

Office of Public Health Preparedness and Response



Our Mission

The Office of Public Health Preparedness and Response (OPHPR) leads the agency's preparedness and response activities by providing strategic direction, support, and coordination for activities across CDC, as well as with local, state, tribal, national, territorial, and international public health partners.

OPHPR focuses its initiatives on the following areas

- Supporting state and local preparedness activities through funding and technical assistance
- Ensuring availability of critical medical assets during emergencies
- Operating CDC's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) for 24/7/365 monitoring and coordinating emergency response
- Regulating biological agents and toxins to protect public health and safety

Activity Snapshot

- CDC's Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) cooperative agreement has provided approximately \$700 million annually since 2001 to state, local, and territorial public health departments to build and strengthen their abilities to respond effectively to public health emergencies.
- The Strategic National Stockpile procures, stores, and delivers critical medicines and medical supplies to protect the American public if there is a public health emergency severe enough to cause local supplies to run out.
- CDC's Emergency Operations Center serves as the command center for monitoring and coordinating CDC's emergency response to public health threats in the United States and abroad and is staffed 24/7/365.
- The Select Agent Program oversees entities that possess, use, or transfer biological agents or toxins that could pose a severe threat to public health and safety.
- The Career Epidemiology Field Officer Program places experienced epidemiologists ("disease detectives") in state and local health departments to help prepare them for public health emergencies.
- The Meta-Leadership Summits for Preparedness Initiative trains leaders from all sectors to act together in times of crisis.





OPHPR Divisions

Division of State and Local Readiness

The Division of State and Local Readiness administers the PHEP cooperative agreement, which supports preparedness nationwide in state, local, tribal, and territorial public health departments. As of 2009, the cooperative agreement has provided approximately \$700 million annually to these public health departments to upgrade their ability to effectively respond to the public health consequences of all types of hazards, whether natural, intentional, or accidental. Hazards may include infectious diseases; natural disasters; and biological, chemical, nuclear, and radiological events. The cooperative agreement currently funds 62 grantees, including all 50 states, four localities (Chicago, Los Angeles County, New York City, and Washington, D.C.), and eight U.S. territories and freely associated states.

Division of Strategic National Stockpile

The Division of Strategic National Stockpile (DSNS) has the mission to deliver critical medical assets to the site of a national emergency. DSNS manages the Strategic National Stockpile, a national repository of antibiotics, chemical antidotes, antitoxins, life-support medications, and medical supplies that can be used to supplement state and local resources during a large-scale public health emergency. This division procures, stores, and delivers stockpile assets, and provides technical assistance to help state and local sites prepare to receive and distribute these assets. When certain assets are deployed, technical advisory support is provided through specialized CDC teams.

Division of Emergency Operations

The Division of Emergency Operations (DEO) is responsible for overall coordination of CDC's preparedness, assessment, response, recovery, and evaluation prior to and during public health emergencies. DEO is also responsible for the CDC Emergency Operations Center (EOC), which maintains situational awareness of potential health threats 24/7/365 and is the centralized location for incident management when activated. The EOC organizes CDC scientific experts in one location during an emergency response to efficiently exchange information and connect with partners. The EOC also coordinates the deployment of CDC staff and equipment to support local, state, and international efforts during emergencies.

Division of Select Agents and Toxins

The Division of Select Agents and Toxins (DSAT) through the Select Agent Program regulates the possession, use, and transfer of biological agents and toxins ("select agents") that have the potential to pose a severe threat to public health and safety. Select agents include the bacteria that cause anthrax and plague, and the virus that causes smallpox. This program is designed to ensure compliance with the select agent regulations by providing guidance and evaluating and inspecting registered entities. The division also works closely with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's program that regulates agents that pose a severe threat to animal and plant health or products. In addition, DSAT oversees the Etiologic Agent Import Permit Program that regulates the importation of agents, hosts, and vectors of human disease into the United States.

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