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Policy Title:	Board of Health Position Statements		
Policy Number:	N/A		
Program Area:	Board of Health Governance		
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Approved by: Board of Health			
Responsible Division: Board of Health			

Purpose:

Iowa Code Chapter 137.103 states that “A county board shall have jurisdiction over public health matters within the county.” While there is an almost endless array of issues which can potentially affect public health within the county, the Board of Health should exercise discernment and be deliberate in its selection of topics and development of material as it adopts position statements. This policy is intended to establish the process for selecting issues for position statement development including the criteria to be evaluated during that process in order to ensure focus of effort and credibility to the Board.

- I. Any member of the Board of Health may introduce and present an issue for the Board’s consideration. The Director of Johnson County Public Health may also recommend issues for consideration. Issues to be discussed shall be placed on the Board’s agenda in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations pertaining to public meetings.
- II. The Board shall consider the following criteria when deciding whether or not to develop a position statement on any issue: (There are no established thresholds or scoring system herein adopted to determine if an issue will have a position statement developed for it. These are criteria that the Board wants to ensure are examined during its discussions.)
 - A. Prevalence – The extent to which the issue/condition is present within the population at large.
 - B. Severity – The likelihood that the health of those affected by the subject will be significantly degraded if no change is made.
 - C. Applicability/Relevance - If, or the extent to which, the issue affects Johnson County. (There may be some issues which are prevalent in the world, U.S. or Iowa, but may not be in Johnson County. This criterion discusses the issue’s effect on the health of residents of Johnson County.)
 - D. Persistence – Is the issue likely to exist in to the future? Some issues may only be short-term and might likely be more effectively addressed with a letter or some other method of communication. Position statements are intended to be relevant for multiple years in to the future.

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- E. Policy Solution – This refers to the ability of the issue to be resolved by policy change. Position statements should address the policy issues at the root of a problem or condition rather than programming or operational issues.
 - F. Local Priority – As in C, above, the Board should determine if or how an issue aligns with local priorities as identified in the current Community Health Needs Assessment and Health Improvement Plan (CHNA-HIP). Issues which align with local priorities should weigh more heavily when making decisions.
 - G. Unity – Any Board action must have a majority vote of a quorum present to become a policy or official action of the Board. Position Statements should reflect issues of such importance that there is general agreement among all Board members. While this policy does not establish a requirement for a unanimous or supermajority vote in order to adopt a position statement, the Board should consider the value in speaking with a strong unified voice on issues of public health importance.
 - H. Science and Evidence Based – Data and other information used to inform the Board on issues being considered should be from reliable sources such as peer reviewed journals or reports from academic or government institutions with a rigorous and reputable scientific base or from best available evidence gained from the scientific method.
- III. Position Statements shall be reviewed at least every three years to consider the following:
- A. Updates to the science, epidemiology or any other factors that were considered in the original or most recent draft of the statement. These statements may be edited to reflect recent content or found to be current and remain Active.
 - B. If factors described in paragraph II, above, are no longer present, the statement may be Archived.
 - C. The Board may rescind a statement if it finds the basic science or other relevant factors have changed to the point where the Board can no longer support the Statement.
- IV. This policy shall be reviewed at least every five years.
- V. Distribution. Position Statements adopted by the Board of Health are public documents intended for wide public consumption. JCPH staff shall ensure that statements are posted on the JCPH website, shared with other Boards of Health and distributed to other policy makers as needed as part of public health policy development.

Scope:

This policy is directed primarily to Board of Health members. Management staff of Johnson County Public Health should be familiar with this policy as they prepare background information and draft proposals for the Board's consideration, at their request.

Definitions:

Active: Position statements that have been adopted by the Board and address issues of public health which are still persistent and it is anticipated that continued action by the Board or JCPH staff will be needed.

Archived: Position statements on issues which have been addressed through policy change or other desired actions, for which continued Board of JPCPH staff action is not anticipated.

Rescinded: Position statements for which the underlying science, research base, or other reasons as agreed by the Board have changed and the Board rescinds its adoption of the statement in response.