

# **Mohawk Area Public Health Coalition**

## **Regional Coalition of Massachusetts Public Health Emergency Preparedness Region 1**

### **Principles of Operation**

Adopted: February 11, 2004

Amended: December 6, 2010; June 18, 2012; June 15, 2015

The following document sets forth the principles of operation including the governing structure adopted by the members of the public health regional coalition in the Massachusetts Department of Public Health Emergency Preparedness Region 1B. The members are the local board of health members, health directors or other agents of the local public health authority for the 26 cities and towns that make up this public health preparedness regional coalition.

#### **1. Definitions**

*Direct Support:* Financial support given directly to a town or city that includes, but is not limited to

- a. Formula-based allocations
- b. Funding for proposals submitted by a community or group of communities
- c. Funding for travel to out-of-state conferences or meetings
- d. Receipt of equipment or services.

*EDS:* Emergency dispensing site.

*EDS Planning Groups:* MAPHCO's towns are divided into EDS regional planning groups, in which multiple communities work together to plan for public health emergency response for their collective citizens (see section 3).

*Full Coalition:* The entire 26 towns of the Coalition, which meets annually.

*Member:* Each Town's Board of Health/Health Department is a member of MAPHCO and has one vote.

*Participating Community:* A town or city that

- a. Has at least one representative attend at least 50% of their respective EDS planning meetings within the grant year
- b. Provides 24/7/365 contact information to MAPHCO staff on a quarterly basis
- c. Participates in all preparedness exercises as outlined in the annual PHEP deliverables, such as facility set up drills, site notification drills, and call down drills
- d. Has at least two town members (board of health, selectmen, town administrator, emergency management director, etc.) registered on the Massachusetts Health and Homeland Security Network (HHAN).

*PHEP*: Public Health Emergency Preparedness grant. This is federal funding provided by the Centers for Disease Control through the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and is MAPHCO's primary financial resource.

*Region*: Dept. of Health and Human Services Region 1, which includes the four counties of Western Massachusetts. This Region has been divided into four county-level public health preparedness coalitions, of which MAPHCO is one.

*Steering Committee*: A group of MAPHCO members elected annually by the Full Coalition to set policy and provide oversight, which meets monthly.

*Sub-Region*: The 26 towns of the MAPHCO Coalition – Franklin County, minus Orange and New Salem, plus Williamsburg and Goshen. This area is considered state sub-region 1B.

## **2. Purpose & Duties**

The members of this coalition agree to work collaboratively to enhance communities' collective capacity to share resources and respond to public health threats and emergencies, including bio terrorism and outbreaks of infectious diseases. Specifically, coalition members will work collaboratively to:

1. Assess and monitor regional public health emergency planning and response needs; and advocate locally, regionally, and statewide for effective responses to these needs.
2. Set funding priorities to enhance regional public health emergency planning and response capacity;
3. Submit plans, needs, and requests to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Emergency Preparedness Bureau;
4. Be accountable and responsible for the use of CDC funding and any

additional funding the Coalition may secure, in cooperation and coordination with Host Agency;

5. Coordinate with other regional coalitions to ensure that all municipalities in the Western Mass. Region are represented in a coalition and to enhance overall preparedness throughout the Region;
6. Share knowledge, lessons learned, and best practices throughout the Commonwealth by participating in regional and statewide meetings;
7. Coordinate efforts to further emergency preparedness with other existing regional or local plans, and
8. Meet the other goals associated with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health Emergency Preparedness initiatives as well as other regional public health efforts.

### **3. The Full Coalition**

**Membership:** Membership of MAPHCO shall consist only of a board of health member, the health director or other agent of the local public health authority, or her/his designee, for the following cities/towns: Ashfield, Buckland, Bernardston, Charlemont, Colrain, Conway, Deerfield, Erving, Gill, Goshen, Greenfield, Hawley, Heath, Leverett, Leyden, Monroe, Montague, Northfield, Rowe, Shelburne, Shutesbury, Sunderland, Warwick, Whately, Williamsburg, and Wendell. Staff from the Host Agency are not voting members of MAPHCO. Each member community shall have one (1) vote, for a total of 26 votes.

Member communities are organized into Emergency Dispensing Site Planning Groups, as follows:

*Montague EDS:* Gill, Montague, Erving, Wendell

*Greenfield EDS:* Greenfield

*Mohawk EDS:* Buckland, Shelburne, Ashfield, Colrain

*Hawlemont EDS:* Hawley, Charlemont, Rowe, Monroe, Heath

*Pioneer EDS:* Leyden, Warwick, Northfield, Bernardston

*Frontier EDS:* Whately, Sunderland, Deerfield, Conway

*Shutesbury/Leverett EDS: Shutesbury, Leverett*

*Williamsburg/Goshen EDS: Williamsburg, Goshen*

**Full Coalition Meetings:** The full coalition shall meet at least once per year, at an agreed-upon place and time. Meetings may be scheduled more frequently as necessary. Notice of each full Coalition meeting shall be given to each member by email (or by post, if necessary) not less than twenty (20) days before the meeting.

**Full Coalition Quorum:** The coalition may act by a simple majority of members present and voting unless otherwise provided in these principles.

**Full Coalition Voting:** Each member of the coalition shall have one (1) vote. The member shall be responsible for briefing his/her respective board of health or other legally designated health authority about actions pending and taken by the coalition. A member unable to be present for a vote may use written proxies.

#### **4. The Host Agency**

The Steering Committee chooses a Host Agency for the Coalition. Currently the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) serves as the fiscal and administrative agent/conduit for MAPHCO. The Host Agency staff shall, at the direction of the Steering Committee and under the supervision of the Host Agency, work to complete the state and federal deliverables delineated in the contract with DPH and any additional funders, including: EDS plan exercise and improvement, communications planning, planning for individuals requiring additional assistance, providing training, risk communication and coordinating MAPHCO efforts in the community and schools.

**Duties & Responsibilities of the Host Agency Staff:** The Host Agency staff people are responsible for:

- Ensuring that all grant funds are used in accordance with DPH intent and state and federal law.
- documenting and maintaining records of the coalition's actions and coordinating activities including taking minutes at all meetings,

- completing and documenting annual emergency preparedness deliverables (see attachments),
- sending out meeting announcements and agendas, finalizing meeting location and logistics, and distributing meeting minutes,
- monitor, manage, and report on grant spending and objectives
- completing other required DPH fiscal and programmatic reports and paperwork,
- training, supervising, disciplining, and providing benefits to staff hired at the request of the Steering Committee,
- other coordination or administrative duties as requested by the Committee.
- a Host agency representative can serve as official spokesperson in absence of Co-Chairs.

**Reporting Requirements:** Each year, the Host Agency shall prepare or cause to be prepared, regular reports of finances, program and personnel, and other matters of interest for the preceding fiscal year, as required by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. These reports shall be distributed to all members. In addition, the Host Agency shall complete other contract, financial, and program reports as required by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and other funders. All Host Agency staff receiving payment through MAPHCO funds shall report their monthly activities in writing to the Steering Committee.

## **5. The Steering Committee**

The Steering Committee will serve as the governing body for MAPHCO. The Committee is responsible for overall administration and management of this coalition's activities, in coordination with assigned Host Agency staff. The Committee delegates day-to-day administrative responsibilities to staff people employed and supervised by the host agency, but who work at the direction of the Committee. The Committee shall have up to twelve (12) but not fewer than five (5) members, two being Co-Chairpersons, and shall represent the diversity of the communities included in the coalition, including geographic, population, and access to professional assistance. Each member of the Committee shall have one (1) vote. To be clear, each town has one vote, regardless of

the number of members in attendance from a given town. Alternates from Steering Committee towns are welcome but not required. The Host Agency staff people will provide staff support to the Committee.

**Steering Committee Composition:** In order to reflect the diversity of this coalition, the members of the Executive Committee will represent primarily the eight EDS clusters set forth above, and, secondarily, the four (4) population districts. The full coalition shall select the members to serve on the Steering Committee at its annual meeting.

Population Districts:

*Population 0-1,000:* Rowe, Hawley, Heath, Monroe, Warwick, Leyden, Goshen, Wendell

*Population 1,001 – 2,000:* Charlemont, Gill, Erving, Whately, Leverett, Ashfield, Conway, Shutesbury, Colrain, Buckland,

*Population 2,001-7,000:* Sunderland, Shelburne, Bernardston, Williamsburg, Northfield, Deerfield

*Population 7,001+:* Greenfield, Montague,

**Steering Committee Terms:** Committee members will serve one-year terms. Mid-term vacancies may be filled by appointment by the Steering Committee at a regular meeting.

**Duties & Responsibilities of the Co-Chairs:** The Chairpersons are elected by the Steering Committee annually at the Spring meeting. Paper balloting may be used for the election at the request of any member of the Committee. The Chairpersons: (1) schedule regular and special meetings of the Committee, (2) preside at all meetings, (3) appoint and dissolve subcommittees, working groups, and leaders of same, and (4) serve as the official public spokespeople of the Committee.

**Steering Committee Quorum:** Four (4) members of the Steering Committee shall constitute a quorum for the purposes of transacting business.

**Steering Committee Meeting Schedule:** The Steering Committee shall meet at least ten times annually, and may schedule additional meetings as necessary. Advance

notice of all Steering Committee meetings shall be given by email (or by post, if necessary) to all Boards of Health in the MAPHCO region.

**Sub-Committees of the Steering Committee:** The Steering Committee may create committees and working groups as needed. Members of the region may form committees or work groups among themselves to consider matters of interest. Proposals or projects developed by committees or work groups established independently by members of the region are subject to review and ratification by the Steering Committee.

## **6. Amendments**

These principles may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote of the members of this coalition. A proposal to amend the principles may be initiated by any member. The proposed amendment shall be submitted in writing via email or U.S. mail to the Co-Chairs of the Steering Committee or the Host Agency staff person at least 30 days prior to the next regularly scheduled meeting so that it may be distributed to all coalition members in advance of the next regularly scheduled meeting, at which time the proposed amendment will be considered.