

Virginia Mentorship Participants

Alexandria Department of Health (VA)

Background

State: Virginia

LHD Population Size Served: 140,000

Number of Retail Food Establishments Inspected: 725

Retail Program Standards Met/Working On: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, Self-Assessment

Enrolled in the Retail Program Standards: 2004

NACCHO Mentorship Program Cohort(s): 1, 3, and 4

The Alexandria Health Department serves the City of Alexandria, Virginia. The mission of the Alexandria Health Department is "Protecting and Promoting Health and Well-Being In Our Communities".

Alexandria is an ethnically and culturally diverse city of 140,000 people directly across the Potomac River from Washington, D.C. With an area of only 15.4 square miles, Alexandria is the tenth most densely populated municipality in the United States. Alexandria is known for its fine dining restaurants. Alexandria has a total of approximately 725 food establishments including restaurants, groceries and other food service operations.

The Alexandria Health Department is a state-administered local health department operating under a cooperative agreement with the City of Alexandria. The Alexandria Health Department has responsibility for administering both state laws and regulations and local ordinances.

Role in Mentorship Program

Alexandria Health Department participated in the NACCHO Retail Program Standards Mentorship Program as a mentor in the first, third, and fourth cohorts. Alexandria Health Department mentored St. Louis County Health Department (MO) and County of Lake, Environmental Health Department (CA) during the first cohort and mentored Cape Girardeau County Public Health Center (MO), Cheyenne-Laramie County Health Department (WY), and Prince George's County Health Department (MD) during the third cohort. For the fourth cohort, they mentored Louisville (KY) Metro Public Health and Wellness, Jackson County (NC) Department of Public Health, and Gwinnett, Newton, and Rockdale County (GA) Health Departments.

Lessons Learned/Tips

One of the key insights was that everyone does not need to (and should not want to) reinvent the wheel. Environmental health (EH) units nationwide are experiencing staff shortages and budget cuts. Working on the Retail Program Standards is resource intensive. By working together sharing policies, forms, ideas and expertise between EH units, the resources needed to implement the Retail Program Standards are substantially reduced.

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Central Shenandoah Health District

Background

State: Virginia

LHD Population Size Served: 293,000

Number of Retail Food Establishments Inspected: 1,068

Retail Program Standards Met/Working On: 2 and Self-Assessment

Enrolled in the Retail Program Standards: 2016

NACCHO Mentorship Program Cohort(s): 6

The Mission of the Virginia Department of Health is to promote and protect the health of all Virginians. The Central Shenandoah Health District (CSHD) works diligently to promote and protect the health of all residents and visitors in our localities.

CSHD's retail food regulatory program encompasses a diverse area geographically and strives to meet the needs of a diverse population. The program reflects both the rural agricultural element (for example; regulating and inspecting establishments at County fairs, an increasing number of farm-to-table businesses, and foodservice at vineyards/breweries) as well as the increasingly diverse urban areas with a growing number of mobile food units and new ethnic restaurants.

There are currently 13 Environmental Health Specialists with duties in the retail food regulatory program working from 7 offices within the CSHD. The CSHD retail food regulatory program includes a program supervisor (with assigned establishments), and a district standardization officer (with assigned establishments). The manager does not have assigned establishments. Factoring in other assigned job duties the full time equivalent staff assigned to the retail food regulatory program is currently less than 6.

Regulated establishments include restaurants, schools and mobile food units, bed and breakfasts, hotel/motels, and summer camp kitchens

The CSHD administers the Virginia Department of Health's Food Regulations (effective July 12, 2016) which were amended to be consistent with the 2013 FDA Food Code. Regulatory authority is statutorily derived (Code of Virginia, Title 35.1) and then delegated by the State Board of Health and the State Health Commissioner (12 VAC5-421. Food Regulations).

Role in Mentorship Program

The CHSD participated in the NACCHO Retail Program Standards Mentorship Program as a mentee in the sixth cohort. Fairfax County Health Department (VA) mentored CHSD on Standard 2.

Lessons Learned/Tips

One lesson learned is that an agency might be surprised at how much they already may be doing toward meeting a Standard. With some effort and focus on improving key areas great progress can be made. Another lesson learned is that you need to stay on top of making sure staff stay committed and focused. Seeking out staff input and making sure to offer opportunity for growth need to be a focus for ensuring full and committed participation

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Chickahominy Health District

Background

State: Virginia

LHD Population Size Served: 150,000

Number of Retail Food Establishments Inspected: 575

Retail Program Standards Met/Working On: Standard 2 (2017) Working on Std 4 & 7

Enrolled in the Retail Program Standards: 2016

Version of Food Code: Administrative Code of Virginia Chapter 421 Food Regulations based off the FDA Food Code 2013.

NACCHO Mentorship Program Cohort(s): 6 and 8

Mission and Brief One Paragraph Background:

To improve the health of our community by **preventing** disease, **promoting** healthy lifestyles, and **protecting** people from the environment & other hazards.

Working under the authority of the Commonwealth of Virginia Health Commissioner, the Chickahominy Health District regulates food establishments, as defined by the Code of Virginia, throughout the region known as the Chickahominy Health District. This is a diverse district spanning Virginia's Piedmont region to the Coastal Plans for a total of 1,191 miles. The Chickahominy Health District serves approximately 150,000 citizens in the counties of Charles City, Goochland, Hanover, New Kent, and the Town of Ashland.

Role in Mentorship Program

- Role: Mentee in cohorts 6 and 8
- In cohort 6, Fairfax County Health Department, VA mentored Chickahominy on Standard 2.
- In cohort 8, Gwinnett, Newton, and Rockdale Health Departments, GA mentored Chickahominy on Standards 4 and 7.

Accomplishments in the Mentorship Program

- Chickahominy Health District worked on Standards 4 and 7. Regarding Standard 4, we composed a written Quality Assurance Standard Operating Procedure. We will be implementing this Plan for a future verification audit. Regarding Standard 7, we developed and implemented a social media campaign relating to food safety and we developed and implemented a RedCap survey relating to the EHSS' food establishment inspection interaction. Lastly, we are developing an agenda and stakeholder's contact information to hold a Food Safety meeting with regulatory staff, FDA, VADACS, Local government officials, food establishment owners and customers and other food safety stakeholders.

Lessons Learned/Tips

The impact from our first verification audit will be felt most immediately internally in having a written and verifiable training plan in place. While our training process has been fairly consistent in the past, we now have a clearly written plan and method for verifying training steps and completion, identifying gaps in training and identifying individual strengths and weakness during the training process. With more consistent

training and a better means to identify training needs, our staff will be better prepared to serve our customers.

- Take full advantage of you mentor – Ask questions, have them review your drafts;
- Hold scheduled meetings with your team – we set up a reoccurring meeting to go over our progress and what to do next;
- Hold teammates accountable – Make sure everyone understands their role and responsibilities while working on the Standards and keep notes on your meetings for future reference. We all have our “normal” job duties, and my teams accepted the additional assignments and were honest regarding their workload when establishing a due date.

Contact

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Fairfax County Health Department (VA)

Background

State: Virginia

LHD Population Size Served: 1,200,000

Number of Retail Food Establishments Inspected: 3,790

Retail Program Standards Met/Working On: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, Self-Assessment

Enrolled in the Retail Program Standards: 2003

NACCHO Mentorship Program Cohort(s): 2-9

The Fairfax County Health Department (FCHD) is the largest local public health department in Virginia, serving 1.2 million residents from diverse ethnic, cultural and economic backgrounds throughout Fairfax County, as well as the cities of Fairfax and Falls Church and the towns of Herndon, Vienna and Clifton. With more than 100 years of leadership in the field and over 600 full-time staff, we are committed to protecting, promoting and improving the health and quality of life for all in our community. The FCHD achieved national accreditation through the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) in May 2016.

Role in Mentorship Program

FCHD participated in the NACCHO Retail Program Standards Mentorship Program as a mentor in the second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, and ninth cohorts.

- In the second cohort, FCHD mentored Jefferson County Health Department (MO), Summit County Environmental Health (CO), and Cumberland County Health Department (IL) and was shadowed by St. Charles County Department of Community Health and the Environment.
 - In the third cohort, FCHD mentored Thomas Jefferson Health District (VA), County of Monterey, Environmental Health Bureau (CA), Frederick County Health Department (MD), St. Charles County Department of Community Health and the Environment (MO) and was shadowed by Kanawha-Charleston Health Department (WV).
 - In the fourth cohort, FCHD mentored the County of San Bernardino Department of Public Health (CA), Division of Environmental Health Services, Southern Nevada Health District (NV), Erie County Health Department (OH), and Loud Fairfax Health District (VA).
 - In the fifth cohort, FCHD mentored Mid-Ohio Valley Health Department (WV), New River Health District (VA), Oakland County Health Division (MI), Rockingham County Environmental Health (NC), and Wilkes County Health Department (NC).
 - In the sixth cohort, FCHD mentored District of Columbia Department of Health, Englewood Department of Health (NJ), Central Shenandoah Health District (VA), Chickahominy Health District (VA), Rappahannock-Rapidan Health District (VA), and Northwest Georgia Public Health District (GA).
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- During the seventh cohort, FCHD mentored Angelina County (TX) on Standards 1, 4, 7; Rappahannock-Rapidan (VA) on Standards 4; Cumberland County (NJ) on Standards 2,4 and 9; District of Columbia on Standards 2 and 3; and Marion County (IN) on Standards 3, 4, and 6.
- In the eighth cohort, Fairfax mentored Erie County, OH; Fairhaven, MA; Marlborough, MA; and Union County, OH on Standards 1, 2, 3 and/or 7.
- Ninth cohort, FCHD mentored Henrico County, VA; Fairhaven, MA; Peninsula, VA; Prince William, VA; and Rappahannock, VA on Standards 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 and/or 9.

Accomplishments in the Mentorship Program

Our mentees worked on self-assessments for Standards 1, 2, 3 ,4 ,6 and/or 9. Verification audits are scheduled to be conducted for three of the mentees by a site visit /Zoom. The Peninsula Health District passed Verification Audit for Program Standard 2. Prince William County Health District has passed their verification Audit for Standard 1. (Note: Audit for Henrico County – Program Standard 2 is scheduled for later this month).

Mentorship Program Lessons Learned/Tips

Our participation in the NACCHO Program Standards Mentorship helps to maintain a working knowledge of Retail Program Standards and their importance to our agency and our stakeholders. We encourage Retail Program Standards enrollees to find ways to incorporate one or more of the Standards as a part of the discussion in staff and management meetings. We have learned that this transfer of knowledge is very important to establish a succession plan to sustain the activities related to the Retail Program Standards. We would also recommend using the Retail Program Standards as the framework to enhance other environmental health programs. We have learned that basic elements of the Retail Program Standards such as trained regulatory staff, a standardized inspection report form, inspection report marking instructions, clear procedural documents, and a quality assurance program provide the framework for a risk-based inspection program with more measurable public health outcomes. Funding opportunities such as this mentorship program can also provide valuable resources and funds needed by health departments to use for training, professional development, and equipment related to a regulatory food program. This has been a very different year for most of us working on the Retail Program Standards. However, we have learned to find different ways to keep in touch with mentees and ensure we are all on track with meeting the goals and deadlines for this year using alternate methods of communication and technology.

Project Contact

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Hampton Health Department (VA)

Background

State: Virginia

HD Population Size Served: 137, 436 (according to 2010 Census)

Number of Retail Food Establishments Inspected: 536 permitted food facilities: 452 (State), 84 (Local)

Retail Program Standards Met by Verification Audit/Working On: 1

Year Enrolled in the Retail Program Standards: 3

NACCHO Mentorship Program Cohort(s): this is our first

Version of Food Code: 2013

Mission and Background:

Our mission is to protect the health and promote the well-being of all people on the Virginian Peninsula.

The Hampton Health Department is located in Hampton, VA. Hampton has a total of 136 square miles and is located in the center of the Hampton Roads metropolitan area. We are home to Langley Air Force Base, Fort Monroe, the Hampton Roads Convention Center, Hampton University, and a wide array of business and industrial enterprises, retail and residential areas, and historical sites. The Hampton Health Department is one of thirty-five (35) health districts of the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) and is jointly funded by the state and the city. Our authority is statutorily derived and delegated through the State Board of Health and the State Health Commissioner. In addition to inspecting and permitting food establishments as defined by the Virginia Food Regulations, we also inspect and permit food establishments as defined in the Hampton City Code (which references the VA Food Regs). The Virginia Department of Health implemented the use of a statewide database in 2001 and as of June 2019, the database transitioned to a cloud-based database to capture real-time data. All food inspections are entered in this database which allows the public to access the inspections through an established website. The Hampton Environmental Health Specialists (EHS) have the capability to enter inspections in the field/onsite using laptops and portable printers. We also have the capability to send inspections electronically using Adobe Pro software. We conduct risk-based inspections based on the risk categories identified in FDA Annex 5: Conducting Risk Based Inspections. Hampton EHS staff (a total of 4 when fully staffed) are trained by the District Standardization Officer (DSO) using the VDH Procedures for Certification and Standardization of Food Inspection Staff manual.

Role in Mentorship Program

- Mentee or Mentor? Mentee
- Who were you paired with? New River Health District, VDH

Accomplishments in the Mentorship Program

- What Standard(s) did you work on and what did you accomplish? Standard 2. Created a procedures training manual for new EH (has been a goal since becoming the District Standardization Officer in 2008).

Lessons Learned/Tips in Mentorship Program or working on Retail Program Standards (Provide 2-3 examples)

- We learned where we were lacking in our food program training
- I learned how to do a presentation while using Google Meets

Contact

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Henrico County Health Department

Background

State: Virginia

HD Population Size Served: 329,260

Number of Retail Food Establishments Inspected: 1170

Retail Program Standards Met by Verification Audit/Working On: Standard 2

Year Enrolled in the Retail Program Standards: 2018

NACCHO Mentorship Program Cohort(s): 9

Version of Food Code: 2013

Pursuing Accreditation (Y/N?) If Y, have you achieved accreditation?) N

Mission and Brief One Paragraph Background:

The Henrico County Health District (HCHD) believes food safety is a basic tenet of public health and has long worked to establish a sound and robust program. The district is dedicated to continuing to build a strong and sustainable food safety program, one built on established principles and sound science as modeled by the FDA Food Code.

Role in Mentorship Program

- Mentee or Mentor? Mentee
- Who were you paired with? Fairfax County

Accomplishments in the Mentorship Program

- What Standard(s) did you work on and what did you accomplish? Standard 2

Lessons Learned/Tips in Mentorship Program or working on Retail Program Standards (Provide 2-3 examples)

- Good documentation is key.
- Communication with your mentor and other mentees working on the same standard or who have previously met the standard is invaluable.

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Lenowisco Health District (VA)

Background

State: Virginia

LHD Population Size Served: 80,000

Number of Retail Food Establishments Inspected: 300

Retail Program Standards Met/Working On: Met Standard 2 previously, working on 3 and 4

Enrolled in the Retail Program Standards: 2018

NACCHO Mentorship Program Cohort(s): 6 and 9

Version of Food Code: VA Regulations based on 2013 Food Code

Our District's mission is to be the healthiest district in the Commonwealth of Virginia. This is a tall order given we do not look like much of the Commonwealth from the perspective of health metrics. The health disparities we must overcome impact all facets of our programs. This is a driving force as to why we strive to participate and succeed at programs such as this.

Role in Mentorship Program

6th Cohort: Lenowisco was mentored by New River Health District, VA on Standard 2.

9th Cohort: Lenowisco was mentored by Gwinnett County, GA on Standard 3 and 4.

Lessons Learned/Tips

- The biggest lesson we learned was the need to better track our training efforts during our quarterly meetings.
- The special circumstances presented by the COVID-19 pandemic were a definite stressor on our mentor and us. Meeting by phone or Google Meets did show that it was possible to move forward successfully in less than ideal circumstances.
- Our mentor was very helpful in meeting Standard 3. We were unaware of some changes that impacted our ability to full meet the Standard, but with their help, we were able to make those adjustments.

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Lord Fairfax Health District (VA)

Background

State: Virginia

LHD Population Size Served: 238,419

Number of Retail Food Establishments Inspected: 863

Retail Program Standards Met/Working On: Self-Assessment, Standard 2/Standard 3

Enrolled in the Retail Program Standards: 2014

Version of Food Code: 2016

NACCHO Mentorship Program Cohort(s): 4, 8, and 9

Mission – Protect the health and promote the well-being of all persons in LFHD and Virginia

Originally enrolled in 2014. Currently members of Retail Standard Team- District Standardization Officer and 4 Standardized Environmental Health Specialist Seniors. Mentored through bimonthly polycoms with New River Health District

Role in Mentorship Program

- Mentee in cohorts 4, 8, 9
- In Cohort 4, Lord Fairfax was mentored by Fairfax County Health Department, VA.
- In Cohort 8, Lord Fairfax was mentored by New River Health District, VA on Standard 2.
- In Cohort 9, Lord Fairfax was mentored by New River Health District, VA on Standard 3.

Lessons Learned/Tips

- Streamlined Food Program and Training Process for LFHD
- Helped bridge gaps in Training or lack there of
- Created unity amongst staff with better communication.
- Realized that we have most of the requirements in place to meet Standard 3, however technology has made them second nature to us. Writing out the policies has helped create a better understanding of:

1) Assigned risk categorizations and inspection frequencies for facilities

2) Documenting non-compliance with risk factors; and

3) Determining immediate and long-term corrective actions

.....especially for when technology fails us.

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Contact

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Lynchburg Health Department, VA

Background

State: Virginia

HD Population Size Served: 261,600

Number of Retail Food Establishments Inspected: 900

Retail Program Standards Met/Working On: Met Standard 2, working on Standard 1

Year Enrolled in the Retail Program Standards: 2017

NACCHO Mentorship Program Cohort(s): none

Version of Food Code: 2013

Mission and Background:

Mission Statement: "We nurture the community's well-being by practicing public health, meeting the needs of the present while planning for the future."

Background: The Central Virginia Health District (CVHD) regulates retail food safety in the counties of Amherst, Appomattox, Bedford and Campbell, as well as the city of Lynchburg. The district is administratively part of the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) and receives general policy direction from the VDH Office of Environmental Health Services. Through routine inspections, training and education our main role is to regulate and ensure the retail food establishments operate in accordance with the Virginia Food Regulations, which reference the 2013 FDA Food Code.

Role in Mentorship Program

- Mentee
- New River Health District
- Standard 2

Lessons Learned/Tips

- Documentation of training inspections is important
- Formulating the ledger for Standard verification is important. Presenting the information to the auditor in a clear and linear way makes the process exponentially easier.

Contact

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New River Health District (VA)

Background

State: Virginia

LHD Population Size Served: 178,000

Number of Retail Food Establishments Inspected: 670

Retail Program Standards Met/Working On: Self-assessment, 1, 2, 4, 9

Enrolled in the Retail Program Standards: 2013 & 2015 supplement

NACCHO Mentorship Program Cohort(s): 5-9

Mission:

As an agency, and as individuals, we value hospitality, responsiveness, accountability, compassion, integrity, and cutting-edge expertise. We are committed to protecting all citizens in the New River Valley at all times, preventing disease, and promoting health and wellness.

NRHD was recruited to enroll in the Retail Program Standards by Fairfax County in the fall of 2015. As a fairly small, rural health department, we were hesitant to enroll for years prior to the recruitment pitch; convinced we did not have the resources to work on the RPS. Fairfax prevailed. We enrolled and were paired with them as our Mentor as we got started on the RPS. Since enrolling we have met Standards 1, 2, and 3, and are working on Standard 5 & 9 now – having completed our Risk Factor Study for 9. We have also served as a mentor to four other health departments. Enrolling and staying active in the RPS has been a boon to our Food Safety Program, staff (8 FSIOs and 1 Supervisor) are engaged and have flourished and enjoyed the opportunities created by the process. We plan to continue to work towards achieving conformance with all 9 standards, to pursue funding opportunities as long as they are available and to use the process to guide our work on improving our Food Safety Program. We hope to use lessons learned and tools developed to help us gain accreditation in the near future as well.

Role in Mentorship Program

- New River participated in the NACCHO Retail Program Standards Mentorship Program as a mentee in the fifth cohort and was mentored by Fairfax County Health Department (VA).
- In the sixth cohort, New River mentored Lenowisco Health District (VA) on Standards 2.
- In the seventh cohort they mentored Central Virginia Health District (VA) on Standard 2.
- In the eighth cohort they mentored Lord Fairfax, VA and Prince William, VA on their initial self-assessments for all 9 Standards and Standard 2.
- In the ninth cohort, New River mentored Hampton, VA; Lord Fairfax, VA; and Three Rivers District, VA.

Lessons Learned/Tips

- Ask many questions of the Mentee. It is easy to forget; sometimes mentees do not know to ask questions or what questions to ask. It is easy to mistake a lack

of questions for understanding. Engaging mentees with questions of your own, helps identify barriers and issues early, and makes it easier to overcome them during the grant year.

- Talk to NACCHO team about invoicing – often. Four cohorts in and we still make mistakes. Between invoicing expectations and our own agency rules – which don't always align – it is easy to miss something.
- Use the team approach. We had our smallest team working on mentoring this cohort and we noticed a difference. Division of labor and multiple eyes help ensure success.
- Beg, borrow and steal from your colleagues, peers and fellow enrollees.

Contact

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Peninsula Health District

Background

State: VA

HD Population Size Served: 180,179

Number of Retail Food Establishments Inspected: ~1,400

Retail Program Standards Met by Verification Audit/Working On: Standard 2

Year Enrolled in the Retail Program Standards: 2019

NACCHO Mentorship Program Cohort(s): 9

Version of Food Code: 2013

Pursuing Accreditation (Y/N?) If Y, have you achieved accreditation?) No

Mission and Background:

The Virginia Department of Health focuses on healthy people in healthy communities with of vision to “become the healthiest state in the nation.” Our mission is to protect the health and to promote the well-being of all people on the Virginia Peninsula. Our work is guided by these core values: service; equity; and data informed decision-making.

Role in Mentorship Program

- Mentee or Mentor? Mentee
- Who were you paired with? Fairfax County Health Department

Accomplishments in the Mentorship Program

- What Standard(s) did you work on and what did you accomplish? For this cohort (9) our district worked to meet Standard 2. Our district was audited 7/27-7/28, 2020. We were deemed to have met Standard 2. During this cohort (9), I also began to do self-assessments for standards 1-6, even though it was not a part of the submitted work plan.

Lessons Learned/Tips in Mentorship Program or working on Retail Program Standards (Provide 2-3 examples)

- Stick to your workplan – if you committed to meeting a date, meet it.
- Lean on your mentor – there’s a reason they are a mentor!
- Utilize FoodShield and Clearinghouse Q&A! There are so many documents uploaded to Foodshield to help, so you don’t have to reinvent the wheel, and the Clearinghouse Q&A will answer a lot of your questions – odds are you aren’t the first to have your question.

Contact

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Prince William Health District, VA

Background

State: Virginia

HD Population Size Served: 463,000 – Prince William County, Manassas Park City and City of Manassas

Number of Retail Food Establishments Inspected: Approximately 1400

Retail Program Standards Met by Verification Audit/Working On: Standard 2 and Standard 1 – August 2020

Year Enrolled in the Retail Program Standards: October 2018

NACCHO Mentorship Program Cohort(s): Cohorts 8 and 9

Version of Food Code: 2013 with 2015 Supplement

Pursuing Accreditation (Y/N?) If Y, have you achieved accreditation? August 2016

Mission and Background:

The Prince William Health District is dedicated to promoting optimum wellness, preventing illness, responding emergencies and protecting the environment and health of our residents.

Working under the authority of the Commonwealth of Virginia Health Commissioner, the Prince William Health District regulates food establishments, as define by the Code of Virginia, throughout the region known as Northern Virginia. This is a diverse health district spanning approximately 348 square miles throughout Prince William County. The Prince William Health District serves over 463,000 citizens with approximately 1400 food establishments in Prince William County, Manassas Park City and the City of Manassas. The Health District is a blend of open, rural landscaping and suburbia, agriculture and business, history and tourism.

Role in Mentorship Program

- Served as Mentee
- Cohort 8, Prince William was mentored by New River Health District, VA on self-assessment of 9 standards and Standard 2.
- Cohort 9, Prince William was mentored by Fairfax County, VA on Standard 2 and 1.

Accomplishments in the Mentorship Program

- What Standard(s) did you work on and what did you accomplish? Work on, met the requirements for Standard 2, and completed the verification audit on May 2, 2019. We also completed a self-assessment of our food inspection program
- Met Standard 1.

Lessons Learned/Tips

- Helped identify strength and weakness in our staff training. Importance of good record keeping, documentation and audits for new and existing senior staff members
- Streamline our food inspection program and training process. Provided a consistent training process for all staff. New training manual, logs and forms

- Helped bridge the gap in training for new and existing staff that came onboard before procedures were in place
- This process helped create and developed uniformity amongst staff and better communication with staff and management
- Learn properly time management by addressing Health District Priorities first.
- A team is not always plural during a pandemic or a public health emergency (COVID 19).
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Contact

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Rappahannock-Rapidan Health District (VA)

Background

State: Virginia

LHD Population Size Served: 181,500

Number of Retail Food Establishments Inspected: 486

Retail Program Standards Met/Working On:

Verification Audits: Standard 1 (2020) and Standard 2 (2017); working on Standard 4, Standard 5, and Standard 6

Enrolled in the Retail Program Standards: 2016

NACCHO Mentorship Program Cohort(s): 6, 7, and 9

Version of Food Code: 2013

Pursuing Accreditation (Y/N?) If Y, have you achieved accreditation?): No

Mission and Background:

Virginia Department of Health Mission: The mission of the Virginia Department of Health is to protect the health and promote the well-being of all people in Virginia. The Agency's vision statement is "Become the healthiest state in the nation"

Rappahannock Rapidan Health District Mission: Our mission is to attain optimal health for the people of our community through disease prevention, environmental safeguards and health promotion.

The Rappahannock Rapidan Health District (RRHD) is located in Virginia and as such is part of the Virginia Department of Health (VDH). We are one of thirty-five (35) health districts in Virginia. Our district is co-operatively funded by both state and local monies. Our authority is statutorily derived and subsequently delegated through the State Board of Health and the State Health Commissioner. Working under the authority of the Commonwealth of Virginia Health Commissioner, the Rappahannock Rapidan Health District (RRHD) regulates Food Establishments, as defined by the *Code of Virginia*, throughout the region known as the RRHD comprised of five (5) individual counties Fauquier, Culpeper, Madison, Orange, and Rappahannock. Our District spans approximately 1,950 square miles of area.

Role in Mentorship Program

- 6th cohort: RRHD was mentored by Fairfax County Health Department (VA) on Standard 6.
- 7th cohort, Fairfax County mentored RRHD on Standard 4.
- 9th cohort: RRHD was mentored by Fairfax County, VA on Standard 6 components.

Accomplishments

- Drafted and finalized Compliance and Enforcement Policies for RRHD

- Reviewed and completed FDA worksheets for 50 permitted food establishments for Standard 6 audit

Lessons Learned/Tips

- Learned how to critically review inspection reports so they comply with the VA Food Regulations and RRHD's Compliance and Enforcement Policies
- After reviewing previous inspections, recognized specific violations that repeatedly lacked necessary documentation and follow-up actions in the inspection report

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Link: www.rrhd.org

Thomas Jefferson Health District (VA)

Background

State: Virginia

LHD Population Size Served: 235,000

Number of Retail Food Establishments Inspected: 860

Retail Program Standards Met/Working On: 4, Self-Assessment

Enrolled in the Retail Program Standards: 2013

NACCHO Mentorship Program Cohort(s): 3

The Virginia Department of Health is dedicated to promoting and protecting the health of Virginians. The Thomas Jefferson Health District (TJHD), Virginia's Planning District 10, is comprised of the City of Charlottesville and the counties of Albemarle, Fluvanna, Greene, Louisa and Nelson. It includes approximately 235,000 people living in urban, suburban, and rural environments.

Role in Mentorship Program

TJHD participated in the NACCHO Retail Program Standards Mentorship Program as a mentee in third cohort and was mentored by Fairfax County Health Department (VA).

Lessons Learned/Tips

Having a full-time permanent data analyst position for each health district would make it easier for health districts to meet the FDA Regulatory Food Standards.

Thomas Jefferson is currently working towards obtaining PHAB accreditation. Some of the documentation that meet the FDA Program Standards was useful for PHAB accreditation as well. For instance, the QA policy was able to be used as an example of Thomas Jefferson incorporating evidence-based practices for PHAB Measure 10.1.1A

Contact

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Link: <http://www.vdh.state.va.us/LHD/ThomasJefferson/EnvironmentalHealth.htm#Food>

Three Rivers Health District (VA)

Background

State: Virginia

HD Population Size Served: 140,000

Number of Retail Food Establishments Inspected: 450

Retail Program Standards Met by Verification Audit/Working On: 2

Year Enrolled in the Retail Program Standards: 2019

NACCHO Mentorship Program Cohort(s): 9

Version of Food Code: 2017

Pursuing Accreditation (Y/N?) If Y, have you achieved accreditation?)

Mission and Brief One Paragraph Background:

The Virginia Department of Health's goal is to become "the healthiest state in the nation," and local health district food safety is an integral part of the environmental health component of that effort. The Three Rivers Health District is a ten-county, rural health organization where a team of six food safety staff permits, inspects, and educates the operators of approximately 450 dispersed food facility operators of all types, and numerous temporary and mobile food vendors.

Role in Mentorship Program

- Mentee or Mentor? Mentee
- Who were you paired with? New River Health District

Accomplishments in the Mentorship Program

- What Standard(s) did you work on and what did you accomplish? We worked primarily on Standard 2 and have made considerable progress in establishing a well-documented, local health district counterpart to the state agency food safety training program, in order to ensure an adequately trained and credentialed food safety team.

Lessons Learned/Tips in Mentorship Program or working on Retail Program Standards (Provide 2-3 examples)

- Always ask questions, of NACCHO, your mentor, and your staff.
- Get buy-in from all levels of your organization in support of this effort.
- Stay organized and maintain momentum with your work plan.

Contact

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Link to food safety program website:

State: <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/environmental-health/food-safety-in-virginia/>

Local: <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/three-rivers/environmental-health/>