

Public Health Awakened is a national network of public health practitioners organizing for health, equity, and justice. We work with social justice movements on strategic and collective action to create a world in which everyone can thrive.

Our Values

We believe in...

- **Health and justice for all.** Health is a human right.
- A practice of public health that protects, promotes, and defends the **physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual well-being of communities** and the people within them. Public health is impacted by a complex interaction of various systems and institutions including socio-cultural, economic, political, and environmental.
- **Improving social and economic conditions** to prioritize health.
- The **personal as political**. We believe in naming and valuing lived experience as a tool to achieve health equity. Broader systems and histories shape our lived experiences and conditions.
- **Dismantling all systems of oppression**, and naming their specific and intersecting harms to health. These systems include racism, capitalism, militarism, sexism, ableism, ageism, xenophobia, homophobia, transphobia, and more. We lead explicitly with an anti-racist frame to fight these systems that uphold White supremacy, and create and perpetuate inequalities in every sector of society for the sake of profit. We seek to create a world grounded in love as the antidote to oppression.
- **Solidarity and abolition**. We work towards creating the necessary and safe conditions for a world without prisons, detention centers, policing, surveillance, immigration enforcement, and punishment, and where people have what they need to be healthy, safe, and resourced. We are not free until we are all free. We acknowledge that the prison industrial complex, and related forces, maintain current oppression and inequalities, do not keep the public safe, and are in direct opposition to the values and objectives of public health.
- Engaging in **practices that build trust**. We recognize that the fields of public health and healthcare have perpetuated oppression and harm, both currently and historically.

Our Guiding Organizing Principles

We strive to practice the below principles in our organizing and all interactions and spaces across the Public Health Awakened network. Acknowledging that learning is ongoing, iterative, and not always linear, we ask members to commit to using them to lead and shape our work in local, regional, and national contexts and campaigns.

- ★ We show up and **leverage the power of the public health sector** — our evidence, expertise, voice, and resources — to join movements for social justice and the liberation of all people. We show up not just as public health practitioners but as whole people with diverse privileged and marginalized identities, lived experiences, histories, values, and opinions.
- ★ We develop and amplify organized, coordinated, sustained activities that **disrupt the status quo** and push our fields, organizations, institutions, policies, narratives, and broader communities to shift conditions toward health equity. We **utilize a range of tactics and actions** built from our members' strengths and experiences.
- ★ We center, uplift, and **prioritize the leadership and voices of people who have been most harmed, directly impacted, and targeted by systems of oppression**, both within and outside of our membership and the public health field. We **honor the power of grassroots movements** and actions to hold politicians, funders, employers, and other decision-makers accountable and lead campaigns to shift structural and material conditions that shape health.
- ★ We **name how power and privilege operate and their impacts**, both internally with each other and externally with our partners. We are experts only in our own experiences. We practice structural competency and cultural humility by working collectively to understand our own personal biases and **reject frameworks, language, and policies that foster oppressive behaviors and systems**. We believe people can learn and change, and we give people space to grow but with serious attention to addressing instances where behavior causes harm.
- ★ We **act with integrity and commit to authentic engagement** with each other. We are most effective when we are collectively grounded in respect and humility. We are accountable to and seek feedback from each other and our partners, and we create conditions to prevent and repair interpersonal harms.
- ★ We **create a political home for public health practitioners** by building community, learning together, supporting one another, practicing clear communication, and taking strategic action based on our shared values.

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A previous version of these guidelines was written by chapter representatives and HIP staff in 2021. This version was adapted by HIP staff for the national network in 2024 after member feedback.