Overview

Domain 7: Policy and Governance describes how state, Tribal, local, and territorial (STLT) health departments operate within legal authority and governance structures to support effective governmental public health practice. This domain focuses on the laws, regulations, decision-making processes, and governance relationships that shape how governmental public health functions.

Policy and governance reflect the legal and governance foundation of governmental public health practice.

DOMAIN 7: POLICY AND GOVERNANCE

Core Job Tasks (7.1-7.4)

As identified in the 2024 Governmental Public Health Job Task Analysis, Domain 7 includes:

7.1 Adhere to the rules and regulations that apply to the department (e.g., rules, regulations, statutes, laws, policies)
7.2 Educate key partners and policymakers on the importance and impact of public health or policies impacting governmental public health systems
7.3 Coordinate with other local, state, Tribal, territorial, and federal governmental agencies and departments for policy development and implementation
7.4 Engage with the department's governing body(ies) to ensure delivery of public health programs

These responsibilities occur across job levels, from supporting compliance and communication to contributing to policy development and governance engagement.

DOMAIN 7: POLICY AND GOVERNANCE

Alignment with CEPH MPH Foundational Competencies

This section shows how governmental public health job tasks connect to the CEPH MPH Foundational Competencies[1] taught in public health degree programs. By mapping job tasks to competencies, students can see how the knowledge and skills they develop in the classroom relate to real-world governmental public health work in STLT health department settings.

The mapping is intended to help students better understand how academic learning prepares them for careers in governmental public health and supports continued professional growth through hands-on experience and training in the field.

Domain 7 Job Task		Related CEPH MPH Foundational Competencies
7.1	Adhere to the rules and regulations that apply to the department (e.g., Rules, Regulations, Statutes, Laws, Policies)	*No direct CEPH MPH Foundational Competency alignment identified.*
7.2	Educate key partners and policymakers on the importance and impact of public health or policies impacting governmental public health systems	**Competency 18:** Select communication strategies for different audiences and sectors.
7.3	Coordinate with other local, state, Tribal, territorial, and federal government agencies and departments for policy development and implementation	**Competency 12:** Discuss the policy-making process, including the roles of ethics and evidence. **Competency 21:** Integrate perspectives from other sectors and/or professions to promote and advance population health.
7.4	Engage with the agency's governing body(ies) to ensure delivery of public health programs	**Competency 16:** Apply leadership and/or management principles to address a relevant issue.

Instructional materials aligned to Domain 7 reinforce foundational competencies central to accredited education for public health.

1. https://media.ceph.org/documents/2024.Criteria.pdf

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DOMAIN 7: POLICY AND GOVERNANCE

In Practice

In STLT health departments, policy and governance work may include:

- Ensuring programs comply with legal requirements and departmental policy
- Interpreting statutes, regulations, and mandates that shape program delivery
- Preparing briefings or talking points for leadership and governing bodies
- Communicating governmental public health evidence, data, and program impacts to policymakers and community leaders
- Supporting development, implementation, and interpretation of regulations, ordinances, guidance, and public health policies
- Coordinating with other governmental departments (e.g., housing, education, emergency management)
- Participating in governance meetings, hearings, advisory boards, or legislative processes

Policy and governance connect public health practice to legal authority, accountability, and decision-making systems.

DOMAIN 7: POLICY AND GOVERNANCE

Importance to Governmental Public Health

Policy and governance strengthen governmental public health by:

- Ensuring compliance with laws and regulations that govern public health practice
- Supporting effective policy development and implementation
- Strengthening coordination across levels of government
- Supporting accountability and transparency in governmental public health decision-making
- Improving communication between public health professionals and decision-makers
- Strengthening public trust through credible and consistent governance engagement

Without strong policy and governance capacity, STLT health departments may face barriers to implementing programs effectively, communicating with governing bodies, or responding to community needs.