

Who to count?

In the 2019 Epidemiology Capacity Assessment Survey



This document summarizes the 3 key parameters for which FTEs at which organizations should be counted in the 2019 enumeration of the current public health epidemiology workforce in Ontario. For the purposes of this enumeration, employees should be included as part of the public health epidemiology workforce if they meet **all 3 parameters** described below.

Those who are counted should...

1. Work at the following organizations

- Public Health Ontario
- A board of health (i.e. public health unit)
- An indigenous serving organization with a specified public health mandate
- Employed by another level of government or government agency and assigned to work at an organization specified above (e.g. federal field epidemiologist assigned to work at a local public health unit)



2. Have the following job specifications

- Full-time, part-time, or on contract at the time of enumeration
- In union or non-union positions
- Staff or management positions
- **Not** a Medical Officer of Health, Associate Medical Officer of Health or Public Health Physician
- **Not** a (paid or unpaid) student practicum or work placement



3. Have a primary job responsibility to fulfil the epidemiological function

For the purpose of this enumeration, employees should be included as part of the public health epidemiology workforce when a **primary job responsibility** is to fulfil the **epidemiology function**, which is broadly defined as:

Collecting, measuring, analyzing and interpreting health-related data and information to monitor trends, identify issues, investigate public health problems, and facilitate effective decision-making and evaluation.

For more detail on the epidemiology job function in Ontario, please see **page 2**.



Primary job functions for public health epidemiological practice in Ontario

Please include employees whose role involves **all or most** of the job functions outlined below in the Epidemiology Capacity Assessment survey.

Employees in non-management roles

Assessment and analysis

- Recognize public health problems pertinent to the population, articulate/evaluate need for further investigation/public health action based on population health assessment and surveillance data
- Conduct and organize surveillance activities (e.g., identify data needs; implement and design new, or revise existing, surveillance systems; report key findings; support evaluation of surveillance system)
- Identify acute and chronic conditions or other adverse outcomes in the population (e.g., assist in community health assessments; design and conduct investigations; hypothesis generation and verification of hypotheses; recommend priorities of potential public health problems to be addressed)
- Apply principles of good ethical/legal practice as they relate to study design and data collection, dissemination, and use (e.g., privacy laws, research ethics)
- Organize, analyze, summarize and report on data and information from surveillance, investigations, or other sources (e.g., define and manage databases; create analysis plans; analyze data; identify bias and limitations; identify and synthesize key findings)
- Support the development of evidence-based interventions and control measures in response to epidemiological findings and scientific evidence
- Assist in evaluation of programs (e.g., develop measurable and program-relevant goals and objectives; develop program logic models and theories of action; collect data for use in tracking program objectives and outcomes; evaluate progress towards program objectives and outcomes)

Basic public health sciences

- Apply principles of informatics, including data collection, process, and analysis, in support of epidemiological practice
- Use identified informatics tools in support of epidemiological practice

Communication

- Prepare and communicate epidemiological information through written and oral reports and presentations to a variety of audiences (e.g., professional audiences, policy makers, and the public)

Community dimensions of practice

- Provide epidemiological input into epidemiological studies, public health programs, and community public health planning processes in the community, local, provincial/territorial, federal level

Cultural competency

- Describe population by sociodemographic characteristics (e.g. race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation) using appropriate methods and analyses
- Use knowledge of specific sociocultural factors in the population to interpret findings

Financial and operational planning and management

- Use skills that foster collaborations, strong partnerships, and team building to accomplish epidemiology program objectives

Leadership and systems thinking

- Support the epidemiological perspective in the agency strategic planning process
- Use performance measures to evaluate and improve epidemiology program effectiveness

Policy development

- Support the application of epidemiological knowledge to the development and analysis of public health policy

Employees in management roles

- Staff in management roles not only ensure that staff in non-management roles are carrying out the epidemiological functions described above, but are able to provide technical and functional support and guidance. Thus, these individuals should have training in epidemiology.

