



Strategic Plan

2026 - 2028

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BACKGROUND

The Association of Ohio Health Commissioners (AOHC) undertook a comprehensive strategic planning process in 2025 to strengthen its role as the unified voice of local public health in Ohio and to position the organization for future success. This effort was driven by the recognition that the landscape of public health is rapidly evolving and that AOHC must continue to adapt to meet the needs of its members.

Kane Learning facilitated the planning process, which began with a statewide survey of AOHC members and key stakeholders, conducted alongside an internal and external environmental scan. Together, these activities provided candid feedback on AOHC's strengths, challenges, and opportunities while also assessing broader trends and forces shaping local public health in Ohio. Common themes that emerged included the importance of sustainability, workforce development, stronger partnerships, and increased transparency and communication. The survey also highlighted the need for AOHC to continue serving as a connector across jurisdictions and as a trusted advocate for local public health.

Building on these insights, AOHC convened three in-depth working sessions with its Board of Directors and the Executive Director. These sessions created space for robust dialogue about AOHC's role in Ohio's public health system and the organization's path forward. Leaders emphasized the need to reaffirm AOHC's core purpose, articulate a clear vision, and focus efforts on the most critical priorities for the coming years.

As a result of this collaborative process, AOHC has:

- Developed a new mission statement that reflects the association's purpose and relevance.
- Created an aspirational vision that unites members and partners around a shared future.
- Clarified organizational values to guide how AOHC operates and engages with members.
- Identified five strategic priorities that will focus resources and efforts over the next three years.

This strategic plan represents an important milestone for AOHC. It honors the association's history, reflects the perspectives of its members and partners, and provides a clear, actionable path forward. Most importantly, it is designed to be a living document that guides decisions, builds accountability, and strengthens local public health across Ohio.



MISSION

Our purpose – why the organization exists

Empower and equip Ohio's local Public Health leaders.



VISION

What excellence looks like – what our organization aspires to

Exceptional Leaders. Shared Purpose. Healthy Communities.



VALUES

<i>How we treat one another and our members</i>			
Members	Collaboration	Empowerment	Innovation
We are committed to responsive, high-quality service that meets the evolving needs of local public health agencies and the leaders who serve them.	We ensure every voice is heard, every member is valued, and diverse perspectives guide our work. We build strong partnerships through transparency and respectful engagement across the public health system.	We cultivate and support strong, visible leaders who shape the future of local public health in Ohio.	We embrace modernization and anticipate challenges to drive sustainable solutions.

CRITICAL ISSUES

Based on the SWOT Analysis, six Critical Issues emerged including:

- Communication
- Member Retention / Services (e.g., provide needed resources and templates)
- Technology / Process
- Legislative Perception
- Sustainable Funding
- Education and Engagement

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

To focus attention on what matters most for future success, AOHC is committed to the following five Strategic Priorities:



1. Establish a Sustainable Future for Ohio's Local Health Departments



2. Expand Awareness and Member Engagement



3. Elevate Member Experiences (Onboarding, Mentorship, and Development)



4. Educate and Engage Decision Makers



5. Employ Innovative Technology and Strengthen Operations

The remaining pages of this plan detail each Strategic Priority including goals, success measures, and actions. A companion Action Planning spreadsheet will help the organization monitor progress and share updates.



STRATEGIC PRIORITY #1:

Establish a Sustainable Future for Ohio's Local Health Departments

Success Measures

- Fewer role vacancies and shorter fill times (determine baseline)
- Greater % of Local Health Departments have more resources and more funding
- Draft policies, supported by a coalition of key partners, ready for the legislature to consider that will support modernization of public health laws

Goals and Key Actions

- 1) Support a sustainable workforce pipeline
 - a. Establish a statewide workforce initiative (by year end 2026)
 - b. Establish specific core competencies for common public health roles and leadership/management positions in health departments (by year end 2027)
 - i. Leadership Roles
 - ii. Individual Contributor Roles
 - c. Develop common resources to support the public health workforce, based on the competencies developed for common public health roles: (by year end 2028)
 - i. Trainings
 - ii. Position descriptions
 - iii. Evaluation tool
 - iv. Etc.
 - d. Deploy developed resources across Ohio (by April 2029)
- 2) Establish a coalition to modernize local public health laws and rules
 - a. Define our partners (by year end 2026)
 - b. Define our key needs and potential concessions (by year end 2026)
 - i. Determine opportunities to streamline and reduce
 - c. Benchmark other organizations and examples; compare to Ohio needs (by year end 2027)
 - d. Develop draft policies for legislative review (by year end 2030)

- 3) Develop replicable strategies that every jurisdiction can use to generate funding
 - a. Gather unique ideas (by August 2026)
 - i. Board
 - ii. Members
 - iii. Stakeholders
 - iv. Other government agencies
 - b. Build templates for the most promising ideas and train members on how to implement them (by year end 2026)
 - c. Explore opportunities to increase funding (e.g., grants) (by August 2026)
 - d. Increase advocacy for State and Federal funding (by August 2026)



STRATEGIC PRIORITY #2:

Expand Awareness and Member Engagement

Success Measures

- Monthly AOHC Meeting attendance (determine baseline)
- Public Affairs Meeting attendance (determine baseline)
- Member Conference Overall Satisfaction rating of >90%
- Participation in New Leader Survey

Goals and Key Actions

- 1) Increase effectiveness of Monthly AOHC Meeting
 - a. Solicit input on topics in advance (by year end 2025)
 - b. Confirm meeting day/time with members (starting October 2025)
 - c. Develop consistent meeting agenda /format (by year end 2025)
 - d. Publish finalized agenda one week in advance of meeting (starting January 2026)
 - e. Publish call notes and attendance numbers in new agenda format (starting January 2026)
- 2) Increase effectiveness of Public Affairs Meeting
 - a. Survey members to gain input on desired topics and cadence (by February 2026)
 - b. Evaluate Bill Review Assignment Process (by May 2026)
 - c. Clearly differentiate purpose of Public Affairs Meeting from Monthly AOHC Meeting (by February 2026)
 - d. Publish call notes and participants (by year end 2025)
 - e. Connect with members who are not consistently attending to understand why (by August 2026)
 - f. Develop a Public Affairs Committee orientation (by October 2026)
 - g. Conduct Public Affairs Committee orientation annually (in October)
- 3) Increase productivity of District Meetings
 - a. Develop an agenda framework (by September 2026)
 - b. Provide training for District Directors (by April 2027)
 - i. Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)
 - ii. Guidebook
 - iii. Website
 - iv. Resources
 - c. Conduct survey to gain feedback (by December 2027)

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">4) Foster engagement through Member Conference participation<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Survey membership to gauge Overall Satisfaction and value of Conference attendance (with each conference)b. Publish conference survey feedback themes (following each fall conference)c. Create new meaningful opportunities for leaders to connect with one another during conferences (fall and spring 2026, 2027, 2028)<ul style="list-style-type: none">i. LHD characteristicsii. Tenure/Experienceiii. Interests |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">5) Implement New Leader Survey process to be sent at the end of year one in role<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Develop survey content (by June 2026)b. Administer survey with one year role anniversary communication (by September 2026)c. Set up small group connections with new leaders (quarterly starting July 2027)d. Create a systemic way to track leadership changes (Health Commissioners, Administrators, and Medical Directors) (by June 2026) |



STRATEGIC PRIORITY #3:

Elevate Member Experiences (Onboarding, Development, Mentorship)

Success Measures

- Completion rate of New Leader Onboarding (develop baseline in 2026)
- Establishment of new Mentors each year (develop baseline in 2027)
- Completion of Resource Library

Goals and Key Actions

- 1) Evaluate and update AOHC onboarding (audience HC)
 - a) Update onboarding packet (by year end 2025)
 - i. Minimum requirements awareness
 - ii. AOHC provided resources
 - b) Provide overview at Health Commissioner University (at each session)
- 2) Formalize Mentorship Program
 - a) Document expectations of Mentor / Mentee (by the end of 2026)
 - b) Outline key program activities (by the end of 2026)
 - c) Develop/refine Mentorship training and tools (by the end of 2026)
 - d) Introduce updated program to membership (by April 2027)
- 3) Create a set of resources to support delivery of core LHD functions
 - a) Audit most significant needs (by March 2026)
 - b) Consolidate resources for members (by September 2026)
 - c) Build a curated resource library on AOHC website (by September 2027)
 - d) Develop and implement a plan to keep resources current and relevant (by September 2028)
- 4) Enhance Membership Connections
 - a) Introduce Networking opportunities (by year end 2027)
 - b) Team building (by year end 2028)
 - c) Establish discussion/email groups (by year end 2027)



STRATEGIC PRIORITY #4:

Educate and Engage Decision Makers

Success Measures

- Completion of annual advocacy platform
- Three or more direct engagement events with legislators annually
- Advocacy resources and training for members completed and maintained

Goals and Key Actions

- 1) Complete an annual advocacy platform
 - a) Poll membership on advocacy priorities (by November 2025)
 - b) Engage taskforces on priorities (by November 2025)
 - c) Draft priorities agenda and plan (ED, Lobbyist) (by April 2026)
 - d) Share draft priorities with members (by May 2026)
 - e) Finalize policy agenda and present it to Board/Members (by September 2026)
 - f) Repeat steps annually (2027 & 2028)
- 2) Equip members with the knowledge and confidence to communicate with all elected officials
 - a) Increase resource availability by moving content to a file accessible by all members and staff (by October 2026)
 - b) Review and revise current advocacy resources (by July 2026)
 - c) Facilitate training sessions at conferences (spring/fall 2026, 2027, & 2028)
- 3) Engage Legislators
 - a) Coordinate and host event(s) (by end of year 2027)
 - b) Invite Legislators to Fall Conference Welcome Reception (fall 2026)
 - c) Participate in Statehouse Day with policy handouts (starting in 2026)
 - d) Establish a Legislator of the Year Award (starting in 2027)



STRATEGIC PRIORITY #5:

Employ Innovative Technology and Strengthen Operations

Success Measures
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Increased efficiency and streamlined operationsNew website launchedUpdated resource librarySOPs updated and maintainedCompletion of LHD technology needs assessment
Goals and Key Actions
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Streamline AOHC office technology solutions<ol style="list-style-type: none">a) Update office software and calendaring capacity (by May 2026)b) Implement cloud-based solution for file access and storage (by December 2026)c) Evaluate and secure AOHC IT supportd) Upgrade QuickBooks (by December 2026)2) Improve AOHC and LPHSC business processes<ol style="list-style-type: none">a) Simplify banking operations (by year end 2026)b) Evaluate and update SOPs (by year end 2027)c) Advance training delivery methods and materials (by year end 2026)<ol style="list-style-type: none">i. Virtual meeting solutions (e.g., Zoom, Teams, Web Ex)d) Streamline resource preparation for trainings (by year end 2026)3) Enhance Member Communication vehicles<ol style="list-style-type: none">a) Update and expand website capacity (by year end 2026)b) Create resource library (by year end 2027)<ol style="list-style-type: none">i. Shared Access to documents (e.g., SharePoint)c) Evolve newsletter format and content (by year end 2027)4) Support Local Health Department technology needs<ol style="list-style-type: none">a) Complete a needs assessment via survey (by year end 2028)b) Identify statewide opportunities to provide solutions (by year end 2028)

AOHC plans to share this Strategic Plan with its members at the Fall Conference on September 24, 2025. It is anticipated that a revised Strategic Plan will be developed in 2028 for the next three-year time span.

APPENDIX

SWOT Analysis:

Gaining a clear, strategic view of our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, enabling AOHC to make informed decisions, leverage our advantages, and proactively address challenges for long-term success.

STRENGTHS (internal) Impactful Leadership Dedicated Board Communication (Newsletter, Board to Districts) Advocacy Conferences and Workforce Development Training Current Event Information Solid Foundation to Build Upon Members Feel Valued Passion for Members, Public Health, and Communities	WEAKNESSES (internal) Marketing and Branding (internal and external) Innovative Uses of Technology (training, communication) Modernize Training Member Engagement Curated Resources (templates, policies, position descriptions) Engagement with Elected Officials Member Education re: Engaging with Elected Officials Often Reactive vs. Proactive Staffing to Meet Member Expectations
OPPORTUNITIES (external) Provide additional member services (HR, Legal, Purchasing) Succession Planning (Collaborative / Institute) Revisit Structure (Geography) New AOHC Leadership (DOMS Director) Members and Stakeholders Support and Investment Additional Learning Communities (City HD) AI	THREATS (external) Political Landscape Sustainable Funding (LHDs, AOHC) Advocacy Gaps County vs. County Competition Governance Structure

Member and Stakeholder Survey Themes

(Administered in May 2025)

Member Advice re: Strategic Planning Process

- Prioritize Inclusion and Representation
- Be Bold, Forward-Thinking, and Action-Oriented
- Center the Plan on Equity, Funding, and Impact
- Transparent and Regular Communication
- Use the Process to Reignite Engagement and Trust

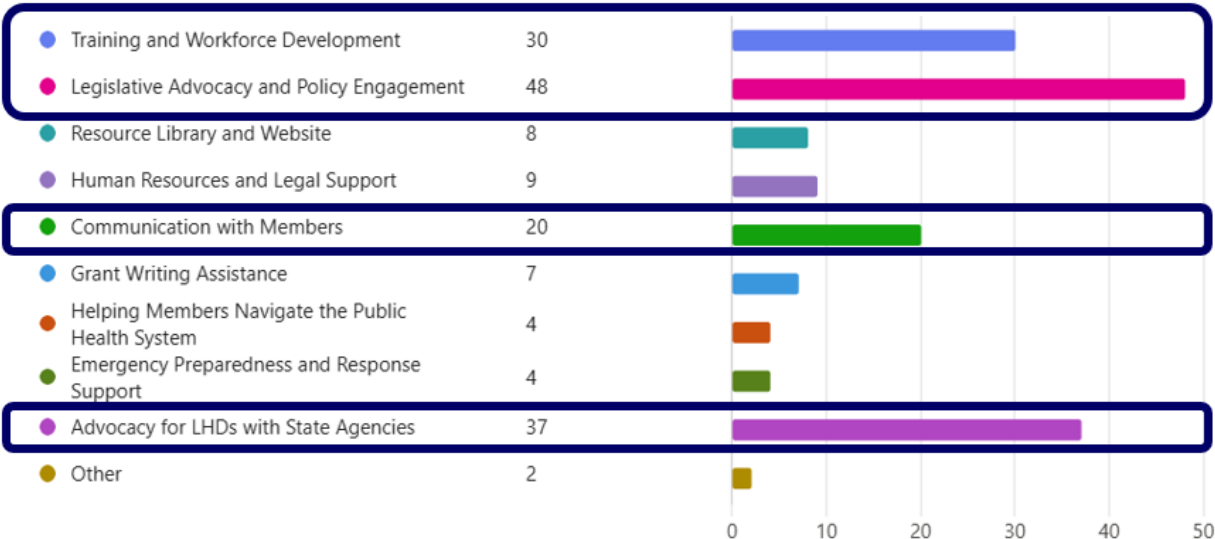
AOHC’s Purpose (Members & Stakeholders):

- Advocacy and Legislative Engagement
- Support for Local Health Departments and Health Commissioners
- Training and Professional Development
- Communication and Liaison Role
- Collaboration and Networking
- Strategic Leadership and System Strengthening
- Public Health Advancement

AOHC’s Role in the Public Health System

- Unified Voice and Advocate for Local Public Health
- Connector and Conduit Across the System
- Hub for Public Health Leadership and Coordination
- Driver of Workforce Development and Training
- Facilitator of Consistency and System-wide Alignment

Top Priorities for AOHC Members



Top Priorities for AOHC Stakeholders

