

PUBLIC HEALTH

***Please Note:** BYU Life Sciences has specific Public Health programs, separate from the Exercise Science and Exercise and Wellness degrees. These include Environmental/Occupational Health, Epidemiology, Health Promotion, Health Science, and School Health Education:

<https://catalog.byu.edu/life-sciences/public-health>.

Public health promotes and protects the health of people and the communities where they live, learn, work and play. From conducting scientific research to educating about health, people in the field of public health work to assure the conditions in which people can be healthy. That can mean vaccinating children and adults to prevent the spread of disease or educating people about the risks of alcohol and tobacco. Public health sets safety standards to protect workers and develops school nutrition programs to ensure kids have access to healthy food. Public health also works to track disease outbreaks, prevent injuries and shed light on why some people are more likely to suffer from poor health than others.¹

JOB REQUIREMENTS

What is the exact job title?

- Public Health Educator
- Epidemiologist
- Public Health Analyst
- Public Health Specialist
- ...and many more

***The following information is mainly based off of statistics for the Payscale Public Health Specialist page and BLS Health Educators and Community Health Workers page. Please do additional research.**

How do I become one?

- Health educators need at least a bachelor's degree in health education or health promotion. Students learn theories and methods of health behavior and health education and gain the knowledge and skills they will need to develop health education materials and programs. Most programs include an internship.³
- Some health educator positions require candidates to have a master's or doctoral degree. Graduate programs are commonly in community health education, school health education, public health education, or health promotion. A variety of undergraduate majors may be acceptable for entry to a master's degree program.³
- Community health workers need at least a high school diploma, although some jobs may require some postsecondary education. Education programs may lead to a 1-year certificate or a 2-year associate's degree and cover topics such as wellness, ethics, and cultural awareness.³

What qualities do I need?

- Analytical skills: Health educators collect and analyze data in order to evaluate programs and to determine the needs of the people they serve.³
- Instructional skills: Health educators and community health workers should be comfortable with public speaking so that they can lead programs, teach classes, and facilitate discussion with clients and families.³

1<https://www.apha.org/what-is-public-health>

2<https://explorehealthcareers.org/field/public-health/>

3<https://www.bls.gov/ooh/community-and-social-service/health-educators.htm>

4https://www.payscale.com/research/US/Skill=Public_Health_Education/Hourly_Rate

5https://www.payscale.com/research/US/Job=Public_Health_Specialist/Salary

- **Interpersonal skills:** Health educators and community health workers interact with many people from a variety of backgrounds. They must be good listeners and be culturally sensitive to respond to the needs of the people they serve.³
- **Problem-solving skills:** Health educators and community health workers must think creatively about how to improve the health of the community through health education programs. In addition, they may need to solve problems that arise in planning programs, such as changes to their budget or resistance from the community they are serving.³
- **Writing skills:** Health educators and community health workers develop written materials to convey health-related information. Health educators also write proposals to develop programs and apply for funding.³

TYPICAL WORK DAY

What do they do?

- Public health professionals analyze and develop programs that protect the health of individuals, families and communities in the United States and abroad. Because of their “big picture” perspective, public health experts play a key role in emergency preparedness and response. This may be why public health has become such a growing field in recent years. The United States is placing a high priority on building up the nation’s public health workforce.²

Where do they normally work?

- Health educators and community health workers work in a variety of settings, including hospitals, nonprofit organizations, government, doctors’ offices, private businesses, and colleges.³

What hours do they work?

- Health educators and community health workers generally work full time.³

BENEFITS

What is a typical salary in this field?

- Public Health Education: \$19/hour or \$44k/year.³
- Epidemiologist: \$28/hour or \$61k/year.⁴
- Public Health Analyst: \$22/hour or \$62/year.⁴
- Public Health Specialist: \$20/hour or \$53k/year.⁴

Does this job come with any benefits? (vision, dental, 401k, PTO, etc.)

- Medical: 89%⁵
- Vision: 65%⁵
- Dental: 75%⁵
- None: 10%⁵

GROWTH

What is the projected job growth?

- Between 2018 - 2028, job growth is projected to be 11%.³

Last Updated: October 2019

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