



# OHIO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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John R. Kasich / Governor

Theodore E. Wymyslo, M.D. / Director of Health

TO: Local Health District Commissioners

FROM: Ted Wymyslo, M.D.  
Director of Health

SUBJECT: Minimum Standards

DATE: February 13, 2012

Dear Health Commissioner:

The Ohio Department of Health (ODH), working cooperatively with the Ohio Voluntary Accreditation Team, has adopted new "minimum standards" which adopt the national Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) standards for local health districts and ODH. The standards received ample consideration from the public health community and approval of the Public Health Council, the Joint Committee on Agency Rule Review (JCARR) and the Ohio House of Representatives and Ohio Senate.

By adopting these national standards, Ohio continues to advance the quality and performance of state and local health districts should they voluntarily choose to become nationally accredited. The new standards accommodate variations in local health districts' size and capacity. Specifically, for state and local public health, these standards will provide an opportunity to:

- Develop capacity and performance excellence by sharing best practices;
- Guide the internal development of continuous quality improvement;
- Compare Ohio's progress relative to peer states and communities.

The minimum standards, found in Ohio Administrative Code 3701-36-03, act as a "blueprint" by identifying performance standards, or benchmarks, which define local public health in Ohio. In addition, the minimum standards have been updated to align reporting dates for local health department performance standards, annual financial report **and** state subsidy application by March 1 with the following provisions:

- Completion and submission of the state subsidy application on an annual basis;
- Completion and submission of the online improvement standards report every even numbered year beginning in 2012 (first year of the state biennium);
- Completion and submission of the online annual financial report on an annual basis;
- Completion and submission of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention performance standards report using the CDC tool at least once every five years beginning in 2012:
  - <http://www.cdc.gov/nphsp/index.html>
  - If a LHD has not completed the report since 2008, they should complete the tool by the 2014 reporting cycle to meet the minimum standards;
  - Completion of the CDC performance tool **does not** take the place of the state improvement standards report which is due every even numbered year beginning in 2012;

- State subsidy allocation will be a per-capita amount to each eligible health district based on the federal decennial census OR a more recent census bureau's population estimate of the health district's jurisdiction.

All reports for the minimum standards will now be submitted within Ohio's Health Department Profile and Performance Database (OPPD) in the ODH Application Gateway. This new system will offer greater efficiency with respect to data entry, as well as, greater ability to export data and trends for ODH and local health districts. Although the online reporting process was deemed a success, there are a few points related to the new standards and the reporting tools that I would like to clarify and provide some assurances to our local public health partners:

- Local health districts will meet the minimum standards for state subsidy funds by: completing and submitting their reports on time, attending the required public health conferences, maintaining the appropriate administrative leadership, providing public health education services and showing the minimum three dollars (\$3.00) per capita expended in local public health funds;
- As part of their state subsidy fund application, local health districts will provide written assurances indicating they are in compliance with these minimum standards;
- The projects in the improvement standards report- priority focus area, promising practice and QI process- are **optional**. However, LHDs are encouraged to add projects to enrich the data for other local health departments;
- Ohio will reference the new PHAB standards in future ODH Request for Proposals (RFPs) to align its funding to the standards. Local health districts are encouraged to use such grants as opportunities for meeting those standards;
- ODH will provide individual feedback to local health districts, as requested.

Similarly to LHDs, ODH will also use the improvement standards tool to complete a self-assessment every other year and upload projects related to the state-specific standards and measures. The new improvement standards tool will allow local health districts and ODH to assess their readiness for voluntary accreditation by reviewing the standards and making a determination if they meet the standards. ODH will be using these data to produce an annual summary of the improvement standards and annual financial reporting for the entire state.

The new PHAB standards will move public health in Ohio forward and expand our ability to improve our work and to better meet the needs of our communities and the state. I would like to thank members of the Performance Standards Taskforce, the Ohio Voluntary Accreditation Team, the Association of Ohio Health Commissioners and all local health districts who have made this great work possible.

If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact Joe Mazzola, Local Health Department Liaison at (614) 728-9296 or [joe.mazzola@odh.ohio.gov](mailto:joe.mazzola@odh.ohio.gov).

Thank you.