




Career Guide



Hi, I've heard of the New Mexico Department of Health, but what do you actually do?

Great question! We work to keep our communities healthy, not just by treating illness, but by preventing it.



Like Hospitals?

Partially, but on a much larger scale. We monitor diseases, ensure the safety of food and water, support mental health, and respond to public health emergencies. Our efforts are dedicated to improving health outcomes for New Mexicans. Review our Career Guide for more information!

This is fantastic! A career guide to help me explore opportunities in public health!



NMHealth
Career Guide

What is Public Health?

Public health is super important in our daily lives. It includes things like making sure we have clean water and running safety programs for communities. The goal is to protect and improve the health of both individuals and communities. There are lots of different areas and job opportunities in public health.

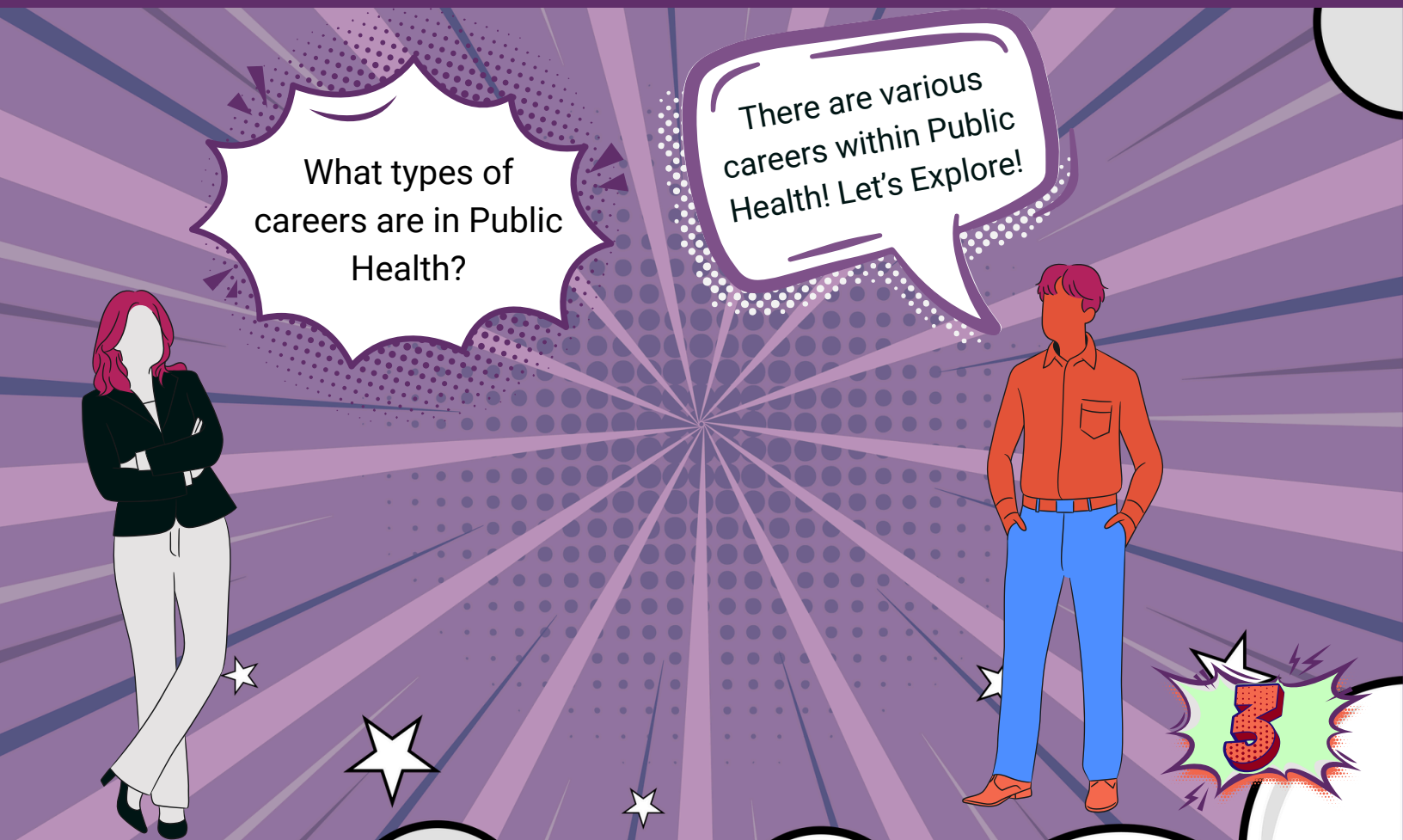
The New Mexico Department of Health is in charge of public health throughout the state. It provides services that meet the needs of different communities and uses up-to-date information to tackle various issues, including environmental and health-related problems.



Epidemiology

The scientists that impact our every day lives!

Epidemiologists are scientists who study how diseases start and spread. They also find ways to prevent or control them. Applied epidemiologists, often working for state health departments, respond to disease outbreaks, figuring out their causes and helping to stop them from spreading. Research epidemiologists study diseases in labs and in real-world settings to learn how to prevent future outbreaks.



What are Epidemiologists?

There are different areas of focus within the field of Epidemiology in Public Health. The New Mexico Department of Health (NMDOH) is a statewide organization that works to improve and protect the health of people in New Mexico. Epidemiologists are experts who help develop health guidelines and give us an understanding of what is happening in our communities. They look at current health trends, new health issues, and areas that might need more attention.

Epidemiologists can specialize in subjects like environmental health, infections in hospitals, community health, reproductive health, long-lasting diseases, infectious diseases, and preparing for public health emergencies, among other areas.

Why it Matters!

- You get to solve mysteries and help keep people safe.
- Your work can influence laws, make communities safer, prevent health risks, and improve hospitals.



Epidemiology Specialties

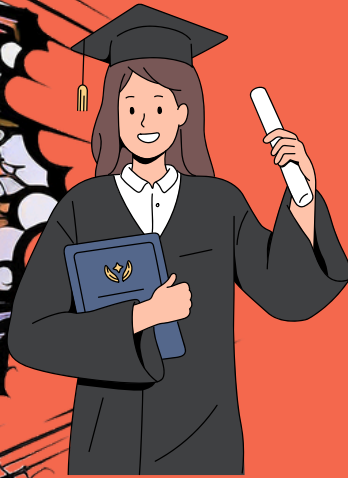
Specialties within epidemiology vary, and thanks to these specialists, we can promote and ensure a safe and healthy community. Many aspects of epidemiology impact us, such as access to care, clean water, health communications, preventative care data, health systems, and injury and behavioral health data. These factors influence our everyday lives and communities. As a result, we can implement changes, develop policies, and communicate important resources and events happening around us. Some of the specializations include:

- Environmental Epidemiologists
- Community Health Equity Epidemiologists
- Health Communications & Data Disseminations Epidemiologists
- Mental Health Epidemiologists
- Injury and Behavioral Health Epidemiologists
- Occupational health Epidemiologists
- Health Systems Epidemiologists



Public Health - Epidemiologist Career Pathway

Career pathways vary significantly; often, individuals take breaks or return to previous aspirations. This serves to illustrate the available options for those interested in pursuing a career in Epidemiology.



MASTER'S
Degree!

Epidemiologists hold a Master's degree! These degrees vary from Public Health, Social Work, Statistics, amongst others! Due to the various specialties, several degrees fit into the epidemiology sector.

BACHELOR'S
Degree!

Almost There!
Most of our Epidemiology positions require a Master's degree. But sometimes there are other related roles you can explore with your Bachelor's.



**High School
Graduation**



Degrees

Many experts who study diseases, called epidemiologists, often have a Master of Public Health degree. However, they can also have degrees in areas like social work, statistics, biology, or environmental sciences. There's no single "right" degree for these jobs. Since there are many different areas in epidemiology, it's important to have experts from various fields.

A Bachelor of Public Health is a 4-year college degree that teaches students how to protect and improve the health of entire communities, not just individual patients. Unlike doctors or nurses, who focus on one person at a time, public health students learn to address large-scale health issues. They study topics like how diseases spread, the impact of pollution on people's health, and ways to make communities healthier through education and policy changes.



A Master's of Public Health is a graduate degree that helps you become a leader in keeping communities healthy. It builds on what you learned in your bachelor's degree by offering advanced training in subjects like how diseases spread (epidemiology), using statistics to understand health data (biostatistics), global health issues, and health policy. This degree helps you use information and science to create real-world solutions.



Nursing

Public health nursing focuses on keeping whole communities healthy, rather than just individual people. These nurses work in places like schools, neighborhoods, and clinics to stop people from getting sick, encourage good health habits, and teach everyone about living healthy lives.



What are Public Health Nurses?

Public health nurses work to improve the health of whole communities, not just single patients. They help create health policies, prevent and manage contagious diseases, and offer important services like reproductive health care, support for refugees, vaccines, and help for people with substance use issues.



Why it Matters!

- They help people stay healthy by understanding and improving their communities.
- They build trust by working directly with families, schools, and local organizations.
- They ensure everyone can access healthcare, regardless of where they live or their financial situation.
- During outbreaks or natural disasters, public health nurses are often among the first to help communities recover.
- They collaborate with doctors, scientists, and other health experts to create programs that save lives.



Public Health Nurse - Career Pathway

There isn't just one straight path to becoming a public health nurse. Students can choose to get an Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN), a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN), or even go further to become a Nurse Practitioner (NP) as part of their education journey.



Degrees

- **Associate Degree of Nursing:** This is a two-to-three-year college program that gets you ready to work as a registered nurse. You'll learn basic nursing knowledge, get hands-on experience in real clinics, and develop important skills for taking care of patients.
- **Bachelor of Nursing:** This is a four-year college degree that trains you to become a registered nurse (RN). As a BSN nurse, you'll learn how to take care of patients, promote health, and prevent diseases in hospitals, clinics, and communities. You'll study subjects like biology, anatomy, nursing care, and public health, and you'll practice your skills through clinical rotations in various healthcare settings.
- **Nurse Practitioner:** A Nurse Practitioner is a highly trained registered nurse who has completed advanced education and training. They can diagnose illnesses, prescribe medications, and manage patient care.



Social Worker

Social workers at NMDOH are professionals who help families find the support, services, and resources they need. They don't just focus on medical care; they consider all aspects of a person's life, including emotional, social, and financial needs.



Degrees

- A Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) gets you ready for starting jobs in social work. You can work in places like hospitals, schools, and community centers.
- Master of Social Work (MSW): This program offers advanced training in social work, focusing on areas like public health, mental health, and child welfare. It also has a special track for students who already have a Bachelor of Social Work (BSW).



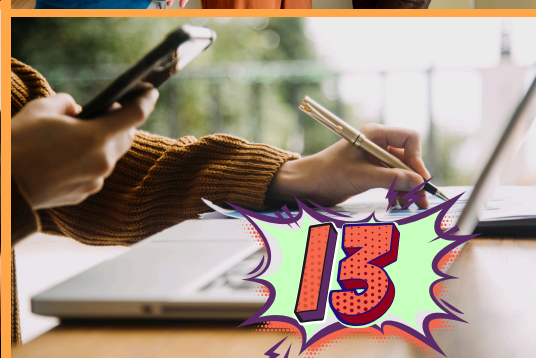
Career Outcomes:

Clinical Social Worker – Offers therapy and counseling to people, families, and groups who are facing mental health issues.

Medical Social Worker – Helps patients in hospitals and healthcare settings by providing access to resources, offering counseling, and planning for when they leave the hospital.

School Social Worker – Assists students with their emotional, social, and academic challenges by collaborating with teachers, families, and school staff.

Child Welfare Social Worker – Helps kids and their families stay safe and healthy. They often work with foster care and adoption services.



Career Outcomes:

Substance Abuse Counselor – Assists people dealing with drug and alcohol problems by offering support, creating treatment plans, and suggesting additional help.

Geriatric Social Worker: helps older people and their families deal with issues related to aging, such as healthcare, finding a place to live, and providing emotional support.

Community Outreach Worker – Works in non-profits and organizations to connect people with community services, such as food assistance and housing.

Policy Analyst – Advocates for laws and policies that support social justice and community well-being.

Crisis Intervention Specialist – Provides immediate support to individuals in emergencies, such as domestic violence survivors or people experiencing homelessness.

Probation Officer – Helps people on probation reintegrate into society by providing counseling and monitoring their progress.

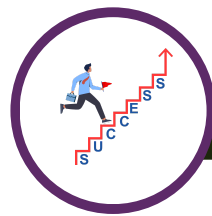


Social Work Career Roadmap

Career paths can be very different for everyone; sometimes people take breaks or go back to what they wanted to do before. This guide shows the different options available for anyone interested in a career in social work.

Employment

Graduates can apply for social work jobs in public health agencies, such as Children's Medical Services. In these roles, they can assist families by organizing care, speaking up for their needs, and managing services.



Licensure and Certification

- After completing an MSW, graduates need to pass the Licensed Master Social Worker (LMSW) exam in New Mexico to practice social work.
- With experience, social workers can pursue the Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) credential for advanced clinical roles.



Pursue a Master of Social Work (MSW)

Employment Opportunities

BSW? What? Huge Accomplishment!

After getting a Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) degree, graduates can look for beginner jobs in areas like social services, public health, or child welfare as they work toward their master's degree. Some might also choose to take a year off to gain experience in the field.



BACHELOR'S Degree!

Pursue a Bachelor of Social Work (BSW)

Look at the university resources for more information.



High School Graduation/GED

Congratulations!





“Social workers provide services to the most disenfranchised in our communities including those troubled by domestic violence, substance abuse and mental health issues as well as individuals with disabilities. The “youth mental health crisis” as one example calls for an increase in school social work positions. Social Workers address basic needs—food, clothing, shelter, coordinating medical appointments, arranging for transportation, providing interpretation, working on immigration issues, while addressing psychosocial issues and assisting clients with applications for medical insurance and assistance programs. The impact of licensed social workers allows for prevention, health equity and overall improved outcomes and quality of life for New Mexicans.”

