District, VA
- **Mentor: Harris County Public Health, TX**  
Mentees: Hardin County Health Department, TX; Jasper Newton County Public Health District, TX; and Marlborough Health Department, MA
- **Mentor: New River Health District, VA**  
Mentees: Hampton Health Department, VA; Lord Fairfax Health District, VA; and Three Rivers Health District, VA
- **Mentor: Oakland County Health Division, MI**  
Mentees: Hennepin County Public Health, MN; and Portage County Health District, OH
- **Mentor: Richmond County Health Department, NC**  
Mentees: Randolph County Health Department, NC
- **Mentor: Riverstone Health, MT**  
Mentee: Trempealeau Health Department, WI
- **Mentor: Southern Nevada Health District, NV**  
Mentees: Union County Health Department, OH; and Mecklenburg County Public Health Department, NC
- **Mentor: Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department, WA**  
Mentee: Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation (Saipan), MP
- **Mentor: Vineland Health Department, NJ**  
Mentees: Chatham Health District, CT; Jefferson County Health Department, WV; and West Hartford-Bloomfield Health District, CT
- **Mentor: Washoe County Health District (NV)**  
Mentees: Monongalia County Health Department, WV

Participants design plans for reaching program milestones, conduct self-assessments, develop improvement plans, and conduct verification audits, among other learning activities. The Mentorship Program has helped participants from the first eight

cohorts improve their inspection programs, train more inspection staff, enhance customer service, and implement innovative strategies to reduce risk factors at retail that may cause or contribute to foodborne illness outbreaks. Funding from the program has also helped participants purchase equipment needed to conduct inspections and acquire food safety materials to educate their communities.

In addition to assistance and guidance provided by the peer mentors, staff from NACCHO, FDA's Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition's (CFSAN), Retail Food Protection Staff, and Retail Food Specialists from the Office of Regulatory Affairs' Office of State Cooperative Programs will provide technical assistance to all participants in the Mentorship Program.

The 37 participants began the Mentorship Program in December 2019 and will complete it at the end of August 2020. A highlight of the program is a site visit by the mentees to meet and work with their mentors and an end-of-year meeting for all participants to report on progress, network and build partnerships, and share experiences. Throughout the program year, resources and tools developed by program participants will be shared with other regulatory programs and two "sharing session" webinars on retail food topics will be scheduled and made available to all jurisdictions on the NACCHO website.

For more information on the Mentorship Program, Retail Program Standards and the NACCHO-FDA Cooperative agreement visit these websites:

[Mentorship Program for the Retail Program Standards](#) or  
[FDA's Voluntary National Retail Food Regulatory Program Standards](#) (Retail Program Standards)

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### **About NACCHO**

The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) represents the nation's nearly 3,000 local health departments. These city, county, metropolitan, district, and tribal departments work every day to protect and promote health and well-being for all people in their communities. For more information about NACCHO, please visit [www.naccho.org](http://www.naccho.org).