

Public Health Associate Program for Recent Graduates

Early-career professionals who work at health departments and other public health organizations nationwide to gain field-based training



What Associates Do

The Public Health Associate Program for Recent Graduates (PHAP) assigns recent college graduates to health departments and other public health organizations nationwide for a 2-year term to:

- **Fill staffing gaps while gaining real-world experience early in their careers at:**
 - ✓ Health departments
 - ✓ Community-based organizations
 - ✓ Public health associations
 - ✓ Academic institutions
- **Cover a range of fundamental public health activities, such as:**
 - ✓ Updating disease-reporting processes
 - ✓ Implementing infectious disease interventions
 - ✓ Conducting contact tracing and disease investigations
 - ✓ Mobilizing communities through partnerships
- **Serve in critical roles during public health emergencies by working directly with impacted communities to:**
 - ✓ Assess community needs
 - ✓ Trace disease spread
 - ✓ Support emergency response operations

By the Numbers

1,800+ **associates** placed at health departments nationwide since 2007

On average **82%** **of alumni** are in school for public health, working in the field, or both

Where Associates Work

In the 2023 & 2024 PHAP cohorts:

112 associates are addressing critical public health workforce needs in:

★ **38** states and the District of Columbia

★ **2** US territories

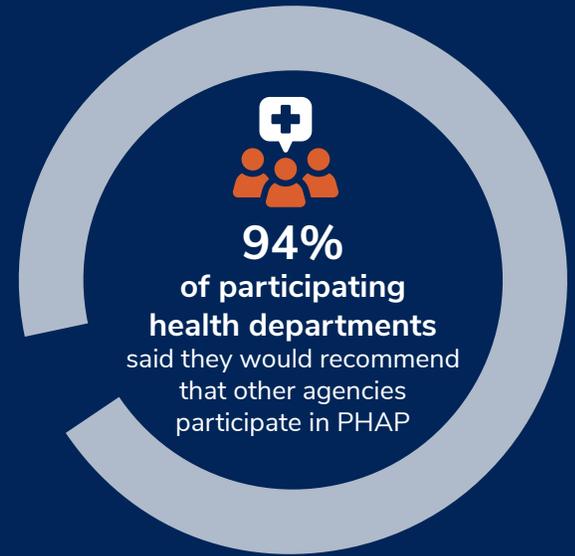


Why this Program Matters

Associates help health departments respond to urgent threats and protect communities by:

- **Strengthening local emergency response efforts** through [Community Assessment for Public Health Emergency Response](#) (CASPER) deployments and other rapid needs assessments.
- **Bridging staffing gaps in health departments** while preparing the future public health workforce. As of summer 2025, 61 out of 66 associates were assigned to health departments and nongovernmental tribal organizations.
- **Driving public health improvements** through innovation, evaluation, quality improvement, education, and outreach.

Associates Deliver for Health Departments



A Closer Look

Associates support emergency response and major infectious disease events nationwide. Here are some examples:



Ten associates helped local teams with tuberculosis disease investigation and contact tracing during a large-scale outbreak in Kansas City, Kansas, in 2024–2025.



Sixteen associates worked with state health officials to assess the health impacts of wildfires and flash floods in Lincoln County, New Mexico, in 2024, informing plans on how and where resources are allocated.



Seven associates supported local airport response to Marburg virus disease by receiving and assessing travelers in Chicago and New York City in 2024, helping prevent the virus's introduction into the United States.



Twenty-one associates assessed health impacts from the 2022 Oak Wildfire and the 2023 blizzards and flooding by interviewing 185 residents as part of a CASPER mobilization in Mariposa County, California.



Associates during deployment to Lincoln County, NM, in August 2024