

## Who we are

The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) is the state agency responsible for protecting, maintaining, and improving the health of all people in Minnesota. MDH works to make Minnesota a better place for everyone to live, work, and play.

Minnesota's public health system is known as one of the best in the nation. It's built upon a strong partnership between MDH, local public health agencies, Tribal governments, and other organizations. MDH has more than 2,000 employees. The agency attracts and retains a diverse, skilled workforce with a supportive culture and a passion for helping people in Minnesota at its core.

## What we do

The Minnesota Department of Health does many things to help keep people healthy.

### Here are some examples:

- Monitoring infectious diseases and quickly responding to outbreaks.
- Ensuring tap water across the state is safe to drink and foods are safe to eat.
- Supporting statewide food programs for women, infants, and children.
- Providing birth and death certificates.
- Advancing policies and programs to prevent chronic diseases and improve mental health.
- Inspecting nursing homes, hospitals, and other facilities to ensure quality care.
- Gathering and analyzing data on Minnesota's health care system to support reform.
- Advising on how to reduce environmental and pollution risks to health.
- Screening newborns for rare disorders and hearing loss to prevent long-term health problems.
- Minimizing health impacts caused by climate change and extreme weather.
- Offering grants and contracts to community groups to support grassroots efforts to improve health.

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*Public Health is what we, as a society, do collectively to assure the conditions in which people can be healthy.*

– Institute of Medicine



## Advancing health for everyone

A central part of MDH's work is the integration of health equity into each of its program areas. The work of improving health for all communities is shared by everyone in the agency. Some communities have more opportunities to be healthy than others – this leads to what we call health inequities. Research shows that the conditions needed for health are peace, shelter, education, food, income, and social justice. This means that health is more than just the prevention of disease or injury. MDH looks at all of the factors that create health and works with communities and partners to make sure everyone has what they need to be healthy.

## Information and data for all in Minnesota

MDH works hard to gather and share information that all people in Minnesota can understand and use to make decisions about their health. This means gathering data that represents all communities, such as communities of color and Indigenous communities, people with disabilities, LGBTQIA+ communities, urban vs. rural communities, and more. Having data for all of these communities can help us better understand health needs and provide the best information and resources for people to be healthy.

## Community solutions for statewide impact

The best solutions for improving public health come directly from communities. MDH works closely with the people it serves to address issues that are important to them, meeting them where they are, and working together to communicate in the most effective way. By issuing grants and contracts to fund local programs throughout the state, MDH supports community-driven solutions to address the root causes of health disparities and improve health for all.