

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Baseline Organizational Assessment for Equity Infrastructure

What is Equity? What is Health Equity?

Equity recognizes that because different individuals or groups have different histories and circumstances, they have unique needs and unequal starting points. Using an equity approach, individuals and groups receive different resources, opportunities, support, or treatment based on their specific needs. By providing what each individual or group needs, they can have equal or fair outcomes.

Health Equity describes circumstances in which all people have the opportunities and resources necessary to lead healthy lives. Efforts to achieve Health Equity often require giving special attention to the needs of those at greatest risk of poor health, including historically oppressed or marginalized racial or ethnic groups.

How does this organizational assessment intersect with Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) work?

The assessment can potentially be used as documentation to [meet certain standards for Public Health Accreditation](#). Some examples are as followed:

- **Standard 5.3.2A- Adopted Department Strategic Plan**
 - Assessment can be used to help inform c) Goals and objectives with measurable and time-framed targets and f) Assessment of health department strengths and weaknesses in the development of Departmental Strategic Plan
- **Standard 8.2.1A- Workforce Development Strategies**
 - Assessment is a state-developed, specialty-focused document that focuses on equity competencies. It can be used to inform the health-department specific workforce development plan

Additionally, the assessment can be used to determine readiness for accreditation, as many standards have integrated equity into their requirements.

What was the rationale for each of the domains and competencies identified in this assessment?

Domains and competencies identified in this assessment were informed by a July 2021 LHI survey where we asked how LHJs would like to approach the organizational assessment. We also reviewed existing assessment tools and frameworks from Bay Area Regional Health Inequities Initiative (BARHII), Human Impact Partners (HIP), Coalition of Communities of Color (CCC), and the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) to determine which competencies were common between all of them. For deeper and more comprehensive organizational assessments, we recommend viewing the resources provided by [BARHII](#), [HIP](#), [CCC](#), and [GARE](#).

Do local health jurisdictions (LHJs) have to be doing all examples in a particular “early, established, strong” level? What if LHJs are doing some activities at one level and some at another?

The examples are meant to serve as a reference to help you reflect on how equity is potentially embedded throughout your LHJ. The examples shown under each level for each competency are not meant to be an exhaustive list or a checklist of requirements. We recommend choosing the level that you feel best reflects where your LHJ stands for that competency. An optional textbox is provided under each domain as an opportunity for your LHJ to explain your reasoning for choosing a particular level or to provide additional examples that may not have been included.

Our LHJ believes we fall under “Established” for one of the competencies, but none of the examples apply or resonate with us. What do we do?

The examples shown under each level for each competency are not meant to be an exhaustive list or a checklist of requirements. Your LHJ activities might be completely different from the examples provided, but can help you determine what level your activities fall under. If you mark “5” for one of the competencies, it does not imply that your LHJ is performing all the activity examples of “Early” and “Established,” but rather that the scope and depth of activities in your LHJ is similar to the implementation level reflected in the examples.

We recognize that not all examples listed under each competency may apply to your LHJ. We have provided an optional textbox under each domain for your LHJ to explain your reasoning for choosing a particular level or to provide additional examples that may not have been captured in the assessment.

Our LHJ is concerned about scoring mostly in the “Early” stages on this assessment. Will we be penalized?

We understand that each LHJ is in a unique position with different levels of resources and community-specific considerations about how to expand the scope of their equity work. This baseline assessment is not meant to put a spotlight on practices that your LHJ “should” have been doing. Rather, it is meant to initiate dialogue, gather insights on the current state of your LHJ, and surface considerations that help focus internal priorities in order to strengthen LHJ capacity to plan health equity work. We will not penalize LHJs that score mostly in the “Early” stages of the various competencies. Accurate answering on this assessment will allow us to identify priorities for technical assistance.

Under Domain 1: Workforce and Capacity, Competency C) Training, development, and support, what is meant by “Affinity groups/employee resource groups”?

Affinity groups/employee resource groups are designated safe spaces in the workforce formed around common interests, common bonds, or similar backgrounds.

Where is the SurveyMonkey link?

The SurveyMonkey can be found by going to <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/YRYSBJY>.

Will I be able to save my responses on the SurveyMonkey link and return at a later time to complete the assessment?

Yes, respondents can return to the survey and pick up where they left off and/or edit previous responses until they click the Done button.

Am I able to skip around on the SurveyMonkey link or will I have to answer the questions in order?

Yes and no. You will be able to go back to previous answers, but you will not be able to advance forward without responding to all the required questions on the page. We encourage you review and share the PDF version of the Baseline Organizational Assessment for Equity Infrastructure before starting to complete the SurveyMonkey version.

Can my LHJ submit more than one SurveyMonkey response?

Our team asks that your LHJ collaborates as a team to submit only one SurveyMonkey response per LHJ.