

Environment and Public Health

2024 Field Training Manual for Students



RUTGERS

New Jersey Agricultural
Experiment Station

Office of Continuing Professional Education

102 Ryders Lane

New Brunswick, NJ 08901-8519

Phone: (848) 932-9271 | Fax: (732) 932-1187

www.cpe.rutgers.edu ~ eph@njaes.rutgers.edu

Program Coordinator: Olga Welsh – 848-932-7315

Faculty Coordinator: Peter Tabbot

I. INTRODUCTION

Field training provides an opportunity for each student to begin applying the knowledge, principles, and theory gained in the **Environment and Public Health (EPH) Course**. This 200-hour training period includes three days with the New Jersey Department of Health and the balance of time with a local, county, or regional health department. Successful completion of the field training is a prerequisite to taking the New Jersey State Registered Environmental Health Specialist (REHS) exam.

The Health Officer (HO) and/or a REHS at each field location will be responsible for your field training, either directly or indirectly by designating employees to act as trainers or supervisors. To fulfill the objectives for field training, sponsoring departments are encouraged to introduce students to a variety of staff members, issues, projects, and investigations. Training supervisors also are encouraged to work with other health departments to provide a wide range of field experiences.

This guide includes an outline of subject areas, duration, training activities, instructional methods for your field training, and forms to document your training. One goal of this guide is to ensure that all students receive a complete field training experience. The procedures and subjects are presented in a suggested order to help students gain maximum advantage from their field training. At every opportunity, either on-site or after leaving the premises, and most importantly, at the end of each day, **discussion between staff and students is critical to maximizing the educational experience.**

II. TRAINING OBJECTIVES

A. General

1. Define the functions and relationships of the training agency, the local governing body, Board of Health, and the various departments within that local governing body including county Cooperative Extension Service, medical society, civic and fraternal organizations, and service clubs.
2. Define the functions and the relationships of state and federal agencies to the local health department (i.e., Departments of Health, Agriculture, Education, Environmental Protection, US Department of Health, CDC, and FDA).

B. Community Related

1. Develop **educational skills** in association with standard operating procedures (i.e., the opportunity to educate food handlers during routine inspections).
2. Develop **service-oriented skills** for the community in the form of direct technical aid and advice on specific problems (e.g., communicable disease information, disinfection procedures, disease prevention strategies, and assistance with an environmental health review of site plans).
3. Develop **public relations skills** to deal tactfully and effectively with the public during investigations and while interpreting problems.
4. Develop **communication skills** such as interviewing techniques, letter writing, public speaking, and preparation of reports, news articles, radio scripts, educational pamphlets, posters, and exhibits.

5. Develop a knowledge of **federal, state, and local health laws, ordinances, and regulations** and their application to health problems.

C. Administrative

1. Develop an understanding of the **structure, goals, divisions, and functions** of a local health department.
2. Develop an understanding and appreciation of current **social and economic problems** related to public health.
3. Develop the ability to **critically evaluate existing methods** in meeting the changing community needs.
4. Develop skills in the **collection, organization, analysis, and interpretation of data**.
5. Develop the ability to use records and statistics for determining **progress and evaluating health status**.

D. Professional

1. Understand and follow the expectations of a **professional office environment**, , dress code, hygiene, and promptness.
2. Learn to work as a **team member** of the health department staff, by developing and demonstrating the following qualities:
 - i. **Interest** in all topics presented.
 - ii. **Motivation** to take an active role in one's learning.
 - iii. **Industrious and effective use of time**, particularly during unstructured or "free" periods.
 - iv. **Good listening, attentiveness, and observation skills** at all times.
 - v. **Humility, respect, and an open mind** when working with staff members who may have a different opinion or approach.
 - vi. **Helpfulness** to the staff whenever possible.
3. Dedication to keeping to a mutually agreed upon schedule of training dates and activities and communicating any absences or emergencies in a professional and timely manner.

III. RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS

This is your training, so *make the most of it!* Review the topics listed in the Training Outline (Section IV) and work with your supervisor(s) to ensure that you receive maximum exposure to as many of the topics as possible. In many cases, that may require working with another health department for one or more days during your training period. The required training period is 200 hours. That translates to five 40-hour work weeks. If the department's work week is not a full 40 hours, it may take you closer to six weeks to complete the training. You may complete your training over any schedule that meets your needs and is acceptable to your sponsoring health department.

This is a professional training opportunity, so please treat it as such. Our state's local health practitioners are giving generously of their time and expertise to provide the training you need, so be attentive, punctual, respectful, and professional at all times. Please note it is incumbent upon you to research and familiarize yourself with relevant codes before inspections (or by refreshing your knowledge as needed). Know and follow the rules, policies, and requirements of the health department where you are training each day. **Your supervisor has the right to dismiss you for poor behavior or failure to act professionally – don't give him/her any reason to do so! This is your chance to learn, network, and grow – take advantage of it!**

INSTRUCTIONS

Here is what you need to do, document, and submit to Rutgers at the conclusion of your internship to receive credit for completing the field training component of the EPH program:

1. Complete 200 hours (equivalent to a minimum of 25 full days) of supervised training with a municipal, county, or regional health department and document activities using the forms included in this manual.
2. Maintain a **log of weekly activities** that includes date, name of trainer, location, and a brief description of activities completed. Print out multiple blank copies of the weekly log sheet (Appendix A, page 9) before you begin your internship. Fill in your training activities each day. Have your supervisor read and sign the log sheet each week to confirm its accuracy. **Do not wait until the end of your internship to have your supervisor sign your log sheets.**
3. If you travel to a different health department to complete certain activities (for example, to West Milford to work with Sue Muhaw on septics), you should fill out a separate activity sheet for the days you are there. Have *that* supervisor (for example, Sue Muhaw) sign that log sheet.
4. Maintain a **separate log sheet** (Appendix B, page 11) for activities completed with the State (NJDOH) Inspector. This log sheet is to be signed by the State Inspector.
5. Complete, sign, and submit the two-page **training confirmation form*** (Appendix C, pages 13-15).
6. Complete, sign, and submit the two-page **evaluation form*** (Appendix D, pages 16-17).
7. We strongly recommend that you **type** your activity logs, confirmation form, and site evaluation form (Appendices A-D) before you submit them to Rutgers, either on a weekly basis, or at the end of your internship. Typed notes are much easier to read, and by typing them, you will help yourself to review, remember, and reflect upon your training experience.
8. Your main supervisor is responsible for completing two forms: a performance evaluation and a topic confirmation form. We will provide these forms to your supervisor, but it is YOUR responsibility to remind your supervisor to fill out and submit these forms to our office at the END of your internship.

IV. TRAINING OUTLINE

CORE REQUIRED TOPICS: The following 10 topics **MUST** be addressed during the field training experience.

- **Local Health Department**

Demonstrate the organization and services offered by your entire agency, other than environmental health, and review the health problems of your community; include inter-agency relations, home health services, clinics and conferences, preventable disease control, vital statistics, rabies control, laboratory services, nursing, and the interaction among departments with fire, police, OEM, construction, and other partners.

- **Retail Food Inspection**

Develop inspection and evaluation techniques appropriate to N.J.A.C. 8:24. (Note: N.J.A.C. 8:24 is colloquially known as Chapter 24 of the State Sanitary Code.) Students must be instructed in risk-based food inspection techniques and application of HAACP principles. Recognize specific problem areas related to food safety, including methods to determine levels of sanitizing agent used, approved plumbing arrangements, etc. Accurate, thorough, detailed reports should be demonstrated, then performed by the trainees. At the conclusion of each inspection, a thorough review of the activity and the report should be conducted. **Students are encouraged to write a minimum of 5 reports.**
- **Solid Waste**

Review solid waste storage, including the adequacy of containers at private and multiple refuse sites, with emphasis on the harborage, feeding, and breeding of insects and rodents. Review the same aspects associated with the collection of refuse by observing the vehicles and equipment used, as well as the timing and quality of the operation. Emphasize the association of proper refuse storage and collection with the prevention of insects and rodents. Examine disposal problems such as infestations of insects, rodents, and leachate (i.e., burrows, droppings, presence of larvae and eggs).
- **On-site Sewage Disposal Systems**

Observe several percolation and permeability tests and test borings for a proposed installation. Conduct on-site inspections for installations of individual sewage systems before backfilling. **Students must witness aspects of at least 2 installations** (i.e., plan review, excavation inspection, final inspection, as built inspection). Review compliance with N.J.A.C. 7:9A-1.1, et seq., the Standards for Individual Subsurface Sewage Disposal Systems.
- **Surface Water Pollution Investigation**

Conduct an investigation of a surface water body (stream, pond, lake, river, bay, ocean) which either originates from a citizen complaint (i.e., odors, color, foaming or other visual impact, fish-kill, spills, illegal discharge), NJDEP referral, or is part of a routine watershed surveillance program (i.e., water quality sampling, sanitary survey, illicit connection track down). The investigation may include a physical description of the surface water body (i.e., type of surface water, inputs, potential sources, surrounding land use), visual observations, sampling plan, sampling technique, analysis of sampling results, source identification and impact on surface water, remedial actions, follow-up, and coordination with NJDEP.
- **Recreational Sanitation and Bathing**

Conduct safety and sanitation inspections/surveys of day camps, summer resident camps, private campgrounds, and natural bathing places. Review site plans of swimming pools for layout, safety, construction, and function of equipment and machinery. Inspect a pool that is in operation.
- **Court Cases**

Observe or review a court case with reference to a public health violation -- actual or staged for training purposes. The student should be familiar with the case prior to the court date and should know the chain of custody followed and discovery necessary to document the investigation successfully, including summons writing.
- **Insect and Rodent Control**

Review rodent and insect-related nuisances, identify insects and rodents of public health significance and nuisance pests, and demonstrate competency regarding investigation techniques as they pertain to same.
- **Outbreak Investigation**

Review techniques, forms and steps used in the investigation of disease reports and suspected outbreaks, including notification protocols, case interviews, hypothesis development, laboratory sampling, site investigation and tabulation of appropriate rates, including relative risk, odds ratio and/or chi square. Emphasis should be placed on foodborne investigation techniques.

- **Training with a State Inspector**

Students must complete three total days of training with an NJDOH-assigned state inspector. Your training time with the state inspector may count towards your 200-hour total.

ELECTIVE TOPICS: You are **required to complete at least 5 of the 11 topics** listed below and encouraged to experience all of these if possible.

- **Emergency Management, Preparedness and Response**

Participate in meetings of LEPC (Local Emergency Planning Committee), review emergency management plans (including health-related plan annexes like Public Health Annex, Hazardous Materials Response Annex, Shelter Annex, Radiological Event Annex). Attend and evaluate emergency response activities including timely, safe onsite visit to emergent events and post-event meetings to review actions and implications.

- **Ragweed and Poison Ivy**

Review State and local regulations pertaining to nuisance plants like ragweed and poison ivy, and perform investigations including identification and confirmation of violations, techniques used in performing inspections, and process for reconciling complaints.

- **Noise Investigation**

Demonstrate knowledge of regulations related to unwanted sound, including investigation of noise complaints, understanding of thresholds constituting a violation, steps in handling various noise conditions and process for reconciling noise issues/complaints.

- **Potable Water**

Witness a Safe Water Drinking Act inspection and well inspections for individual (private) and public non-community water supplies. Practice water sampling from adequately protected wells, and review and interpret laboratory results. Review site plans and construction of a new or altered individual water quality supply. Examine, interpret, and analyze laboratory reports for drinking water samples. Participate in the preparation of a violation notice and offer of settlement and observe any resultant negotiations or court action.

- **Lead Inspection**

Review a recent case of elevated blood lead (lead poisoning) with the appropriate staff (i.e., REHS *and* Public Health Nurse) or perform work in an active lead investigation, Techniques used to determine environmental lead levels should be demonstrated and report writing should be reviewed with applicable staff and demonstrated.

- **Regional Solid Waste or Compost Operation**

Visit and inspect a waste storage or transfer site, observing the relevant steps in processing waste. This site visit may be to a solid waste transfer station, a sanitary landfill, or a compost facility, and the visit must include a review of the respective actions taken to minimize public and environmental health risks at the site. In addition, an overview of critical steps in the respective waste management process should be reviewed and discussed.

- **Tanning**

Review NJDOH tanning facility regulations and perform onsite inspection of tanning facility and/or complete complaint investigation regarding same. Demonstrate knowledge of sanitation protocols, age requirements and/or parental consent.

- **Body Art**

Review NJDOH body art code and perform inspection of body art/permanent cosmetic establishment, and/or complete complaint investigation regarding same. Demonstrate understanding of sanitation requirements, bloodborne pathogen safety, autoclaving, and needle sterilization.

- **Animal Control/Welfare**
Join Animal Control Officer/Humane Law Enforcement Officer for investigations including animal bites (animal to animal, animal to human), animal quarantines and required notifications, nuisance complaint inspections and/or animal welfare investigations.
- **Pet Shops/Kennels/Shelters**
Review applicable regulations and perform pet shop, kennel, or animal shelter inspections for compliance with relevant State codes and any local ordinances.
- **Air Pollution**
Demonstrate techniques used to read smoke opacity/density and other smoke conditions. Develop familiarity with the laws and procedures for the municipality in handling air pollution problems. Review laws dealing with open burning. Perform a “windshield” inspection for air pollution violations or review a current complaint.

OPTIONAL TOPICS: If available, feel free to complete these topics during your training for a well-rounded experience.

- **Housing**
Conduct several multiple dwelling inspections and perform surveys at motels, hotels, tourist homes, migrant labor camps, and/or mobile home parks. Become familiar with the Housing-Related Health and Safety Hazard Assessment (HUD) and/or the NJ Department of Community Affairs’ Cooperative Housing inspection checklist.
- **Institutional Sanitation**
Inspect continuing care facilities, boarding homes, and/or convalescent centers, including food service, water service, sewage disposal, and general housekeeping sanitation.
- **Disaster Sanitation**
Review the principles and procedures for investigating food establishments after a flood, fire, or similar disaster, with emphasis on embargo procedures.
- **Specialized Training**
If you have a particular interest, strength, or weakness in any of the subjects previously covered, you may request additional field training in that area if mutually agreed upon by your supervisor.
- **Weights and Measures**
Review the steps in determining accuracy of weighing devices, scales, and/or gasoline dispensers. Learn process for citing and fining entities that maintain such devices that are not accurate in their measures.
- **Public Health Nursing/Clinical**
Assist nursing staff with planning, execution, and evaluation of clinical and educational nursing programs, including mass prophylaxis/point of distribution (POD) clinics for emergency vaccination, disease case investigation and contact tracing, if prioritized or requested by host health agency.

V. SUMMARY OF TECHNIQUES TO BE DEVELOPED:

Try to experience as many of the following techniques as possible during your training period.

- Bacteriological Sampling of Potable and Non-Potable Water
- Chlorine Residual & pH- Swimming Pool

- Bacteriological Sampling of Food
- Performance of Legal Food Sampling
- Permeability/Percolation Testing
- Evaluation of Soil Log
- Identification of Rodent and Insect Infestation; Live activity tracked with rodent tracking powder
- Lead Analysis with X-ray fluorescence (XRF) analyzer, lead dust wipe samples or paint chip extraction/analysis
- Investigation of Lead Poisoning Case
- Housing: Familiarity with Housing-Related Health and Safety Hazard Assessment which includes the 29 safety hazards (?) (HUD)
- Ragweed and Poison Ivy Identification
- Food Inspection Techniques: Student trainee must write a minimum of 5 reports.
- Epidemiological Investigation of Disease Outbreak
- Noise Monitoring
- Identify Cross Connection, Air Gap, Air Break, Vacuum Breakers, etc.
- Report Writing (timelines, documentation, photos).

APPENDIX A: Weekly Training Log

Make copies of this page. Fill out one page for each week. Every weekly page must be signed by your supervisor.

STUDENT NAME: _____

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Date: _____ Trainer's Name: _____ Location(s): _____

Activities: _____

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Date: _____ Trainer's Name: _____ Location(s): _____

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Saturday Date: _____

Trainer's Name: _____

Location(s): _____

Activities: _____

Hours

Sunday Date: _____

Trainer's Name: _____

Location(s): _____

Activities: _____

Hours

Total Hours

Supervisor Signature _____ **Date:** _____

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APPENDIX B: 3 Days with State Inspector Training Log

Instructions to Student: Fill in each date and record the activities you observe with your assigned state inspector in the spaces below. Have the state inspector sign the form at the conclusion of day 3. Once the state inspector signs the form, you are NOT to make any changes to the descriptions of activities completed.

Student Name: _____

DAY 1

Date: _____ Location: _____

Activities Completed:

DAY 2

Date: _____ Location: _____

Activities Completed:

DAY 3

Date: _____ Location: _____

Activities Completed:

State Inspector Name (please print): _____

State Inspector Signature: _____

State Inspector: Your signature confirms that the student accompanied you during the activities described above. Your signature DOES NOT constitute an evaluation or appraisal of the student's performance.

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APPENDIX C: Student's Training Confirmation Form – Page 1 of 2

Student Name (please print): _____

INSTRUCTIONS: Use this two-page form to document the field training topics you have experienced, noting the *date(s)* each was completed (these should match up with your weekly training logs). Include **brief** comments about the extensiveness and frequency of the experience (e.g., performed once, multiple times, in-depth, brief overview). Please note the additional requirements for retail food inspection (#2 below) and on-site sewage disposal (#4 below).

<u>CORE/REQUIRED TOPICS</u>	YES	NO	DATE(S):	COMMENTS:
1. Local Health Dept.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
2. Retail Food Inspection* *A minimum of 5 written reports required	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
3. Solid Waste	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
4. On-site Sewage Disposal* *Must witness a min. of 2 installations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
5. Surface Water Pollution Investigation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
6. Recreational Bathing* (Minimum of 1 PRB inspection report)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
7. Court Case	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
8. Insect & Rodent Control	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
9. Epidemiological Investigation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
10. Training w/ State Inspector (3 days)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____

APPENDIX C: Student's Training Confirmation Form – Page 2 of 2

Student Name: _____

ELECTIVE TOPICS

(Must complete 5 or more of these 11 topics)

	YES	NO	DATE(S):	COMMENTS:
1. Emergency Management, Preparedness & Response	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
2. Nuisance Plants	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
3. Noise Investigation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
4. Potable Water Supply	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
5. Lead Inspection	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
6. Solid Waste/Compost Operation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
7. Tanning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
8. Body Art	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
9. Animal Control/Welfare	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
10. Pet Shops/Kennels/Shelters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
11. Air Pollution	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____

OPTIONAL TOPICS

	YES	NO	DATE(S):	COMMENTS:
1. Specialized Training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
2. Housing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
3. Institutional Sanitation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
4. Disaster Sanitation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
5. Weights & Measures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
6. Public health Nursing/Clinical	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____

Signature of Student _____

Date _____

NOTE: Supervisor signature is NOT required on this training confirmation form.

APPENDIX D: Student’s Training Site Evaluation Form – Page 1 of 2

Instructions: This form gives you, the student, the opportunity to rate your training site and provide feedback about your training experience to Rutgers. This form is for you and Rutgers only. Review by the training supervisor is NOT required. If you trained at more than one health department, please copy both pages of this form, and complete a separate form for each health department.

Student Name: _____

Primary Supervisor/Trainer: _____

Training Site: _____

Please provide feedback on your field training experience by evaluating your field training site and your training supervisor using the criteria below:

	EXCEL.	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	COMMENTS
1. Professionalism					
2. Willingness to train					
3. Enthusiasm					
4. Open to questions					
5. Stimulated your interest in the topics					
6. Able to explain the public health significance of violation					
7. Overall training experience					

Additional Comments:

APPENDIX D: Student's Training Evaluation Form – Page 2 of 2

Would you recommend this health department as a future training site? YES NO

Why or why not?

What was the most valuable aspect of your field training experience?

What was the least valuable aspect of your field training experience?

Were you employed as a result of this field training experience? YES NO

What would you suggest to improve the overall field training experience?

Signature of Student _____

*Thank you for your time and cooperation in filling out this field training evaluation. Your responses and comments will help improve the quality of training for future **Environment and Public Health** students.*

SUBMISSION OF FIELD TRAINING DOCUMENTS

I. Intern's Documentation

A. Preferred Method of Submission:

Please scan and email the following documents:

1. Completed field training weekly logs (Appendix A)
2. State inspector log (Appendix B)
3. Training confirmation form (Appendix C)
4. Training site evaluation form (Appendix D)

to Rutgers OCPE at eph@njaes.rutgers.edu

You do *not* have to send your restaurant inspection reports.

Please make sure your scans are clear and easy to read before emailing them. We prefer that you combine your scans into four separate documents: Appendix A, B, C, and D, if possible. Please include your first and last name in the file name. (Example: John Smith Appendix A.pdf) **Remember to include your typed copies in addition to your handwritten copies.**

B. Alternate Method of Submission:

If scanning and emailing your internship documentation is not possible, you may **make a copy** of your original documents, and mail us your copies (please keep the originals) at:

Office of Continuing Professional Education
Rutgers University
102 Ryders Lane
New Brunswick, NJ 08901-8519
ATTN: EPH – Training Documentation

II. Supervisor's Documentation

Your supervisor should complete, sign, and mail to Rutgers OCPE the internship skills confirmation and supervisor evaluation forms, found in the back of *their* version of the field training manual, once your internship is complete. If they need a new copy, you may find this version on Canvas.

It is YOUR responsibility to remind your supervisor to complete and email or mail in these forms.

We prefer that they scan and email the forms to us, at eph@njaes.rutgers.edu. If that is not possible, they may make a copy and mail us their forms at the same address as above.

Questions? Contact Us!

Email: eph@njaes.rutgers.edu

Phone: 848-932-7315