

2025-2026

POLICY AGENDA



WALHDAB

Public Health In Action

Wisconsin Association of Local Health Departments and Boards

Public health is what we as a society do collectively to assure the conditions in which all people can be healthy. These conditions go far beyond access to healthcare and individual choices. In fact, 80% of what makes people healthy occurs outside of a doctor's visit. For everyone to thrive, we must create and maintain community conditions and systems that support health like safe housing, good-paying jobs, public transportation, and well-resourced schools. Public policies that promote public health are essential for building a stronger Wisconsin, where everyone has the chance to live their healthiest lives.

POLICY PRIORITIES WE WILL LEAD



Local & Tribal Health Department Funding

Secure funding for local and tribal health departments to carry out essential and mandated public health responsibilities and services



Community Health Funding

Secure funding for community-based organizations, local and tribal health departments, and community partners to address community specific health gaps based on community health needs assessments



Public Health Workforce

Support the recruitment and retention of the public health workforce in Wisconsin



Public Health Authority

Assure public health authority for control of communicable diseases and other public health threats

POLICY PRIORITIES WE WILL SUPPORT



Increase Access to Care & Improving Clinical Linkages

- Extension of Medicaid postpartum coverage to one year
- Expansion of Medicaid eligibility as allowed under the Affordable Care Act
- Access to comprehensive reproductive rights and healthcare
- Policies that support doulas and birth workers
- Policies that increase access to oral health care
- Reimbursement for community health worker services



Safe, Healthy, & Thriving Communities

- Equitable policies that prevent and reduce substance use
- Increased funding for the expansion of youth and adult mental health and substance use treatment programs, and support for legal diversion programming
- Allocation of a greater proportion of opioid settlement dollars to community-based prevention and harm reduction initiatives
- Evidence-based policies and programs to prevent chronic disease
- Policies that address the inequities and health harms of the criminal legal system
- Policies that reduce firearm-related harm and violence
- Evidence-based immunization practices
- Expanded civic engagement and equitable access to voting



Environmental & Climate Health

- Expanded funding for PFAS testing, mitigation, and remediation
- Policies that remove lead hazards
- Policies that improve the quality of air, water, and food safety



Economic Growth & Family Stability

- Increased access to affordable childcare
- Increased access to affordable and safe housing
- Paid family leave
- Universal school meals and reduced food insecurity
- Policies that support family caregivers
- Expanded child tax credits

Who are we?

The Wisconsin Public Health Association (WPHA) is the state's largest membership organization for public health workers and includes those working in both governmental and nongovernmental sectors. The Wisconsin Association of Local Health Departments and Boards (WALHDAB) is the professional organization representing leaders and workers in local governmental public health. Together, WPHA and WALHDAB represent more than 1,200 public health professionals across Wisconsin who are striving to create a healthier, safer, and more equitable state for all people.

