



# Public Health Infectious Disease Response

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Joint Hearing of the House Committee on Homeland Security and Public Safety and the House Committee on International Relations and Economic Development

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John Hellerstedt, M.D.  
Commissioner



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# Public Health in Texas

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- Public health functions can include:
  - Disease surveillance and tracking
  - Zoonotic disease surveillance and treatment
  - Immunization services
  - Health education and promotion
  - Disease prevention and treatment
  - Public health emergency preparedness
  - Food safety



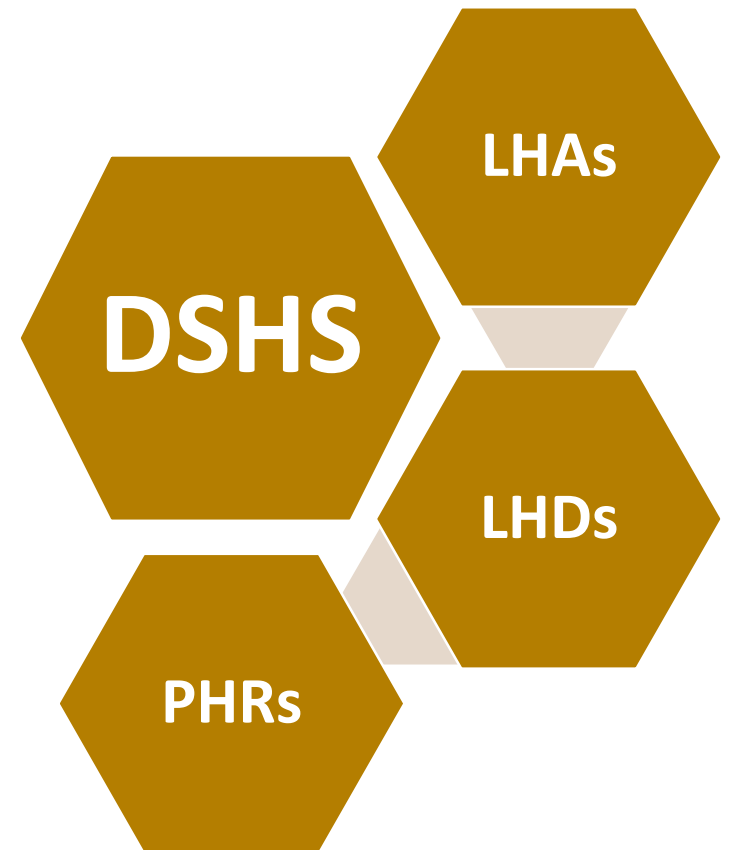
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# Public Health in Texas



- Texas statute sets governmental public health roles and responsibilities
  - Local Health Departments and Authorities (LHDs/LHAs)
  - DSHS and its Public Health Regions (PHRs)
- Because Texas is a home rule state, public health responsibilities begin at the local level unless:
  - There is no LHD; in these cases, DSHS provides basic public health protections through its regional offices
  - A local jurisdiction requests technical assistance or resources from the state

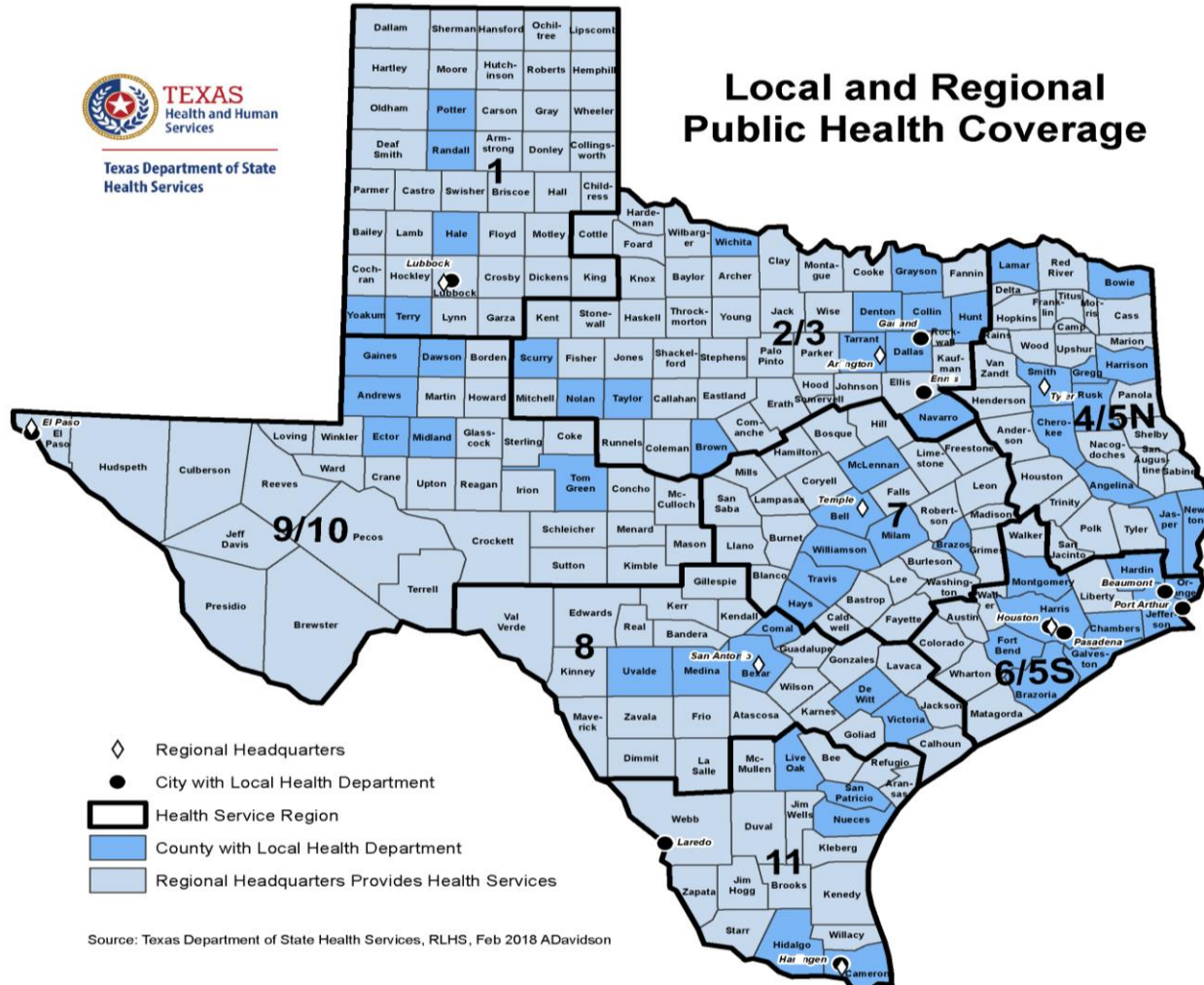


# Local and Regional Public Health



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Local and Regional  
Public Health Coverage

Region	City
1	Lubbock
2/3	Arlington
4/5 North	Tyler
6/5 South	Houston
7	Temple
8	San Antonio
9/10	El Paso
11	Harlingen

Source: Texas Department of State Health Services, RLHS, Feb 2018 ADavidson

# Role of the Federal Government in Texas Public Health

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- Primary federal public health partners
  - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
  - Department of Health and Human Services
- Provide grant funding for public health programs, including for infectious disease activities and public health preparedness activities
- Provide consultation and augment state resources, on request
- Partner on multistate disease investigations



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# Infectious Disease Public Health Functions

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## Detection

- Required reporting of Notifiable Conditions
- Statewide Laboratory Response Network
- DSHS Public Health Reference Laboratory in Austin
- Syndromic Surveillance
- Communication and coordination among public health partners

## Investigation and Response

- Investigations tailored to setting and type of disease
- Prophylaxis and treatment
- Control orders and quarantine

## Prevention

- Education about preventive measures
- Immunizations



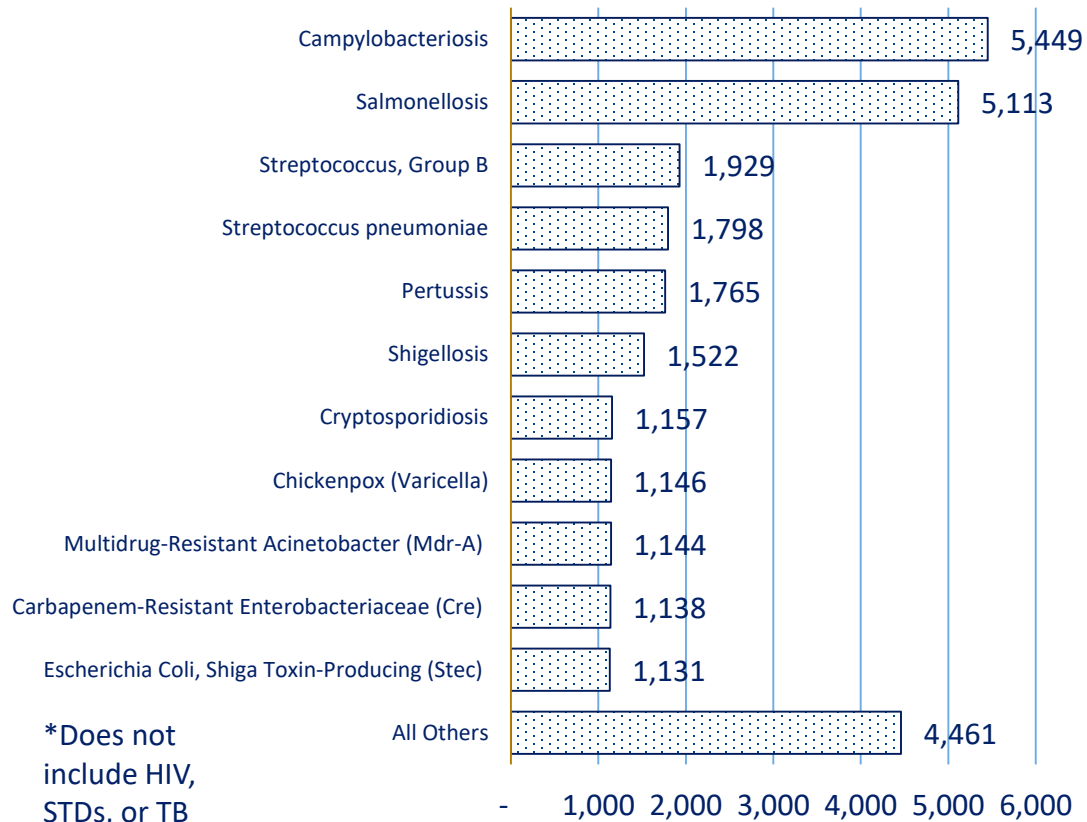
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# Infectious Disease Detection and Investigation

Confirmed Cases, Select Diseases, 2017



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**1.8 M**
  - All laboratory reports received by DSHS
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**34,000**
  - Number of infectious disease investigations
- 
**26,000**
  - Number of Confirmed Cases\*



# Infectious Disease in Congregate Settings

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- Conditions in congregate settings can increase the risk that infectious disease could spread. Other examples of congregate settings include:
  - Prisons and jails
  - Nursing homes and hospitals
  - Schools and daycares
- Common infectious diseases of concern in congregate settings are tuberculosis, influenza, mumps, measles, and chicken pox.
- Texas has recorded over 300 cases of mumps in detainees and eight cases in staff.



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# DSHS Role Related to Federal Immigration Facilities

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- DSHS has no jurisdiction within federal immigration facilities
- The primary focus is on identifying whether any diseases of concern could spread into Texas communities
- Communication with related federal agencies
  - Regular participation in planning and response calls with Department of Homeland Security about disease incidence within the facilities
  - Discussion of public health issues related to migrants being released
  - Preparedness exercises to practice coordination among multiple partners during an outbreak response
  - Ad hoc communications when incidence of disease occurs
- Provision of vaccine supplies in certain instances
- If incidence of disease occurs in the community, then these are addressed through Texas public health monitoring systems, which are always active.



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