

Domain 12: Maintain Capacity to Engage the Public Health Governing Entity

Domain 12 focuses on the health department's support and engagement of its governing entity in maintaining and strengthening the public health infrastructure for the jurisdiction served. Governing entities both directly and indirectly influence the direction of a health department and should play a key role in accreditation efforts. However, much variation exists regarding the structure, definition, roles, and responsibilities of governing entities.

A governing entity, as it relates to the accreditation process, should meet the following criteria:

1. It is an official part of Tribal, state, or local government.
2. It has primary responsibility for policy-making and/or governing a Tribal, state, or local health department.
3. It advises, advocates, or consults with the health department on matters related to resources, policy making, legal authority, collaboration, and/or improvement activities.
4. It is the point of accountability for the health department.
5. In the case of shared governance (more than one entity provides governance functions to the health department), the governing entity, for accreditation purposes, is the Tribal, state, regional, or local entity that, in the judgment of the health department applying for accreditation, has the primary responsibility for supporting the applicant health department in achieving accreditation.

DOMAIN 12 INCLUDES THREE STANDARDS:

Standard 12.1:	Maintain Current Operational Definitions and Statements of the Public Health Roles, Responsibilities, and Authorities
Standard 12.2:	Provide Information to the Governing Entity Regarding Public Health and the Official Responsibilities of the Health Department and of the Governing Entity
Standard 12.3:	Encourage the Governing Entity's Engagement In the Public Health Department's Overall Obligations and Responsibilities

STANDARD 12.1: Maintain current operational definitions and statements of public health roles, responsibilities, and authorities

A health department operates with specific authorities to protect and preserve the health of the population within its jurisdiction. These authorities may be set forth in state statute, rules and regulation, local ordinances, administrative code, charters, or resolutions. Authorities may be regulatory and/or programmatic. This standard assures that the health department understands its authority, roles, and responsibilities and that of its governing entity, that such authority is put into practice, and that the governing entity is informed and engaged.

Standard 12.1: Maintain current operational definitions and statements of public health roles, responsibilities, and authorities.

MEASURE	PURPOSE	SIGNIFICANCE		
<p>Measure 12.1.1 A Mandated public health operations, programs, and services provided</p>	<p>The purpose of this measure is to assess the health department's knowledge of and provision of the operations, programs, and services that it is mandated to provide.</p>	<p>Each health department has a set of mandated operations, programs, and services that it provides to protect and preserve the health of the population within the jurisdiction it serves. It is important that the health department is knowledgeable of these mandates and performs them as required.</p>		
REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION	GUIDANCE	NUMBER OF EXAMPLES	DATED WITHIN	
<p>1. Authority to conduct public health activities</p>	<p>1. The health department must provide a copy of the body of law (statutes, rules, regulations, ordinances) that sets forth its mandated public health operations, programs, and services or a listing of mandated public health services and the reference to the legal citation. The health department must make copies or access to the laws and regulations available to the Site Visit Team.</p> <p>For example, the health department could provide the disease reporting rules or regulations reflected by the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologist's list of Nationally Notifiable Conditions; mandates for vaccinations; mandated oversight of environmental public health conditions, for example, solid waste, small public water systems, underground storage tanks, and hazardous materials; and various inspection programs, such as restaurant inspections.</p> <p>Tribal health departments could provide a Tribal resolution, ordinance, or executive order.</p>	<p>1 example</p>	<p>5 years</p>	
<p>2. Operations that reflect authorities</p>	<p>2. The health department must document how it implements its mandated processes, programs, or interventions. Documentation could be, for example, service descriptions, annual reports, reports to the governing entity, meeting minutes, reports to governance, functional descriptions, organizational descriptions, or other written material.</p>	<p>1 example</p>	<p>5 years</p>	

Standard 12.1: Maintain current operational definitions and statements of public health roles, responsibilities, and authorities.

MEASURE	PURPOSE	SIGNIFICANCE		
<p>Measure 12.1.2 A</p> <p>Operational definitions and/or statements of the public health governing entity's roles and responsibilities</p>	<p>The purpose of this measure is to assess the health department's knowledge of the governing entity's operational definition and/or governing entity's roles and responsibilities.</p>	<p>The governing entity is the point of accountability for the health department. The health department should have a clear understanding of the governing entity's structure, responsibilities, and expectations.</p>		
REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION	GUIDANCE	NUMBER OF EXAMPLES	DATED WITHIN	
<p>1. The governing entity's authority</p>	<p>1. The health department must provide a description of the governing entity and formal written statement of the governing entity's authority.</p> <p>The governing entity could be, for example, a board of health, a governor's office, county commissioners, or other point of accountability.</p> <p>Documentation could be a copy of the body of law (for example, statutes, rules, regulations, ordinances, charter) that sets forth the mandated authority or a description of the authority and the reference to the legal citation.</p> <p>Tribal health department documentation could be a Tribal resolution, ordinance, or executive order.</p>	<p>1 or more documents, as required</p>	<p>No date restriction</p>	
<p>2. The governing entity's structure and composition</p>	<p>2. The health department must provide a written description of the governing entity. The governing entity could be, for example, a board of health, a governor's office, county commissioners, or other point of accountability.</p> <p>Documentation could be, for example, a statute, rules, regulations, a charter, an official charge statement, or other formal written document.</p>	<p>1 example</p>	<p>No time restriction</p>	

STANDARD 12.2: Provide information to the governing entity regarding public health and the official responsibilities of the health department and of the governing entity.

The governing entity is the point of accountability for the health department. The governing entity is accountable for the health department achieving its mission, goals, and objectives to protect and preserve the health of the population within its jurisdiction. This standard addresses the health department's capacity for keeping the governing entity knowledgeable of the department's overall legal authority, obligations, and responsibilities, and on the governing entity's supporting role.

Standard 12.2: Provide information to the governing entity regarding public health and the official responsibilities of the health department and of the governing entity.

MEASURE	PURPOSE	SIGNIFICANCE	NUMBER OF EXAMPLES	DATED WITHIN
<p>Measure 12.2.1 A</p> <p>Communication with the governing entity regarding the responsibilities of the public health department and of the responsibilities of the governing entity</p>	<p>The purpose of this measure is to assess the health department's education of and communications with its governing entity regarding the health department's responsibilities and the roles and responsibilities of the governing entity.</p>	<p>Governing entities significantly influence the direction of health departments through policy making and other similar activities. Many governing entities have key roles in resource allocation, policy making, legal authority, collaboration, and/or quality improvement activities. As a result, they may heavily influence whether health departments are fulfilling their responsibilities. The governing entity, to be an effective advocate for public health and for the agency, must be aware of its responsibilities and duties and of the health department's roles and responsibilities.</p>	<p>2 examples for a; 1 process for b</p>	<p>5 years</p>
REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION	GUIDANCE			
<p>1. Communication with the governing entity regarding the responsibilities of the public health department</p> <p>a. Communication with the governing entity about its operational definitions and/or statements of the public health governing entity's roles and responsibilities</p>	<p>1. The health department must document communications provided to the governing entity concerning the health department's responsibilities, as set forth in the health department's authorizing document(s).</p> <p>Documentation must demonstrate the process of informing the governing entity about the responsibilities of the health department.</p> <p>The health department will select its documentation for this measure based on the model of governance in place for the health department.</p> <p>Documentation could be, for example, reports, testimonies, speeches, presentations, or emails.</p> <p>a. The health department must document its sharing with the governing entity operational definitions and/or statements of the public health governing entity's public health related roles and responsibilities. The health department will select its documentation based on and appropriate to the health department's model of governance.</p> <p>Documentation could be, for example, meeting minutes, memos, emails, briefing papers, or other correspondence.</p>			

MEASURE 12.2.1 A, continued

<p>b. The orientation process for new members of the governing entity</p>	<p>b. The health department must document its process for orientation of new members of the governing entity. New member orientation must include both the responsibilities of the health department and of the governing entity.</p> <p>Documentation could be, for example, orientation agenda, meeting minutes, orientation materials.</p>		
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STANDARD 12.3: Encourage the governing entity's engagement in the public health department's overall obligations and responsibilities.

Public health governing entities exercise a wide range of responsibilities, including policy development, resource stewardship, legal authority, partner engagement, continuous improvement, and oversight. Specific areas of responsibilities may include, strategic planning, adopting and ensuring enforcement of public health regulations, ensuring that the governing body and health department act ethically, serving as a strong link between the health department and the community and other community organizations, supporting a culture of quality improvement, hiring and evaluating the health department director, taxing authority, and budget adoption. These responsibilities demand that the governing entity is well-versed in public health and in the work of the health department and the health challenges of the community. The governing entity and the health department should communicate regularly on the health of the community, strategic plan implementation, program activities, health department policy issues, public health ethical issues, and quality improvement activities.

Standard 12.3: Encourage the governing entity’s engagement in the public health department’s overall obligations and responsibilities.

MEASURE	PURPOSE	SIGNIFICANCE		
<p>Measure 12.3.1 A</p> <p>Information provided to the governing entity about important public health issues facing the community, the health department, and/or the recent actions of the health department</p>	<p>The purpose of this measure is to assess health department efforts to keep the governing entity informed of public health issues and health department activities.</p>	<p>The health department has a responsibility to communicate with its governing entity to ensure that the governing entity’s policies and decisions are informed. A regular flow of information helps to ensure that the governing entity acts in the best interests of the public’s health. Information also needs to flow from the governing entity to the health department to ensure mutual understanding of policy options and implications.</p>		
REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION	GUIDANCE	NUMBER OF EXAMPLES	DATED WITHIN	
<p>1. Communication with the governing entity regarding important public health issues and/or recent actions of the health department</p>	<p>1. The health department must document communications with the governing entity regarding important public health issues and/or recent actions of the health department. Important public health issues include a population’s health status, health indicators, health equity and disparities, disease outbreaks, environmental health hazards, etc.</p> <p>Documentation could be reports, testimonies, formal meeting minutes, meeting summaries, program updates, reports on identified public health hazards, community health assessment findings, community dashboards, outbreak and response efforts, annual statistical reports, or other written correspondence (memos, emails).</p>	<p>2 examples</p>	<p>2 years</p>	

Standard 12.3: Encourage the governing entity’s engagement in the public health department’s overall obligations and responsibilities.

MEASURE	PURPOSE	SIGNIFICANCE		
<p>Measure 12.3.2 A</p> <p>Actions taken by the governing entity tracked and reviewed</p>	<p>The purpose of this measure is to assess the health department’s familiarity and awareness of the governing entity’s actions in order for the health department to identify patterns of issues discussed and topics or areas that call for increased communication and information.</p>	<p>It is important that the health department understand the priorities, policy positions, opinions, and actions of the governing entity in order to continually improve communication and effectiveness, leading to a quality governing entity-health department relationship.</p>		
REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION	GUIDANCE	NUMBER OF EXAMPLES	DATED WITHIN	
<p>1. Consistently review issues discussed, actions taken, and policies set by the governing entity</p>	<p>1. The health department must document that it has consistently reviewed the governing entity’s 1) patterns of issues discussed; 2) opinions of the governing entity members; and/or 3) positions taken.</p> <p>This will highlight topics or issue areas where increased communication is desirable. Review must be done at least annually.</p> <p>Documentation could be, for example, health department meeting minutes, reports, dashboards, presentations, memos, or other record of health department leadership’s discussion of governing entity actions.</p>	<p>2 examples</p>	<p>14 months</p> <p>Examples do not need to be from different years.</p>	

Standard 12.3: Encourage the governing entity’s engagement in the public health department’s overall obligations and responsibilities.

MEASURE	PURPOSE	SIGNIFICANCE		
<p>Measure 12.3.3 A</p> <p>Communication with the governing entity about health department performance assessment and improvement</p>	<p>The purpose of this measure is to assess the health department’s communication with the governing entity on the overall assessment and improvement of the performance of the health department.</p>	<p>The governing entity should be knowledgeable about the health department’s overall assessment and quality improvement initiatives. The governing entity will be in a better position to guide, advocate for, and engage with the health department if it is aware of improvements being undertaken.</p>		
REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION	GUIDANCE		NUMBER OF EXAMPLES	DATED WITHIN
<p>1. Communication with the governing entity concerning assessment of the health department’s performance</p>	<p>1. The health department must document communications with the governing entity on plans and processes for improving health department performance.</p> <p>The health department will select its documentation for this measure based on the model of governance in place for the health department.</p> <p>Communication efforts could include, for example, program reviews, accreditation efforts, quality improvement projects, and other performance improvement activities.</p> <p>Documentation could be, for example, meeting minutes, reports, presentations, memos, or other discussion records.</p>		<p>2 examples</p>	<p>5 years</p>
<p>2. Communication with the governing entity concerning the improvement of the health department’s performance</p>	<p>2. The health department must document communication with the governing entity on its performance improvement efforts as a result of performance improvement processes and/or activities.</p> <p>The health department will select its documentation for this measure based on the model of governance in place for the health department.</p> <p>Documentation could be, for example, annual reports, department dashboards, program reviews, meeting minutes, reports, presentations, memos, or other record of discussion.</p>		<p>2 examples</p>	<p>5 years</p>