

## Report to the Boards of Health

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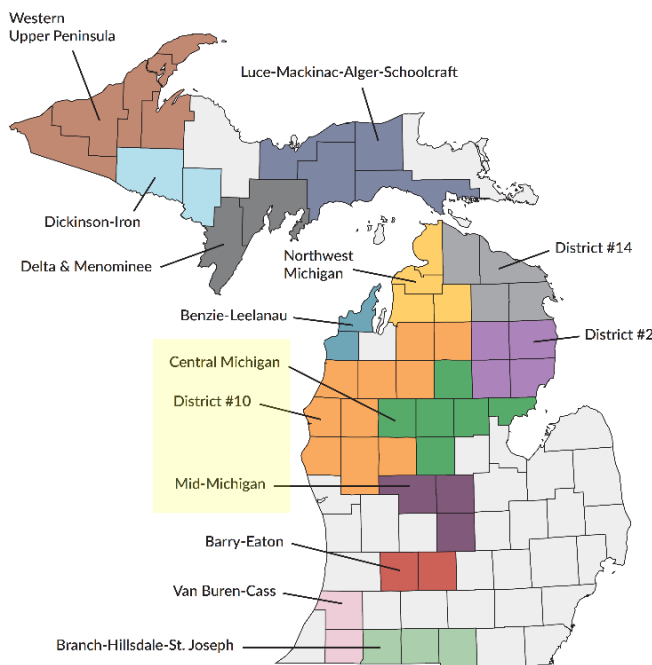
Mid-Michigan District Health Department, Wednesday, February 22, 2023  
Central Michigan District Health Department, Wednesday, February 22, 2023  
District Health Department 10, Friday, February 24, 2023



### Role of Medical Director in Local Public Health

There are 45 local public health departments in Michigan. These health departments cover either a single county (there are 30 single county health departments), a group of counties (there are 14 district health departments), or a city (there is only one city department: Detroit). The public health code requires that each health department have either a medical health officer or a health officer and a medical director. Currently, there are only two medical health officers in the state and the remaining 43 health departments utilize the health officer/medical director model. The medical director covering the three health departments addressed by this report covers 19 counties, accounting for nearly 1/5<sup>th</sup> the square mileage of the entire state. This is more territory covered by any other medical director in Michigan.

Per the public health code, the medical director of a district health department is employed by the district board of health and must be approved by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS). They must meet the following minimum requirements:



#### **R 325.13002, 325.13004, and R 325.13007 Medical director; qualifications.**

**A medical director shall be a physician licensed in Michigan as an M.D. or D.O. who complies with 1 of the following requirements:**

- 1) Is board certified in preventive medicine or public health, or
- 2) Has an M.P.H. or M.S.P.H. degree and not less than 2 years of full-time public health practice, or
- 3) Has an unexpired provisional appointment issued by the department.
  - a) A provisional appointment of a Medical director may be made for a period of not more than 3 years, if an arrangement satisfactory to the state health director is made for the fulfillment of the appropriate qualifications specified in these rules, and if during such time a qualified public health physician advisor is appointed.

**A Medical director shall comply with all of the following requirements:**

- 1) Except as provided in subdivision (3) of this rule, a medical director shall devote his or her full time to the needs of a local health department.
- 2) For purposes of this rule, "full time" means 32 hours or more per week.
- 3) If a local health department serves a population of not more than 250,000 and cannot obtain full time medical direction, the time may be reduced to not less than 16 hours per week. This exception does not apply if the medical director is covering 3 or more local health departments, even if the combined population served is not more than 250,000. Medical directors covering 3 or more local health departments must be full time, regardless of the total combined population.

The medical director provides direction in the development of medical public health policy and program planning, is responsible for developing and carrying out medical policies, procedures, and standing orders, and for advising the health officer on matters related to medical specialty judgments. The medical director provides medical direction to a wide variety of professional, paraprofessional and technical employees and programs. The work

requires independent judgment with considerable consequence of error present and must exercise considerable skill in dealing with the public and public officials.

The day-to-day activity of a medical director varies greatly depending on whether serving a rural or urban area, single county or district, one health department or several, and whether part-time or full time. Basic duties of a medical director are listed in Table One along with some examples of how the medical director for the three districts addressed by this report fulfills those duties.

**Table One: Basic Duties of Local Public Health Department Medical Director with Examples of Duties for MMDHD, CMDHD and DHD10**

<b>Duties of the Medical Director</b>	<b>Some Examples of Duties at MMDHD, CMDHD, and/or DHD10</b>
Function as part of the administrative team by providing appropriate medical input to the administrative decision-making process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend monthly administration meetings/management meetings.</li> <li>• Attend monthly board meetings.</li> <li>• Pertinent administrative policy development and review.</li> </ul>
Actively engage local/state/national political leaders and officials to promote public health goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoted T21 legislation.</li> <li>• Education efforts prior to vote to legalize recreational MJ.</li> <li>• Attend meetings with political leaders re: opioids and other topics.</li> <li>• Writing resolutions re: gun safety, vaccination waivers, etc.</li> </ul>
Serve as a liaison to medical community, health care networks, and other groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate with healthcare providers re: communicable diseases (CD), vaccinations, etc.</li> <li>• Provide resources, references, and data to providers as requested.</li> <li>• Give presentations to healthcare groups (ex: Rabies conference, Hepatitis C conference, Infectious Diarrhea presentation, Vaccination education).</li> <li>• Send letters and information to all healthcare providers when updates are needed about ongoing outbreaks or any changes in public health.</li> <li>• Communicate with schools and nursing homes re: CD issues.</li> <li>• Send letters and information to schools and nursing homes when updates are needed about ongoing outbreaks or changes.</li> <li>• Provide letters to schools to send home to parents re: any CD issue in schools.</li> </ul>
Represent the department on various local and state committees and special task forces and liaison to local and state organizations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Member of the Statewide Drinking Water Advisory Council</li> <li>• Member of Executive Board of Region 6 Healthcare Coalition</li> <li>• Member of Michigan Family Planning Medical Advisory Committee</li> <li>• Michigan Health and Hospital Association Public Health Taskforce</li> <li>• MI Tuberculosis Elimination Plan Committee</li> <li>• Chronic Wasting Disease Education and Outreach Plan Steering Committee Member</li> </ul>
Provide medical oversight and guidance to all programs of the department.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Field questions from department nurses re: CD cases, immunization, test results, etc.</li> <li>• Write/review policies and procedures for all clinical activates.</li> <li>• Sign standing orders for all clinical services provided by nurses.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ This also allows for insurance billing.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Assist with medical aspect in other departments such as toxicology/other human health issues in EH, lead testing/management, anemia, etc. in WIC, other health related questions from community.</li> </ul>
Function as an integral member of the local Emergency Preparedness Team other public health threats.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist with writing and reviewing policies and procedures for EP, specifically medical point of dispensing countermeasures</li> <li>• Actively participate in EP exercise planning and execution</li> <li>• Received additional training in disaster live support and mass fatalities</li> </ul>
Provide direct medical services or oversight of mid-level practitioners for specific programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide oversite to 12 mid-level providers (nurse practitioners), one at MMDHD, three at CMDHD, and eight at DHD10 (3 in family planning, 5 in school clinics).</li> <li>• These providers work under my supervision, delegation and collaboration to practice.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ This also allows for billing of insurance.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Providing services in STD, family planning, women’s health, children/ adolescent school-based care.</li> <li>• Provide them with clinical guidance as needed, do chart reviews, attend meetings, etc.</li> </ul>

Function as a contact person between the department and medical services at the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services and assist in translating these services into local activity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Receive calls from MDHHS epidemiologists, emerging disease staff, local public health liaison etc. re: important matters that need to be addressed.</li> <li>• Receive after hours calls from MDHHS.</li> <li>• Receive calls from MDHHS program leads re: ideas for new programs.</li> <li>• Asked by MDHHS to participate in taskforces/committees.</li> <li>• Take staff concerns or local problems/needs for help to MDHHS.</li> </ul>
Advocate for public health priorities through community outreach and may serve as the spokesperson for the department by being a visible public health leader for the department.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide media interviews.</li> <li>• Give public talks and presentations.</li> <li>• Write/edit materials for public education.</li> </ul>
Serve as a mentor to new medical directors and may serve as an academic teacher or preceptor to students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide help to newer medical directors.</li> <li>• Clinical Assistant Professor at MSU College of Human Medicine and teach public health curriculum to Rural Medicine students based in Gratiot, Clare, and Ludington County.</li> <li>• Teach classes to CMU PA students re: public health.</li> </ul>
Describe the nature of the threats, recommend corrective actions, and communicates these effectively to the Board of Health and to the consumers and providers in the county.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide monthly report to board of health.</li> <li>• Provide reports to county commissioners, other officials as needed.</li> <li>• Attend and present at community forums on public health topics.</li> </ul>
Engage in professional development and in continuing education aimed to assure public health competencies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend annual conferences on CD, TB, epidemiology, public health, immunizations, and family planning and others.</li> <li>• Required to obtain 150 education credits every 3 years to maintain medical license.</li> <li>• Maintain board certification in family medicine.</li> </ul>

Overall, serving as a medical director for a local public health department is a very interesting and dynamic position. The medical director is a resource to the community and can be called on with questions and concerns.

If you are interested in the specific training and qualifications of the medical director for these districts, see [www.linkedin.com/in/jennifer-morse-md-mph](http://www.linkedin.com/in/jennifer-morse-md-mph) .

**Sources:**

Local Public Health Personnel, Public Health Code, Act 368 of 1978 and Rules  
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Medical director Job Description Template  
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Michigan’s Guide to Public Health for Local Governing Entities, 2022. [https://accreditation.localhealth.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Public\\_Health\\_Guide\\_Final-Digital-Accessible.pdf](https://accreditation.localhealth.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Public_Health_Guide_Final-Digital-Accessible.pdf)