

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2003

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SENATE DRS55274-LN-193 (5/20)

Short Title: Local Health Dept. Accreditation.

(Public)

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Sponsors: Senator Hartsell.

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Referred to:

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A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO REQUIRE THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES TO ESTABLISH A LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT VOLUNTARY ACCREDITATION PROGRAM AND TO ESTABLISH THE LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT ACCREDITATION BOARD; AND TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS TO IMPLEMENT THIS ACT.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

**SECTION 1.(a)** G.S. 130A-2 is amended by adding the following new subdivision in alphabetical order to read:

**"§ 130A-2. Definitions.**

The following definition shall apply throughout this Chapter unless otherwise specified:

...

(01) "Accreditation board" or "Board" means the Local Health Department Accreditation Board.

**SECTION 1.(b)** Part 1 of Article 2 of Chapter 130A of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

**"§ 130A-34.1. Accreditation of local health departments; board established.**

(a) All local health departments may obtain and maintain accreditation in accordance with this section and with rules adopted by the Commission.

(b) The Local Health Department Accreditation Board is established. The Board is established within the Department of Health and Human Services for budgetary purposes only. The Board shall be composed of 15 members appointed as follows:

(1) Eight appointed by the General Assembly, four upon recommendation of the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, and two by each of the Speakers of the House of Representatives.

- 1           a.     Of the members recommended by the President Pro Tempore of  
2           the Senate, two shall be county commissioners recommended  
3           by the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners,  
4           and two shall be members of a local board of health as  
5           recommended by the North Carolina Association of Local  
6           Boards of Health.
- 7           b.     Of the members recommended by each of the Speakers of the  
8           House of Representatives, one shall be a county commissioner  
9           recommended by the North Carolina Association of County  
10          Commissioners, and one shall be a member of a local board of  
11          health as recommended by the North Carolina Association of  
12          Local Boards of Health.
- 13          (2)    Six by the Secretary of Health and Human Services, as follows:
- 14           a.     Two local health directors.
- 15           b.     One staff member from the Division of Public Health.
- 16           c.     Three members at large.
- 17          (3)    One by the Secretary of Environment and Natural Resources, from the  
18          Division of Environmental Health.
- 19          (c)    Any appointment to fill a vacancy on the Board created by the resignation,  
20          dismissal, ineligibility, death, or disability of any member shall be made by the original  
21          appointing authority and shall be for the balance of the unexpired term. The chairman  
22          shall be elected by the Board and shall designate the times and places at which the  
23          Board shall meet. The Board shall meet as often as necessary to carry out its duty to  
24          develop and review periodically accreditation standards, to engage in activities  
25          necessary to assign accreditation status to local health departments, and to engage in  
26          other activities necessary to implement this section.
- 27          (d)    Members of the Board who are not officers or employees of the State shall  
28          receive reimbursement for travel and subsistence expenses at the rates specified in  
29          G.S. 138-5. Members of the Board who are officers or employees of the State shall  
30          receive reimbursement for travel and subsistence at the rate set out in G.S. 138-6.
- 31          (e)    The Board shall assign an accreditation status to each local health department  
32          that applies for initial accreditation, reaccreditation, or relief from conditional  
33          accreditation. The Board shall assign the appropriate accreditation status, as follows:
- 34           (1)    Accredited, which means that the local health department has satisfied  
35           the accreditation standards adopted by the Board and applicable rules  
36           adopted by the Commission.
- 37           (2)    Conditionally accredited, which means that the local health department  
38           has failed to meet one or more accreditation standards and has  
39           therefore been granted short-term accreditation subject to conditions  
40           specified by the Board.
- 41           (3)    Unaccredited, which means that the local health department has  
42           continued to fail to meet one or more accreditation standards after a  
43           period of conditional accreditation.

1 (f) The Commission shall, after reviewing standards developed by and  
2 consulting with the Board, adopt rules establishing accreditation standards for local  
3 health departments. The accreditation standards shall include at least all of the  
4 following:

5 (1) An accreditation process that consists of the following components:

6 a. A self-assessment conducted by the local health department  
7 seeking accreditation. The self-assessment shall measure the  
8 local health department's capacity to and performance of the  
9 following essential services:

10 1. Monitoring health status to identify community health  
11 problems.

12 2. Diagnosing and investigating health hazards in the  
13 community.

14 3. Informing, educating, and empowering people about  
15 health issues.

16 4. Mobilizing community partnerships to identify and solve  
17 health problems.

18 5. Developing policies and plans that support individual  
19 and community health efforts.

20 6. Enforcing laws and regulations that protect health and  
21 ensure safety.

22 7. Linking people to needed personal health care services  
23 and assuring the provision of health care when otherwise  
24 unavailable.

25 8. Assuring a competent public health workforce and  
26 personal health care workforce.

27 9. Evaluating effectiveness, accessibility, and quality of  
28 personal and population-based health services.

29 b. A site visit by a team of experts to clarify, verify, and amplify  
30 the information in the self-assessment.

31 c. Final action by the Board on the local health department's  
32 accreditation status.

33 (2) The local health department's capacity to provide the essential public  
34 health services as defined by the Centers for Disease Control and  
35 Prevention.

36 (3) The local health department's facilities and administration. The review  
37 shall address, at a minimum:

38 a. Adequacy of facilities for services provided.

39 b. Hours of operation that are adequate for access to essential  
40 services.

41 c. Mechanisms for assessing quality of services.

42 (4) The local health department's staff competencies and training  
43 procedures or programs. The review shall address, at a minimum:

44 a. Licensing, certification, and registration requirements.

- 1                    b. Continuing education.  
2                    c. Orientation.  
3                    (5) The local health department's governance. The review shall address, at  
4                    a minimum, policies on:  
5                    a. Budgeting, accounting, fee-setting, and purchasing.  
6                    b. Other financial management activities that assure accountability  
7                    for funds.  
8                    (g) The Board shall assign the following accreditation status, as applicable:  
9                    (1) "Accredited" to a local health department that satisfies the  
10                    accreditation standards and rules adopted by the Commission. The  
11                    initial period of accreditation shall expire four calendar years after  
12                    initial accreditation is granted.  
13                    (2) "Conditionally accredited" to a local health department that, in its  
14                    initial accreditation application, fails to satisfy the accreditation  
15                    standards and rules adopted by the Commission. The period of  
16                    conditional accreditation shall expire two calendar years after  
17                    conditional accreditation is granted. The Board shall provide to the  
18                    local health department a written statement of the conditions that must  
19                    be satisfied in order for the local health department to be accredited. At  
20                    any time during the two-year period, the local health department may  
21                    request that its status be reviewed and changed from "conditionally  
22                    accredited" to "accredited." If the Board finds that the conditions have  
23                    been met, the Board shall change the local health department's status to  
24                    "accredited" with the accreditation period to expire four calendar years  
25                    after the conditional accreditation was initially granted. If the Board  
26                    finds that the conditions have not been satisfied, the local health  
27                    department shall continue under its grant of conditional accreditation.  
28                    (3) "Unaccredited" to the local health department if, at the end of the  
29                    conditional accreditation period, the department fails to meet the  
30                    accreditation standards at that time.  
31                    (h) Each accredited local health department shall apply for reaccreditation before  
32                    the initial period of accreditation expires. If a local health department fails to apply for  
33                    reaccreditation in a timely manner, the Board shall change the local health department's  
34                    status to "unaccredited."  
35                    (i) When the Board assigns the status "unaccredited" to a local health  
36                    department, the Board shall send written notification of that status to the local health  
37                    department and to the Secretary.  
38                    (j) The Commission shall adopt rules to implement this act."

39                    **SECTION 2.** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the  
40 Department of Health and Human Services the sum of two hundred fifty-five thousand  
41 five hundred ninety-seven dollars (\$255,597) for the 2004-2005 fiscal year. These  
42 funds shall be allocated for administrative costs and for activities of the Accreditation  
43 Board for the accreditation of six or fewer local health departments. The Department

1 may provide for the accreditation of additional local health departments if non-State  
2 funds are obtained for this purpose.

3           **SECTION 3.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2004.