



Licensure Examination for Health Officers in New Jersey

Study Guide

BACKGROUND:

The Licensure Examination for Health Officers in New Jersey (“HO Exam”) is a two-part exam offered twice annually and open to candidates who, as determined by the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) and/or the Public Health Licensing and Examination Board, possess the qualifications and provide the necessary evidence for eligibility as listed in New Jersey Administrative Code, Title 8, Chapter 7: Licensure of Persons for Public Health Positions (N.J.A.C. 8:7). Part I of the HO Exam consists of 100 true-false questions that is intended to measure candidates’ factual knowledge and Part II of the HO Exam consists of 40 open-ended questions that is intended to assess candidates’ skills and competencies. Candidates must pass Part I to sit for Part II; both sections are offered on the same day. Additional information on the HO Exam, including dates for upcoming exams and applications for potential candidates, can be found on the NJDOH Office of Local Public Health (OLPH) website at <http://www.state.nj.us/health/lh/professionals/licensing/>.

EXPECTATIONS:

As per N.J.A.C. 8:7, it is the expectation that candidates sitting for the HO Exam have prior training, knowledge and experience as follows:

- **Education:** Diplomate of the American Board of Preventive Medicine or complete eligibility therefore, or degree of doctor or master from an accredited college or university program in a health-related field recognized as such by the Department of Education such as medicine, osteopathy, veterinary medicine, public health, environmental science, health administration, social work, nursing or health education. The core course work for the degree shall include or be supplemented by at least three credits in each of the following: planning, administration, environmental science, social science, biostatistics and epidemiology at the undergraduate, junior or senior level.
- **Experience:** Unless otherwise exempted by statute, satisfactory completion of two years full-time employment in a position providing administrative experience in at least three of the five existing recognized public health activities as specified in N.J.A.C. 8:52.
- **Expectation:** The health officer is expected to provide leadership in the field of public health in his or her community. In addition to being the chief executive officer of a local health department, he or she is responsible for evaluating the health problems of his community, planning appropriate activities to meet their health problems, developing necessary budget procedures to cover these activities, and directing the department’s

staff so as to carry out the activities efficiently, economically and in accordance with accepted policies and practices as defined by the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services and Public Health Council in N.J.A.C. 8:52, Recognized Public Health Activities and Minimum Standards of Performance for Local Boards of Health in New Jersey. Applicants are examined relative to these essential activities.

While NJDOH OLPH has endeavored to provide a guide that will assist candidates in studying for the HO Exam, it is important to understand the difference between a licensing examination and an examination given as part of a course of study. Examinations given as part of a course of study will contain questions that pertain to specific information provided in texts, manuals, and/or course lectures. Examinations given for licensure will contain questions that pertain to accumulated knowledge, experience and skills obtained from multiple sources, and may require candidates to use their own judgement as learned from their extensive training. Therefore, while our intent is to provide a study guide that is as comprehensive as possible, there may be questions within the HO Exam that are not covered by this guide.

STUDY GUIDE:

The HO Exam is based on New Jersey Administrative Code, Title 8, Chapter 52: Public Health Practice Standards of Performance for Local Boards of Health in New Jersey (N.J.A.C. 8:52 or "The Practice Standards"). The Practice Standards guides the HO Exam in two ways: 1) the Practice Standards outlines the core services relevant to health challenges that are at the forefront in New Jersey. Part I of the HO Exam includes factual questions in these core service areas and is divided into general categories including management and administration, environmental and occupational disease, chronic and disabling disease and communicable disease; and 2) The Practice Standards references the importance of the Ten Essential Public Health Services in providing the framework for the public health workforce in New Jersey, including the skills and competencies required of public health professionals in local health departments. Part II of the HO Exam assesses these skills and competencies and includes open-ended questions that require candidates demonstrate the ability to solve problems, interpret data and communicate effectively.

The following references include the Practice Standards, the Ten Essential Public Health Services and other key resources that all HO Exam candidates should be familiar with:

- The Public Health Practice Standards:
http://www.state.nj.us/health/lh/documents/chapter_52.pdf
- The Ten Essential Public Health Services:
<https://www.cdc.gov/nphpsp/essentialServices.html>
- New Jersey Statutes Annotated Title 26: Health and Vital Statistics (N.J.S.A. 26):
<http://law.justia.com/codes/new-jersey/2013/title-26>
- The NJDOH Health Officer Orientation Package (HOOP):
http://www.state.nj.us/health/lh/documents/lh_officer_orientation_packet.pdf
- PEOSH Bloodborne Pathogens Standard (29 CFR 1910.1030):
<http://www.state.nj.us/health/workplacehealthandsafety/peosh/peosh-health-standards/bbp.shtml>

- The NJDOH website, including best practices from programs such as the Communicable Disease Service; the New Jersey Immunization Information System (NJIS); the Communicable Disease Reporting Surveillance System (CDRSS); the Consumer, Environmental and Occupational Health Service; the Division of HIV, STD and TB Services; the Child and Adolescent Health Program (CAHP); the Office of Population Health; the Center for Health Statistics and Informatics; Healthy New Jersey 2020; and Emergency Preparedness and Operations (EP&O):
<http://www.nj.gov/health/>
- The NJDEP website, including regulations and guidelines from programs such as the Indoor Air Quality Program; the Division of Water Supply and Geoscience; the Site Remediation Program; and the Division of Solid and Hazardous Waste.
<http://www.state.nj.us/dep/>
- The CDC National Health Report: Leading Causes of Morbidity and Mortality and Associated Behavioral Risk and Protective Factors—United States, 2005–2013
<https://www.cdc.gov/healthreport/publications/compendium.pdf>
- The CDC National Health Report: Leading Causes of Morbidity and Mortality and Associated Behavioral Risk and Protective Factors webpage
<https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/su6304a2.htm>
- National Standards for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS) in Health and Health Care
<https://www.thinkculturalhealth.hhs.gov/assets/pdfs/EnhancedNationalCLASStandards.pdf>
- The U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Think Cultural Health website
<https://www.thinkculturalhealth.hhs.gov/assets/pdfs/CLASCompendium.pdf>

Text books for general study (these are examples only; candidates may have text books from their undergraduate or graduate work that provide information on public health principals and practices):

Local Public Health Practice: Trends and Models. Glen P. Mays, C. Arden Miller, Paul K. Halverson. American Public Health Association Publications. 2002.

Planning for Community Oriented Health Systems. James E. Rohrer. American Public Health Association Publications. 1999.

Principles of Public Health Practice. F. Douglas Scutchfield and William Keck. Delmar Learning. 2002.

Public Health Administration and Practice, George E. Pickett and John J. Hanlon. The C. V. Mosby Company, St. Louis. 1990.

The Future of Public Health. National Academy of Sciences. 1988.
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK218218/>

Principles of Epidemiology in Public Health Practice, Third Edition: An Introduction to Applied Epidemiology and Biostatistics - November 2011.
<https://www.cdc.gov/ophss/csels/dsepd/ss1978/SS1978.pdf>