



GLOBAL SECTION B SUBCOMMITTEE REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY DIVISION

Inflation Impacts:

- Increasing maintenance and operating costs for existing technology system contracts.
- Reduced funding of federal grants for program implementation.
- The rising in the cost of housing in Helena increases recruiting challenges.

How does your division support the annual plan?

The Public Health and Safety Division (PHSD) directly supports the DPHHS HB 190 annual plan and mission statement by serving Montanans in their communities to improve health, safety, well-being, and empower independence. To accomplish this, the division works to improve the health of Montanans through a wide range of public health services aimed at disease prevention and the promotion of healthy lifestyles. Private and public providers offer services, including local and tribal public health departments, clinics, hospitals, and other community-based organizations. Consistent with the department's annual plan, PHSD leads a five-year strategic assessment and planning cycle to engage the entire public health system in Montana.

- The **State Health Assessment (SHA)** describes Montanans' health status on various health issues, including access to care, behavioral health, chronic conditions, injury, and family health. The 2023 State Health Assessment will be published in March 2025.
- The **State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP)** uses the information available in the SHA to identify health priorities to focus on as a state over the next five years. The SHIP includes objectives for measuring change over time and strategies for advancing health. It is designed to be a collectively owned and a living document to improve collaboration amongst statewide partners to address specific population health priorities. The 2024–2028 State Health Improvement Plan will be published in March 2025.
- The **Public Health and Safety Division Strategic Plan** is a five-year plan that aligns with the SHA, SHIP, and the DPHHS Annual Plan. It identifies measurable goals, outcomes, strategies, and tactics for the Division. An updated Division Strategic Plan will be finalized in 2025.

The Division's Strategic Plan strengthens service delivery to promote healthy independence and positive outcomes for Montanans in these focus areas:

1. Policy Development and Enforcement
2. Disease and Injury Prevention and Control, and Health Promotion



3. Health Services, Particularly Clinical Preventive Services
4. Assessment and Surveillance
5. Public Health System Capacity
6. Internal Operations and Financial Systems

<https://dphhs.mt.gov/assets/publichealth/ahealthiermontana/2019PHSDStrategicPlan.pdf>

Describe efficiencies and/or cost savings achieved over the past biennium or those planned for the next biennium.

During the 2025 biennium, the Laboratory Services Bureau (LSB) has undertaken a comprehensive modernization effort to enhance its laboratory capabilities. The LSB has been working hard to expand its laboratory testing and emergency response capacity. Hence, they are in a better position to respond to public health threats rapidly and efficiently in Montana. This includes a new state-of-the-art laboratory information system that provides a platform for electronic test requests and results, the acquisition of new instrumentation, and an extensive remodel that provides additional laboratory space for public health emergency response.

In accordance with the Regulative Reform Initiative criteria, EMS reduced the regulatory burden by shortening and simplifying EMS Service Licensing rules and making them more user-friendly for emergency medical service providers. Many regulations have not been updated since the 1990s and no longer reflect industry best practices and federal standards. The revised rules decreased unnecessary regulatory barriers while maintaining requirements for the safe operation of emergency medical services.

The PHSD embarked on a multi-year effort to modernize the public health data infrastructure from an outdated and siloed system to a connected, scalable, and adaptable response-ready system.

Data Presented in Division PowerPoint

Tobacco Use Prevention Program

Over the last 13 years, significant reductions in cigarette smoking have been observed in Montana. Adult smoking dropped from 22% in 2011 to 12% in 2023, while youth smoking plummeted from 17% in 2001 to an all-time low of 7% in 2023. American Indian adult use of cigarettes has decreased from 47% in 2011 to 25% in 2023.

- Baseline Adult Cigarette Use: 2011: 22%
- Current Adult Cigarette Use: 2023: 12%
- Baseline Youth Cigarette Use: 2001: 17%
- Current Youth Cigarette Use: 2023: 7%
- American Indian Adult Cigarette Use: 2011: 47%
- Current American Indian Adult Cigarette Use: 2023: 25%



Emergency Medical Services and Trauma Systems

Montana's Emergency Medical Services (EMS) alert rate to hospitals within 10 minutes of EMS identifying a possible patient heart attack is nearly twice as high as the national rate. Hospitals initiate guideline therapy more quickly, improving outcomes and improving outcomes and resulting in fewer deaths.

- Baseline: 2022: 37%
- Target: 2023: 43%
- Most Recent: 2024 (Q1-Q3): 41%

Diabetes Self-Management Program

The Montana Diabetes Program worked with partners and healthcare systems to improve access to diabetes self-management education and support (DSMES) services across the state. DSMES is a program for people with diabetes to gain the knowledge and skills necessary to manage their diabetes and related conditions and to prevent complications.

Local sites have increased access to programs and services in several rural areas across the state and are generating revenue for the covered organizations. At the end of 2022 there were 48 DSMES access points; at the end of 2024, there were 53 access points.

- Baseline: 2022: 48 access points
- Current: 2024: 53 access points

Response to Infectious Disease Outbreaks

Number of reported outbreaks

- Baseline, 2021-2022: 80
- Current, 2023-2024: 299
- Percent change: 273% increase

Describe any direct or indirect interactions your division has with justice-involved individuals.

The EMS & Trauma Section provides financial support for community-based organizations involved in substance use disorder harm reduction; funding is through the CDC Overdose Data to Action grant.

The Montana Cancer Control Program provides breast and cervical cancer screenings to incarcerated women or those in early release programs, as they meet the requirements of being un- or under-insured, and at or below 250% of the federal poverty level.

PHSD supports nurses and administrators of correctional facilities in investigating and controlling outbreaks of communicable diseases, such as influenza and hepatitis C.