

# Resources for Employee Retention Challenges and Solutions

## *Resources to Improve the Public Health Workforce Environment and Retain Employees*

Public health agencies and entities are on various journeys to create a work environment in which their employees can thrive. The work group recognizes that public health organizations have unique strengths and opportunities for improvement.

Through discussions and reviewing research, the Public Health Workforce Development work group identified the areas of the public health work environment that need to be addressed to continue to attract and retain quality employees and associated resources.

Capacity	Rationale	Tools, trainings, and resources
Plan for leadership departures and have succession plans in place	Data show that Iowa’s public health workforce is aging and nearing retirement.  State data show a majority of public health professionals have reevaluated their career since the pandemic.  Regional data show that a quarter of public health professionals are considering leaving the sector.	IDPH succession toolkit and training - more information coming soon
Be mindful of and address the workforce’s mental health and mitigate burnout	According to national data, more than half of public health employees report symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder, and 1 in 5 say their mental health is either fair or poor.  State data show that stress and trauma and lack of support are the leading contributing factors of burnout.	<a href="#">IPHA &amp; MPHTC mental health resources</a>  ASTHO will soon launch a website of resources to address employee well-being and burnout
Be able to adapt to external forces, such as workforce trends and changes in government structures	Iowa’s public health sector is evolving and changing, such as the IDPH and HSS alignment. Public health professionals need to understand these changes and trends, how they impact their sector, and how to navigate through them.	MPHTC <a href="#">Building a Culture of Resilience</a> course

Train and mentor new Public Health leaders, with a focus on building strong partnerships and understanding county and local processes	<p>Proper training and onboarding leads to a more positive workplace experience, higher retention, and less turnover.</p> <p>Building strong partnerships is a foundational skill of public health practitioners.</p> <p>Understanding county and local processes is essential for public health success.</p>	<p>Understanding County and local processes</p> <p><a href="#">IDPH Public Health Leadership Academy</a></p>
Be able to effectively communicate about public health with a variety of stakeholders	<p>Strong communications skills is important for public health practitioners, particularly as it relates to employee satisfaction.</p>	<p><a href="#">CDC Public Health Collaborative</a></p> <p>MPHTC <a href="#">Social Marketing for Health</a> course</p>
Ensure policymakers understand what public health is and its importance to lowans and their communities	<p>State data show that lack of support from the public and policymakers contributes to burnout of public health employees.</p> <p>Educating policymakers and other stakeholders about the critical role of public health contributes to stronger government partnerships and greater public support.</p>	<p><a href="#">IDPH Public Health Leadership Academy</a></p>

### Additional Resources

Source	Topic	Resource
Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO)	Search public health job opportunities across the nation	<a href="#">PublicHealthCareers.org</a>
DeBeaumont Foundation	Resources to help determine appropriate staffing levels	<a href="#">Staffing Up</a>
Region V Public Health Training Center	Sample job descriptions that can be adapted by local and state health departments	<a href="#">Public Health Model Job Descriptions Project</a>
The National Consortium for Public Health Workforce Development	A collection of public health workforce resources	<a href="#">National Consortium for Public Health Workforce Development Resources</a>