



AMERICAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION  
*For science. For action. For health.*

### **Importance and use of APHA policy statements**

Policy statements help to shape APHA's stance on a variety of public health topics reflecting the depth and the diversity of interests and expertise among APHA's members. The policy statements serve as a regular resource of information to many, including APHA staff, members, Affiliates, partners and policymakers.

APHA staff regularly refer to APHA policy statements as background for determining whether APHA will support or oppose legislation, regulations and other actions based on the research, general position and recommendations included in the policy statements. The policy statements:

- drive the content of legislative and regulatory recommendations including letters and comments sent to Congress, the White House, federal agencies and the judiciary;
- help to shape the development of legislative, regulatory and media advocacy activities;
- provide easy access to the latest research; and
- help staff to develop statements, fact sheets, reports and infographics.

Additionally, congressional staff and regulatory agencies refer to APHA policy statements as a reference or resource when developing legislation and regulations.

### **How can YOU use policy statements?**

- APHA often coordinates with APHA components for their content and on-the-ground expertise to draft regulatory comments on important public health issues. APHA policy statements help to provide a framework for the comments.

Example: APHA's Food and Nutrition Section recently developed comments on the [2015 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee's scientific report](#) which referenced a number of APHA policy statements to support APHA's position on the report's recommendations. Association staff reviewed and finalized the comments and submitted them to the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services on behalf of APHA.

- APHA members and Affiliates can also use the policy statements to advocate for public health issues in their states.
- Additional opportunities for APHA members and Affiliates to use the policy statements include:
  - informing letters to the editor on various public health issues;
  - staying informed about APHA's stance on a variety of public health issues;
  - equipping yourself with the latest research and knowledge when advocating for public health with local, state and federal policymakers; and
  - developing scientific sessions for APHA annual meetings.