

# *Reach*

*for a career in public health*



*Who Says*

*You Can't Change the World?*

*Reach*

*for a Career in Public Health*

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## *Why Pursue a Career in Public Health?*

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Public health professionals have saved more lives than any other professional group. They protect the lives not only of the poorest people in the developing world, but also of the people nearest and dearest to you.

Public health is an **exciting and growing** field that saves lives – your life, the lives of your family and friends, and the lives of people around the world. It helps to contain deadly contagious diseases, promote healthier lifestyles, address catastrophic events, provide basic sanitation, ensure safe food and water, and fight numerous other health threats.

It's also a diverse and **dynamic profession**. Public health professionals do everything from analyzing the effect on health of genetics, personal choices, and the environment to developing programs that protect the health of families and communities. They work to understand how the ecology of health affects our well-being – from social networks and economic circumstances to our environment – and to then promote safer health practices.

So, what can you do to be one of the best in this field? Schools of public health prepare tomorrow's public health professionals to protect and promote the health of all of us here and throughout the world.

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## *Accredited Schools of Public Health\* Offer...*

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- Diverse areas of specialization with more than 25 major fields of study
- Hands-on work experience that includes internships, fellowships, and traineeships
- A high-level of student involvement; low student-to-faculty ratios that are conducive to discussions, individualized programs, and personal attention
- Training from internationally recognized faculty with vast experience
- Short-term to long-term training; from certificates to master's and doctoral degrees
- Important career-building skills; learn to identify, analyze, and act to address public health challenges
- A flexible education format; many schools of public health offer distance education programs which allow students to participate at any time and from any place

*\* Association of Schools of Public Health (ASPH) members and accredited by the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH)*

Infectious Diseases  
Health Care Systems  
Injury Prevention  
HIV/AIDS  
Minority Health  
Toxic Chemical Control  
Substance Abuse  
Lead Poisoning  
Public Health Preparedness  
Geriatrics  
Risk Management  
Adolescent Health  
Hazardous Waste Management  
Immunizations  
Chronic Diseases  
Alternative Medicine  
Health Statistics  
Disaster Management  
Data Analysis  
Bioterrorism  
Water Pollution  
Genetics  
Health Communication  
Outcomes Research  
Mental Health  
Surveillance  
Food Safety  
Clinical Trials  
Population-based Planning  
Program Evaluation  
Program Planning  
Health Economics  
Tobacco Control  
Disease Prevention  
Primary Care  
Reproductive Health  
Dental Health  
Policy Analysis  
Solid Waste Management  
Smoking Cessation

# Important Questions About Career Opportunities in Public Health

## How Will a Graduate Degree in Public Health Enhance My Career Opportunities?

You'll gain knowledge and skills that will prepare you for a dynamic career geared towards improving the lives of others. An advanced public health degree will also give you a competitive edge through:

- Knowledge of factors that influence local, national, and global legislative and social policies;
- Broad-based, state-of-the-art quantitative and qualitative skills needed for problem solving;
- Improved communication skills from working with diverse populations; and
- Training for a leadership role in health promotion and disease prevention.

## What Are the Career Opportunities in Public Health?

Public health professionals are found in almost every professional setting. While there are dozens of exciting specialties in public health, most career opportunities are found in the following fields:

- **BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES/  
HEALTH EDUCATION**  
Specialists encourage people to make healthy choices and develop educational programs that promote healthy lifestyles and prevent disease and injury. They also promote more efficient uses of health services, adopt self-care practices, and participate actively in the design and implementation of health programs.
- **BIOSTATISTICS**  
Biostatisticians identify health trends that lead to life-saving measures through the application of statistical procedures, techniques, and methodology to forecast scenarios and determine the causes of disease and injury.
- **ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SCIENCES**  
How do the built and natural environments influence our health and how can we reduce risk factors? Specialists from chemistry, toxicology, engineering, and other disciplines combine their expertise to answer these important questions. They analyze the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the complex interaction between genetics and our surroundings in order to prescribe healthier behaviors.
- **EPIDEMIOLOGY**  
Epidemiologists uncover the causes of disease and injury, who is at risk, and how to prevent further incidences. They spot the demographic and social trends that influence disease and injury and evaluate new treatments.
- **GLOBAL/INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH**  
Globalization has linked our health more closely to one another than ever before. The rapid movement of people and food across borders means that a disease can travel from a remote village to an urban hub at breakneck speed. Global public health meets the rising health challenges that transcend national boundaries. This international field encompasses virtually all specializations in public health.

- **HEALTH SERVICES ADMINISTRATION**  
Health services administration combines politics, business, and science in managing the human and fiscal resources needed to deliver effective health services. Specialization can be in planning, organization, policy formulation and analysis, finance, economics, or marketing.
- **MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH**  
Maternal and child health experts promote the health of pregnant women and unborn children, provide information and access to birth control, and dispense vaccinations to children. They focus on improving the health delivery channels for women, children, and their families through advocacy, education, and research.
- **NUTRITION**  
Nutritionists study the interaction between nutrients, nutrition, and health. They promote healthy eating and regular exercise, and educate the public about the dangers of bad eating habits. By combining education with science, nutritionists can reduce the number of preventable diseases and improve overall health.
- **PUBLIC HEALTH LABORATORY PRACTICE**  
Bacteriologists, microbiologists, and biochemists test biological and environmental samples in order to prevent and treat infectious diseases. Testing also ensures the safety of our food and water, screens for diseases within communities, and saves lives during public health emergencies, such as bioterrorism.

### How Can I Get Experience in Public Health Before I Apply to a School?

There are many options for individuals who are looking to get experience before applying to a school of public health.

- Working part-time or full-time at a hospital or health clinic, including working on an immunization program, a reproductive health clinic, or a health promotion program.
- Volunteering for a non-profit direct services organization, such as a Whitman-Walker clinic or a local chapter of the American Red Cross.
- Working at a non-profit organization that is directly involved in public health advocacy and policy.
- Working or volunteering for a local health department.
- Exploring options provided by public service organizations such as [www.peacecorps.org](http://www.peacecorps.org), [www.americorps.org](http://www.americorps.org), [www.idealists.org](http://www.idealists.org), or [www.teachforamerica.org](http://www.teachforamerica.org).

### What Are the Average Salaries of Public Health Professionals?

Because public health professionals work in such a wide variety of settings and often work in multi-disciplinary capacities, the salaries vary significantly from job to job. There is currently no national data available to ASPH on the average starting salary that is representative of what a graduate can expect. However, career offices of schools of public health may be able to provide this information for their graduates. Another resource to identify current salaries is [www.publichealthjobs.net](http://www.publichealthjobs.net).

### What Are Examples of Career Opportunities That Will Be Available to Me?

The following jobs, available to graduates from the nation's accredited schools of public health, represent a wide range of career possibilities with multiple specializations:

# Administration/Management

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Rapid changes in both the private and public sectors of health care and related industries mean more opportunities for qualified professionals to manage complex institutions, organizations, and health services delivery programs. Whether your background is in science or business, there are dynamic career opportunities for public health graduates in all sectors of the health care industry.

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## Job Settings

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- Hospitals and clinics
- Managed care organizations
- Insurance companies
- International agencies
- Pharmaceutical and hospital supply firms
- Professional organizations
- Federal, state, and local government agencies
- Industry and business
- Colleges and universities
- Consulting firms

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## Job Titles

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- Environmental Health and Safety Manager  
Anheuser-Busch  
St. Louis, MO
- Program Manager  
Global Health Action  
Atlanta, GA
- Associate Director  
National Partnership for Women & Families  
Washington, DC
- Director  
Indian Health Service  
Phoenix, AZ
- Public Health Preparedness and Response  
Coordinator  
Jefferson County Public Health Service  
Watertown, NY
- Country Representative  
Cameroon and Central African Republic  
Population Services International  
Yaounde, Cameroon
- Infectious Disease Chief  
University of California, San Diego  
San Diego, CA
- Assistant Director, Obesity Initiative  
Harlem Children's Zone, Inc.  
New York, NY
- Regional Director  
Africa Ipas  
Chapel Hill, NC

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## Key Issues

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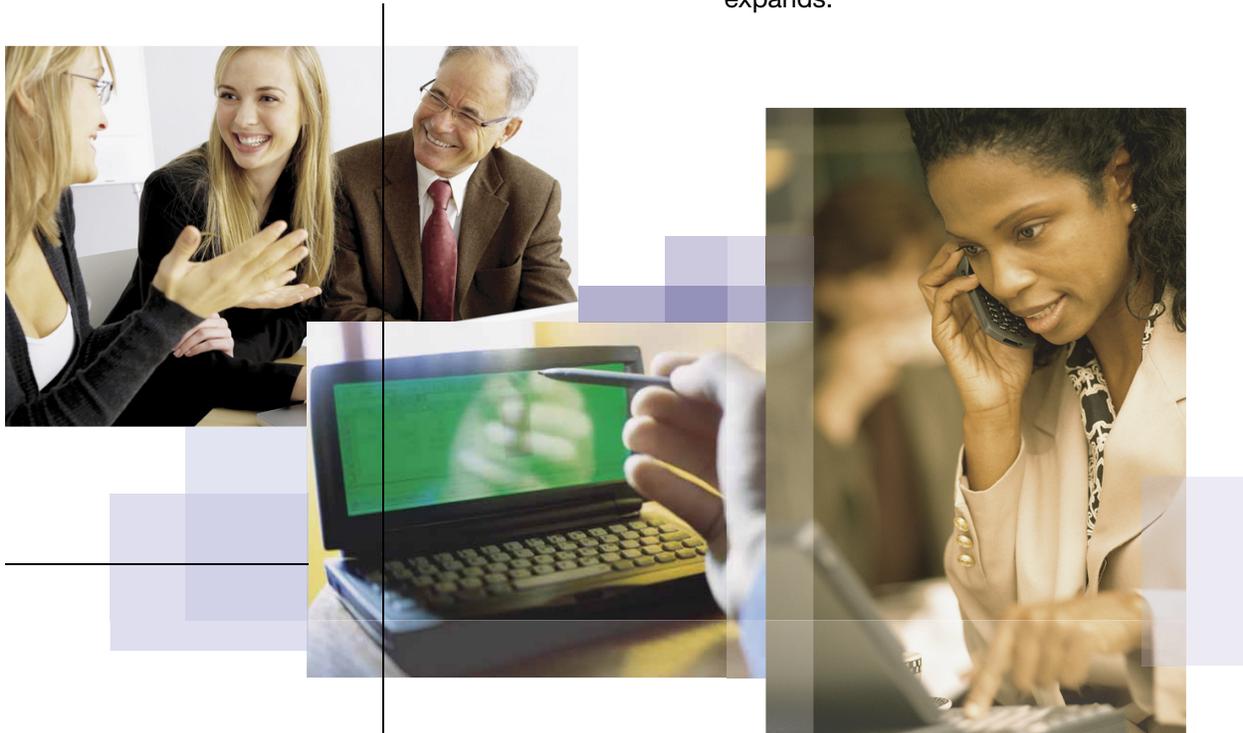
- Financing the rising costs of care
- Free market competition
- Long-term care for the elderly
- Home health care
- Quality control
- Technology assessment
- Hospital-based marketing
- Alternative health delivery systems
- Service delivery in developing countries

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## Job Trends

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- Health care is the largest industry in the U.S. and will continue to grow.
- Employment opportunities in nontraditional settings such as ambulatory care and out-patient surgery clinics, home health, and other alternative delivery systems will outpace demand in traditional settings.
- Greater emphasis will be placed on cost-containment, requiring innovative leaders in finance and economics.
- The demand for marketing expertise will increase with competition.
- Exportation of public health technologies to developing nations will expand well into the future.
- The demand for qualified managers and administrators will grow as the industry expands.



# Education

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Public health problems involve complex and interrelated social, behavioral, legal, medical, and economic issues. If you are interested in health education, virtually every specialization within public health offers career opportunities that will make an impact on people's lives. As an educator with a graduate degree in public health, your primary challenge will be to develop and implement interventions designed to improve overall health.

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## Job Settings

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- Colleges and universities
- Public and private secondary schools
- Consumer advocacy organizations
- International organizations
- Consulting firms
- State legislative committees
- Health service delivery organizations
- Community organizations
- Federal and state health agencies
- Voluntary health agencies

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## Job Titles

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- Outreach Specialist  
California Pan-Ethnic Health Network  
Oakland, CA
- Dean  
School of Public Health  
San Juan, Puerto Rico
- Health Educator  
Lupus Foundation of America, Inc.  
Long Beach, CA
- Virology Trainer  
NYC Department of Health  
New York, NY
- Assistant Professor of International Health Economics  
Harvard School of Public Health  
Cambridge, MA
- HIV/AIDS Behavior Change Technical Advisor  
Academy For Educational Development  
Maputo, Mozambique
- Professor of Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences  
University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston  
Houston, TX
- Director of Cancer Information  
American Cancer Society, New England Division  
Framingham, MA
- Cardiovascular Disease Prevention and Control Program Outreach Educator  
NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene  
New York, NY



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## Key Issues

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- Health promotion, disease prevention
- Sexually transmitted diseases
- Healthy lifestyles
- Injury prevention
- Maternal and child health
- Chronic diseases
- Diet, smoking cessation
- Occupational safety and health
- Drugs and alcohol
- Environmental hazards

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## Job Trends

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- The AIDS epidemic with its related complex medical, legal, economic, and social issues is expected to substantially increase the need for qualified health educators throughout the world.
- The rising cost of health insurance is causing corporations to increasingly sponsor healthier lifestyle programs for employees. Consequently, the demand for health educators in this sector is expected to grow rapidly in the next decade.
- The need for interdisciplinary faculty in secondary and higher education is expanding rapidly to keep pace with ever changing public health technologies.
- Educators trained in maternal and child health, nutrition, sanitation, industrial hygiene, population dynamics, and prevention of disease will increasingly find career opportunities in developing countries.

# Community Practice

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Community practice offers career opportunities to those striving for mobility or a leadership position in health care programs. A graduate degree in public health will equip you with the knowledge and leadership experiences needed to launch a successful career in community practice.

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## Job Settings

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- Federal, state, and local health agencies
- Voluntary agencies
- Relief agencies
- Consulting firms
- Crisis centers
- International organizations
- Rehabilitation centers
- Health services delivery organizations
- Substance abuse centers and agencies
- Centers for the aging

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## Job Titles

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- Health Scientist  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention,  
Division of STD Prevention  
Atlanta, GA
- Executive Director  
Boulder County AIDS Project  
Boulder, CO
- Registered Nurse for Home Visitation  
Services  
Northern NJ Maternal/Child Health  
Consortium  
Paterson, NJ
- Chief, Center for Clinical Epidemiology  
Community Health Administration  
Baltimore, MD
- Community Assessment Health Educator  
Washington State Department of Health  
Tumwater, WA
- Associate Professor  
Department of Community Health, UCLA  
School of Public Health  
Los Angeles, CA
- Maternal and Child Health Specialist  
Food for the Hungry  
Washington, DC
- Community Health Educator  
American Refugee Committee International  
Thailand
- Emergency Watch Commander  
Medical and Health Services Research  
Association  
New York, NY
- Chief Operating Officer  
Neighborhood Health Plan  
Boston, MA
- Tuberculosis Controller/Assistant Health  
Officer  
Santa Clara County Public Health Department  
San Jose, CA

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## Key Issues

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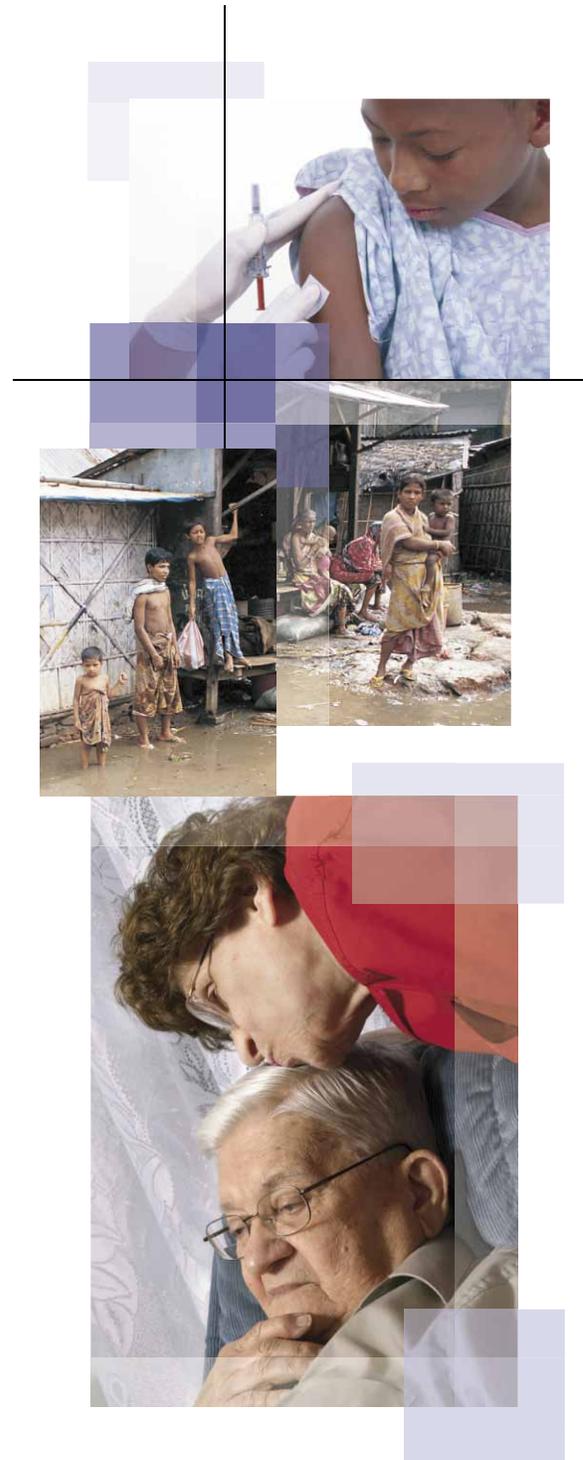
- Malnutrition
- Infant mortality
- Population growth
- Immunization
- Rural health
- Sexually transmitted diseases
- Environmental pollution
- Nutrition
- Aging population
- Teen suicide

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## Job Trends

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- Demand is increasing for epidemiologists in public health agencies, industry, public and private health services delivery organizations, and international agencies.
- Demand for nutritionists remains strong due to health, nutrition, and food assistance programs sponsored by both public and private agencies. Demand is also increasing in settings such as physician offices, wellness centers, media, and private industry.
- There are national and international shortages for nurses, physicians, veterinarians, environmentalists, social workers, and engineers trained in public health technologies.



# Research

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A career in basic and applied research demands interdisciplinary skills to meet the challenges of a rapidly-changing field. A background in science – biological, natural, social, or behavioral – opens the door to many career opportunities, and an advanced degree in public health will help you realize your full potential.

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## Job Settings

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- Research agencies such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Institutes of Health, and the Food and Drug Administration
- Private research firms
- Public and private foundations
- Industry
- Ministries of health
- State and local governments
- Academic institutions
- International health agencies
- Labor and consumer organizations
- Health services delivery organizations

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## Job Titles

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- HIV/AIDS Vaccine Researcher  
La Pierre Angulaire  
Abidjan, Cote D'Ivoire
- Research Associate  
American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology  
Washington, DC
- Director, Clinical Research  
Children's Hospital of Boston  
Boston, MA
- Data Analyst/Biostatistician  
Department of Nutrition  
Harvard School of Public Health  
Cambridge, MA
- Injury Epidemiologist  
Safe Kids Worldwide  
Washington, DC
- Genetic Engineer  
Stratagene  
San Diego, CA
- Postdoctoral Fellow in Maternal and Child Health  
Tulane School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine  
New Orleans, LA
- Director  
World Trade Center Health Registry  
New York City Dept. of Health and Mental Hygiene  
New York, NY
- Environmental Research Associate  
WESTAT  
Rockville, MD
- CDC Resident Advisor  
President's Malaria Initiative, Malaria Branch, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
Nairobi, Kenya

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## Key Issues

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- Toxicological and chemical effects of toxic wastes
- Psychosocial impact of disease and injury
- Parasitic diseases
- Virology
- Risk assessment of chemical and physical agents
- Economic impact of acute and chronic disease
- Changing behavior to prevent disease
- Alternative delivery systems of care
- Cancer epidemiology
- Design and evaluation of clinical trials for drug therapies



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## Job Trends

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- The second Task Force for Research Planning in Environmental Health Science reported a critical shortage in public health of qualified researchers in chemistry, toxicology, occupational health, environmental epidemiology, and environmental engineering.
- As a result of the complex changes taking place in our health care systems, the demand for health services researchers in health economics, finance, and operations research is growing significantly.
- The emergence of diseases such as AIDS and multi-drug resistant strains of TB, as well as continued increases in sexually transmitted and other acute and chronic diseases, has created a shortfall of research epidemiologists. This shortage is expected to continue for decades to come.
- Demand for biostatisticians remains high with many positions available in both corporate and academic settings.



# Policy

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Health policy examines the complexity and dynamics of our public health system and its impact on the health of individuals and communities. Whether you're looking for a career in health policy in the private or public sector, a graduate degree in public health will multiply your career opportunities regardless of your academic background. With an advanced degree, you'll be in a position to make vital health policy decisions that affect countless lives.

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## Job Settings

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- Regulatory agencies
- Advocacy groups
- Government agencies
- Public and private foundations
- Professional associations
- Industry
- Corporations
- Think tanks
- Consulting firms

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## Job Titles

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- Healthcare Analyst  
Connecticut Hospital Association  
Wallingford, CT
- Project Specialist  
Tomas Rivera Policy Institute  
Los Angeles, CA
- Health Economist  
Congressional Budget Office  
Washington, DC
- Secretary of Health  
Government of Kiribati  
Tarawa, Kiribati
- Executive Director and General Counsel  
Legal Environmental Assistance Foundation  
Tallahassee, FL
- Administrative Assistant to U.S. Senator  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC
- Director of Public Health Studies  
Wood-Snodgrass, Inc.  
Topeka, KS
- Principle Policy Analyst  
Health Research Inc.  
New York, NY
- Activity Manager/Family Compliance  
Management Systems International  
Washington, DC



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## Key Issues

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- Access to health care
- National health insurance
- Genetic engineering
- Technology assessment
- Safety legislation
- AIDS, aging, accidents, and abuse
- Health care finance
- Environmental protection
- Homelessness
- Reproductive health

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## Job Trends

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- Emerging scientific technology and associated medical, legal, economic, and social issues will continue to create demand for well-educated policymakers.
- As corporations face rising health costs, the need for decision makers with analytical and problem-solving skills will grow in the private sector.
- Exportation of scientific technology to developing countries will increase and expand the need for health planners and policymakers worldwide.
- Policy planners in the public sector will be in demand to protect the health rights of the homeless, under-insured, elderly, or disabled.
- Health policy experts will be in increasing demand to determine and control toxic waste disposal.

# More About Schools of Public Health

## Fields of Concentration

While each school of public health may offer different concentrations, the most common fields of concentration include:

- Epidemiology
- Biostatistics
- Nutrition
- Environmental Health Sciences
- Maternal and Child Health
- Health Services Administration
- Public Health Policy, Practice, and Program Management
- Behavioral Sciences and Health Education
- Health Law
- Occupational Safety and Health
- Biomedical and Laboratory Sciences
- Tropical Medicine
- Global Public Health
- Population Health
- Exercise Science
- Public Health Preparedness
- Immunology

## Degrees

Schools of Public Health are primarily graduate institutions and offer a variety of degrees. Common degrees conferred include:

- Master of Public Health (MPH)
- Master of Health Administration (MHA)
- Master of Science (MS)
- Doctor of Public Health (DrPH)
- Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)
- Doctor of Science (ScD)

Master's degree programs usually require one to two years to complete. Depending upon prior education, experience, and the area of study, doctoral programs generally require at least three or more years.

In addition to these degrees, many schools offer coordinated or joint degree options in business, law, medicine, nursing, dentistry, social work, engineering, and other fields. Many offer off-campus or extended programs, as well as continuing education programs for public health professionals.



## The Association Of Schools Of Public Health

ASPH represents the Schools of Public Health (SPH) accredited by the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH). These schools have a combined faculty of over 9,900 and educate more than 25,000 students annually from every state in the U.S. and most countries throughout the world. The schools graduate approximately 8,300 professionals each year.

ASPH promotes the efforts of schools of public health to improve the health of every person through education, research, and policy. Inspired by the belief that “You’re only as healthy as the world you live in,” ASPH works with governmental and professional organizations to solve the most pressing health concerns.

For more information on graduate programs in public health,  
visit [www.asph.org](http://www.asph.org) or contact us at:

ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS OF PUBLIC HEALTH  
1900 M Street NW, Suite 710, Washington, D.C. 20036  
Tel: (202) 296-1099, Email: [info@asph.org](mailto:info@asph.org)

Related Links:

[www.whatispublichealth.org](http://www.whatispublichealth.org)  
[www.publichealthjobs.net](http://www.publichealthjobs.net)

“ I’m very grateful for the training that my MPH gave me. Not only did I enjoy and feel challenged and motivated in the coursework, but I gained valuable skills that I use daily in my current position. ”

“ Getting my master’s degree has been crucial in my professional development. It allowed me to develop the skills and make contacts that led to a fulfilling career. ”

“ My graduate education in public health gave me a wonderful overview of the field, and allowed me to concentrate on specific issue areas that would help prepare me for the next step of my career. ”

“ Attending a school of public health with such a wide array of public health professionals and experts was intellectually stimulating and astounding. The experience has greatly broadened my view of public health issues, deepened my interest and commitment to public health, and helped me develop fundamental skills in public health. ”

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