



Rural Public Health Preparedness Collaborative

What is the Rural Public Health Preparedness Collaborative?

The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) is the organization representing over 2,800 local health departments nationwide. According to NACCHO's [2016 National Profile of Local Health Departments](#) study, approximately 25 percent of local health departments are in rural jurisdictions, and many others serve rural and frontier communities.

NACCHO, with support from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), is establishing a **Rural Public Health Preparedness Collaborative** ("Rural Preparedness Collaborative") to address the unique preparedness challenges and needs of this population.

The Rural Preparedness Collaborative is a membership-driven ("*by local health departments, for local health departments*") workgroup that will provide a forum for local health departments from rural and frontier communities to collaborate, network, and inform national preparedness policy and practice. The goals of the workgroup are to:

- Provide a forum for local health departments from rural and frontier communities to engage in **peer-to-peer information sharing and networking on preparedness-related topics**; and
- Influence national preparedness policy, guidance, and practice by providing **input and feedback to NACCHO and federal partners** on the unique needs and challenges of rural and frontier health departments.

The specific activities and objectives of the workgroup will be determined by the membership of the Rural Preparedness Collaborative.

NACCHO's Rural Health Section versus Rural Preparedness Collaborative

In order to better serve as a leader, partner, catalyst and voice with local health departments, as of autumn 2017, NACCHO established a **Rural Health Section**. The Rural Health Section is a membership unit of NACCHO intended to foster collaboration among members and give rural health departments a voice at the federal level.

The Rural Health Section covers a broad range of public health issues, whereas the Rural Public Health Preparedness Collaborative will specifically address preparedness, response, and recovery in rural and frontier health departments. Although the two groups will coordinate, the Rural Health Section has different membership requirements than the Rural Preparedness Collaborative.

For more information on the Rural Health Section, contact NACCHO at membership@naccho.org.



Eligibility

Participants in the Rural Preparedness Collaborative must be employed at a local health department (or equivalent) in a rural or frontier jurisdiction and have preparedness-related responsibilities. Participation in another NACCHO workgroup does not preclude participation in the Rural Preparedness Collaborative.

There are many nuanced definitions of *rural* and *frontier*; because the stated goals of this workgroup are to foster collaboration among local health departments, NACCHO is not prescriptive about the definitions. Local health department employees with preparedness responsibilities who serve jurisdictions that they consider rural and/or frontier are eligible to participate.

During the initial formation of this collaborative, active membership with NACCHO is not required. However, this is subject to change. Learn more about the benefits of NACCHO membership here: <http://www.naccho.org/membership>.

Responsibilities and Time Commitment

The Rural Preparedness Collaborative is a voluntary, membership-driven workgroup. As such, the primary responsibility of membership is to be an active and engaged participant. Logistics, such as determining meeting frequency and time commitment, will be determined based on the objectives and priorities of the group.

The initial meeting of the collaborative will take place in **Winter 2017**. NACCHO will provide the technological infrastructure (e.g., conference call lines, virtual meeting platform) for the collaborative to conduct meetings virtually.

NACCHO, through CDC support, will provide funding to help establish the workgroup. The collaborative will run until June 30, 2018, at which time NACCHO and collaborative members, in consultation with CDC, will decide whether to continue through 2019.

Application and Resources

To apply, email preparedness@naccho.org with the title “*Rural Preparedness Collaborative*.” In the email, describe your jurisdiction (including population size) and your reasons for joining the workgroup. Consideration will be given to the number of applicants, the individuals’ stated reasons for wanting to participate, geographic location, and jurisdiction size when selecting members. Selected participants will be notified mid-November. Thank you for your interest!

For questions about the workgroup, or more information, check out the [Preparedness Brief blog](#), or email preparedness@naccho.org.

NACCHO Preparedness Workgroups

Not from a rural or frontier health department, but want to participate in a NACCHO workgroup?

NACCHO has over forty advisory groups covering the range of public health issues and six preparedness-related workgroups covering topics such as preparedness policy, medical countermeasures, incident management, and healthcare preparedness.

For more information, visit <http://www.naccho.org/membership/advisory-groups> or email preparedness@naccho.org.

