



## U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps



### FACT SHEET

## Applied Public Health Teams

### *Applied Public Health Teams Can Provide Resources*

The U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) Applied Public Health Teams (APHT) provide resources and assistance to local health authorities throughout the United States. They were created in 2006 as part of the National Response Plan's ESF-8 public health and medical asset provisions. There are currently five APHT, each of which is a work force comprising 47 USPHS trained Commissioned Corps officer responders. Yet each APHT is scalable, and can provide only those resources needed. Each APHT is also responsive; as a Tier 2 team the APHT can deploy within 36 hours of activation. Each APHT is on-call one out of every 5 months and typically deploys only during the on-call month. Deployments typically do not exceed 2 weeks. Each APHT member is expected to participate in up to 2 weeks of response team training per year.

APHT structure includes nine mini-teams or sections of specific expertise in public health. Team leaders and deputy team leaders provide coordination and management reporting. APHT utilize established communications and other equipment to operate effectively in disaster-affected locations and surrounding areas. The primary areas of APHT activities and reporting include:

- 1. Epidemiology/surveillance;**
- 2. Preventive (medical) services delivery (e.g., disease prevention, vaccinations, laboratory information, health information), and;**
- 3. Environmental public health (air, water, wastes, vectors, food, safety, shelter, etc.).**

If a State, Tribal or local health infrastructure suffers damage from a natural disaster or other event, APHT can assist officials in response and/or recovery efforts. Assistance can include augmenting the local health work force to speed up response or recovery, or, with especially difficult matters, assisting or advising local health decision-makers. Each APHT can also provide essential services to preserve the lives and the health of affected and returning populations. APHT can assist local officials with planning and with proposals for restoring public health infrastructure, for improving that infrastructure, or for both. Further, each APHT can collect and analyze information for evaluating and for improving local programs' effectiveness or service delivery. APHT members have the technical consultation skills and abilities to preserve and to safeguard local public health, especially during emergencies.

### *Authority to Activate an APHT*

The Secretary and Assistant Secretary for Health have the authority to activate an APHT and do so in response to requests made through the Surgeon General.

For more information, contact:

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