

Mission:

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



Rick Scott  
Governor

John H. Armstrong, MD, FACS  
State Surgeon General & Secretary

Vision: To be the Healthiest State in the Nation

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**Media Contact:**  
**Julia Ruschmann**  
**850.872.4455 x 1369**

**FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH IN BAY COUNTY RECEIVES NATIONAL  
"PUBLIC HEALTH READY" RECOGNITION**

Panama City, FL - The Florida Department of Health in Bay County (FDOH Bay) has been recognized by the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) for its ability to plan for, respond to, and recover from public health emergencies. FDOH Bay demonstrated these capabilities by meeting the comprehensive preparedness benchmarks required by Project Public Health Ready (PPHR), a partnership between NACCHO and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. FDOH Bay joins more than 400 local health departments across the country that have been distinguished for excellence in preparedness through PPHR.

"We are proud to have been recognized by Project Public Health Ready for our high level of preparedness," said Douglas M. Kent, MPH, Administrator of the Florida Department of Health in Bay County. "This honor reflects tremendous effort, dedication, creativity, and cooperation with local and state Public Health Preparedness Programs, County Emergency Management and response partners. Bay County is a leader in public health emergency preparedness and will continue to quickly and effectively respond to any public health crisis."

This recognition confirms that FDOH Bay has a thorough and coordinated emergency response plan in place and that staff have the training to protect the health of the community during an emergency. Local health departments recognized by PPHR undergo a rigorous evaluation by peer review to assess their ability to meet a set of national standards for public health preparedness. These standards align with federal government requirements and other national best practices. "All disasters strike locally, and local health departments are a critical part of any community's first response to disease outbreaks, emergencies, and acts of terrorism," said Robert Pestronk, NACCHO Executive Director. "NACCHO commends FDOH Bay for being a model of public health emergency preparedness."

NACCHO, the voice of the 2,800 local health departments across the country, provides resources to help local health department leaders develop public health policies and programs to ensure that communities have access to vital programs and services that people need to keep them protected from disease and disaster. Its mission is to be a leader, partner, catalyst, and voice for local health departments in order to ensure conditions to promote health and equity, combat disease, and improve the quality and length of all lives.

For more information on Project Public Health Ready, including recognized sites, project tools, and resources, visit <http://www.naccho.org/PPHR> For more information on this achievement or the Public Health Preparedness Program in Bay County, please contact the Florida Department of Health in Bay County: 850.872.4455 or visit [baycountyhealth.org](http://baycountyhealth.org).

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