

# Public Health Laboratory Training Partner Handbook



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# Introduction

This Public Health Laboratory Training Partner (TrP) Handbook is meant to introduce some of the terms and available resources to training coordinators, biosafety officers, bioterrorism and chemical terrorism preparedness coordinators and others involved in public health laboratory training.

## About APHL

The [Association of Public Health Laboratories \(APHL\)](#) works to strengthen laboratory systems serving the public's health in the United States and globally. APHL represents state and local governmental health laboratories in the US. Its members, public health laboratories, monitor, detect and respond to health threats.

## National Base, International Scope

APHL works closely with federal agencies to develop and execute national health initiatives. During public health emergencies, it operates as a coordinating center for laboratory response.

APHL also works internationally to build effective national laboratory systems and expand access to quality diagnostic testing services. With over 20 years' experience in 31 countries on five continents, APHL is recognized internationally as a leader in laboratory science and practice.

## Expertise

- [Laboratory Science](#): APHL supports development of new testing methods and technologies, and publishes materials to assure the quality of laboratory testing.
- [Emergency Response](#): APHL collaborates with health partners to respond to disease outbreaks, natural disasters, terrorist attacks and other health threats. It also supports the [US Laboratory Response Network](#).
- [Public Health Informatics](#): APHL is a leader in the development of public health laboratory informatics systems in the US and in countries worldwide.
- [Laboratory Training](#): APHL offers high quality continuing education programs to strengthen the skills of laboratory scientists. Find all available trainings and events at [aphl.org/training-search](http://aphl.org/training-search).
- [Leadership Development](#): APHL fosters the [development of new leaders](#), expands knowledge of public health laboratory management and directs multiple [laboratory fellowship programs](#).
- [Research](#): APHL assesses the capacity and capability of US public health laboratories and disseminates findings.
- [Publications](#): APHL publishes reports, briefs and other resources profiling developments in public health laboratory science, practice, management and training.
- [Conferences](#): APHL convenes [national conferences and colloquia](#) on critical issues in laboratory science.

[Federal Liaison/Policy](#): APHL serves as a conduit of information between US public health laboratories and federal agencies. It issues statements on pending legislation and regulations, and disseminates educational materials on priority issues.

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**Learn more about becoming  
an APHL member!**

## APHL Training and Workforce Development Program

APHL's [Laboratory Training Program](#):

- Provides technical expertise, including instructional design
- Maintains a database of training products and services
- Maintains a website and registration system
- Provides recommendations for subject matter experts and faculty resident in public health laboratories
- Provides continuing education units (P.A.C.E.®) for approved courses.

APHL also offers specialized resources for public health laboratory professionals who work to design and deliver workforce training and development opportunities within their organizations. Submit an [APHL Training Community Connection Request](#) for the opportunity to engage with other trainers and receive timely information and resources, such as:

- Access to a community of individuals interested in public health laboratory training
- [APHL CoLABorate Communities](#)
- [Collaborative work groups](#) with trainers having like interests
- Invitation to the biannual Public Health Laboratories Training Conference
- Monthly TrP Connection Newsletter and other promotional emails
- Notification of [available training offered by APHL](#).

Learn more about this community on page 5.

## About CDC

The [US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) is the lead federal agency for protecting the health and safety of people—at home and abroad—providing credible information to enhance health decisions and promoting health through strong partnerships. CDC serves as the national focus for developing and applying disease prevention and control, environmental health, and health promotion and education activities designed to improve the health of the people of the United States.

APHL collaborates with the CDC's [Division of Laboratory Systems \(DLS\)](#). DLS is responsible for laboratory-related activities including the [Clinical Laboratory Improvement Advisory Committee](#), training and workforce development, preparedness, quality and safety systems, and informatics and data science. DLS's Training and Workforce Development Branch is responsible for much of the [laboratory training offered by CDC](#).

## Recommendations for New Trainers

To ensure access to a wide array of training resources and maximize their impact, it's recommended to:

- Become familiar with the [APHL](#) and [CDC](#) training websites
- Join [CDC OneLab REACH](#) and [CDC TRAIN](#) (see page 4)
- Submit an [APHL Training Community Connection](#) request to access APHL's training communities and resources
- Distribute announcements and information from APHL and CDC to other members of laboratory staff as appropriate (including affiliate laboratories or other public health laboratories in the state); if applicable, forward information on APHL training products and services to clinical laboratories in your jurisdiction
- Keep laboratory directors and other staff with training responsibilities informed of APHL training activities as appropriate.
- Review [CDC's eight training development standards](#), which serve as a quality benchmark for developing trainings. The standards provide guidance for developing quality training that results in learning.

# Training Platforms, Opportunities & Events

## Public Health Laboratory Training Conference

The Public Health Laboratory Training Conference (PHLTC) is held every two to three years as funding permits. The agenda is planned jointly by APHL, CDC and TrPs and includes topics related to public health and public health laboratory training. For more information about PHLTC, please [contact APHL](#).

## APHL Laboratory Trainings and Events Webpage

APHL offers high quality educational activities on a variety of topics in convenient formats, from laboratory-specific resources to those serving the broader public health community. Educational opportunities include events such as conferences, meetings, webinars and workshops; on-demand laboratory trainings and courses; and other resources, such as documents and toolkits. Visit the [APHL Laboratory Trainings and Events webpage](#) to search for all of APHL's laboratory trainings, events, tools and resources.

## APHL Learning Center

The [APHL Learning Center \(ALC\)](#) is a digital repository for online courses and live and archived webinars. From this portal, view and enroll in a range of free training courses—from personal leadership skills to laboratory operations, functions and science topics. The ALC tracks course progress and certificates, and enables you to complete training on your own schedule. Courses are free and many of the courses provide P.A.C.E.® continuing education credit. Individuals should [create their own account](#) to access courses.

## CDC OneLab REACH

Access free laboratory resources through CDC's [OneLab REACH](#) (Rapid Education and Capacity-building Hub), a customized learning management system designed specifically for laboratory professionals and the testing community. OneLab REACH provides training resources that cover essential topics, including preparedness and response, quality, safety, core science, laboratory fundamentals, informatics, diagnostic testing, packing and shipping, and workforce development. Please contact [reach@cdc.gov](mailto:reach@cdc.gov) with OneLab REACH issues.

Resource: [How to create an account on REACH](#)

## CDC TRAIN

[CDC TRAIN](#) is CDC's external learning management system—a learning resource for public health professionals and an affiliate of the [Public Health Foundation](#). CDC TRAIN is available to learners across the public health community, including public health practitioners, healthcare professionals, laboratory scientists, epidemiologists, veterinarians, first responders, educators and students. Through TRAIN, you can register for live and on-demand courses, create learning plans, apply and receive a variety of continuing education credits, sign up for notifications of new courses, and view archived seminars and live events at CDC.

Visit the [CDC TRAIN Help/FAQ webpage](#) to find information about how to register for an account on CDC TRAIN.



# APHL Training Community

Engage with APHL's wider training community to optimize your access to training materials, resources and information through private groups and targeted communications, such as:

- Collaborative work groups (learn more below)
- APHL CoLABorate TrP Community (learn more below)
- Training Partner Connection—a monthly newsletter that highlights topics of interest to the training community (find previous editions on the [About the APHL Laboratory Training Program](#) webpage).

Members of the training community are encouraged to:

- Provide feedback about problems with laboratory testing of public health significance that might have training implications
- Share information about training needs for new laboratory equipment or procedures.

Learn more about these opportunities below and on the [APHL Training Community Connection](#) webpage. To access any of APHL's training community groups and resources, please [submit a Training Community Connection request form](#).

## Collaborative Work Groups

Collaborative work groups (CWGs), organized around themes related to public health laboratory training, provide an opportunity for public health laboratory trainers to interact with others who share like interests. CWG membership is voluntary and open to employees of local and state public health laboratories, employees of APHL's state and federal agency partners (CDC, FDA, etc.) and individual members of APHL.

APHL facilitates two CWGs, which are both open to new members:

- **Sentinel Laboratory CWG** focuses on sentinel laboratory preparedness training and drills.
- **Chemical Threat CWG** discusses chemical threat preparedness practices and outreach activities.

## TrP CoLABorate Community

The [TrP CoLABorate Community](#) is a group specifically for public health laboratory trainers to connect and discuss training, education and outreach. Through this community, trainers can access help with program development and delivery, post notices of programs or publications, and ask questions to a large group of colleagues. Beyond general discussions, members of the TrP CoLABorate Community also receive access/call-in information to the biannual TrP national calls, as well as minutes/updates after the calls.

CoLABorate communities operate like a bulletin board and provide an open forum for discussion of news and information relating to that community's topic. When a member sends a message or replies to someone else, that message can be seen by all members of the group. There are three ways to start a new discussion thread:

1. **Send an email to [aphl-trp@connectedcommunity.org](mailto:aphl-trp@connectedcommunity.org).** The subject line of your email will be the title of the discussion thread (note that the subject line should reflect the topic of discussion since it will be searchable in the community). The body of your email will be the content of the message.
2. **Select the "Post New Message" link in emails received from other discussion threads.** This will open a new message in your email client. Then, enter the subject and body of the email as outlined above, and send the message as you normally do.
3. **Visit the [community site](#), select the discussion tab, then the "Post New Message" button.** You will be directed to a form where you can enter information and post your new discussion topic. Note that your signature will automatically populate from the information in your account.

**Submit an APHL Training Community Connection request to become involved!**

Before submitting a Connection request, please [create an APHL account](#) or sign in and visit [aphl.org/MyAPHL](http://aphl.org/MyAPHL) to make sure your account is up to date!

[APHL CoLABorate](#) is a platform for topical communities that allow members to communicate and interact directly with one another by posting questions/answers, sharing resources and more.

## Association of Public Health Laboratories

The Association of Public Health Laboratories (APHL) works to strengthen laboratory systems serving the public's health in the US and globally. APHL's member laboratories protect the public's health by monitoring and detecting infectious and foodborne diseases, environmental contaminants, terrorist agents, genetic disorders in newborns and other diverse health threats.

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7700 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 1000  
Bethesda, MD 20814

Phone: 240.485.2745

Fax: 240.485.2700

[www.aphl.org](http://www.aphl.org)