

LPHA Accreditation Support FAQs

General Questions

1. What funding is available?

- a. DHSS has dedicated a large portion of the total awarded Public Health Infrastructure Grant (PHIG) funding to supporting LPHAs as they pursue or maintain an accredited status. Visit the [LPHA resource site](#) for more detailed information, (all information is located under the Accreditation Information tab) or to access the [Accreditation Support infographic](#) for at-a-glance information.
 - Technical assistance is available to LPHAs through a contract with the Missouri Center for Public Health Excellence (MOCPHE) at no cost to the LPHA.
 - DHSS is offering access to the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) readiness assessment free of charge for all LPHAs.
 - Direct funding is available for accreditation activities through the DHSS Center for Local Public Health Services (CLPHS).
 - DHSS dedicated more than \$2.5 million to cost reimbursement to defer the cost of pursuing accreditation for LPHAs.
 - DHSS has also secured general revenue funding to support incentive payments for LPHAs that meet eligibility criteria.
- b. Continue reviewing the following frequently asked questions for more information on each funding option.

2. What if I'm not planning to pursue accreditation?

- a. LPHAs are not required to achieve accreditation, however it is strongly recommended for LPHAs to take advantage of this opportunity to innovate and improve their operations at little to no cost. Funding from DHSS can support the development of LPHA policies, plans such as Community Health Assessments and Community Health Improvement Plans, and systems such as performance management and quality improvement.

3. What if I'm currently accredited? Can I use this support for reaccreditation?

- a. Yes. All the accreditation support options can be used to pursue reaccreditation or maintain an LPHA's accredited status.

4. Can I use this support for PHAB and Missouri Institute for Community Health (MICH) accreditation?

- a. Yes. All the accreditation support options are applicable to both PHAB and MICH accreditation, with the exception of the PHAB readiness assessment.

5. What if I need technical assistance with accreditation activities?

- a. LPHAs may submit a request for assistance through the CDC's Public Health Infrastructure Virtual Engagement (PHIVE) system. CLPHS can coordinate requests and assist LPHAs with the PHIVE system. Technical assistance through PHIVE is available at no cost for PHIG grantees and is available for any topics that fall under the [PHIG guidance](#).

LPHAs may also request technical assistance through a contracted agreement between DHSS and MOCPE. See the Technical Assistance section below for more information on how to access support.

Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) Readiness Assessment

1. Is the readiness assessment mandatory?

- a. No. LPHAs not interested in pursuing accreditation are not required to participate in the PHAB Readiness Assessment. However, participation is strongly encouraged for all LPHAs since the assessment **is available for free, with PHIG funds until January 1, 2025**, and is usually \$1,299. The readiness assessment is also a powerful tool to understand your agency's capacity around key areas like quality improvement and performance management. This unbiased review of operations can be used as justification when applying for funding opportunities, planning programs, and interacting with governing entities.

2. How do I start the process?

- a. Email educationservices@phaboard.org to receive registration information and register for an upcoming training session.

3. Is there training available?

- a. Yes, PHAB provides training resources during virtual sessions, on-demand, and during office hour sessions for LPHAs participating in the readiness assessment.

4. What is the training and office hour schedule?

- a. Virtual trainings are offering from December 2023 through August 2024:
 - December 5, 2023: 2:00 – 3:30 pm
 - February 22, 2024: 1:00 – 2:30 pm
 - March 6, 2024: 9 – 10:30 am
 - April 17, 2024: 2:00 – 3:30 pm
 - June 25, 2024: 1:00 – 2:30 pm
 - August 28, 2024: 2:00 – 3:30 pm
- b. For registration links and office hour times and topics, please visit the Accreditation Information tab on the [LPHA resource site](#).

5. Does participation in the PHAB readiness assessment make me eligible for incentive funding?

- a. Yes. LPHAs that participate in the PHAB readiness assessment are eligible for incentive payments weighted at 20% of the same percent of the funding the LPHA receives of the total core funding. More detailed information and guidance is available on the [LPHA resource site](#).

6. Is there a cost for the readiness assessment?

- a. No. DHSS is supporting access to the readiness assessment for all 115 LPHAs in Missouri through PHIG funding until January 1, 2025. LPHAs do not need to apply for reimbursement funding or pay for the assessment themselves.

- 7. Does completing the readiness assessment mean I have to pursue accreditation?**
 - a. No. Participation in the PHAB readiness assessment does not require LPHAs to go for full accreditation or reaccreditation. LPHAs may access this resource free of charge and take advantage of the [benefits](#) without being obligated to achieve an accredited status.
- 8. How does the readiness assessment affect my MICH accreditation status?**
 - a. Participating in the PHAB readiness assessment does not affect MICH accreditation status for LPHAs.

Cost Reimbursement

- 1. What are some allowable uses of the cost reimbursement funding?**
 - a. LPHAs may use the cost reimbursement funding for a large variety of activities designed to make progress towards accreditation. Staff time, hiring, contracting, and supply purchases are all possible uses of the funding. Allowable uses include, but are not limited to the development of:
 - Community Health Assessments (CHAs)
 - Community Health Improvement Plans (CHIPs)
 - Quality Improvement Plans
 - Performance Management Systems
 - Feedback and Communication Plans
 - Health Equity Intervention Plans
 - Software purchases supporting accreditation requirements
 - Contracting for plans related to accreditation including public health data collection
 - The hiring of staff members, or reimbursement of staff time dedicated to accreditation activities
 - Fees associated with applying for accreditation or reaccreditation under PHAB or MICH
 - Staff training required to meet a measurement identified in PHAB or MICH measures
- 2. How much funding is available?**
 - a. DHSS has a total of \$2.5 million available for cost reimbursement in year 2 of the PHIG. DHSS plans to apply each year until the grant ends in 2027, for additional funding and may be able to adjust the amount based on demand. Funding is available on a first come, first serve basis each year.
- 3. How do I apply for funding?**
 - a. The deadline for funding for this budget year was December 15, 2023 and that time has since passed. The budget template and guidance were sent to LPHA Administrators via email on November 14th and November 28th.
- 4. What is the timing to apply for funding each year?**
 - a. DHSS will apply for CDC PHIG funding each year and may be able to supplement the total amount of cost reimbursement funding based on demand from the previous year.

LPHAs will apply for funding yearly through the budget template process on a first come, first serve basis.

5. What if I don't plan to pursue accreditation in the next year?

- a. LPHAs do not need to apply for these funds if they do not plan to partake in any accreditation activities in the next year. LPHAs may apply for funds the following year if they decide to start accreditation activities then.

6. How is this funding different from the direct PHIG funding?

- a. The direct funding from PHIG is available to LPHAs to support a wide range of activities allowable under CDC's PHIG guidance. The cost reimbursement funding is available to offset the costs of pursuing accreditation in particular. LPHAs may use direct funding to support accreditation activities if they prefer as it is an allowable expense under the PHIG guidance. Visit the [LPHA resource site](#) for more [specific guidance](#) on allowable uses of direct funding.

Technical Assistance (TA)

1. What kind of assistance is available from the Missouri Center for Public Health Excellence (MOCPE)?

- a. Through a contract with DHSS, MOCPE can provide:
 - i. A resource library filled with accreditation checklists, templates, project plans and more for LPHAs pursuing accreditation through PHAB or MICH
 - ii. Quarterly training sessions tailored to specific needs such as strategic planning, health equity, public health communications, and custom training upon request
 - iii. Opportunities to participate in cohorts and learning collaboratives with peer agencies
 - iv. Information to guide decision-making around which accrediting body is right for your agency

2. How do I start getting help?

- a. MOCPE is available now to begin technical assistance. Email the MOCPE accreditation team at accreditation@mocpe.org to determine what resources MOCPE has to offer that is right for your LPHA.

3. What if I need more substantial assistance?

- a. MOCPE can help with more robust accreditation assistance on a funded, direct contract basis. To determine what level of assistance your LPHA needs, please contact the MOCPE accreditation team at accreditation@mocpe.org.

4. Is there TA for PHAB Specifically?

- a. MOCPE currently facilitates a PHAB Learning Collaborative, whose purpose is to provide guidance and support to governmental public health agencies navigating the complexities of PHAB accreditation. The group meets the second Tuesday of each month from 2:30-3:30pm. Please email the MOCPE accreditation team (accreditation@mocpe.org) for more information on the collaboratives.

5. Is there TA for MICH Accreditation Specifically?

- a. MOCphe does not currently facilitate a MICH Learning Collaborative but would be happy to start if there is enough interest from LPHAs. If this is something you are interested in, please email the MOCphe accreditation team at accreditation@mocphe.org

Incentive Payments

1. How do I qualify for incentive payments?

- a. DHSS secured general revenue to encourage and reward public health service delivery improvement. This is strictly an incentive program, and the funding does not become part of Core Public Health funding, thus it is entirely possible not all available incentive funding will be fully distributed each year. LPHAs are eligible for incentive payments based on specific measures and weights as defined in the [funding guidance document](#) and subject to specific reporting requirements as outlined in the [reporting guidance](#) available on the [LPHA resource site](#).

2. Does participating in MOCphe's accreditation collaboratives count towards incentive payment eligibility?

- a. Yes, LPHAs are eligible for incentive payments if they complete four or more hours of participation in an accreditation work group or readiness group. MOCphe currently facilitates a PHAB Learning Collaborative that meets the second Tuesday of each month from 2:30-3:30pm. They will start a MICH Collaborative if there is enough interest. Please email the MOCphe accreditation team (accreditation@mocphe.org) for more information on the collaboratives. MOCphe sends an attendance list to DHSS for Please access the funding guidance document for more detailed information on the incentive payment.

FAQs from LPHA Bi-Weekly Call on February 6, 2024:

1. What is the difference between Pathways and Initial Accreditation?

- a. This handout might be helpful: <https://phaboard.org/wp-content/uploads/7-Steps-to-Accreditation.pdf>. More information on Pathways is found here: <https://phaboard.org/accreditation-recognition/pathways-recognition-program/>

2. Each of the scheduled trainings will be covering different topics, correct?

- a. No, each training is the same regardless of which one the LPHA chooses to attend. The list shows the specific Measures of topic during the Office Hours, but is that the same for each of the training dates as well? The mini-topic (specific measures) will change for each Office Hours but the session is open for all questions.

3. Does the PHAB Fee begin at the time of signing up for pathways or initial or does payment trigger at completion and actual receiving PHAB? Needed for budgeting purposes.

- a. The Annual Fee supports the ongoing process of the health department as it goes through the accreditation lifecycle and is invoiced each year, **beginning when the application is submitted**. More information about PHAB fees is found here:
<https://phaboard.org/accreditation-recognition/fees/>
4. **Is there a source to talk about the difference between PHAB and MICH and which might be best fit for our agency?**
 - a. PHAB will be participating in the Accreditation Information session on 4/3/24 where both accrediting bodies will provide an overview.