



# Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County, TN

## Legislation Text

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A resolution identifying the skills and qualities needed for Nashville's next Director of the Metro Public Health Department.

WHEREAS, the mission of Metropolitan Public Health Department ("MPHD") is to protect, improve, and sustain the health and well-being of all people in Nashville and Davidson County; and

WHEREAS, Section 10.103 of the Metropolitan Charter requires the Metropolitan Board of Health to hire the Director of Health and oversee his or her direction of MPHD; and

WHEREAS, Section 10.105 of the Metropolitan Charter requires the Metropolitan Board of Health to establish the qualifications for the Director of Health, subject to approval by the Metro Director of Human Resources; and

WHEREAS, like other large US cities, Metro Nashville is experiencing the impacts of both opioids and firearm violence, two issues that have received federal public health declarations; and

WHEREAS, since 2021, over 700 people have died annually by drug overdoses in Nashville and Davidson County; and

WHEREAS, since 2022, 228 people have been fatally shot in Nashville and Davidson County, including six students, faculty, and staff members during the March 2023 Covenant School shooting; and

WHEREAS, in order to effectively address the crisis of community violence, MPHD relies on the important work of partner organizations including Raphah Institute, The F.I.N.D Design, Why We Can't Wait, as well as all member organizations of "The Village", a community of over 150 grassroots non-profit organizations actively working to improve the lives of residents through education, economic opportunity, housing, restorative justice, and health care; and

WHEREAS, in addition to issues like opioids and gun violence that have federal public health designations, on September 17, 2024, the Metropolitan Council adopted a resolution declaring racism a public health crisis in Nashville and Davidson County; and

WHEREAS, Metro Nashville's complex problems require innovative data-driven solutions, and MPHD plays a crucial role in co-creating these solutions while protecting the health and well-being of our community; and

WHEREAS, the Director of Health is a vital leadership position within MPHD and the Metropolitan Government and requires a skilled and experienced individual who is not only passionate about the needs of the community but also possesses the capabilities and public health competencies to guide its operations and initiatives, build external partnerships and align strategies for the greatest impact; and

WHEREAS, at the May 9, 2024, Board of Health Meeting, Board Chair Tene H. Franklin led the Board through the first ever comprehensive process to create alignment on capabilities and competencies for the position of Director of MPHD; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Health then unanimously voted on the evidenced-based Public Health Competencies

for directors of health as outlined below; and

WHEREAS, subsequently, on June 13, 2024, current Director of Health Dr. Gill C. Wright, III, announced that he would not seek an extension of his contract, which was approved by Resolution No. RS2021-1090; and

WHEREAS, during public comment and community voice comment at the August 8, 2024, meeting of the Board of Health, members were asked to conduct a thorough and transparent search process for what will be Nashville's third Director of Health in five years; and

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Council supports the Board of Health's plans to solicit and consider feedback from resident stakeholders and the public health workforce as practicable during the selection process to ensure that the next Director of Health aligns with the public health and community priorities; and

WHEREAS, the application process closes on October 2, 2024, and, pursuant to Section 10.105 of the Metropolitan Charter, the Metropolitan Council must approve the chosen candidate's employment contract compensation by resolution; and

WHEREAS, in addition to meeting the requirements of the published position profile, the Metropolitan Council supports the Board of Health's consideration of the following capabilities and competencies as they evaluate candidates for Metro Nashville's Director of Health:

- **Domain 1: Data Analytics and Assessment Skills**
  - Describe factors that affect the health of a community
  - Apply public health informatics in using data, information, and knowledge
  - Assess community health status
  
- **Domain 2: Policy Development and Program Planning Skills**
  - Influence policies, programs, and services external to the organization
  - Engage in organizational strategic planning
  - Engage in community health improvement planning
  
- **Domain 3: Communication Skills**
  - Communicate with internal and external audiences
  - Respond to information, misinformation, and disinformation
  
- **Domain 4: Health Equity Skills**
  - Implement organizational policies, programs, and services to achieve health equity and social and environmental justice
  - Contribute to achieving and sustaining a diverse, inclusive, and competent public health workforce
  - Advocate for health equity and social and environmental justice
  
- **Domain 5: Community Partnership Skills**
  - Collaborate with community members and organizations
  - Share power and ownership with community members and others
  
- **Domain 6: Public Health Sciences Skills**
  - Apply public health sciences in delivering the 10 Essential Public Health Services
  - Use evidence in developing, implementing, evaluating, and improving policies, programs, and services

- **Domain 7: Management and Finance Skills**
  - Secure financial resources
  - Apply critical thinking in decision making
  - Engage individuals and teams to achieve program and organizational goals
  
- **Domain 8: Leadership and Systems Thinking Skills**
  - Implement a vision for a healthy community
  - Engage politicians, policymakers, and the public to support public health infrastructure
  - Advocate for public health

WHEREAS, it is the desire of the Metropolitan Council to support the Board of Health and MPHD by continuing to engage with the Board of Health and the public health workforce.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY:

Section 1. That the Metropolitan County Council hereby goes on record as supporting the Metropolitan Public Health Department and its mission of protecting and improving the health of all Nashvillians.

Section 2. The Metropolitan County Council believes that the selection of a new Director of Health is a critical decision with far-reaching implications for the health and well-being of our community.

Section 3. The Metropolitan County Council affirms the Board of Health's process to consider the ongoing feedback from community stakeholders as part of their selection and future evaluation of the next Director of Health for the Metropolitan Public Health Department. The Metropolitan County Council requests that the Board of Health share this resolution with the selected candidate before the candidate attends a joint special-called meeting of the Budget and Finance and Public Health and Safety committees for members to ask questions in advance of voting on the selected candidate's contract.

Section 4. This Resolution shall take effect from and after its adoption, the welfare of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County requiring it.