DOMAIN 4 DIRECT AND FIELD SERVICES

Overview

DOMAIN 4

Purpose: Direct and Field Services

Domain 4: Direct and Field Services describes the hands-on governmental public health services provided directly to individuals, families, and communities by state, Tribal, local, and territorial (STLT) health departments to prevent disease, protect health, and/or connect people to care. This domain focuses on the processes, infrastructure, and coordination needed within STLT health departments to be able to effectively deliver services across a variety of clinical, community, and field-based environments and work to identify and respond to community health needs and priorities.

Direct and field services offer ongoing points of connection between STLT health departments and individuals, families, communities, and organizations.

DOMAIN 4

Core Job Tasks (4.1- 4.2)

As identified in the 2024 Governmental Public Health Job Task Analysis, Domain 4 includes:

4.1
Provide direct public health services in the community

4.2
Ensure equitable access to and utilization of public health services through guidance, referrals, linkage, case management, and follow up

These responsibilities occur across job levels, from delivering programs and direct support to leading efforts that ensure timely and responsive services across community health needs.

DOMAIN 4

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 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 4 Job Task	Related CEPH MPH Foundational Competencies
4.1 Provide direct public health services in the community	*No direct CEPH MPH Foundational Competency alignment identified.*
4.2 Ensure equitable access to and utilization of public health services through guidance, referrals, linkage, case management, and follow up	**Competency 7:** Assess population needs, assets, and capacities that affect communities' health. **Competency 21:** Integrate perspectives from other sectors and/or professions to promote and advance population health.

Instructional materials aligned to Domain 4 reinforce foundational competencies central to accredited education for public health.

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

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DOMAIN 4

In Practice

In STLT health departments, work related to direct and field services may include:

- Conducting contact tracing and disease investigation programs
- Performing environmental health inspections and compliance activities
- Linkage to care, referrals, and navigation to medical or social services
- Case management and follow-up for community members
- Emergency preparedness, response, and recovery support
- Community-based data collection, including surveys and needs assessments

Community perspectives help align public health services and outreach efforts with community needs and populations experiencing the greatest barriers to health.

DOMAIN 4

Importance to Governmental Public Health

Direct and field services enable STLT health departments to:

- Reach individuals and communities who may experience barriers to accessing traditional healthcare
- Protect the public in emergency situations through field service networks
- Build trust and strengthen community relationships through visibility and familiarity
- Improve health outcomes through education, outreach, and improved access to services

Direct and field services are essential because they are the frontline delivery system of governmental public health – bringing prevention, protection, and response directly into communities.

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