

**ARTICLE 33-01
GENERAL ADMINISTRATION**

Chapter
33-01-01 Organization of Department

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ORGANIZATION OF DEPARTMENT**

Section
33-01-01-01 Organization and Functions of State Department of Health

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1. Organization of department.

- a. History. The territorial board of health for Dakota Territory came into being in 1885 with the responsibilities to make and enforce "all needful rules and regulations for the prevention and cure, and to prevent the spread of any contagious, infectious, or malarial disease among persons and domestic animals". In 1889, when Dakota Territory was divided, a board of health was established. In 1923, the state department of health was created, consisting of a public health advisory council, a state health officer, directors of divisions, and other employees. The public health laboratory, connected with the University of North Dakota since its inception in 1907, was placed under the state health department in 1933. In 1947, the legislative assembly reorganized the department, making necessary changes to provide for hospital registration and licensure. The reorganization changed the name of the advisory council to the state health council, giving it policymaking responsibility and increasing its membership.

In 1987, the state laboratories department was consolidated with the state health department forming the state department of health and consolidated laboratories. In 1995, the agency name was changed to state department of health.

- b. Sections and divisions. The department consists of the following sections and divisions:

Administrative Support

Accounting
Education Technology
Human Resources
Vital Records

Community Health Section

Cancer Prevention and Control Division
Chronic Disease Division
Family Health Division
Injury Prevention and Control Division
Nutrition and Physical Activity Division

Emergency Preparedness and Response Section

Emergency Medical Services and Trauma Division
Hospital Preparedness
Public Health Preparedness

Environmental Health Section

Air Quality Division
Laboratory Services

Municipal Facilities Division
Waste Management Division
Water Quality Division

Health Resources Section

Food and Lodging Division
Health Facilities Division
Life Safety and Construction Division

Medical Services Section

Disease Control Division
Forensic Examiner

- c. Health officer. The health officer is appointed by the governor to hold office for four years. The health officer must have had postgraduate training or experience in public health administration. If the governor does not appoint as state health officer a physician licensed in this state, the governor shall appoint at least three licensed physicians recommended by the state medical association to serve as an advisory committee to the state health officer. The health officer is responsible for the exercise of powers and duties prescribed to the health officer under the law.
- d. Legal counsel. The attorney general of North Dakota is the ex officio attorney for the department. However, by statute, the attorney general may, and has chosen to, appoint legal counsel to act as chief legal adviser for the department.

2. Functions of department sections.

- a. Administrative support section. This section provides support services to the divisions of the department and assists in coordinating department activities. More specifically, the divisions in this section provide services in the areas of personnel administration, fiscal management, health statistics, and certification of vital events.
- b. Community health section. The community health section is responsible for coordination of public health education and intervention activities, including such areas as wellness promotion and health risk reduction, promotion of optimal nutrition, reduction in tobacco use, injury prevention, and improvements in dental health. Many of the services provided by this section are delivered through district, county, or city health units.
- c. Emergency preparedness and response section. The emergency preparedness and response section is responsible for enhancing the preparedness and response capabilities of the state's public health and private medical providers. It works to create and promote a state of readiness and response to protect the health of North Dakotans during catastrophic events, large-scale disasters and emergencies.

The administration of the emergency medical services system, licensing of ambulance services, and certifying of emergency medical technicians are also responsibilities of this section.

- d. Environmental health section. The goal of this section is to assure that the quality of life in the state will not be diminished below acceptable standards as a result of degradation of the air, water, and physical environment.

Primary functions and responsibilities include coordinating communications with the environmental protection agency regarding state programs and related environmental issues, monitoring and enforcing compliance with state and federal environmental laws, and carrying out environmental chemistry analyses.

Priorities for the section are to continue to implement strategies for addressing environmental impacts and problems associated with new developments; administering a state hazardous waste management program; administering a water quality management program for cleaning up targeted lakes and rivers, and protecting ground water and drinking water aquifers; and controlling air, radiation, noise, and solid waste pollution.

- e. Health resources section. This section is responsible for licensing inpatient health care facilities, home health agencies, electrologists, and electronic hair removal technicians. The section conducts certification surveys of all facilities and programs providing service to persons eligible under the medicare and medicaid programs.
- f. Medical services section. The section is responsible for disease prevention, surveillance, testing and identification, as well as epidemiologic investigation and forensic examinations.

3. **Inquiries.** General inquiries regarding the state department of health should be addressed to:

(Section or Division Name)
North Dakota State Department of Health - Department 301
600 East Boulevard Avenue
Bismarck, ND 58505-0200

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