

NACCHO Policy Statements: Model Policy for Local Health Departments



Local health departments advance population health and public health by crafting policies that affect the health and safety of people as they live, learn, work, and play. Part of the ongoing work of the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) is to help local health departments implement policies that make it easier for people to maximize their potential and quality of life.

As the national voice for local health departments, NACCHO informs federal policymakers of the critical role these agencies play in keeping communities healthy and safe. Policy statements inform and support NACCHO's national advocacy for local health departments and programmatic work. They also support the local voice in policy development, programs, and stakeholder education. NACCHO encourages local health departments to use these policy recommendations as models for their communities.

Through policy statements, NACCHO provides local health departments with the latest science and public health approaches to address key public health issues. For example, recently approved policy statements include [Transportation and Health](#), [Community Health Strategist](#), and [Mass Incarceration and Racism](#).

NACCHO policy statements are an important part of addressing public health policy issues. NACCHO has more than 125 policy statements across a variety of topic areas, as illustrated in the word cloud to the right. Policy statements can be found on NACCHO's website at <http://naccho.org/advocacy/activities/>.

In 1998, the NACCHO Board of Directors established a policy development process in which NACCHO's more than 25 advisory groups draft, review, and update policy statements within their purview. All policy statements are approved by the Board at their quarterly meetings and updated at a minimum every three years. Each policy statement includes a justification and many include references to the latest scientific evidence.

How Local Health Departments Can Utilize NACCHO Policy Statements

NACCHO's Research and Evaluation team has assessed the usefulness and reach of policy statements. A large majority of NACCHO member respondents reported using policy statements, most often to educate others (61%),

to communicate about public health issues (43%), or to promote policy at the local level (42%).

Local health department leaders and staff reported that policy statements give them a level of awareness of public health issues that can be used to validate actions by their health department, to support a position at the local level, or to gain knowledge about upcoming challenges.



Testimonials

Below are some testimonials from local health department leaders about how they have used NACCHO policy statements.

Gillian Stoltman, former health official

Kalamazoo (MI) County Health and Community Services

"My health department used the NACCHO Influenza Vaccination for Health Care Personnel policy statement to support a local policy on required vaccinations for department staff, protecting our staff and the public from infectious disease."

Torney Smith, Administrator

Spokane (WA) Regional Health District

"The NACCHO Health Equity and Social Justice policy statement is used to craft internal policy and orient program activities in my community. It is used to compare to the National Prevention Strategy section on Promotion of Health Equity and Elimination of Health Disparities with our agency strategic goal to reduce health inequities that contribute to health disparities. This policy statement continues to offer support for the local public health role in our State Improvement Model grant and Medicaid Demonstration Project through our engagement with our accountable community for health, Better Health Together."

Robert Kim-Farley, MD, MPH, Chair of Infectious Disease

Los Angeles County Department of Public Health

"In Los Angeles County, NACCHO's policy statement National Healthcare Safety Network (developed by NACCHO's

Infectious Disease Prevention and Control Workgroup) was used to encourage voluntary data sharing with the health department by more than 100 hospitals where data had previously been unavailable on healthcare acquired infections (HAI). This data is regularly shared by hospitals directly with CDC. NACCHO's policy statement was written to encourage CDC to also share the data with the appropriate local health departments.

"In addition to voluntary sharing, using the policy statement as backup, the LA County Public Health Department engaged in ongoing discussions with CDC about sharing the hospital data they receive with local health departments. The LA County Public Health Department has also initiated discussions with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) about tracking whether hospitals share HAI data with local health departments as part of the CMS Hospital Compare website. These efforts were bolstered by having the statement of policy from NACCHO as a national organization representing all local health departments.

"NACCHO's policy statement on Meaningful Use (developed by NACCHO's ePublic Health Workgroup) was helpful in obtaining a meaningful use coordinator, a new position for the health department, with funding from the County of Los Angeles."

To learn more about NACCHO's policy statements and see the full list of statements, visit <http://www.naccho.org/advocacy/activities>.

About NACCHO

The National Association of County and City Health Officials is the voice of more than 3,000 local health departments across the country. These city, county, metropolitan, district, and tribal departments work every day to ensure the safety of the water we drink, the food we eat, and the air we breathe.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

Eli Briggs

Senior Director, Government Affairs

202-507-4194

ebriggs@naccho.org

NACCHO

National Association of County & City Health Officials

The National Connection for Local Public Health



Public Health
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1201 Eye St, NW, Suite 400 Washington, DC 20005

202-783-5550

<http://www.naccho.org>

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