



# CALBOH

COLORADO ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL BOARDS OF HEALTH

## **CALBOH Purpose**

The Colorado Association of Local Boards of Health (CALBOH) is a unique organization strengthening Colorado's local boards of health, in collaboration with the State Board of Health.

## **CALBOH Mission Statement**

The mission of the Colorado Association of Local Boards of Health (CALBOH) is to strengthen local boards of health through education, training, networking, advocacy, collaboration and celebration, thus enabling them to effectively support the core functions and the ten essential services of public health that promote and protect the health of their communities.

## **CALBOH Vision**

The CALBOH's vision is to remain focused on the health of the public by:

- Recognizing that public health is the foundation on which a successful health care system is built.
- Promoting high standards of comprehensive public health services for the citizens of Colorado.
- Providing consultation and education for, and facilitate the collaboration among, Board of Health members.
- Supporting health policy and finance issues in support of public health in Colorado.
- Encouraging close working relationships between local Boards of Health and other allied agencies, including the State Board of Health.
- Advancing programs and projects deemed necessary to protect and promote the health of the citizens in Colorado.
- Supporting public awareness of public health issues and dangers.

## **Why Form a Colorado Association of Local Boards of Health (CALBOH)?**

A CALBOH is a professional association, and a key incentive for joining is to strengthen and improve the functioning of the local boards of health by education, training, collaboration, and advocacy. When local board members become involved in public health issues, they have the collective ability to influence how political, educational, business, and community leaders perceive and support local health issues. By creating the CALBOH, board of health members are able to learn and interact with their peers (commissioners and designated local board of health members) and public health leaders throughout the state. Local board members also have access to a wide variety of services, including:

- **Educational programs**
- **Legislative information**
- **Networking opportunities**
- **Models for improving local public health programs**
- **Training to improve board performance**

The CALBOH will also provide local board of health members with the opportunity to develop the leadership skills necessary to participate in shaping health policy at local, regional, and state levels.

## **Benefits for Colorado Association for Local Board of Health Members**

### **For the public health system, a CALBOH:**

- Gives local boards of health a strong, unified voice in matters of public health policy and advocacy
- Identifies and organizes local board of health members
- Ensures that public health policy makers or advisors optimize the field work of agency staff through effective policy
- Identifies specific training and education needed for board members to fulfill their oversight responsibilities

### **For local board members, a CALBOH:**

- Provides education and training designed specifically for them

- Represents local boards of health and public health policy at the state level
- Provides local board members with professional development and leadership opportunities
- Tracks legislation that affects public health agencies and boards of health
- Offers governance training and education for local boards of health
- Ensures that local boards of health are effective in public health agency oversight responsibilities

**Because of the unique role that local boards of health play in the public health system, state associations are needed to focus upon and respond to the statewide public health issues.** SALBOHs are best suited to advocate on behalf of local board members because of their knowledge of state and local rules and regulations and their ability to tailor national educational and training materials and programs to the specific needs of their local boards.

**Because the CALBOH leadership is more likely to interact with other state leaders, there is an increased opportunity for this personal contact with legislators, politicians, and others to positively affect boards of health.** Because of this contact, the CALBOH is better positioned to track and act upon state public health legislation, protect the local board of health's role in public health agency oversight, and represent the boards' positions.

**SALBOHs provide board training and education.** Many board members have a sense of isolation regarding public health. They may be well informed about their own community but broader, statewide, or national issues often aren't communicated to them. Most board members take their responsibilities seriously but, unfortunately, in some regions there is no training or education as to what those responsibilities include. Boards often have to deal with difficult issues for which there is limited experience. A CALBOH is able to promote communication among boards so that problems and successes can be shared. A listserv, regional meetings, conference calls, and a newsletter are some of the ways to accomplish this.

#### **What Other SALBOHs have done**

The activities and projects of a SALBOH will vary depending upon the needs, opportunities and resources within each state. One major effort, of course, is education and training of board of health members, but CALBOHs have been instrumental in initiation, development and collaboration of other projects that advance that state's public health initiatives. Each of the following has been accomplished by one or more of the existing CALBOHs:

#### *Education and Training:*

- Published a guide of responsibilities for new board of health members
- Developed a complete training manual for board of health members
- Established a website for board of health training resources
- Provided training by workshops and distance learning
- Convened annual statewide conferences for board of health members
- Established a leadership institute for board of health members
- Pilot tested an accreditation program for the board and local public health agency

#### *Collaboration and Partnerships:*

- Participated in bioterrorism training exercises
- Guided formation of an organization of public health associations to aid in grant applications
- Worked with the state and CDC to deliver Governance Performance Standards workshops to all boards
- Participated in grant surveys to assess perceived training needs of board members
- Participated in annual statewide joint meetings with other public health associations

#### *Initiatives and Advisory:*

- Promoted initiatives for smoke-free cities and states
- Initiated regulation of body art (tattoos, etc)
- Advocated for retention of local board regulatory authority
- Worked with legislators and participated in legislative hearings
- Promoted credentialing of public health administrators and emergency response coordinators