Draft Preparedness and Response Competencies

1. Risk and Crisis Communication
2. Preparedness Improvement (or Prevention, Protection, and Response Improvement)
3. Incident Management System
4. Surveillance and Detection
5. Preparedness and Response Strategies and Interventions
6. Investigation and Analysis
7. Safety and Protection
8. Psychological Aspects
9. Situational Awareness
10. Collaboration, Connectivity, and Community Relations
11. Decision Making and Prioritizing
12. Public Health Legal Authority
13. Responsibility and Ethical Conduct
14. Hazard, Vulnerability, and Risk Assessment
Core Competencies

1. Risk and Crisis Communication

Engages with stakeholders (e.g., partners, public) to facilitate two-way communication and provide information regarding the existence, nature, and/or severity of risks and hazards affecting health, safety, and the environment.

- Create documents and reports that communicate content (e.g., ideas, concepts, information) in an organized manner.
- Tailor communication to the identified audience.
- Use appropriate methods of communication based on the purpose of the communication, message content, urgency, and sensitivity/confidentiality of message.
- Observe and interpret non-verbal behavior.
- Use multiple channels of communication to disseminate information to the public.
- Coordinate the development and delivery of event-specific information based on scientific principles of risk communication to inform the public, health care providers, and members of the response community.
- Convey complex public health information clearly and simply to individuals affected by a public health incident or are potentially at risk.
- Communicate information regarding public health roles, capacities, and legal authority accurately to emergency response partners including other public health agencies, other health agencies, and other government agencies during planning, drills and actual emergencies.
- Adapt communication style and techniques to culturally diverse situations.
- Follow up with others in order to ensure communication resulted in the intended effect.

2. Preparedness Improvement (or Prevention, Protection, and Response Improvement)

Participates in the preparedness cycle of planning, training, equipping, exercising, and evaluating in order to correct and improve the organization’s operational capabilities. Enhances the community’s ability to support prevention, protection, response, and recovery efforts.

- Develop strategies to evaluate performance and identify developmental opportunities.
- Change future behavior, or adapt plans, based on performance evaluations and feedback.
- Learn from both successes and failures to better prepare for future incidents.
- Participate in training activities (e.g., drills, exercises, simulations) to prepare for public health incidents.
- Ensure that the organization has a written, updated plan for major categories of emergencies.
- Integrate the organization’s response plan into the Incident Command or Unified Command System used by other responders (such as Fire, Police and EMS) in the jurisdiction.
- Establish response roles for diverse public health incidents.
- Identify resources required to respond to public health incidents.
- Demonstrate a readiness to apply professional skills to a range of emergency situations during regular drills.
• Apply public health principles to planning and implementing public health interventions.
• Develop policies to facilitate a quick and effective emergency response.
• Advocate policy development in public health.
• Apply the theory and principles that drive public health policy.
• Consider the impact of in the design and implementation of public health programs.

3. Incident Management System
Functions in accordance with the National Response Framework and in the context of the agency’s response to public health emergencies.

• Apply principles of Incident Command System (ICS)
• Incident action plan (complete, read, interpret)
• Apply project management principles to ensure public health preparedness and response objectives are achieved on time and with available resources.
• Breakdown work structures, sequence events using network diagrams, and identify critical paths (e.g., gantt charts)
• Describe the role of public health during diverse emergency situations.
• Describe the chain of command and management system (incident command system) for emergency response in the jurisdiction.
• Identify and locate the agency emergency response plan.
• Identify limits of responsibility and authority, and resources for referring matters that exceed these limits.

4. Surveillance and Detection
Conducts systematic collection, analysis, and interpretation of health information and data (e.g., environmental monitoring) to achieve early warning of health threats, early detection of health events, and overall situational awareness to guide and inform countermeasures in a disaster or public health emergency.

• reporting
• Identify sources, quality, and limitations of surveillance data.
• Take action in response to a potential or emerging threat.
• Recognize unusual events that might indicate an emergency and describe appropriate action (e.g., communicate clearly within the chain of command.)

5. Preparedness and Response Strategies and Interventions
Select and implement prevention, containment, and control measures.

• Adapts public health response to meet public health needs appropriate to the situation.
• Modifies plans and practice in consideration of changes in public need.

6. Investigation and Analysis
Investigates and researches the nature of current, emerging, or potential public health threats.

• Consider available resources to analyze, interpret, and evaluate public health matters and determines existing and needed capabilities to meet public health needs.
• Develop protocols and other data collection methods based on a research plan.
• Identify knowledge gaps in existing public health data and information.
• Utilize data to address scientific, political, ethical, and social public health issues.
• Verify accuracy and reliability of data resources.
• Share and/or disseminate relevant public health findings with appropriate agencies and contacts.
• Analyze qualitative and quantitative data.

7. Safety and Protection

*Ensures health and safety of self and others.*

• Demonstrate proficiency in the assessment, selection, and use of health and safety measures (e.g., technology, equipment, devices, situations)
• Demonstrate effective use of personal protective equipment (PPE)
• Demonstrate effective use of emergency communication equipment.
• Demonstrate an understanding of both preventative strategies and curative strategies for prevalent health problems.
• Describe potential options and safety precautions for citizen protection in the event of a various public health emergencies.
• Adhere to applicable industry regulations, guidelines, and safety precautions related to the use of PPE and other devices.
• Demonstrate correct use of all communication equipment used for emergency communication (phone, fax, radio, etc.)

8. Psychological Aspects

*Anticipates, plans for, recognizes, and facilitates response to the psychosocial aspects of public health emergencies.*

• Communicate information in a manner that is sensitive to the situation
• Consider the psychological effect of the event, and potential reactions to information.

*Additional considerations*
• Make referrals
• Self, others, workforce, and public

9. Situational Awareness

*Maintains an awareness of the critical elements of an emergency by seeking, filtering, and processing information from available sources. Supports collective awareness through the provision of information.*

• Identify sources of information relevant to critical elements of an emergency
• Use tools (e.g., communication) to support situational awareness
• Review situation reports to remain up-to-date on a crisis.
• Attend to new information and adapt activities as appropriate.
• Contribute to the content of the situational report.
• Maintain an awareness of own behavior and consider the perspectives of others to resolve or avoid cultural issues or misinterpretations.
10. Collaboration, Connectivity, and Community Relations

*Utilizes a network of traditional and non-traditional partners to identify and pursue preparedness and response goals.*

- Maintain a current directory of partners and identify appropriate methods of contact in emergencies.
- Use established communication systems for coordination among the response community during a public health incident.
- Maintain regular communication with emergency response partners.
- Apply and interpret measures of public health (e.g., risk factors, protective factors), in community health improvement initiatives.
- Consider community needs when developing and implementing public health policy.
- Foster community participation and involvement in public health initiatives.
- Evaluate the impact of public health programs on different populations and cultures and use data to make evidence based program decisions.
- Identify and address community health problems by applying principles of public health.
- Create or leverage opportunities to develop new partnerships.
- Maintain agreements with partners from within the jurisdiction and from other jurisdictions to foster teamwork, information sharing, and cooperation.
- Explain how various organizations, positions, and roles contribute to carrying out public health's core functions and essential services.
- Develop partnerships with other agencies that have authority in public health-related situations; clarify roles and responsibilities.
- Apply strategies to resolve conflicts.
- Interact appropriately based on the situation.
- Interact appropriately with persons from diverse cultural, socioeconomic, educational, racial, ethnic, and professional backgrounds.

*Additional Considerations*
- Interacting with vulnerable populations
- Building an integrated response team
- Interacting with community stakeholders

11. Decision Making and Prioritizing

*Makes timely decisions in conditions of high uncertainty. Determines priorities, anticipates consequences, and takes action.*

- Identify emerging issues and take action to react or prepare.
- Articulate the criteria used to make a decision.
- Consider the input of others to inform decisions.
- Work with others to reach consensus.
- Make decisions within the IMS structure.
- Collaborate with relevant stakeholders (e.g., partners) in decisions that may affect them.
- Use feedback from others to inform future decisions.
- Develop solutions and make decisions based on limited or uncertain information.
- Develop creative solutions for complex problems, and/or modify previous solutions in order to meet the needs of novel situations.
- Search for new or innovative ways to solve problems.
Understand where the appropriate authority or jurisdiction lies when making decisions on particular issues.
Manage conflict that may arise from sensitive/controversial decisions.

12. Public Health Legal Authority
Acts in compliance with public health emergency laws, statutes, and regulations (i.e., local, tribal, state, federal).

- Demonstrate an understanding of the role of law and government in promoting and protecting the health of the public.
- Identify specific functions of governmental public health agencies in assuring population health.
- Evaluate and review public health laws of the jurisdiction to ensure they are current.
- Identify and address problems and challenges facing public health law by applying principles of public health information systems.
- Describe the scope of states’ powers to protect public health, safety and general welfare.
- Identify and apply provisions of relevant government health code within designated area of expertise and practice.
- Describe the basic legal process; including how laws are made, amended, and enforced.
- Integrates legal policies and regulations into the practice of public health.
- Adheres to confidentiality law in the collection and release of data.

13. Responsible and Ethical Conduct
Acts in accordance with the organization’s ethical priorities, standards, and guidance during emergency situations and ensures the continuity of operations.

- Consider ethical dilemmas to inform action in ethically ambiguous situations faced in the context of a crisis situation.
- Maintain currency by completing relevant training and other developmental opportunities.
- Apply ethical guidelines in the context of crisis situations.
- Develop, disseminate, articulate, and reiterate ethical standards of public health practice.
- Interact sensitively and respect diverse cultural, political, and policy differences.

14. Hazard, Vulnerability, and Risk Assessment
Assesses hazards and vulnerabilities that put the public at risk; devotes scarce resources in order to prevent, protect, and respond.

- Assess pre-impact and ongoing conditions that are relevant to public risk.
- Assess population composition and demographics to determine unique vulnerabilities, risk factors, and/or required public health needs including availability and use of health services.
- Describe the meaning of “All-hazards”.
- Demonstrate knowledge of relevant planning scenarios.
- Apply technical knowledge to contribute to the execution of emergency response activities and planning scenarios.
Citations


Association of Schools of Public Health (June, 2009). *Leadership Group Meeting: ASPH Preparedness and Response Core Competency Development Project.* Alexandria, VA.

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Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2009). *Crisis Leadership Competency Model.* Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Atlanta, GA.


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