DOMAIN 3 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND EDUCATION

Facilitator Guide

Domain 3: Community Engagement and Education Instructional Materials

This facilitator guide is for instructors in schools and programs of public health who are teaching how community engagement and education in governmental public health practice.

This guide is designed to:

- Clarify what community engagement and education means in governmental public health
- Contextualize how community engagement and education functions within state, Tribal, local, and territorial (STLT) health departments
- Explain how community engagement and education job tasks support governmental public health programs, services, and community partnerships
- Align community engagement and education job tasks with the CEPH MPH Foundational Competencies[1]
- Support instructional delivery in academic settings

This guide supports instructors in helping students understand how governmental public health systems use community engagement and education to strengthen programs, improve service delivery, and support effective public health practice. The Facilitator Guide is informed by the 2024 Governmental Public Health Job Task Analysis.

Alignment with the CEPH MPH Foundational Competencies

This section of the facilitator guide is intended to support instructors in showing students how classroom learning connects to real-world governmental public health practice. Governmental public health job tasks were mapped to the CEPH MPH Foundational Competencies[1] to illustrate how the knowledge and skills taught in public health degree programs are applied in health department settings. This mapping demonstrates how academic preparation supports workforce readiness and professional growth in governmental public health. As students learn and practice these competencies, they build the knowledge and skills needed to develop proficiency in governmental public health job tasks through experience and training in the field.

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

CENTER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ASPPH

Domain 3 Job Task	Related CEPH MPH Foundational Competencies
3.1 Facilitate community collaboration to address public health issues	**Competency 13:** Propose strategies to identify relevant communities and individuals and build coalitions and partnerships for influencing public health outcomes. **Competency 17:** Apply negotiation and mediation skills to address organizational or community challenges.
3.2 Incorporate community feedback to improve service delivery and programming	**Competency 11:** Select methods to evaluate public health programs.
3.3 Build and maintain resilient partnerships with community members and organizations	**Competency 13:** Propose strategies to identify relevant communities and individuals and build coalitions and partnerships for influencing public health outcomes.
3.4 Develop and disseminate health information into accessible materials	**Competency 19:** Communicate audience-appropriate public health content, both in writing and through oral presentation to a non-academic, non-peer audience with attention to factors such as literacy and health literacy.
3.5 Provide relevant education in various settings to populations served by the department	**Competency 7:** Assess population needs, assets, and capacities that affect communities' health. **Competency 9:** Design a population-based policy, program, project, or intervention. **Competency 18:** Select communication strategies for different audiences and sectors. **Competency 19:** Communicate audience-appropriate public health content, both in writing and through oral presentation to a non-academic, non-peer audience with attention to factors such as literacy and health literacy.
3.6 Empower community partners to use data to engage diverse populations	*No direct CEPH MPH Foundational Competency alignment identified.*

Community Engagement and Education in Governmental Public Health

In STLT health departments, community engagement refers to the bidirectional process through which governmental public health professionals collaborate with community members, organizations, and leaders to identify health priorities, inform decision-making, develop solutions, and improve governmental public health programs and services.

This domain includes job tasks related to delivery of health information and resources, promoting health literacy, and supporting informed health decisions and behaviors that promote health. Together, these job tasks help ensure that governmental public health programs are responsive, audience-centered, and aligned with community needs.

Community engagement and education job tasks are not limited to outreach or communication campaigns. Instead, they involve building sustained relationships, creating opportunities for community input, and supporting communities as active partners in public health decision-making.

Community Engagement and Education: Job Tasks

The Domain 3 job tasks (3.1–3.6) were identified through the 2024 Governmental Public Health Job Task Analysis and describe how community engagement and education are carried out within STLT health departments.

3.1 Facilitate community collaboration to address public health issues
3.2 Incorporate community feedback to improve service delivery and programming
3.3 Build and maintain resilient partnerships with community members and organizations
3.4 Develop and disseminate health information into accessible materials
3.5 Provide relevant education in various settings to populations served by the department
3.6 Empower community partners to use data to engage diverse populations

Together, these job tasks illustrate how governmental public health professionals work collaboratively with communities to strengthen programs, improve service delivery, and promote population health.

Community Engagement and Education in Action

In STLT health departments, community engagement and education job tasks often include:

- Convening listening sessions or community meetings to understand local priorities and experiences
- Developing community-informed health education materials
- Incorporating community feedback into program design and service delivery
- Supporting community partners in understanding and using public health data to inform outreach, decision-making, and community action
- Partnering with community organizations, faith-based and neighborhood leaders, schools, and local institutions
- Providing health education in community settings such as schools, libraries, faith-based organizations, and neighborhood events

Community engagement and education job tasks require governmental public health professionals to develop trust-based relationships with communities and to communicate information in ways that are clear, respectful, and responsive to local needs and contexts. Unlike one-time outreach efforts, effective community engagement involves ongoing collaboration and shared decision-making. Health departments must continuously work with communities to understand emerging concerns, identify barriers to accessing programs and services, and adjust strategies to improve outcomes.

Helping students understand this operational context allows them to see that community engagement is not simply outreach or communication, it is a structured and sustained component of governmental public health systems.

Community engagement and education job tasks are foundational to governmental public health because they help STLT health departments:

- Ensure programs and services reflect community needs and priorities
- Increase participation in, awareness of, and access to public health services
- Improve population health outcomes through education, awareness, improved access to public health services, and community-informed approaches
- Build trust and credibility with the populations they serve
- Strengthen partnerships that support coordinated community health improvement

Community engagement and education job tasks illustrate how governmental public health systems cannot improve population health through policies and services alone. Sustainable health improvement requires community participation, trust, and shared action between health departments, communities, and partners.

When STLT health departments build strong relationships with communities, they are better positioned to:

- Identify emerging health concerns early
- Design programs that are both relevant and accessible
- Encourage participation in prevention, education, and intervention programs
- Strengthen emergency preparedness and response efforts

For students entering the governmental public health workforce, understanding community engagement and education helps them recognize that effective public health practice depends on meaningful collaboration with communities and populations being served.

How to Use This Guide in Academic Settings

In academic instruction, this domain emphasizes that governmental public health impact depends not only on delivering programs, but also on meaningful engagement with communities and effective health education.

This guide is adaptable throughout schools and programs of public health, as well as other related educational disciplines. It supports instruction at the undergraduate and graduate levels, including but not limited to courses in community health practice, health communication, health education and promotion, and public health leadership and management.

SUGGESTED INSTRUCTIONAL FLOW

1. Introduce community engagement and education and what these job tasks mean in governmental public health
2. Review job tasks 3.1–3.6 through applied examples
3. Align job tasks to CEPH MPH Foundational Competencies
4. Facilitate discussion on how community engagement and education job tasks encourage trust-building, communication, and partnership development in governmental public health settings
5. Conclude with reflection on how community engagement and education job tasks support community partnerships in improving health outcomes

SUGGESTED INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

In addition to adapting and/or presenting the Domain 3 slide deck, instructors may consider incorporating the following learning activities:

Community Partnership Mapping Exercise: Ask students to identify potential partners that a health department might collaborate with to address a public health issue.

Community Feedback Scenario Analysis: Ask students to analyze a scenario in which a health department receives feedback from community members about a public health program and discuss how the program could be improved.

Accessible Communication Exercise: Ask students to review a health education resource and identify ways to improve its clarity, accessibility, and relevance to the community using plain language and clear, audience-appropriate communication practices.

Implementation in Schools and Programs of Public Health

The Domain 3: Community Engagement and Education slide deck and instructional materials can be used across a range of academic settings, including:

Single or multi-week modules in public health courses, including:

- Foundations of Community Engagement in Public Health
- Public Health Communication and Education
- Community-Based Health Promotion
- Social and Behavioral Foundations of Public Health
- Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR)
- Monitoring and Evaluation of Health Promotion Programs

Guest lectures, seminars, and grand rounds

Applied practice preparation sessions or capstone preparation sessions

Strengthening Practice Understanding for Instructors

Providing concrete examples can help instructors illustrate how community engagement and education job tasks appear in real governmental public health settings.

EXAMPLE 1: **COMMUNITY LISTENING SESSIONS**

A local health department conducts listening sessions with community members to better understand barriers to accessing public health program, services, and community resources.

Public health staff may:

- Host meetings in community spaces such as schools or faith organizations
- Collect feedback on existing programs
- Use community input to adjust program design and outreach strategies

EXAMPLE 2: **COMMUNITY AMBASSADOR PROGRAMS**

Health departments may partner with trusted community leaders who serve as ambassadors for public health initiatives.

These ambassadors may:

- Share health information with their communities
- Provide feedback to health departments about community concerns
- Help build trust between residents, health departments, and other governmental public health partners

EXAMPLE 2: **ACCESSIBLE HEALTH COMMUNICATION**

A local health department develops plain-language public health education materials related to chronic disease prevention and distributes them through community organizations.

Staff may:

- Translate materials into multiple languages
- Adapt messages for different literacy levels
- Use relevant examples to improve understanding

These examples help instructors illustrate how community engagement and education support effective governmental public health programs.

Toolkit Components – Instructional Materials for Domain 3: Community Engagement and Education

The Domain 3: Community Engagement and Education toolkit is structured to help instructors teach community engagement and education in a way that is conceptually clear, grounded in governmental public health practice, and aligned with the CEPH MPH Foundational Competencies.

Student-Facing Instructional Slides

The student-facing slides introduce each Domain 3 job task and provide:

- An overview of each job task
- A clear explanation of how the job task functions in governmental public health practice
- Examples of how the job task appears in STLT health departments
- Identification of professional skills strengthened through the job task, such as communication, facilitation, and collaboration

The slide deck is designed to help students understand that community engagement is structured, relationship-based work embedded within governmental public health systems.

Real-World Example Slides

Each Domain 3 job task is paired with a real-world example illustrating how the task appears in practice.

Examples included in the slide deck include:

Job Task 3.1 – We Thought You'd Never Ask!: Learning from Boston's Black Community What Supports Its Health, Resilience & Wellbeing

- Demonstrates how collaboration with community organizations can support community-informed governmental public health initiatives.

Job Task 3.2 – Public Health and Community Partners Launch Community Public Health Teams (CPHT)

- Illustrates how trusted community leaders can support public health communication and education.

Job Task 3.3 - Camden Coalition Community Ambassador Program and Toolkit

- Demonstrates how governmental public health agencies build and sustain trusted partnerships with community members to strengthen engagement and improve public health outcomes.

Job Task 3.4 – Metro Health 2.0 Strategic Plan

- Shows how STLT health departments can incorporate accessible materials and communications into strategic planning.

Job Task 3.5 – Black Hawk County Public Health: Nutrition Education and Healthy Eating

- Shows how STLT health departments can address community needs through intentional education programming.

Job Task 3.6 – Process Evaluation in Action: Lessons Learned from Alabama REACH 2010

- Demonstrates how community partners can support public health outreach using relevant data and resources.

These examples are included to help students visualize how community engagement and education job tasks function within real governmental public health systems.

Instructor Guidance Slides

Instructor guidance slides accompany each job task and include:

- Framing notes explaining the context of the job task
- Suggested instructional emphasis
- Clarification of systems-level implications
- Discussion prompts to deepen student understanding
- Explicit alignment with CEPH MPH Foundational Competencies

Domain 3 Example Activities

This collection includes sample activities that instructors can incorporate into courses to reinforce the competencies and job tasks within this domain. Each activity is designed to engage students in authentic governmental public health scenarios while building practical workforce skills.

Instructional Emphasis

When facilitating instruction on community engagement and education, instructors should emphasize relationship-based governmental public health practice.
Instructors should:

- Reinforce that community engagement is an ongoing process, not a one-time outreach activity
- Highlight the importance of trust, transparency, and shared decision-making in partnerships
- Emphasize that effective health communication must be accessible and relevant to the community
- Explain how community partnerships strengthen public health programs and emergency response capacity
- Encourage students to consider how community perspectives influence program design, implementation, and evaluation

Effective instruction should continually reconnect students to the central question:

How does Domain 3: Community Engagement and Education strengthen governmental public health systems and improve population health outcomes?