

Guidance for LPHA Climate and Health Adaptation Plans – July 2024

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to LPHAs on the development of climate and health adaptation plans, which are a required deliverable of Program Element (PE) 51 Public Health Modernization. As per PE 51, LPHAs may either develop a stand-alone Climate and Health Adaptation Plan or integrate climate and health data and strategies into a community health assessment and plan (CHA and CHIP) as their deliverable, which is due June 30, 2025.

A Climate and Health Adaptation Plan is a strategy document that fosters collaboration with internal and external partners to set in motion a series of activities that are geared toward understanding and preventing or reducing anticipated climate change health impacts.

Principles:

1. **Centering health and equity.** Climate change exacerbates health inequities by worsening environmental conditions associated with poor health. These pressing complex issues share some of the same root causes and require transformational change in our communities, systems and organizations ([APHA](#)). Developing climate adaptation strategies that center equity is an important way for us to make progress toward transformation.
2. **Prioritizing engagement and relationships with communities** and populations who are disproportionately impacted by climate change. This is the most important investment that we can make toward equity in the planning process. By prioritizing communities who are disproportionately impacted we can reduce inequities while making progress toward our goal of health and well-being for all communities.
3. **Incorporating locally relevant climate and health data in decision-making.** Before identifying adaptation strategies, it's important to understand how the climate has changed in your geographic area, what changes are expected in the future, and who and what is most vulnerable to these changes. OHA is available to provide support on accessing data.
4. **Building and strengthening relationships is critical.** The plan is only as strong as the conversations, relationships and agreements among those who have a role in reducing the health impacts of climate change in your jurisdiction.
5. **Start where you are.** We recognize LPHAs are in vastly different places with this work. The rubric was designed to be flexible in terms of starting point and scale.

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OHA will use the following as a rubric to determine if a **stand-alone LPHA Climate and Health Adaptation plan** meets requirements for a PE 51 deliverable. LPHAs may also use this as a checklist to guide plan development. The due date for submission of the Climate and Health Adaptation Plan to OHA is June 30, 2025.

	Question	Required Content
Listen and assess	How is climate change affecting my community's health?	Climate impacts in your jurisdiction: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trends related to climate impacts of concern (wildfire, drought, etc.) • Summary of projections for climate impacts in the next 5-10 years
		Health risks and outcomes related to climate change: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include primary sources of data or other info, e.g. research literature, quantitative data, qualitative data or community input
	Which populations are affected most by climate threats and hazards in your jurisdiction?	Communities most impacted by climate change in your jurisdiction: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sources could include research literature, analysis of local health data, qualitative data and/or community input
Partner	What was your process for engaging with partners and community members?	Description of process for engaging partners in plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who was engaged, methods, to inform which parts of the plan • Identify gaps where further engagement is needed
	How were populations at highest risk engaged in the planning process?	If direct engagement wasn't possible, a strategy in the plan should include engagement with partners from these populations, or who serve these populations
Identify actions, strategies	How were strategies identified and selected?	Brief description of how strategies were selected. Process could include using CDC or other guidance documents, partner input, or research literature. Strategies or actions from other related plans for your jurisdiction as well as PHAB process measures could be included. If other agencies are responsible for implementing or leading strategies, make this explicit.
	What strategies are specifically for populations at highest risk?	Strategies should include how your organization is going to engage with populations at higher risk for experiencing health impacts to climate change
Keep plan alive	How will agency and partners check in or report out on status of strategies and outcomes?	This step is about creating a mechanism for accountability, to keep the plan alive, and to adjust as conditions evolve. It is not required to form a new group; an existing group that meets regularly could take on the role of reviewing and tracking progress.

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Frequently Asked Questions

Does OHA have a template for the plan?

OHA does not have a template and is not requiring a particular organizational structure for LPHA plans. Some examples of different organizational frameworks include:

- The CDC BRACE framework. Examples: [North Central Public Health District](#), [Crook County](#), [Jackson County](#), [Multnomah County](#)
- Oregon's Public Health Modernization Capabilities: Example: [Oregon Climate and Health Resilience Plan](#) (OHA)
- Climate and health hazards: Example: [Benton County Climate Change Health Adaptation Plan](#)

What is the timeframe for the Climate and Health Adaptation Plan?

OHA is not requiring a specific timeframe for these plans. Public health preparedness plans are updated yearly, while CHAs and CHIPs are on a five-year cycle. LPHAs can determine what timeframe between 1-5 years makes most sense for them. OHA will work with CLHO to determine requirements for PE 51 climate adaptation deliverables for future years, which may include required plan updates and/or progress reports on implementation of plan strategies.

How does the climate and health adaptation plan compare to public health preparedness plans?

The climate and health adaptation and public health preparedness and response plans (PHEPR) are separate but complementary. The Climate and Health Adaptation Plans are focused on assessment and reduction of risk and harm, while the PHEPR plans focus on how public health responds when climate events occur.

- PHEPR plans are designed to provide a **concept of operations** for all-hazards preparedness and response including when public health authorities activate, how they activate, and the structure of their incident management teams.

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- These plans also outline how certain PHEPR capabilities are delivered such as medical countermeasures dispensing, crisis and emergency risk communications, and how public health can continue their operations when they are interrupted by an event.
- The Climate and Health Adaptation Plan is included in the PHEPR Program Element 12 as one of the options that can be used to meet the local risk assessment requirement every 2 years.

Climate and health adaptation is cross-sectoral and cross-cutting. What are the limits in terms of the kinds of strategies that can be included?

- The Climate and Health Adaptation plan can include strategies and activities that are led by programs outside of the LPHA including from the health care sector, transportation, forestry, agriculture, land use, emergency management, etc.
- The plan can also include strategies and activities being led by other organizations. This is a great opportunity to identify where the work aligns and to elevate ongoing efforts that contribute to moving the needle within respective jurisdictions.
- An LPHA might choose to prioritize strategies that are both adaptive and mitigative (e.g. reduce greenhouse gas emissions). For example, increasing tree canopy is both a climate adaptation and mitigation strategy.

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If an LPHA chooses to integrate a climate adaptation plan into a Community Health Improvement Plan (CHA) and Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), OHA will use the following checklist to evaluate whether the CHA and CHIP adequately integrates climate and health data and strategies and can be considered a completed deliverable for PE 51.	
Phase	Checklist
Community Engagement and Partnerships	<p>Engage Environmental Health Community Partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Invite at least 1-2 community partners who will work on priority environmental health/climate & health issues in your jurisdiction. ▪ Engage with youth in your jurisdiction
	<p>Consider forming a Climate and Health Subcommittee (this is not required)</p> <p>Consider establishing subcommittees specifically focused on climate and health/environmental health to ensure dedicated attention and specialized input.</p>
	<p>Incorporate Climate and Health Resilience in the Vision making process:</p> <p>When creating the shared vision, explicitly include goals or prompts related to climate and health. This helps set a clear direction for integrating climate and health considerations throughout the process.</p>
Data and Assessment	<p>How climate change is affecting my community's health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Trends related to climate impacts of concern (wildfire, drought, etc.) ▪ Summary of projections for climate impacts in the next 5-10 years.
	<p>Health risks and outcomes related to climate change</p> <p>Include primary sources of data or other info, e.g. research literature, quantitative data, qualitative data or community partners inputs</p>
	<p>Communities most impacted by climate change in your jurisdiction:</p> <p>Sources could include research literature, analysis of local health data, qualitative data and/or community partners' input</p>
Community Health Improvement Plan	<p>Prioritize Climate-Related Health Issues</p> <p>Based on assessment findings, identify, and prioritize health issues directly or indirectly related to climate change. Examples include heatwaves, wildfire smoke, air quality, water quality etc.</p>

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	<p>Formulate Climate and Health Specific Goals and Strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How were strategies identified and selected? Brief description of how strategies were selected. Process could include using CDC or other guidance documents, partner input, or research literature. If other agencies are responsible for implementing or leading strategies, make this explicit ▪ What strategies are specifically for populations at highest risk? <p>Strategies should include how your organization is going to engage with populations at higher risk for experiencing health impacts to climate change.</p>
Action Cycle	<p>How will your agency and partners check in or report out on status of strategies and outcomes?</p> <p>This step is about creating a mechanism for accountability, to keep the plan alive, and to adjust as conditions evolve. It is not required to form a new group; an existing group that meets regularly could take on the role of reviewing and tracking progress.</p>

Key Resources

The following websites contain information and resources related to public health and climate change, including links to guidance documents related to assessment, communication, interventions and equity.

[CDC’s Building Resilience Against Climate Effects \(BRACE\) Framework](#): This framework is a five-step process that allows health officials to develop strategies and programs to help communities prepare for the health effects of climate change. CDC has incorporated partner feedback into their BRACE framework and will be releasing a significantly updated framework soon. We will share as soon as we have it.

[APHA Climate Change and Health Playbook](#): The Climate Change and Health Playbook: Adaptation Planning for Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion is designed to support the work of state, local, territorial and tribal health services across the nation in embedding justice, equity, diversity and inclusion into their climate and resilience initiatives, programs and

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operations. The playbook is a supplement to BRACE to amplify the incorporation of justice, equity, diversity and inclusion, or JEDI.

[NACCHO's Climate Change Page:](#) Resources to ensure local health departments are equipped to take on this role, while elevating best practices and success stories at the local level.

[Oregon Climate Assessment Report:](#) The Oregon Climate Change Research Institute (OCCRI) was charged by the Oregon legislature to do biennial assessments of the state of climate change science, including biological, physical and social science and the likely effects of climate change on the state. The latest report was issued in 2023 (link in title).

[Oregon Climate Impact Compendium:](#) The compendium offers a compilation of curated data reports that summarizes the current and potential future impacts of climate change in Oregon.

[Oregon Public Health Advisory Board \(PHAB\) Accountability Metrics:](#) The PHAB has established process measures building climate resilience. The process measures were developed in consultation with LPHA's and reflect best and promising practices for reducing the health impacts of climate change and advancing health equity. Information about PHAB accountability metrics can be found [here](#).

OHA consultation and technical assistance

Climate and Health is a new and rapidly growing field. It can be overwhelming to sift through websites or resources to find what you need. Whether you have a question about the resources provided or would like a thought partner at different points in your planning process, the Environmental Public Health's Data and Epi and Climate and Health teams are available to provide support. You can email climate.health@odhsoha.oregon.gov with a specific question or request related to data or to set up a time to talk through an issue or get feedback.

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Additional Resources

The following resources may be helpful to some LPHAs, depending on the scope of your plan, your staffing resources, and where you are in the planning process. These and many other resources are being saved in the Climate and Health LPHA Community of Practice Basecamp page. If you do not have access to Basecamp and have a request for resources on a specific topic, please email us at climate.health@odhsoha.oregon.gov.

Communication about climate and health to different audiences. These include key messages.

- [Internal partner communications](#)
- [External partner communications: Climate and Health: A Guide for Cross-Sector Collaboration](#)

Planning:

[Climate and Health Adaptation Planning Guide for Michigan Communities](#). This planning guide was developed by the Michigan Dept of Health in partnership with Michigan State University, with CDC funding. This is the most comprehensive guide for LPHA Climate and Health Adaptation plans that we are aware of.

Community Engagement:

[Community-Driven Climate Resilience Planning: A Framework](#)

Strategy/Actions:

[Compendium of WHO and other UN guidance on health and environment, 2022 update, Chapter 7. Climate change](#)

Equity

[Climate Change, Health, and Equity: A Guide for Local Health Departments](#)