

Legal Technical Assistance Hours Available to Local Health Departments

To assist with building public health legal knowledge and capacity within Michigan local health departments (LHDs), the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) has funded a bank of up to 40 legal technical assistance hours to be provided to LHDs on a rolling basis throughout the fiscal year. Legal technical assistance will be provided by Carrie Waggoner Consulting, LLC.

What is Legal Technical Assistance?

Legal technical assistance provides information that can help LHDs gain a deeper understanding of public health and other laws that may impact their programs or interventions. Legal technical assistance may also include resources to enable LHDs to work more effectively with their legal counsel, who may not have specialized expertise in public health law.

For example, an LHD may have questions about the type of order it could issue in response to a public health matter within its jurisdiction. Legal technical assistance in this example could include providing information on the sections of the Public Health Code that may apply, as well as on the determinations the LHD may need to make to support issuing an order. The requestor can then take this information to their attorney – helping to streamline the LHD requestor’s understanding of the issue and improving the information presented to their attorney for legal advice or representation. At times, it may make sense to include the LHD’s attorney in technical assistance discussions.

Legal technical assistance is not legal advice or representation and does not establish an attorney-client relationship. For legal advice and representation, LHDs will need to work with their attorneys.

What does the Legal Technical Assistance Process Look Like?

To initiate the process, the LHD’s Health Officer reaches out via email with a brief summary of the issue and question(s). Depending on the issue(s) presented, a phone call or virtual meeting may be scheduled to discuss and refine the scope of the request. Legal technical assistance may be provided over the phone or via email.

Legal technical assistance will be provided on a rolling basis until all available hours have been used.

How do I Request Legal Technical Assistance?

Legal technical assistance requests must be initiated by an LHD’s Health Officer. Send an email to carrie@carriewaggoner.com that includes a brief description of the issue and question(s), as well as health officer’s contact information (email and phone).