What Qualifies as Public Health Work Experience?

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For purposes of eligibility for the Certified in Public Health (CPH) examination, qualifying public health work experience involves the application of public health knowledge and skills to protect, promote, or improve the health of populations or communities.

Public health practice focuses on preventing disease and injury, promoting health and well-being, identifying and addressing health risks and disparities, and improving the conditions that affect health across populations.

Examples of qualifying public health activities may include:

- Assessing and monitoring population or community health needs.
- Conducting epidemiologic investigations, disease surveillance, or population health research.
- Developing, implementing, or evaluating disease prevention and health promotion programs.
- Identifying and addressing social, environmental, or behavioral factors affecting community health.
- Developing, implementing, or evaluating public health policies, systems, or interventions.
- Conducting public health education, outreach, or community engagement activities.
- Managing, administering, or supporting programs and organizations whose primary functions are directed toward improving population health.

What generally does not qualify?

Employment in a healthcare setting, or work that contributes to health outcomes, does not automatically constitute public health experience.

Responsibilities primarily involving the diagnosis, treatment, or clinical management of individual patients; routine laboratory testing for clinical purposes; healthcare billing or registration; or administrative support for individual patient services generally do not qualify unless the applicant can demonstrate that the work also involved substantive public health functions.

How is experience evaluated?

NBPHE evaluates the actual responsibilities performed rather than relying solely on an applicant's job title, employer, professional credentials, or work setting.

Individuals working in clinical, laboratory, healthcare administration, or other health-related positions may qualify if their responsibilities include substantive public health activities.

Applicants should describe the public health purpose of their work, the populations or communities served, the public health functions performed, and how their activities contributed to population health objectives.