



## RESOURCE GUIDE

# TEMPORARY WORKERS TO BUILD CAPACITY IN MONTANA PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENTS

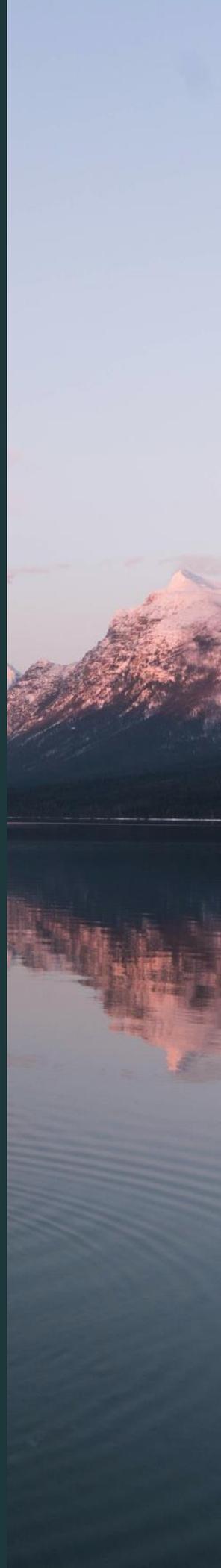
The purpose of this resource guide is to provide detailed information about temporary workers and student internship opportunities that exist to help build capacity in Montana's public health departments. We hope this guide connects health departments to programs aimed at promoting public health as a career choice, as well as meaningful project opportunities that help advance public and community health in Montana.

Please contact the Montana Public Health Institute ([info@mtphi.org](mailto:info@mtphi.org)) if you have questions, would like assistance, or would like to add an opportunity to this resource guide.

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**MONTANA**  
PUBLIC HEALTH INSTITUTE



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# Student Internships

## University of Montana School of Public Health Practicums

<b>Description</b>	University of Montana Master's Degree in Public Health students have two capstone courses (Applied Practicum Experience and Integrative Learning Experience) that require field placement.
<b>Length</b>	Semester long but can vary from 3 months to one year. Can be done over the summer.
<b>Number</b>	~30 annually
<b>How to connect</b>	Students self-select sites and do their own outreach, with the assistance of APE academic advisor. Students may select a practicum anywhere in the world, but many work locally. The UM Workforce Program keeps list of all available practicum opportunities. The Workforce Program also works with Montana public health departments who have a project and the ability to host students to reduce cold calling. No site is guaranteed a student.
<b>Site expectations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify a site mentor</li> <li>• Design a project with clear deliverables</li> <li>• Complete and sign proposal form</li> <li>• Can be onsite or remote</li> <li>• Compensation encouraged but not mandatory</li> <li>• Site mentor is asked to attend MPH student's final practicum presentation (done remotely)</li> </ul> <p>Goal is to design a "win-win" project for the student and site.</p>
<b>Support for sites</b>	Academic advisor coordinates with sites and can troubleshoot challenges. They meet with the site mentor and the student at least once prior to student initiating work, and then as many times as needed throughout the project. Students are required to participate in a simultaneous online course through Moodle, and UM anticipates developing a "Public Health in MT" course for students serving in local practicums to orient them to our system.
<b>Example projects</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community health assessments</li> <li>• Data analyses and dashboards</li> <li>• Programmatic needs assessments, programs survey or evaluations</li> </ul> <p>Seek to align projects with student interest and provide a real-world work experience appropriate for a Master's trained student</p>
<b>Contact</b>	Leigh Taggart, UM School of Public Health Academic Advisor - <a href="mailto:leigh.taggart@mso.umt.edu">leigh.taggart@mso.umt.edu</a> <a href="#">Montana Public Health Training Center Workforce Program</a>

## Montana State University Mark and Robyn Jones College of Nursing Senior Student Practicums

<b>Description</b>	MSU has five nursing campuses offering Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degrees in Montana. The hub campus is in Bozeman with additional sites in Great Falls, Billings, Missoula, and Kalispell. Senior nursing students at each campus take a one semester course that requires a practicum experience. Students interested in public health can complete practicums at local public health departments. Policies and procedures for practicums vary slightly by campus.
<b>Length</b>	Varies. Approximately 90 clinical hours over the course of one semester-can be spring, fall, or summer
<b>Number</b>	~150 annually across five campuses
<b>How to connect</b>	MSU helps connect students to health departments if they are interested in this field. The school can reach out to a health department if they have a student that wants a placement, but it is helpful to have a relationship established between the school and the department.
<b>Site expectations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design a project with clear deliverables (often involves education)</li> <li>• Identify a site preceptor (usually a nurse but does not have to be)</li> <li>• Provide support and orientation to the student to learn about public health nursing</li> <li>• Practicum is onsite</li> </ul>
<b>Support for sites</b>	Practicum course professors provide support as needed to the student and the site. Currently, some limited funding is available for housing and transportation if students are on the rural, primary care track. Students can also do paid work for the health department outside of their clinical hours (for example, many students worked as contact tracers or at immunization clinics during Covid).
<b>Example projects</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Smoke-free policy education for county commissioners</li> <li>• Promoting Covid vaccines</li> <li>• WIC education development</li> </ul> <p>Seek to align projects with student interest and health department needs by offering a hands-on experience of public health nursing.</p>
<b>Contact</b>	Bozeman campus: Sarah Shannon - <a href="mailto:sarah.shannon1@montana.edu">sarah.shannon1@montana.edu</a> Great Falls campus: Christy Buttler-Nelson - <a href="mailto:c.buttlernelson@montana.edu">c.buttlernelson@montana.edu</a> , Laurie Glover - <a href="mailto:glover@montana.edu">glover@montana.edu</a> MSU College of Nursing: <a href="https://www.montana.edu/nursing/">https://www.montana.edu/nursing/</a>

## Salish Kootenai College Nursing Department

<b>Description</b>	Senior students at the Salish Kootenai College Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program are required to complete placements and clinical hours at a community health clinic in Montana. Public health departments can serve as these sites. Senior students must also complete a capstone project. Students may complete placements in locations across Montana. The school leads the nation in its focus on American Indian health and training Native nurses.
<b>Length</b>	20 hours in the first two quarters of the senior year for a placement and then 108 clinical hours precepted at the community health site in last two quarters of the year. Senior students also complete a 120-hour capstone project that could focus on a public health topic.
<b>Number</b>	~30 per year
<b>How to connect</b>	The college develops MOUs with clinic sites and health departments and connects students to these sites for clinical placements and capstone projects. The college is open to making new connections with sites for students.
<b>Site expectations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify a nurse supervisor</li> <li>• Develop and sign an MOU</li> <li>• Clinical hours are onsite, capstone projects could be remote</li> </ul>
<b>Support for sites</b>	The college has a clinical coordinator and director of experiential learning that support sites and observe students at site visits. They provide tools to sites to evaluate students.
<b>Example projects</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working at a community vaccine clinic</li> <li>• Capstone: doing a SWOT analysis and researching best practices for improving nursing practices</li> </ul>
<b>Contact</b>	Kendra Reinlasoder - <a href="mailto:kendrareinlasoder@skc.edu">kendrareinlasoder@skc.edu</a> <a href="#">Salish Kootenai College - Nursing</a>

## Missoula College School of Nursing

<b>Description</b>	The Missoula College School of Nursing is an Associate of Science degree in Nursing (ASN) program that seeks to provide some exposure to students to the field of public health.
<b>Length</b>	ASN students do 90 adult clinical care hours for three semesters and could do part of these hours in a public health clinic. In their last semester, ASN students take a leadership and management course where they could be paired with a preceptor in public health for 90 hours. During the OB and/or child and family health unit 16-week semester, students have spent 1-2 days at a WIC clinic or in some other public health program.
<b>Number</b>	Varies
<b>How to connect</b>	Faculty does outreach to sites, mainly in the Missoula area (including the Bitterroot and Ravalli County). Sites can also reach out to the faculty to make a connection.
<b>Site expectations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sign an affiliate agreement</li> <li>• Identify a nurse supervisor</li> <li>• Follow the preceptor manual provided by the college</li> </ul>
<b>Support for sites</b>	The college has a clinical coordinator and director of experiential learning that support sites and observe students at site visits. They provide tools to sites to evaluate students.
<b>Example projects</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shadowing and observing public health nurses</li> <li>• For leadership class, can identify a project such as research or initiation of a new program</li> </ul>
<b>Contact</b>	Ginger Sillars - <a href="mailto:ginger.sillars@umontana.edu">ginger.sillars@umontana.edu</a> <a href="#">Missoula College - Nursing</a>

# Temporary Workers

## Montana Public Health Corps – Communities in Action

<b>Description</b>	Montana Public Health Corps is a state AmeriCorps program funded through the Governor’s Office of Community Services that places members in public health service in rural, frontier, and tribal communities across Montana. Members strive to improve the capacity of local public health, often with a focus on mental and emotional health. AmeriCorps members must be 17 and have a car. Many have bachelor’s degrees, but few have formal public health training.
<b>Length</b>	Usually 11-12 months but can be 6-9 months depending on the AmeriCorps member and site.
<b>Number</b>	~10-25 per year depending on the number of applicants
<b>How to connect</b>	Public health departments can apply with the Montana Public Health Corp program at Richland County. Filling out an application does not guarantee a placement. Number of placements depends on the number of applicants and matching applicants with sites.  <a href="#">Communities in Action Strategic Plan &amp; Action Groups</a>
<b>Site expectations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist in locate housing (e.g., locate a landlord willing to work with a temporary placement making below poverty wages)</li> <li>• Develop a service plan for onsite work. Projects for AmeriCorps members can involve capacity building and implementation</li> <li>• Provide \$8,000 one-time payment to support year-long placement</li> </ul>
<b>Support for sites</b>	The Montana Public Health Corps receives applications from the AmeriCorps website and links members to public health sites. The program covers the cost of member’s healthcare and taxes as well as an additional \$10,000 for their living stipend. The Montana Public Health Corp staff work to proactively set expectations for members about rural living and provide them with insight on how to thrive in a small community.
<b>Example projects</b>	AmeriCorps members can conduct capacity building and implementation projects for health departments. Example project including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health assessments and planning</li> <li>• Assistance implementing strategy identified in a community health improvement plan</li> <li>• Assessing the mental health needs of a community and working to address those identified needs</li> </ul>
<b>Contact</b>	Stephanie Reynolds - <a href="mailto:stephanie.reynolds@richland.org">stephanie.reynolds@richland.org</a> <a href="#">Communities in Action</a>

# Montana Community VISTA Partnership

<b>Description</b>	The AmeriCorps VISTA program is a federally funded program that focuses on placing temporary workers for capacity building projects in communities across the US. The Montana Community VISTA Partnership (MCVP) is a VISTA program run by the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) that focuses on the health, well-being, and self-reliance of all Montanans. VISTAs in this program focus on healthy futures (access to healthcare and prevention), education (including drop-out prevention and K-12 readiness), and economic development.
<b>Length</b>	12 months
<b>Number</b>	~60 per year
<b>How to connect</b>	The program accepts applications from sites year-round, but placements begin in either January or July. For placements in January, site applications must be submitted by the end of September. For placements in July, applications must be received by the end of February. Sites must include the low-income community in the planning and execution of their project and the developed proposal must have a sustainability plan for after the term ends. The proposal must outline a capacity building/ indirect service project for the VISTA.
<b>Site expectations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a VISTA assignment description with project goals, outcomes, timelines, and performance measures</li> <li>• Sign an MOU with the Montana Community VISTA partnership</li> <li>• Identify a site supervisor who can participate in trainings and ongoing communication</li> <li>• Indicate whether your site is able to assist with free or low-cost housing</li> <li>• Provide a letter of support from your board and complete an accessibility self-evaluation</li> </ul>
<b>Support for sites</b>	VISTAs receive a monthly payment (\$1,000) from the program, an educational award, supplemental health insurance coverage or a healthcare allowance, and sick and annual leave. The Montana Community VISTA Partnership conducts phone check-ins, trainings, and site visits for VISTAs and site supervisors.
<b>Example projects</b>	VISTAs must engage in capacity building work that can be used after the placement, not direct service. Example projects include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coalition building</li> <li>• Needs assessments</li> <li>• Group facilitation</li> <li>• Resource development</li> <li>• Technical assistance</li> </ul>
<b>Contact</b>	John Schlepp – <a href="mailto:john.shlepp@mt.gov">john.shlepp@mt.gov</a> <a href="#">Montana Community VISTA Partnership</a>

## AmeriCorps Seniors – Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)

<b>Description</b>	AmeriCorps Seniors RSVP program connects seniors 55 and older with the people and organizations that need them most. AmeriCorps seniors contribute their job skills and expertise to community projects and organizations. Volunteers receive guidance and training so they can make a contribution that suits their talents, interests, and availability.
<b>Length</b>	Ongoing. Volunteers can serve from a few hours to up to 40 hours per week.
<b>Number</b>	Over 3000 statewide
<b>How to connect</b>	RSVP programs are grant funded programs run through local Area Agencies on Aging or Human Resource Development Councils. Contact your local AAA or HRDC to determine if they have an RSVP program and if your public health department could become a placement site for volunteers.
<b>Site expectations</b>	Receive, orient, and utilize volunteers in a manner consistent with your mission.
<b>Support for sites</b>	RSVP programs have a director who can help connect public health departments to volunteers and provide orientation and training. The program recruits volunteers aged 55 and older, with a focus on diversity, and manages the placement of those volunteers with local organizations.
<b>Example projects</b>	Any project that helps fulfill the mission of the site organization. Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helping navigate clinic patients</li> <li>• Sorting and organizing supplies</li> <li>• Office tasks</li> </ul>
<b>Contact</b>	Locate the RSVP program serving your community and contact them directly. For example, here is the site for the RSVP program in Helena: <p><a href="#">Rocky Mountain Development Council Retired Senior Volunteer Program</a></p> For more information about AmeriCorps programs statewide, contact the <a href="#">Governor's Office of Community Service</a>

# CDC Public Health Associate Program

<b>Description</b>	Public Health Associate Program (PHAP) is a training program for early-career public health professionals who have a recent college degree (bachelor's or master's) and an interest in public health. Associates are placed at a host organization to gain hands-on experience that will serve as the foundation for their careers in public health.
<b>Length</b>	Two years
<b>Number</b>	300 nationwide, 55% of which are in local health departments.
<b>How to connect</b>	Complete a host site application which is due in mid-February each year.
<b>Site expectations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Select a subject area for the PHAP associate and orient them to the agency. Enter into an <a href="#">"Agreement to Detail"</a> with the CDC</li> <li>• Develop work activities that help the host site meet the PHAP curriculum competencies, and provide associates opportunities to gain experience in one public health program area</li> <li>• Identify site supervisor who is able to monitor the associate's day-to-day work activities</li> <li>• Provide training opportunities and robust on-the-job public health experiences</li> <li>• Cover the cost of local travel</li> <li>• Complete PHAP reporting, evaluation, and training requirements</li> </ul>
<b>Support for sites</b>	PHAP associates are federal employees with salary, paid vacation and sick leave, and health insurance paid by the CDC. Associates also receive a comprehensive training curriculum from the CDC and are assigned a mentor from the agency who can provide career guidance and networking opportunities. A CDC PHAP supervisor provides support and guidance to the site and associates. The CDC provides tools to use for bi-annual performance evaluations and other reporting requirements.
<b>Example projects</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Immunizations/preventable disease investigation (currently PHAP project in Flathead County)</li> <li>• Emergency preparedness and response</li> <li>• Lead poisoning prevention</li> <li>• Tobacco prevention and control</li> </ul>
<b>Contact</b>	<a href="#">CDC Public Health Associate Program</a>

## Montana Office of Rural Health and Area Health Education Center (AHEC)-Covid-19 Health Equity Grant

<b>Description</b>	<p>The mission of the Office of Rural Health and Area Health Education Center (MORH/AHEC) is to connect students to healthcare careers, professionals to communities and communities to better health. These programs are federally funded and housed at Montana State University. MORH/AHEC runs a number of projects that may be of interest to public health departments including pipeline programs to support students to enter health fields, training for public health workforce and support for public health system improvements statewide. Sign up for their <a href="#">newsletter</a> or visit their <a href="#">website</a> to learn about ongoing projects.</p> <p>Recently, DPHHS received a Covid-19 Health Equity grant that provides a contract to MORH/AHEC to place Community Health Workers (CHW) and Community Integrated Health Professionals (CIHs) in rural Montana. Funds will be used to support the salaries, benefits, and expenses of Community CHWs and/or CIHs, also known as Community EMTs or Paramedics, in each of Montana's counties. The funding is available first to Critical Access Hospital and then to other organizations (including health departments) if the hospital declines.</p>
<b>Length</b>	<p>2 years ending 5/31/2023</p>
<b>Number</b>	<p>Two per county, with additional funding designated for tribal areas</p>
<b>How to connect</b>	<p>Contact Kailyn Mock, <a href="#">CHW/CIH Workforce Funding Opportunity</a></p>
<b>Site expectations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruiting, hiring, and day-to-day supervision and employment functions (e.g., payroll) of the CHW or CIH</li> <li>• Designating a supervisor for the CHW(s) and/or CIH(s) who will attend an online 16-hour training through MORH/AHEC within 6 months of contract funding acceptance</li> <li>• Managing and supervising the activities of the CHW or CIH</li> <li>• Adhering to the requirements as outlined by MORH/AHEC and the Montana Health Network for reporting, patient interactions, travel expenses, and training</li> </ul>
<b>Support for sites</b>	<p>The grant will cover the annual funding for a CHW up to \$56,550 and for a CIH up to \$72,125. This amount is to cover salary, benefits, technology, travel, and indirect costs. Half of the designated CIH funding amount may be used to support training and operational supplies of non-salaried EMS staff. The cost of required trainings will also be covered by the grant.</p>
<b>Example projects</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide outreach to community resources, disease management coaching, preventative care, and other assistance to patients managing chronic health conditions.</li> <li>• Assist patients in understanding care plans and instructions, and with completion of forms and paperwork such as insurance or financial assistance.</li> <li>• Serve as a liaison between referral sources, facilities, and outside entities to prevent and/or resolve continuity of care issues.</li> <li>• Effectively coordinate and monitor care to promote quality and cost-effective outcomes.</li> <li>• Provide information to the community on contact tracing, testing, quarantine, and isolation requirements for those exposed to COVID-19. Assist those in quarantine or isolation who may need help with food, communications, housing, and other social needs.</li> </ul>
<b>Contact</b>	<p>Kailyn Mock - <a href="mailto:kailyn.mock@montana.edu">kailyn.mock@montana.edu</a>  <a href="#">Montana Office of Rural Health and Area Health Education Center</a></p>



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[Loveland Consulting](#)