



# 2024 Federal Action Priorities

## Investing in and Strengthening Minnesota's Local Public Health Foundation

***LPHA supports a significant increase in funding for local public health foundational responsibilities.***

Long-term investment in Minnesota's local public health foundational responsibilities is crucial for responding to current and emerging health threats. Investing in prevention and local public health pays off by saving health care and other public program costs, such as those from corrections and child protection.

## Responding to Public Health Workforce Needs

***LPHA supports initiatives to recruit and retain a robust public health workforce including a loan repayment program.***

Since 2008 local health departments across the United States have lost more than 20% of their workforce, more than 50,000 jobs. A significant increase in investment in the public health workforce, focused on retention of the current workforce and bringing in new skilled workers, is necessary to provide crucial public health services into the future. LPHA is grateful for the inclusion of the Public Health Workforce Loan Repayment Program in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023 and supports ongoing funding to sustain the program.

## Supporting Data Sharing Infrastructure

***LPHA supports a robust local infrastructure for secure data sharing, collection, and evaluation.***

Local public health faces challenges in accessing timely data. Infrastructure must be created to enable sharing of data between systems, health care providers, and within different levels of government. Increasing secure access to data builds in efficiencies and helps identify health threats early to best use limited resources.

## Improving Maternal and Child Health Outcomes

***LPHA supports legislation and funding that improves maternal and child health outcomes in Minnesota.***

LPHA supports legislation that authorizes the use of televisits for clients in Women, Infant and Child (WIC) programming. During COVID-19, waivers were put in place to allow visits to happen via phone or video, which enabled local public health to reach more clients in need, increase efficiency and reduce barriers for clients. LPHA also supports direct funding to local health departments to expand or enhance home visiting to improve health and development outcomes for at-risk children in Minnesota through evidence-based home visiting.

## Strengthening Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) and Response Capacity

***LPHA supports adequate, sustained funding for local public health emergency planning and response.***

Responding to disasters and emergencies is a core responsibility of Minnesota's local public health departments. In Minnesota, PHEP funding goes to the state and is passed through to locals. Past proposals to redistribute PHEP funds and a series of funding cuts compromised local public health's ability to respond to emergency events.

## Addressing Social Determinates of Health

***LPHA supports policy and funding to address health equity and social determinants of health.***

Local public health plays an important role in addressing social determinates of health that have a direct link to poor health outcomes. COVID-19 has deeply impacted people in our state, further exacerbating existing health inequities. Local public health will continue to serve a leading role in addressing community needs such as higher rates of addiction, housing challenges, food insecurity, violence, and mental health.

## Mitigating Impacts of Extreme Weather Events

***LPHA supports policy and funding to address extreme weather events, natural disasters, and associated health impacts.***

LPHA supports data collection, risk identification, and planning activities related to extreme weather events and changing climate patterns in partnership with local health departments, including shifting vectors, impacts to water systems, extreme precipitation and heat events, and food production and security. Many environmental health issues disproportionately impact BIPOC individuals and communities living in poverty. Local public health can serve as a critical partner in ensuring all Minnesotans can live safe and healthy lives.