

COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Communication and Information Technology (IT) - Information technology and communication systems are vital to the delivery of public health services. The Communication and Information Technology Standards specify the communication infrastructure and systems needed to interface with community partners and the public for both routine and urgent communications. These standards also stipulate the information technology and systems that must be in place to access critical information and data to serve and protect the public.

- Standard IT1 -** Maintain information technology infrastructure.
- Standard IT2 -** Maintain communication infrastructure.
- Standard IT3 -** Maintain a system for routine and urgent communications.
- Standard IT4 -** Provide education, information, and resources to protect and promote the public's health.
- Standard IT5 -** Establish and maintain a statewide public health data warehouse.

STANDARD IT1 - MAINTAIN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE.

LOCAL CRITERIA

IT1a-L - Maintain a computer infrastructure that meets the specifications needed to interface with the state public health department.

Specifications include but are not limited to:

- Secure high-speed Internet connection
- Equipment and software that are compatible with Microsoft operating systems and Microsoft Office
- An Internet browser that supports 128-bit encryption

IT1b-L - Maintain written policies and procedures to assure system security, including virus and firewall protection and other levels of security to safeguard the privacy of electronic information. Review policies and procedures at least annually.

Refer to Administration Standard AD1b-L regarding privacy and security of public health records.

IT1c-L - Assure access to an information technology specialist to maintain operations of computer infrastructure.

Assure access through methods such as organizational design, employment, or contractual arrangement.

IT1d-L - Assure the ability to access a GIS (geographic information system) to analyze data related to the local public health service area.

IT1e-L - Assure compatibility with data requirements of state agencies and other contractors.

IT1f-L - Maintain written procedures for collecting, storing, retrieving, and retaining records and data related to day-to-day operations of the designated local public health agency.

STATE CRITERIA

IT1a-S - Maintain a computer infrastructure needed to interface with the state public health laboratory and other relevant state and local agencies.

Computer infrastructure includes hardware such as PCs, servers, switches, etc. Infrastructure also includes data applications that are built to collect program-specific data requirements. For example, the state public health department's immunization program uses a data application called the Immunization Registry Information System (IRIS).

IT1b-S - Provide data requirements to local agencies to assure compatibility with state public health programs.

IT1c-S - Provide policy and procedure guidelines to local public health agencies for assuring system security.

Guidelines will include templates and examples as appropriate.

IT1d-S - Provide policy and procedure guidelines to local public health agencies for collecting, storing, retrieving, and retaining records and data.

Guidelines will include templates and examples as appropriate.

IT1e-S - Maintain written policies and procedures to assure state public health department system security, including virus and firewall protection and other levels of security to safeguard the privacy of electronic information. Review policies and procedures at least annually.

IT1f-S - Maintain written procedures for collecting, storing, retrieving, and retaining records and data for the state public health department.

IT1g-S - Maintain and utilize a GIS (geographic information system) to analyze statewide data related to public health.

STANDARD IT2 - MAINTAIN COMMUNICATION INFRASTRUCTURE.

IT2a-L - Provide access to interpretation and translation services for languages used within the public health service area.

IT2b-L - Use redundant modes of communication.

(1) Redundant modes of communication include but are not limited to:

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|---|---------------------|
| •Health Alert Network (HAN) | •Telephone line |
| •Individual e-mail address for each employee | •Dedicated fax line |
| •Computers with secure high-speed Internet connectivity | •Cell phones |
| •800 MHz radios | •Pagers |
| •Answering/voice mail system | |

(2) The designated local public health agency may have its own Web site or be part of another entity's internet domain (e.g., county or hospital).

IT2c-L - Assure the existence and maintenance of a Web site for the designated local public health agency.

IT2d-L - Have access to or provide a public information officer (PIO) with an understanding of public health issues to manage media relationships, messages, news releases, and news conferences.

Have access to or provide PIO through methods such as organizational design, employment, or contractual arrangement.

IT2a-S - Provide assistance to local public health agencies in locating associations and networks that may have access to interpretation and translation resources.

The state public health department will provide information to requesting agencies regarding known associations and networks for interpretation and translation services.

IT2b-S - Maintain required communication infrastructure to interface with local public health agencies.

Required communication infrastructure:

- Health Alert Network (HAN)
- 800 MHz radios
- A 24-hour, seven days a week, 365 days a year duty officer and toll-free number(s).

IT2c-S - Use redundant modes of communication.

Redundant modes of communication include but are not limited to:

- | | |
|---|---------------------|
| •Health Alert Network (HAN) | •Telephone line |
| •Individual e-mail address for each employee | •Dedicated fax line |
| •Computers with secure high-speed Internet connectivity | •Cell phones |
| •800 MHz radios | •Pagers |
| •Answering/voice mail system | |

IT2d-S - Assist local public health agencies with managing media relationships, creating messages, writing news releases, and facilitating news conferences.

IT2e-S - Provide consultation and policy guidelines to local public health agencies for managing media relationships, news releases, and news conferences.

IT2f-S - Assure the existence and maintenance of a Web site for the state public health department.

STANDARD IT3 - MAINTAIN A SYSTEM FOR ROUTINE AND URGENT COMMUNICATIONS.

IT3a-L - Assure 24-hour, seven days a week, 365 days a year routine, intermediate, and emergency alerting or notification and information sharing with internal and external partners.

IT3b-L - Maintain and review annually written communication procedures for public information and community education.

Written communication procedures should address:

- Disseminating and documenting clear and accurate routine public health messages
- Coordinating with community partners for the dissemination of public health messages
- Implementing Crisis Emergency Risk Communication (CERC) methods to convey appropriate and accurate information to manage community concern
- Describing responsibilities for positions interacting with the news media and the public. Positions may include local board of health members, any public health staff member, and PIO.
- Identifying the expectations for all staff regarding internal and external communications

IT3c-L - Assure that public health messages address the community's special populations.

Special populations: Any individual, group, or community whose circumstances create barriers to obtaining or understanding information, or the ability to access available public health services. Circumstances that may create barriers include, but are not limited to: age, physical, mental, emotional or cognitive status, culture, ethnicity, religious, language, citizenship, or socio-economic status, or health literacy level.

IT3a-S - Assure 24-hour, seven days a week, 365 days a year routine, intermediate, and emergency alerting or notification and information sharing with the appropriate audiences.**IT3b-S** - Maintain directories of contact information of state public health department employees and programs for use by local public health agencies. Update contact information monthly.

Information will be posted monthly on the Health Alert Network and the state public health department's intranet.

IT3c-S - Provide guidelines for local public health agencies for public information and community education procedures.**IT3d-S** - Identify and provide access to resources that address communications with special populations.

Special populations: Any individual, group, or community whose circumstances create barriers to obtaining or understanding information, or the ability to access available public health services. Circumstances that may create barriers include, but are not limited to: age, physical, mental, emotional or cognitive status, culture, ethnicity, religious, language, citizenship, or socio-economic status, or health literacy level.

IT3e-S - Maintain and review annually the state public health department's written communication procedures for public information and community education.

Written communication procedures should address:

- Disseminating and documenting clear and accurate routine public health messages
- Coordinating with community partners for the dissemination of public health messages
- Implementing Crisis Emergency Risk Communication (CERC) methods to convey appropriate and accurate information to manage community concern
- Describing responsibilities for positions interacting with the news media and the public. Positions may include local board of health members, any public health staff member, and PIO.
- Identifying the expectations for all staff regarding internal and external communications

STANDARD IT4 - PROVIDE EDUCATION, INFORMATION, AND RESOURCES TO PROTECT AND PROMOTE THE PUBLIC'S HEALTH.

IT4a-L - Provide the general public, community leaders, and elected officials with education and information on health risks, health status, and health needs in the community as well as information on policies and programs that can improve community health.

- (1) Refer to stakeholder list in Community Assessment and Planning Standard CA3.
- (2) Information should include program evaluation and best practices.

IT4b-L - Assure usage of various communication methods when providing the public with information and education needed to reduce health risks and improve health.

Examples of communication methods: Public Service Announcements, news releases, community presentations, health fairs, publications, and Web site.

IT4c-L - Assure that special populations are provided targeted prevention and health protection messages in a format to eliminate barriers to understanding.

Special populations: Any individual, group, or community whose circumstances create barriers to obtaining or understanding information, or the ability to access available public health services. Circumstances that may create barriers include, but are not limited to: age, physical, mental, emotional or cognitive status, culture, ethnicity, religious, language, citizenship, or socio-economic status, or health literacy level.

- IT4a-S** - Provide the general public, policy makers, and partners with education and information on statewide health needs, health risks, health status, and information on policies and programs that can improve health.
- IT4b-S** - Assure usage of various communication methods when providing the general public, policy makers and partners with information and education needed to reduce health risks and improve health.
- IT4c-S** - Provide public health educational materials in multiple languages and in formats that accommodate special populations.

Special populations: Any individual, group, or community whose circumstances create barriers to obtaining or understanding information, or the ability to access available public health services. Circumstances that may create barriers include, but are not limited to: age, physical, mental, emotional or cognitive status, culture, ethnicity, religious, language, citizenship, or socio-economic status, or health literacy level.

STANDARD IT5 – ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN A STATEWIDE PUBLIC HEALTH DATA WAREHOUSE.

- IT5a-S** - Establish and maintain a public health data warehouse that resides at the state public health department.

The data warehouse will contain but not be limited to a common set of population-based core public health indicators.

- IT5b-S** - Disseminate public health data via a Web-based application.

The state public health department will establish security levels for the data made available through the Web-based application.

- IT5c-S** - Identify and provide access to resources that address data not collected by the state public health department, if available.