

DELAWARE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Public Health Accreditation

Preliminary Readiness Assessment

September 25, 2025

Preliminary Readiness Assessment

Conducted this past quarter with the goal to:

- Explore feasibility and benefits of PHAB accreditation
- Provide overview of accreditation process
- Inventory required plans and their current statuses
- Develop recommendations and next steps

What is public health accreditation?

- Voluntary national program run by the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB)
- Recognizes state, local, tribal & territorial health departments that meet universal and common standards
- Based on 10 Essential Public Health Services
- Process: documentation → peer review → site visit → 5-year accreditation (with annual reports demonstrating advancements) → reaccreditation
- Benefits: accountability, quality improvement, consistency, stronger infrastructure, increased public health value



Value of Accreditation

Core Public Health

- Accountability to fulfill the 10 Essential Public Health Services

Development of Essential Plans and Policies

- Prepares LHDs by requiring development of core plans, policies, and processes

Best Practices

- Plans and policies drive health departments to operate according to best practices.

Sustainability

- These plans serve as a roadmap for current and future leadership and staff, lending to sustainability of efforts and succession planning.

Among health departments accredited for one year...

Quality Improvement

100% report stimulation of quality and performance improvement opportunities.*

Workforce

95% report improved ability to identify departmental strengths and weaknesses.*

Accountability

90% report improvement in accountability to external stakeholders.^

Programs & Services

91% report increased use of evidence-based practices for public health programs and/or business practices.*

Source: PHAB Post-Accreditation Survey, *N=22, ^N=21

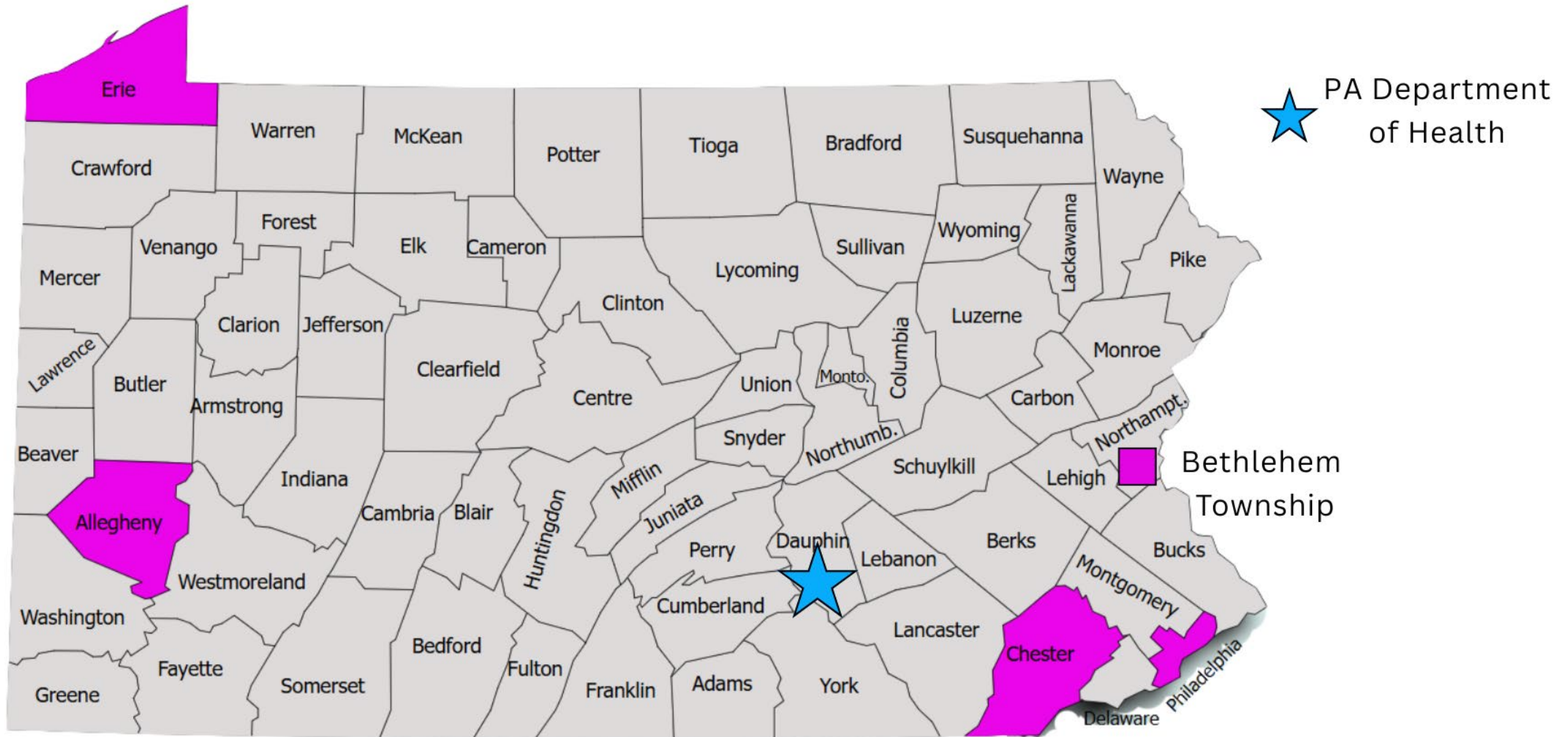
Cost of Accreditation

- Readiness & Training Fee*: **\$1,299**
 - If LHD applies within 12 months, \$500 credit applied to service fee.
- **Annual Accreditation Services Fee*** (Population 500k–1M): **\$11,200**
- Reaccreditation: no additional fees
- Appeal fees: \$5,000

Estimated 3-year total: \$34,399

*Required Fees

Accredited Health Departments in Pennsylvania



Foundational Public Health Services

Foundational Areas



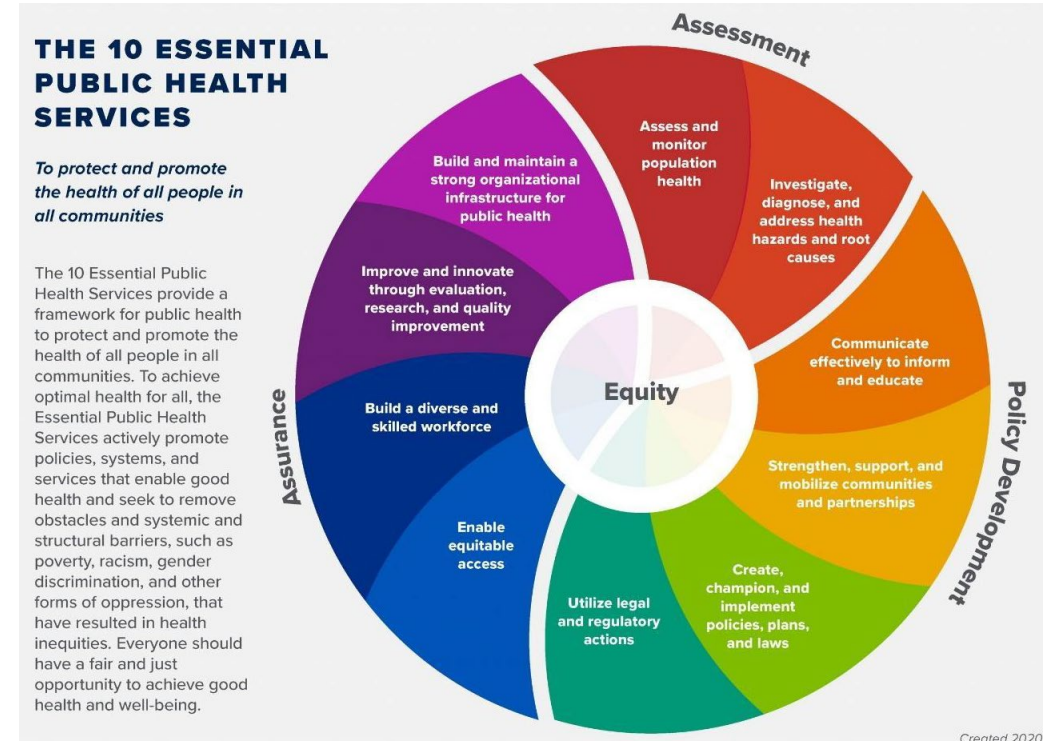
Foundational Capabilities

Assessment & Surveillance	Community Partnership Development	Equity	Organizational Competencies
Policy Development & Support	Accountability & Performance Management	Emergency Preparedness & Response	Communications

EQUITY

Language of Accreditation

- Domains are groups of standards that pertain to public health services
 - Align with 10 Essential Public Health Services →
- Standards describe the level of achievement expected.
- Measures describe the requirements needed to meet those expectations.
- Required documentation is the evidence that is necessary to demonstrate that a health department performs functions that satisfy a measure.





1. Conduct and Disseminate Assessments



2. Investigate Health Problems and Environmental Public Health Hazards



3. Inform and Educate



4. Engage with the Community



5. Develop Public Health Policies and Plans



DELAWARE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

6. Enforce Public Health Laws



7. Provide Access to Care



8. Workforce Development



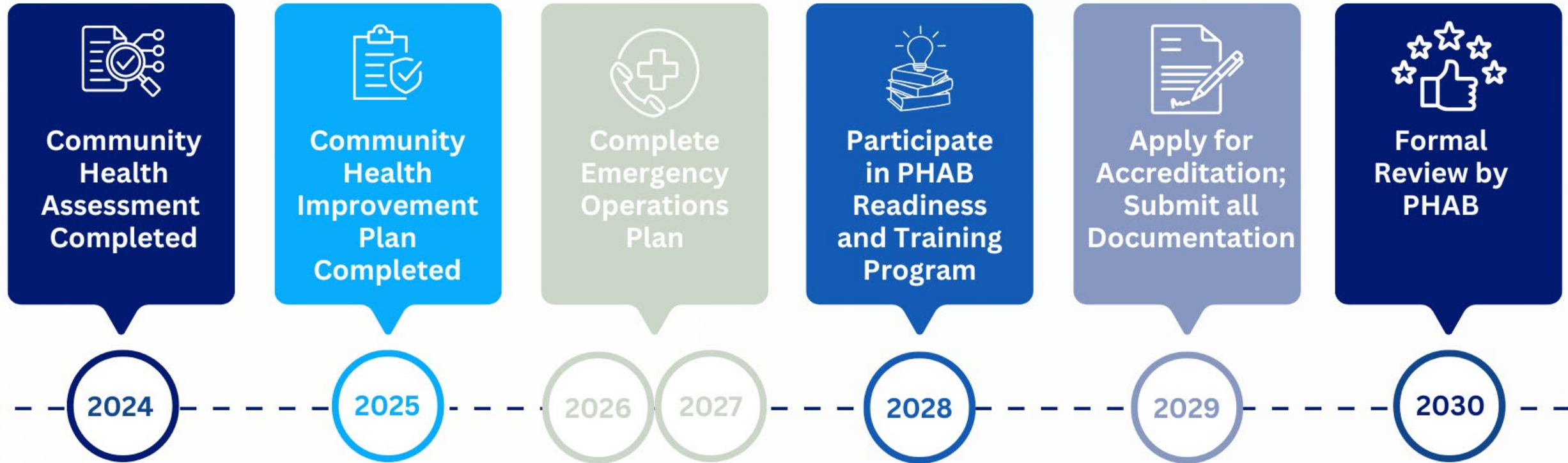
9. Quality Improvement



10. Evidence-Based Practices and Research



Example DCHD Accreditation Timeline



PHAB Required Plans

Plan	Status	Completion Date / Notes
Community Health Assessment	Completed	March 2024
Community Health Improvement Plan	Completed	March 2025
Strategic Plan	Completed	Sept 2024
Workforce Development Plan	Not Started	Planning not begun
Emergency Operations Plan	Underway	Needs PHAB alignment
Organizational Branding Strategy	Underway	Drafted, minor edits needed
Quality Improvement Plan	Not Started	Templates available from PHAB
Performance Management System	Underway	System in place, plan needed

Next Steps for DCHD

- Develop PHAB orientation and communications plan
 - Focus on 10 essential public health services
- Complete all 8 required plans
- Consider hiring or designating role of Accreditation Coordinator as sole responsibility
- Establish PHAB committee (cross-divisional review)
- Cross-reference plans with PHAB Standards and Measures; assure alignment as these are developed

Don't stress over timelines! This work is about BEST PRACTICES- not “achieving” accreditation.