

# NEWS RELEASE

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For immediate release

Happy Birthday to Nebraska Health Departments!

15 years ago on May 16, 2001, LB692, the legislation that formed Nebraska's Local Health Department system, was signed into law.

Local health departments are chief public health strategists in Nebraska communities. Since 2001, Nebraska's local health departments have built infrastructure (in many areas where there was none), built capacity and strong community partnerships, worked with partners to prioritize health needs, leveraged relationships to bring federal and state dollars to local communities, provided local jobs, and made reliable, measurable impacts on the health of our communities.

Nebraska's investment in its public health infrastructure has prevented illness, reduced health care costs, and improved the productivity of Nebraska's workforce. Quick facts:

- Before 2001, 71 of Nebraska's 93 counties were not served by a local health department.
- Today all Nebraska counties are part of one of 20 local health departments that have deep ties in their districts. Departments vary in size, representing anywhere from one to 11 counties.
- Nebraska's local public health system is truly locally controlled. Nebraska's 20 local health departments are all independent agencies with their own local governing boards.
- Two of Nebraska's local health departments cover districts larger than the area of some eastern states.
- Funding committed through LB692 to local public health departments has remained largely unchanged since 2001.
- In 2015, an average of 36% (and as little as 4%) of local health department revenue came from state and local sources.
- By working together, local health departments have brought over \$2.5 million to the state to help them implement programs. These include programs that 1) improve health literacy across local public health systems and 2) improve and support the network of military culturally competent services in rural communities.

For additional information visit [www.pphd.org](http://www.pphd.org) or call Kim Engel, Director, at Panhandle Public Health District at 308-487-3600 ext 102 or toll free at 866-701-7173. Panhandle Public Health District is working together to improve the health, safety and quality of life for all who live, learn, work and play in the Panhandle. Our vision is that we are a healthier and safer Panhandle community.