

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF STATE HEALTH SERVICES REGULATORY PHILOSOPHY

The purpose of this philosophical statement of the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) is to give guidance to the regulatory programs within the department on the ideal manner of conducting state business. No provision of this philosophy is intended as a condition precedent to any regulatory action.

REACH

We **REACH** to attain a maximum level of compliance by the regulated community to ensure protection of public health and safety. We do so with **R**eliable rules and standards, **E**fficient administration of activities, **A**ccountability to citizens and stakeholders, **C**ompliance actions when necessary, and **H**elp through technical advice and communication.

Reliable. Rules should be logical, enforceable, practical, and written in clear language that is easily understood. DSHS's goal of protecting the health and safety of the general public should be clearly understood by the regulated community. To be applied consistently, rules should be based on the best available knowledge, past regulatory experience, stakeholder input, and conform to established standards.

Efficient. The general public and the regulated community are entitled to the best possible management and administration of regulatory activities in a cost-effective manner. Regulatory decisions should be made without undue delay. Fiscal, technical, and managerial competence and responsibility should be a constant goal. Where several equally effective alternatives are available, the option which minimizes the use of resources should be adopted.

Accountable. All regulation is the public's business and should be transacted publicly and candidly. Nothing but the highest ethical standards and professionalism should influence the development of rules. Decisions should be based on objective, unbiased assessments of all information. DSHS regulatory programs should welcome information from their stakeholders and use this information to improve the rules and programs.

Compliance. The goal of DSHS is for all DSHS regulated entities to achieve voluntary compliance. Regulatory actions, including proposed sanctions, should be promptly, fairly and uniformly administered by the appropriate authority in the DSHS central office or independent board. Although voluntary compliance is the goal, public health and safety is paramount. When necessary, enforcement action for violations of statutes and rules will be taken to achieve compliance.

Help. DSHS staff should proactively assist the regulated community and the general public in their understanding of and compliance with regulatory requirements in order to protect the health and safety of all Texans. Regulations and policies should be explained by DSHS staff through activities such as workshops, inspections, newsletters, program websites and association meetings to assist and educate customers.

