

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2003

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SENATE BILL 1361

Short Title: Local Health Department Accreditation/Funds.

(Public)

Sponsors: Senator Hartsell.

Referred to: Health & Human Resources.

May 27, 2004

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT TO REQUIRE THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN  
3 SERVICES TO ESTABLISH A LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT  
4 VOLUNTARY ACCREDITATION PROGRAM; AND TO APPROPRIATE  
5 FUNDS TO IMPLEMENT THIS ACT.

6 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

7 **SECTION 1.(a)** Part 1 of Article 2 of Chapter 130A of the General Statutes  
8 is amended by adding a new section to read:

9 "**§ 130A-34.1. Accreditation of local health departments; accrediting entity.**

10 (a) All local health departments may obtain and maintain accreditation in  
11 accordance with this section and with rules adopted by the Commission.

12 (b) The accreditation process shall be established and implemented by The North  
13 Carolina Institute for Public Health, University of North Carolina School of Public  
14 Health (hereinafter "Institute"). The Institute shall assign an accreditation status to each  
15 local health department that applies for initial accreditation, reaccreditation, or relief  
16 from conditional accreditation. The Institute shall assign the appropriate accreditation  
17 status as follows:

18 (1) Accredited, which means that the local health department has satisfied  
19 the accreditation standards adopted by the Institute and applicable  
20 rules adopted by the Commission.

21 (2) Conditionally accredited, which means that the local health department  
22 has failed to meet one or more accreditation standards and has  
23 therefore been granted short-term accreditation subject to conditions  
24 specified by the Institute.

25 (3) Unaccredited, which means that the local health department has  
26 continued to fail to meet one or more accreditation standards after a  
27 period of conditional accreditation.

28 (c) The Commission shall, after reviewing standards developed by and  
29 consulting with the Institute, adopt rules establishing accreditation standards for local

1 health departments. The accreditation standards shall include at least all of the  
2 following:

- 3 (1) An accreditation process that consists of the following components:
- 4 a. A self-assessment conducted by the local health department  
5 seeking accreditation. The self-assessment shall measure the  
6 local health department's capacity to and performance of the  
7 following essential services:
- 8 1. Monitoring health status to identify community health  
9 problems.
- 10 2. Diagnosing and investigating health hazards in the  
11 community.
- 12 3. Informing, educating, and empowering people about  
13 health issues.
- 14 4. Mobilizing community partnerships to identify and solve  
15 health problems.
- 16 5. Developing policies and plans that support individual  
17 and community health efforts.
- 18 6. Enforcing laws and regulations that protect health and  
19 ensure safety.
- 20 7. Linking people to needed personal health care services  
21 and assuring the provision of health care when otherwise  
22 unavailable.
- 23 8. Assuring a competent public health workforce and  
24 personal health care workforce.
- 25 9. Evaluating effectiveness, accessibility, and quality of  
26 personal and population-based health services.
- 27 b. A site visit by a team of experts to clarify, verify, and amplify  
28 the information in the self-assessment.
- 29 c. Final action by the Institute on the local health department's  
30 accreditation status.
- 31 (2) The local health department's capacity to provide the essential public  
32 health services as defined by the Centers for Disease Control and  
33 Prevention.
- 34 (3) The local health department's facilities and administration. The review  
35 shall address, at a minimum:
- 36 a. Adequacy of facilities for services provided.
- 37 b. Hours of operation that are adequate for access to essential  
38 services.
- 39 c. Mechanisms for assessing quality of services.
- 40 (4) The local health department's staff competencies and training  
41 procedures or programs. The review shall address, at a minimum:
- 42 a. Licensing, certification, and registration requirements.
- 43 b. Continuing education.
- 44 c. Orientation.

- 1           (5)    The local health department's governance. The review shall address, at  
2           a minimum, policies on:  
3            a.     Budgeting, accounting, fee-setting, and purchasing.  
4            b.     Other financial management activities that assure accountability  
5                 for funds.
- 6        (d)    The Institute shall assign the following accreditation status, as applicable:  
7           (1)    "Accredited" to a local health department that satisfies the  
8            accreditation standards and rules adopted by the Commission. The  
9            initial period of accreditation shall expire four calendar years after  
10           initial accreditation is granted.  
11          (2)    "Conditionally accredited" to a local health department that, in its  
12            initial accreditation application, fails to satisfy the accreditation  
13            standards and rules adopted by the Commission. The period of  
14            conditional accreditation shall expire two calendar years after  
15            conditional accreditation is granted. The Institute shall provide to the  
16            local health department a written statement of the conditions that must  
17            be satisfied in order for the local health department to be accredited. At  
18            any time during the two-year period, the local health department may  
19            request that its status be reviewed and changed from "conditionally  
20            accredited" to "accredited." If the Institute finds that the conditions  
21            have been met, the Institute shall change the local health department's  
22            status to "accredited" with the accreditation period to expire four  
23            calendar years after the conditional accreditation was initially granted.  
24            If the Institute finds that the conditions have not been satisfied, the  
25            local health department shall continue under its grant of conditional  
26            accreditation.  
27          (3)    "Unaccredited" to the local health department if, at the end of the  
28            conditional accreditation period, the department fails to meet the  
29            accreditation standards at that time.
- 30        (e)    Each accredited local health department shall apply for reaccreditation before  
31            the initial period of accreditation expires. If a local health department fails to apply for  
32            reaccreditation in a timely manner, the Institute shall change the local health  
33            department's status to "unaccredited."
- 34        (f)    When the Institute assigns the status "unaccredited" to a local health  
35            department, the Institute shall send written notification of that status to the local health  
36            department and to the Secretary.
- 37        (g)    The Commission shall adopt rules to implement this act."

38        **SECTION 2.** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the  
39 Department of Health and Human Services the sum of two hundred fifty-five thousand  
40 five hundred ninety-seven dollars (\$255,597) for the 2004-2005 fiscal year. These  
41 funds shall be allocated for administrative costs of the Department and pursuant to a  
42 contract with the Institute of Public Health, to develop and implement the accreditation  
43 process for six or fewer local health departments. The Department may provide for the

1 accreditation of additional local health departments if non-State funds are obtained for  
2 this purpose.

3           **SECTION 3.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2004.