DOMAIN 8 PROGRAM PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

# Facilitator Guide

## Domain 8: Program Planning and Management

This facilitator guide is for instructors in schools and programs of public health who are teaching students about program planning and management in governmental public health.

This guide is designed to:

- Clarify what program planning and management means in governmental public health
- Explain why program planning and management job tasks are essential to public health practice
- Contextualize how program planning and management functions within state, Tribal, local, and territorial (STLT) health departments
- Align program planning and management 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 move from priorities to action. The Facilitator Guide is grounded in 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

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| Domain 8 Job Task | | Related CEPH MPH Foundational Competencies |
|---|---|---|
| **8.1** | Leverage and pursue funding opportunities to support and improve public health systems and outcomes | **Competency 10:** Explain basic principles and tools of budget and resource management. |
| **8.2** | Cultivate partnerships to further the mission of public health | **Competency 13:** Propose strategies to identify relevant communities and individuals and build coalitions and partnerships for influencing public health outcomes. |
| **8.3** | Plan, develop, and implement strategic initiatives of the governmental public health department | **Competency 9:** Design a population-based policy, program, project, or intervention. |
| **8.4** | Apply evaluation and quality improvement principles | **Competency 11:** Select methods to evaluate public health programs. |
| **8.5** | Develop, implement, and evaluate responses to emergent situations, public health emergencies, and/or planned events | **Competency 9:** Design a population-based policy, program, project, or intervention.<br>**Competency 11:** Select methods to evaluate public health programs. |
| **8.6** | Ensure alignment when developing and implementing planning documents | *No direct CEPH MPH Foundational Competency alignment identified.* |
| **8.7** | Engage in the organization's emergency preparedness, response activities, and contingency plans | *No direct CEPH MPH Foundational Competency alignment identified.* |

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# Program Planning and Management in Governmental Public Health

In STLT health departments, a program refers to an organized set of activities designed to address a specific public health issue or priority. Public health programs may take many forms, such as immunization campaigns, environmental health inspection services, or structured workforce development initiatives.

Programs are not isolated projects. They are structured, funded, and staffed efforts embedded within larger public health systems.

This domain includes job tasks related to:

- Identifying programmatic priorities
- Developing strategic and operational plans
- Securing and managing program funding
- Establishing measurable program goals
- Implementing program activities
- Evaluating program outcomes
- Improving systems over time
- Maintaining readiness for emergencies

This domain reflects how public health priorities become organized, measurable, sustainable efforts. Without program planning and management job tasks, public health work can become reactive, fragmented, and difficult to sustain.

## Program Planning and Management: Job Tasks

The Domain 8 job tasks (8.1-8.7) were identified through the 2024 Governmental Public Health Job Task Analysis, a national study of the responsibilities and functions of the STLT governmental public health workforce. These tasks reflect validated, practice-based responsibilities and describe how program planning and management is carried out operationally within STLT health departments.

**8.1** Leverage and pursue funding opportunities
**8.2** Cultivate partnerships to advance public health goals
**8.3** Plan, develop, and implement strategic initiatives
**8.4** Apply evaluation and quality improvement principles
**8.5** Develop and evaluate emergency and emergent responses
**8.6** Ensure alignment across planning documents
**8.7** Engage in emergency preparedness and contingency planning

## Program Planning and Management in Action

Program planning and management job tasks are continuous and essential. Many of these job tasks happen behind the scenes and involve ensuring that public health programs remain structured, funded, and able to produce measurable results over time. In practice, this may include reviewing funding requirements and ensuring that program activities align with funding expectations, developing workplans with clear objectives and timelines, and meeting across divisions to coordinate responsibilities and maintain progress.

Program planning and management also involves documenting and reporting program performance through quarterly or annual reports, monitoring expenditures in coordination with finance staff, and adjusting when evaluation findings or emerging data suggest that an approach is not working as intended. During and after emergencies, this work may include revising emergency response plans based on exercises, after-action reviews, or real-world events.

Program planning and management is foundational to governmental public health because it:

- Sustains initiatives beyond short-term funding
- Structures accountability to communities and governing bodies
- Organizes workforce jobs and responsibilities
- Supports emergency preparedness capacity
- Connects strategic plans to daily operational work
- Ensures evaluation informs improvement

Program planning and management job tasks are particularly important for students preparing to enter the public health workforce. Many students associate public health primarily with direct service or data analysis. However, long-term impact depends on strong planning systems.

Understanding program planning and management job tasks enables future professionals to:

- Sustain initiatives beyond short-term projects
- Navigate funding structures responsibly
- Strengthen accountability to communities
- Improve program effectiveness over time
- Contribute to resilient public health systems



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## How to Use This Guide in Academic Settings

In academic instruction, this domain helps students understand that public health impact depends not only on program delivery, but also on the internal systems that support programs and services. Many students associate public health primarily with direct services, health education, or epidemiology. However, public health systems rely on internal program planning and management infrastructure to sustain workforce readiness, manage resources responsibly, and maintain long-term capacity.

This guide is adaptable throughout schools and programs of public health, as well as other related educational disciplines, supporting instruction at the undergraduate and graduate levels, including but not limited to coursework in leadership, management, evaluation, emergency preparedness, and applied health practice.

### SUGGESTED INSTRUCTIONAL FLOW

1. Introduce program planning and management and what these job tasks mean in governmental public health systems.
2. Review job tasks 8.1-8.7 through applied examples.
3. Align job tasks to CEPH MPH Foundational Competencies.
4. Facilitate discussion focused on how program planning and management interact within systems and support public health programs and services.
5. Conclude with reflection on how program planning and management job tasks help to sustain population health impact.

### SUGGESTED INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

In addition to adapting and/or presenting the Domain 8 slide deck, instructors may consider incorporating the following approaches:

- **Program Dissection Exercise:** Present a real or hypothetical public health program and ask students to brainstorm its funding source, goals, staffing structure, evaluation measures, and preparedness considerations.
- **Funding Flow Mapping:** Have students map how funding enters a health department, how it is allocated, and how reporting requirements influence implementation decisions.
- **Plan Comparison Activity:** Provide excerpts from a strategic plan and an emergency preparedness plan and ask students to identify connections between them.
- **Reactive vs. Planned Discussion:** Ask students to compare a program operating with strong planning systems versus one responding reactively without structured planning.

These activities help move students from conceptual understanding to applied systems thinking.

## Implementation in Schools and Programs of Public Health

The Domain 8: Program Planning and Management slide deck and instructional materials are adaptable throughout academic spaces, including:

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

- Principles of Public Health Program Management
- Public Health Program Design and Implementation
- Grant Writing and Program Development
- Leadership and Management in Public Health
- Program Evaluation and Performance Measurement
- Nonprofit Management in Public Health

Guest lectures, seminars, and grand rounds

Applied learning intensives or capstone preparation sessions

## Strengthening Practice Understanding for Instructors

Instructors may consider the following examples when explaining program planning and management job tasks.

EXAMPLE 1: **IMMUNIZATION PROGRAM**

A state immunization program must:

- Plan annual vaccine procurement
- Manage funding streams
- Develop provider education initiatives
- Implement reporting systems
- Evaluate vaccination coverage rates
- Prepare for surge vaccination events during outbreaks



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EXAMPLE 2: **DATA MODERNIZATION INITIATIVE**

A health department data modernization initiative must:

- Secure funding to support system improvements
- Monitor data quality and system performance
- Coordinate with healthcare partners
- Evaluate progress toward modernization goals
- Implement electronic data exchange
- Adapt implementation based on feedback

EXAMPLE 3: **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS SYSTEM**

A county health department preparedness program must:

- Develop emergency response plans
- Conduct drills and exercises
- Maintain workforce cross-training
- Coordinate with emergency response partners
- Evaluate exercise outcomes
- Update plans based on findings

## Toolkit Components – Instructional Materials for Domain 8: Program Planning and Management

The Domain 8: Program Planning and Management toolkit is structured to help instructors teach program planning and management in a way that is conceptually clear, grounded in governmental public health systems, and aligned with the CEPH MPH Foundational Competencies.

### Student-Facing Instructional Slides

The student-facing slides introduce each Domain 8 job task and provide:

- An overview of each job task
- A clear explanation of how the job task functions within program planning and management
- Practical examples of how the job task appears in STLT health department settings
- Identification of skills strengthened through the job task (e.g., systems thinking, leadership, communication)

The slide deck is designed to build shared vocabulary and conceptual clarity around program planning and management in governmental public health. This helps students understand that public health programs are structured, funded, measurable systems, not isolated projects.

## Real-World Example Slides

Each Domain 8 job task is paired with a real-world example drawn from large-scale governmental public health initiatives. These examples are included to demonstrate how program planning and management operates beyond theory.

Examples include:

**Job Task 8.1 – CDC: Public Health Infrastructure Grant (PHIG)**
- Demonstrates how STLT health departments identify, secure, and manage funding to strengthen public health infrastructure and organizational capacity.

**Job Task 8.2 – CDC: National Wastewater Surveillance System (NWSS)**
- Illustrates how cross-sector partnerships support data sharing, coordination, and collective public health action.

**Job Task 8.3** – **PHAB Accreditation: Strategic Planning Requirements**
- Shows how health departments translate organizational priorities into strategic goals, implementation plans, and measurable actions.

**Job Task 8.4 – NACCHO: Project Public Health Ready**
- Demonstrates how evaluation and continuous quality improvement strengthen public health programs and organizational performance.

**Job Task 8.5 – Large-Scale Vaccination Clinics During a Public Health Emergency**
- Illustrates how health departments plan, coordinate, implement, and evaluate emergency response operations under rapidly changing conditions.

**Job Task 8.6 – CDC: Data Modernization Initiative**
- Shows how planning, implementation, and continuous improvement support modern, interoperable public health data systems.

**Job Task 8.7 – CDC: Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) Exercises**
- Demonstrates how preparedness exercises build organizational readiness and improve emergency response capabilities.

These examples are included to ground instruction in recognizable governmental public health structures, demonstrate how job tasks manifest in real systems, and help students visualize program planning and management at scale.

### Instructor Guidance Slides

Instructor guidance slides accompany each job task and include:

- Framing notes explaining the context of the job task within program planning and management
- Suggested instructional emphasis
- Clarification of systems-level implications
- Discussion prompts to deepen student understanding
- Explicit connections to CEPH MPH Foundational Competencies

The slide deck is designed to support instructors in facilitating discussion without assuming prior governmental public health experience.

### Domain 8 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 program planning and management, instructors should prioritize applied systems understanding over procedural detail. Emphasize that program planning and management involves the structured, intentional development, implementation, and evaluation of public health programs within governmental systems.

Instructors should:

- Reinforce that evaluation strengthens programs and supports continuous improvement, rather than serving only compliance functions
- Highlight how funding structures influence program design, scope, staffing, and sustainability.
- Clarify how emergency preparedness is embedded within routine planning systems, not separate from them
- Illustrate how planning documents (strategic plans, workforce plans, performance management plans, emergency plans) function together as part of an integrated system
- Emphasize coordination across divisions, partners, and levels of governance as essential to effective program implementation
- Explain relevant governance structures, funding mechanisms, and organizational context to support student understanding
- Encourage systems thinking across program components so students can see how planning decisions influence implementation, evaluation, and long-term outcomes

Effective instruction should continually reconnect students to the central question:

***How does Domain 8: Program Planning and Management enable sustained population health impact?***