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## Public Health

### Overview

For more information on careers in this field, click on the appropriate profession(s) in the [Career Explorer](#) section of this site.

**Public health** is the science and art of creating healthy communities through education, research, and promotion of healthy lifestyles. In public health, the focus is on health promotion and disease/injury prevention; this is in contrast to the medical model of care, which focuses more heavily upon diagnosing and treating illnesses and conditions after they occur.

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.

You can earn over fifteen degrees from an [accredited school of public health](#), including undergraduate, masters and doctoral degrees. The most common are:

- Master of Public Health (MPH)
- Master of Health Administration (MHA)
- Master of Science (MS)
- Master of Science in Public Health (MSPH)
- Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)
- Doctor of Public Health (DrPH)
- Doctor of Science (ScD)

There are over 20 major fields of study. The five core disciplines are:

- [Behavioral Science/Health Education](#)
- [Biostatistics](#)
- [Environmental Health Science](#)
- [Epidemiology](#)
- [Health Services Administration](#)

However, your degree may be in one of several other core public health areas. Examples are:

- [Global Health](#)
- [Laboratory Practice](#)
- [Maternal and Child Health](#)
- [Nutrition/Dietetics](#)
- [Occupational Health and Safety](#)
- Tropical Medicine

You can search for [programs in public health on SOPHAS](#).

For more information on pursuing a career in public health, visit [This is Public Health](#). You can also visit the [Association of Schools of Public Health](#), [What is Public Health](#), the [American Public Health Association](#) and [Public Health Works!](#) Another great site is [Pathways to Public Health](#).

NOTE: The [Schools of Public Health Application Service \(SOPHAS\)](#) is the centralized online service for all students [applying](#) to an [accredited school of public health](#).



\* **Note:** to help people understand just how important public health is in terms of emergency response, the University of Minnesota recently created an interactive online game called "[Outbreak at Watersedge](#)."

Also of interest: [Context](#) is a peer-reviewed electronic journal for health professions students who are working to improve the health of communities.

For more information about current issues related to public health, check out the [American Journal of Public Health](#) and [Public Health Reports](#).

#### **NOTE:**

*This overview has been reviewed and approved by the [Association of Schools of Public Health \(ASPH\)](#).*

#### **Funding Opportunities**

[Search for funding opportunities in this field](#)

#### **Enrichment Programs**

[Search for enrichment programs in this field](#)

#### **Careers in This Field**

[Behavioral Science/Health Education](#)

[Biomedical & Laboratory Practice](#)

[Biostatistics](#)

[Environmental Health Sciences](#)

[Epidemiology](#)

[Global Health](#)

[Health Services Administration](#)

[Maternal and Child Health](#)

[Public Health Practice & Program Management](#)

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