



What is the California Conference of Local Health Officers (CCLHO)?

The California Conference of Local Health Officers (CCLHO) is a membership organization of the 61 legally appointed physician Health Officers in California, one from each of the 58 counties and the cities of Berkeley, Long Beach, and Pasadena. The mission of CCLHO is to prevent disease and improve the health of all California residents. CCLHO was established by statute in 1947 to advise policymakers on all matters affecting health.

CCLHO provides a state/local forum for the discussion of significant health issues and the development of recommendations for appropriate health policy, including legislation and regulations. CCLHO's program committees consider technical and policy issues in chronic

disease control and prevention; communicable disease control and prevention; data and health information; emergency preparedness and response; and environmental health. CCLHO assists Health Officers in educating local and state policy and opinion makers on population-based health needs and priorities.

CCLHO believes that all residents have a right to protection from avoidable health hazards that are beyond their control, whether naturally occurring or human made, unplanned or deliberate. Protection of the public's safety and health is a fundamental responsibility of state and local government. A strong, well-funded, and adequately resourced public health system composed of local, state, and federal agencies is crucial to protecting and promoting the public's health.



CCLHO's Priority Action Areas

CCLHO works to improve the infrastructure of public health in California at the state and local levels. More resources are needed to guarantee that public health agencies will be able to do the following:

- Prevent, investigate, and control communicable diseases, both epidemic and endemic;
- Prevent and control chronic diseases such as heart disease, cancer, diabetes, and asthma;
- Monitor the health of the population through surveillance of both communicable and chronic diseases;
- Prepare for and respond to public health emergencies and disasters;
- Support environmental health functions, an integral part of public health; and
- Promote healthful behavior, including good nutrition practices, physical activity, tobacco cessation, and good sexual health.

What is the Mission of Public Health and Local Health Departments?

The mission of public health is to prevent disease and disability, promote health and wellness, and protect the health of all people and communities. As an agent of the state and an institution of local government, a local health department must provide leadership to assure healthy communities. CCLHO believes that effective public health policies are based on the following principles:

- Public health services improve the health and wellness of communities.
- Core public health functions lay the groundwork for healthful communities.
- Prevention, an effective approach to averting disease and disability and improving the quality of life, is a core public health commitment.
- Epidemiology is the principal scientific base for defining problems, developing interventions, and measuring results in public health.
- Public health services must be provided by local government in collaboration with the private and public sectors and state and federal governments.
- Public health should advocate for universal health care access.
- Local communicable disease control surveillance and reporting activities are the backbone of the state's communicable disease control efforts.
- Social justice is a philosophical underpinning of public health.
- Consideration of health in all policies is necessary to achieve healthy people and healthy communities.

The Role of the Health Officer

In California, the local Health Officer is a physician appointed by the local governing body to provide public health leadership for the entire community. The Health Officer is responsible for assessing and reporting on the health status of the community, using multiple epidemiologic, survey, and statistical methods. The Health Officer is the only health practitioner authorized to exercise police powers, such as isolation and quarantine, to prevent further spread of disease.



For a complete list of California Health Officers, visit:

www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/cclho/Documents/CCLHOHealthOfficerDirectory.pdf



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