Local Health Department Job Losses and Program Cuts: Overview of Survey Findings from January/February 2010 Survey

INTRODUCTION
The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) surveyed a sample of local health departments (LHDs) nationwide in the months of January and February 2010. This was the third in a series of nationally representative surveys designed to measure the impact of the economic recession on LHDs’ jobs, budgets, and programs.

DEEP JOB LOSSES ON THE FRONT LINE OF PUBLIC HEALTH
In the last six months of 2009, nearly half of LHDs (46%) lost the skilled people needed to protect the health of their communities (Figure 1) as 8,000 LHD jobs were lost. When combined with previous NACCHO findings, this results in a cumulative 23,000 jobs lost from 2008–2009 (Figure 2), approximately 15 percent of the LHD workforce in the country. In the last six months of 2009, an additional 13,000 LHD employees were affected by cuts in working hours or mandatory furloughs resulting from budget cuts. In 14 states, more than 75 percent of LHDs lost jobs due to layoffs or attrition (Figure 4).

![Figure 1: Percentage of LHDs with Cuts to Jobs, Budgets, or Programs](image)

An additional 15 percent would have lower budgets but were provided one-time assistance from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and/or H1N1 supplemental funding.

![Figure 2: Estimated Number of LHD Jobs Lost in 2008–2009](image)

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<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<td>Lost Jobs: Layoffs</td>
<td>7,000</td>
<td>16,000</td>
<td>23,000</td>
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<td>or Attrition</td>
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BUDGET CUTS AND JOB LOSSES THREATEN ESSENTIAL SERVICES
More than a third of LHDs report a lower budget this year when compared to the previous year. When one-time funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and/or H1N1 supplemental funding is excluded, an additional 15 percent of LHDs report a lower budget, for a cumulative 53 percent of LHDs experiencing cuts to...
METHODOLOGY

In the months of January and February 2010, NACCHO surveyed 997 LHDs. These LHDs were selected as part of a statistically random sample designed to provide both national and state-level estimates. A total of 721 LHDs distributed across 48 states participated for a response rate of 72 percent. All reported statistics were developed using appropriate weights for both sampling and non-response. All data in this study were self-reported; NACCHO did not independently verify the data provided by LHDs. Additional findings will be posted on NACCHO’s Web site at www.naccho.org/advocacy/lhdbudget.cfm as they become available.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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