DSLR FRIDAY UPDATE

March 11, 2022

CDC's Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) program is a critical source of funding, guidance, and technical assistance for state, local, and territorial public health departments to strengthen their public health preparedness capabilities and improve their response readiness. The Division of State and Local Readiness (DSLR) Friday Update provides information and resources for PHEP recipients and other preparedness planners. Please share the newsletter with your colleagues.
For more information, visit the CDC State and Local Readiness website or contact us at preparedness@cdc.gov.

In This Issue

Upcoming Deadlines
- **March 11** – PHEP 20th Anniversary Workforce Recognition Submissions
- **March 21** – PHEP BP4 Funding Applications
- **April 1** – BP3 Budget Revisions Requiring Prior Approval

PHEP Cooperative Agreement Updates
- Special CDC to Host Special PHEP Connects ORR Webinar on March 16
- PHEP ORR Friday Feature: What to Know About Upcoming PORTS Trainings
- CDC Addresses PERFORMS Issues

COVID-19 Response Activities
- Additional Free, At-Home COVID-19 Tests Now Available
- CDC Releases Information on New CARES Act COVID-19 Laboratory Reporting Requirements
- CDC Mental Health Survey Opens March 14
- CDC Updates COVID Data Tracker Resources
- New and Updated COVID-19 Resources Now Available

What's on the Calendar
- **March 16** – PHEP Monthly Recipient Call Canceled
- **March 16** – PHEP ORR Guidance Orientation

- **March 24** – PORTS Training
- **March 25** – PORTS Training
- **March 28** – PORTS Training
- **March 30** – PORTS Training

Preparedness and Response Resources
- ASPR Releases Fact Sheet on COVID-19 Test to Treat Initiative

News You Can Use
- 2022 National Healthcare Coalition Preparedness Conference Abstracts Due April 13
- CDC Seeks Nominations for Health Equity Advisory Group
- Ready or Not Report Finds Fewer States Ranked in Top Tier for Public Health Preparedness

Online Resources
- CDC MMWR Reports
- COVID-19 Guidance and Resources

- **March 11** – PHEP 20th Anniversary Workforce Recognition Submissions
- **March 21** – PHEP BP4 Funding Applications
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CDC to Host Special PHEP Connects ORR Webinar on March 16

CDC's next PHEP Connects webinar is scheduled for **1 p.m. to 2 p.m. EDT on Wednesday, March 16**. This special webinar is the next scheduled training session designed to orient PHEP recipients to PHEP Budget Period 3 (BP3) program requirements and Operational Readiness Review (ORR) data submissions. During this session, CDC presenter Christopher Reinold will introduce the second new COVID-19 ORR reporting form, Pandemic COVID-19 Functional Exercise (FE): Vaccination for Critical Workforce Groups and Disproportionately Impacted Populations. This session builds on concepts introduced during the February 23 PHEP Connects webinar, particularly the PHEP program role during a response and how that is reported. The roles include lead, support, or no role in the activity. This ORR reporting form focuses on the period when there was limited COVID-19 vaccine availability and the role PHEP programs played during that time.

Both PHEP recipients and local jurisdictions are invited to attend this orientation webinar. However, the session is designed to prepare the 62 PHEP recipients to submit the required programmatic data. CDC has waived the PHEP ORR requirement for local jurisdictions in BP3. A current overview of BP3 programmatic requirements is available on the CDC website at PHEP Budget Period 3 Reporting Requirements and ORR Implementation – February 2022 Update.

Participant Information for March 16 Webinar
Dial-In: (669) 254-5252 (Audio only)
Meeting ID: 161 241 1865
Passcode: 569595
Web Link: https://www.zoomgov.com/j/1612411865

PHEP ORR Friday Feature: What to Know About Upcoming PORTS Trainings

In anticipation of the launch of the PHEP ORR Reporting and Tracking System (PORTS) in late March, this week's PHEP ORR Friday Feature will focus on the technical system training for PORTS. This training will not focus on programmatic content described in the PHEP ORR guidance and highlighted in the February 2, February 23, and upcoming **March 16** Special PHEP Connects webinars. As a reminder, PORTS training is designed for staff from the 62 PHEP jurisdictions; however, local jurisdictions are welcome to attend for awareness.

PHEP recipients will use the PORTS online data collection system to submit program evaluation data to CDC. The virtual, instructor-led technical training will familiarize recipients with how to enter data, upload evidence, and submit data to CDC for review. There will be one training session covering the same content offered on four different dates to accommodate time zones and schedules. Register for any of the training dates below. Recipients will need a TRAIN account to register.

- **Thursday, March 24**| 12 p.m. to 3 p.m. EDT
- **Friday, March 25**|1 p.m. to 4 p.m. EDT
- **Monday, March 28**| 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. EDT
- **Wednesday, March 30**| 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. EDT

Prior to the training, participants should submit a PORTS application form to be enrolled in the system. There is no limit on the number of users per jurisdiction, and CDC encourages PHEP jurisdictions to have multiple users registered. CDC also encourages recipients to read through introductory material to familiarize themselves with PORTS and the ORR module. This advance preparation should take no longer than 15 minutes to complete. CDC will provide further details prior to the training.

If reasonable accommodations are needed to participate in the training, PORTS training attendees should email dslrtraining@cdc.gov. Any questions about this technical training should also be directed to dslrtraining@cdc.gov.

CDC Addresses PERFOMS Issues

CDC's PERFORMS support team has been working this week to address two issues that users have reported with the Budget Period 4 (BP4) application module. The team has resolved issues with updating personnel names and titles and is currently working to resolve issues with updating fringe information in the Properties tab and in individual line items. CDC will notify users as soon as this is resolved.

Recipients should ensure they are accessing the BP4 application module using the MS Edge browser and update previously saved PERFORMS links. Using other browsers to access PERFORMS modules can cause unknown errors.

For assistance with PERFORMS technical issues, recipients should call the PERFORMS toll free number at 1-866-612-3615. Please note that due to a restructuring of DSLR's IT support team, calls may go to voice mail if the IT staff are unable to answer. In that case, please leave a message or send an email to the CDC PERFORMS-SUPPORT mailbox at PERFORMSSupport@cdc.gov.

Additional Free, At-Home COVID-19 Tests Now Available
The White House recently announced that U.S. households are now able to order their second set of four, free at-home COVID-19 tests via the COVIDtests.gov website or by calling 1-800-232-0233 (TTY 1-888-720-7489). No ID, credit card, or health insurance information is required. Tests usually ship within seven to 12 days of ordering. CDC encourages preparedness directors to broadly share this information with their community- and faith-based organizations and other partners.

For questions related to the at-home COVID-19 tests, review the Frequently Asked Questions.

CDC Releases Information on New CARES ACT COVID-19 Laboratory Reporting Requirements
On April 4, new COVID-19 laboratory data reporting requirements under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act will go into effect. A summary of these requirements can be accessed on CDC's Data and Reporting webpage. This guidance outlines federal Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) laboratory reporting requirements under Section 18115 of the CARES Act. State, tribal, local, and territorial (STLT) jurisdictions may have additional laboratory reporting requirements applicable to testing entities subject to their jurisdictions. This updated guidance outlines requirements for data submission to HHS that are authorized under this law.

CDC Mental Health Survey Opens March 14
Public health workers on the frontlines of the COVID-19 response have been hit hard over the past two years, especially when it comes to feelings of heightened stress, anxiety, and hopelessness. In 2021, CDC conducted a mental health survey to better understand the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on public health workers' mental health. The findings from the 2021 survey were published, and have been cited in numerous articles, testimonies, and justifications for additional resources and support for the public health workforce.

In an ongoing effort to understand and address the mental health impact and support needs of this crucial population, CDC has developed the 2022 mental health survey open to all U.S. public health workers who have been responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. The survey is intended for full-time and part-time employees, contractors, fellows, and others who worked in state, tribal, local, and territorial public health departments in 2021 and will look at demographics, job categories, and questions to assess symptoms of anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). As CDC continues to measure and understand the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on public health workers' mental health, the agency can better mobilize resources for additional psycho-social support.

All survey responses are anonymous, and no personal identifiers will be collected. Participation is completely voluntary, and participants may withdraw from the survey at any time. The survey can be taken on a computer, tablet, or cellular device. **The survey link will go live on March 14 and will remain open until 11:59 p.m. EDT on Friday, March 25.** Please share widely with health department staff at all levels and functions.

For more information on CDC's mental health study, contact the survey team at stltmhproject@cdc.gov.

CDC Updates COVID Data Tracker Resources
CDC's COVID Data Tracker combines county, state, national, and global COVID-19 data from across the response in a series of interactive dashboards. Following are recent COVID Data Tracker releases and updates.
- The Hospitalization by Vaccination Status - COVID-NET tab was updated to display January 2022 rates of COVID-19-associated hospitalization comparing unvaccinated people, fully vaccinated people, and people with an additional or booster dose

- The [Rates of COVID-19 Cases and Deaths by Vaccination Status](#) tab was updated to include jurisdictional surveillance data on cases and deaths among children ages 5-11 years by vaccination status

New and Updated COVID-19 Resources Now Available
CDC has updated the following COVID-19 vaccination and community resources.

- CDC's March 4 [Science Brief: Indicators for Monitoring COVID-19 Community Levels and Making Public Health Recommendations](#) is available online. Check COVID-19 Community Level county data [here](#).
- CDC's [Guidance for Antigen Testing for SARS-CoV-2 for Healthcare Providers Testing Individuals in the Community](#) has been updated with information on when to consider confirmatory testing in symptomatic and asymptomatic individuals.
- Travelers who are not U.S. citizens will need to show [proof of being fully vaccinated against COVID-19 before traveling by air](#) to the United States from a foreign country. Some categories of noncitizen, nonimmigrants are exempt from this requirement. In addition, all air passengers ages 2 years or older, regardless of citizenship or vaccination status, must show a negative result of a COVID-19 viral test or documentation of recovery from COVID-19 before they board a flight to the United States. For more information about these testing requirements, visit [Requirement for Proof of Negative COVID-19 Test or Documentation of Recovery from COVID-19](#).
- CDC's new [COVID-19 Testing Resources](#) is now live and can be found on the [COVID-19 Testing: What You Need to Know](#) webpage.

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Preparedness and Response Resources

ASPR Releases Fact Sheet on COVID-19 Test to Treat Initiative
The HHS Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR) has released a [fact sheet](#) on a new nationwide Test to Treat initiative that will give individuals a new way to rapidly access free lifesaving treatment for COVID-19. With this program, people will be able to get tested and – if they are positive and treatments are appropriate for them – receive a prescription from a health care provider, and have their prescription filled all in one location. These "One-Stop Test to Treat" locations will be available nationwide, including at pharmacy-based clinics, federally qualified community health centers (FQHCs), and long-term care facilities. Individuals will also continue to be able to be tested and treated by their own health care providers who can appropriately prescribe these oral antiviral drugs at locations where they are being distributed.

Visit the ASPR website for more information on the COVID-19 Test to Treat initiative.

2022 National Healthcare Coalition Preparedness Conference Abstracts Due April 13
The abstract submission period is now open for the 2022 National Healthcare Coalition Preparedness Conference (NHCPC), which is scheduled for November 29 - December 1 in Anaheim, CA. The deadline for submission is **Wednesday, April 13**. NHCPC is seeking presentations that align with the conference theme, "The Ripple Effect: Leveraging Local Successes for National Impact." Specifically, NHCPC is interested in health care coalition leaders who can share successes in their communities through presentations with tangible takeaways that will equip colleagues to integrate new techniques, develop best practices and increase overall effectiveness. In addition, sessions which highlight effective solutions in rural communities with a population of less than 50,000 residents, are highly in demand by conference attendees. Learn more on the 2022 National Healthcare Coalition Preparedness Conference webpage.

CDC Seeks Nominations for Health Equity Advisory Group
CDC is seeking nominations for membership on the Advisory Committee to the Director (ACD) Health Equity Workgroup (HEW). The HEW will consist of approximately 15 members who are experts in fields associated with health equity; public health science and practice; public health policy development, analysis, and implementation.

Nominees will be selected based on expertise in the fields of health equity; public health science and practice; public health policy development, analysis, and implementation. To ensure a diverse workgroup composition, CDC encourages nominees with front line and field experience at the local, state, tribal and territorial levels to apply. This includes those with experience working for, and with, community-based organizations and other nonprofit organizations. Federal employees will not be considered for membership. Selection of members is based on candidates' qualifications to contribute to the accomplishment of the HEW's objectives.

View the Federal Register Notice: Solicitation of Nominations for Appointment to CDC's Advisory Committee to the Director (ACD) Health Equity Workgroup (HEW). **The deadline for nominations is March 17**. For additional information, contact John Auerbach at jxa4@cdc.gov.

Ready or Not Report Finds Fewer States Ranked in Top Tier for Public Health Preparedness
A new report released on March 10, by Trust for America's Health, calls for urgent investment to create a public health system able to protect all Americans' health during emergencies. *Ready or Not 2022: Protecting the Public's Health from Diseases, Disasters, and Bioterrorism* evaluates states' performance on 10 key emergency preparedness indicators and identifies gaps in states' readiness to respond to emergencies. The report includes policy recommendations for strengthening the nation's health security.

The report measures states' degree of preparedness to respond to a wide spectrum of health emergencies and to provide ongoing public health services, including disease surveillance, seasonal flu vaccination, safe water, and expanded health care services during emergencies. It tiers states and the District of Columbia into three performance levels: high, middle, and low.

This year's report found that 12 states improved their performance while 16 states slipped in their ranking. Seventeen states and the District of Columbia placed in the high-performance tier, 20 states in the middle performance tier, and 13 states in the low performance tier.

CDC MMWR Reports

- [Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, March 11](#)
- [SARS-CoV-2 Incidence in K–12 School Districts with Mask-Required Versus Mask-Optional Policies — Arkansas, August–October 2021](#)
- [Interim Estimates of 2021–22 Seasonal Influenza Vaccine Effectiveness — United States, February 2022](#)
- [Characteristics and Adverse Events of Patients for Whom Nifurtimox Was Released Through CDC-Sponsored Investigational New Drug Program for Treatment of Chagas Disease — United States, 2001–2021](#)
- [Evaluation of Serologic Cross-Reactivity Between Dengue Virus and SARS-CoV-2 in Patients with Acute Febrile Illness — United States and Puerto Rico, April 2020–March 2021](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccine Provider Access and Vaccination Coverage Among Children Aged 5–11 Years — United States, November 2021–January 2022](#)
- [Notes from the Field: Congenital Varicella Syndrome Case — Illinois, 2021](#)
- [QuickStats: Percentage of Adults Aged ≥18 Years Who Sleep <7 Hours on Average in a 24-Hour Period, by Sex and Age Group — National Health Interview Survey, United States, 2020](#)

COVID-19 Guidance and Resources

- **NEW** [COVID-19 Pandemic Response, Laboratory Data Reporting: CARES Act](#)
- [Section 18115](#)
- **NEW** [Science Brief: Indicators for Monitoring COVID-19 Community Levels and Making Public Health Recommendations](#)
- **NEW** [COVID-19 Testing Resources](#)
- **UPDATED** [Guidance for Antigen Testing for SARS-CoV-2 for Healthcare Providers Testing Individuals in the Community](#)
- **UPDATED** [Requirement for Proof of COVID-19 Vaccination for Air Passengers](#)
- **UPDATED** [COVID Data Tracker](#)

CDC Wants to Hear from PHEP Recipients

CDC wants to hear how PHEP jurisdictions are preparing for and responding to incidents, emergencies, and disasters, whether it's the COVID-19 pandemic, recent weather events, or other public health emergencies. Recipients can highlight their experiences in emergency preparedness, response, or recovery by emailing the State and Local Readiness mailbox at preparedness@cdc.gov.

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Center for Preparedness and Response
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention