

WISCONSIN PUBLIC HEALTH STATUTES
SUMMARY OF PUBLIC HEALTH RESPONSIBILITIES AND AUTHORITY
LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENTS

Board of Health

Assessment
Policy Development
Assurance
Leadership
Govern health department
Assure/enforce status/rules
Assure Level 1
Meet quarterly
Verify qualified personnel
Employ public health nurses
Conduct general public health nursing program
Coordinate sanitarians

Local Health Department

Assure Level 1 by providing:
 surveillance, investigation
 control and prevention of CD
 other disease prevention
 health promotion
 human health hazard control
Verify qualified personnel
Assessment
Policy Development
Assurance
Submit local public health data to DHSS
Enforce state rules to prevent:
 animal/vector borne disease

Local Health Officer

Administer local health departments:
 according to state statute/rules
Enforce state statute/rules
Enforce local ordinances and assure
consistent with state statute
Administer funds for public health programs
Appoint qualified personnel
Investigate/supervise sanitary conditions
Access local vital statistics/records
Have charge of local health departments
Submit annual report
Promote spread of information

Communicable Disease

Investigate, report to governing body and department
Prevent, suppress, control, report appropriate sources
Advise how to control disease outbreaks, epidemics
Receive reports and report to department
Permanent record made
Report outbreak or epidemic to department
Laboratory testing
Investigate and examinations made as necessary
Consult a physician
Investigate laws, rules concerning communicable disease
Employ persons as necessary to execute orders
Remove person to quarantine if necessary
Positive TB, investigate and enforce order
Investigate and report case or contact to STD

Human Health Hazard

Order abatement/removal thereof

SUMMARY OF RESPONSIBILITIES AND AUTHORITY FOR LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENTS FROM WISCONSIN'S PUBLIC HEALTH STATUTES

LOCAL BOARD OF HEALTH SHALL:

- Govern each local health department. §251.04(1)
- Assure the enforcement of state public health statutes and public health rules of the department as prescribed for a Level I local health department. §251.04(1)
- Assure that its local health department is a Level I, Level II, or Level III local health department as specified in §251.04(1), 251.04(2)
- Report to the department as required by rule. §251.04(4)
- Meet at least quarterly. §251.04(5)
- Assess public health needs and advocate for the provision of reasonable and necessary public health services. §251.04(6)(a)

LOCAL BOARD OF HEALTH MAY:

- Contract or subcontract to provide public health services. §251.04(1)
- Adopt those regulations for its own guidance and for the governance of the local health department that it considers necessary to protect and improve the public health. §251.04(3)

LOCAL BOARD OF HEALTH SHALL:

- Develop policy and provide leadership that fosters local involvement and commitment, that emphasizes public health needs and that advocates for equitable distribution of public health resources and complementary private activities commensurate with public needs. §251.04(6)(b)
- Assure that measures are taken to provide an environment in which individuals can be healthy. §251.04(7)
- Employ qualified public health professionals, including a public health nurse, to conduct general public health nursing program under the direction of the local board of health and in cooperation with the department. §251.04(8)
- Coordinate the activities of any sanitarian employed by the county board. §251.04(8)

LOCAL BOARD OF HEALTH MAY:

- Employ one or more sanitarians to conduct environmental programs and other public health programs not specifically designated by statute as functions of the public health nurse. §251.04(8)
- County executive or administrator may assume the powers and duties of the local board of health. In those instances, the board of health shall only be a policy-making body determining the broad outlines and principles governing the administration of the county health department. §251.04(9)
- Adopt regulations and recommend enactment of ordinances for animal and vector-borne disease control. §251.51(5)

LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT WITH OVERSIGHT FROM THE BOARD OF HEALTH SHALL:

- Meet the requirements specified, and employ a health officer with the qualifications specified at least for Level I. §251.05(1) and (1)(a)
- Provide at least surveillance, investigation, control and prevention of communicable disease, other disease prevention, health promotion, and human health hazard control. §251.05(2)(a)
- Regularly and systematically collect, assemble, analyze, and make available information on the health of the community, including statistics on health status, community health needs and epidemiologic and other studies of health problems. §251.03(3)(a)
- Develop public health policies and procedures for the community. §251.05(3)(b)
- Involve key policy makers and the general public in determining a set of high priority public health services and assure access to these services to every member of the community. §251.05(3)(c)
- Submit data as requested to the local public health data system established by the department. §251.05(3)(d)
- Enforce state rules for animal and vector-borne disease control. §251.51(4)

LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT MAY:

- Meet the requirements specified for Level II or Level III. §251.05(1)
- Provide services jointly with other local health departments. §251.09
- Be designated to carry out the functions of the department for environmental health. §251.015
- Serve as agent of the department in inspecting and issuing permits for recreational, food, and lodging facilities. §254.69(1)
- Declare housing that is dilapidated, unsafe, or unsanitary to be a human health hazard. §254.593

LOCAL HEALTH OFFICER SHALL:

- Administer the local health department in accordance with state statutes and rules. §251.06(3)(a)
- Enforce state public health statutes and rules. §251.06(3)(b)
- Enforce any regulations that the local board of health adopts and any ordinances that the relevant governing body enacts if those regulations and ordinances are consistent with state public health statutes and regulations. §251.06(3)(c)
- Administer all funds received by the local health department for public health programs. §251.06(3)(d)
- Appoint all necessary subordinate personnel, assure that they meet appropriate qualifications, and have supervisory power over subordinate personnel. §251.06(3)(e)
- Investigate and supervise the sanitary conditions of all premises within the jurisdictional area of the local health department. §251.06(3)(f)
- Have access to vital records and vital statistics from the register of deeds as specified in Ch. 69. §251.06(3)(g)
- Have charge of the local health department and perform the duties prescribed by the local board of health. §251.06(3)(h)

LOCAL HEALTH OFFICER MAY:

LOCAL HEALTH OFFICER SHALL:

- Submit an annual report of the administration of the local health department to the board of health. §251.06(3)(h)
- Promote the spread of information as to the causes, nature of prevention of prevalent diseases, and the preservation and improvement of health. §251.06(3)(i)
- Investigate the appearance and circumstances of any communicable disease and make a full report to the appropriate governing body and the department. §252.03(1)
- Promptly take all measures necessary to prevent, suppress, and control communicable disease and report to the appropriate governing body the progress of the communicable diseases and the measures used against them. §252.03(1)
- Advise the department of measures taken to control communicable disease outbreaks or epidemics. §252.03(2)
- Receive reports of communicable diseases and report them to the department or direct persons reporting to him/her to report to the department. §252.05(1)

LOCAL HEALTH OFFICER MAY:

- Inspect schools or public buildings within the jurisdiction as needed to determine whether the buildings are kept in a sanitary condition. §252.03(1)
- Do what is reasonable and necessary for the prevention and suppression of (communicable) disease. §252.03(2)
- Forbid public gatherings when deemed necessary to control outbreaks or epidemics. §252.03(2)

LOCAL HEALTH OFFICER SHALL:

- Cause a permanent record of any report (of a communicable disease) to be made and upon demand transmit an original or a copy to the department together with other information the department requires. §252.05(6)
- Immediately report the occurrence of an outbreak or epidemic (of communicable disease) to the department, and at all times keep the department informed of the prevalence of the communicable diseases in the locality in the manner and with the facts the department requires. §252.05(7)
- Order laboratory testing in response to a communicable disease report if there is a dispute regarding disease determination, if the disease may have potential public health significance, or if more extensive laboratory tests will aid in the investigation. §252.05(9)
- Investigate and make or order such examinations to be made as are necessary if the health officer suspects or is informed of the existence of any communicable disease. §252.06(3)

LOCAL HEALTH OFFICER MAY:

- Require isolation of a patient, quarantine of contacts, concurrent or terminal disinfection, or modified forms of these procedures as may be necessary and which are determined by the department by rule. §252.06(1)

LOCAL HEALTH OFFICER SHALL:

- Consult a physician as speedily as possible where there is a reasonable doubt or disagreement in diagnosis (of a communicable disease) and where advice is needed. §252.06(3)
- Investigate evasion of the laws and rules concerning communicable diseases and act to protect the public. §252.06(3)
- Employ as many persons as are necessary to execute his/her orders and properly guard any place if quarantine or other restrictions on communicable disease are violated or intent to violate is manifested. §252.06(5)
- When the health officer deems it necessary that a person be quarantined or otherwise restricted in a separate place, remove the person, if it can be done without danger to the person's health, to this place. §252.06(6)
- Upon report of any person with a positive laboratory test for TB, at once investigate and make and enforce the necessary orders. §252.07(05)
- Investigate or cause to be investigated, as necessary, any reported or reasonable suspected case or contact to a sexually transmitted disease. §252.11(2)

LOCAL HEALTH OFFICER MAY:

- Require the examination of food handlers. §252.18
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LOCAL HEALTH OFFICER SHALL:

- Order the abatement or removal of a human health hazard on private premises within a reasonable time period. §254.59(1)
- If a human health hazard is found on private property, notify the owner and the occupant of the property by registered mail with return receipt requested of the presence of the human health hazard and order its abatement or removal within 30 days. §254.59(2)
- If the local health officer deems it necessary to abate or remove a human health hazard found on private property, he/she shall serve notice on the owner or occupant to abate or remove within a reasonable time that is not less than 24 hours. §254.59(4)
- If the owner or occupant fails to comply, or if the human health hazard is on property whose owner is a nonresident, or cannot be found, the local health officer shall cause abatement or removal. §254.59(4)

LOCAL HEALTH OFFICER MAY:

- Request information and follow-up and coordinate care for children with adverse birth and developmental outcomes. §253.12(6)
- If the owner or occupant fails to comply, may enter upon the premises and abate or remove the human health hazard. §254.59(1)
- In cities under general charter, may enter into and examine any place at any time to ascertain health conditions. §254.59(4)