



NACCHO and FDA Announce the 8th Year of the Retail Food Regulatory Program Standards Mentorship Program

Participants in Connecticut, Illinois, Massachusetts, Missouri, New Jersey, North Carolina, Ohio, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia and Wisconsin

WASHINGTON, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, UNITED STATES, May 9, 2019 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The [National Association of County and City Health Officials](#) (NACCHO) has announced the eighth cohort of a mentorship program for retail food regulatory programs. The program is supported by the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (CFSAN) and Office of Regulatory Affairs (ORA).

The peer mentorship program provides an important opportunity to share best practices in food safety and provides opportunities to learn, share experiences, and acquire tools and resources related to the Voluntary National Retail Food Regulatory Program Standards (Retail Program Standards). The program pairs retail food regulatory program practitioners who are experienced in applying the Retail Program Standards with those newly enrolled and/or looking for assistance, guidance, tools, resources, and recommendations for continued success.

This year's cohort consists of 23 participants, including six mentors and 17 mentees, from across the nation. The following are the Mentor and Mentee teams that will be working together for the 2018-2019 mentorship year:

MENTOR: FAIRFAX COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT, VA

Mentees:

- Erie County Health Department, OH
- Fairhaven Board of Health, MA
- Marlborough Health Department, MA
- Union County Health Department, OH

MENTOR: GWINNETT, NEWTON, AND ROCKDALE HEALTH DEPARTMENTS, GA

Mentees:

- Chickahominy Health District, VA
- Angelina County & Cities Health District, TX
- Trempealeau County Health Department, WI

MENTOR: JERSEY COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT, IL

Mentee:

- Madison County Health Department, IL

MENTOR: NEW RIVER HEALTH DISTRICT, VA

Mentees:

- Loud Fairfax Health District, VA

•Brince William Health District, VA

MENTOR: SOUTHERN NEVADA HEALTH DISTRICT, NV

Mentees:

- City of Arlington, TX
- Amarillo Environmental Health Department, TX
- Randolph County Health Department, NC

MENTOR: VINELAND HEALTH DEPARTMENT, NJ

Mentees:

- West Hartford-Bloomfield Health District, CT
- Chatham Health District, CT
- Lincoln County Health Department, MO
- Jefferson County Health, WV

Participants design plans for reaching program milestones, conduct self-assessments, develop improvement plans, and conduct verification audits, among other learning activities. The Mentorship Program has helped participants from the first seven cohorts improve their inspection programs, train more inspection staff, enhance customer service, and implement innovative strategies to reduce risk factors at retail that may cause or contribute to foodborne illness outbreaks. Funding from the program has also helped participants purchase equipment needed for conducting inspections.

In addition to assistance and guidance provided by the peer mentors, staff from NACCHO, FDA's Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition's (CFSAN), Retail Food Protection Staff, and Retail Food Specialists from the Office of Regulatory Affairs' Office of State Cooperative Programs will provide technical assistance to all participants in the Mentorship Program.

The 23 participants began the Mentorship Program in December 2018 and will complete it at the end of August 2019. A highlight of the program is a site visit by the mentees to meet and work with their mentors and an end of program year meeting for all participants to report on progress and share experiences. Throughout the program year, resources and tools developed by program participants will be shared with other regulatory programs and a "sharing session" webinar on a retail food topic will be scheduled and made available to all jurisdictions on the NACCHO web site.

For more information on the Mentorship Program, Retail Program Standards and the NACCHO-FDA Cooperative agreement visit these websites: [Mentorship Program for the Retail Program Standards](#) or [FDA's Voluntary National Retail Food Regulatory Program Standards](#) (Retail Program Standards).

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About NACCHO

The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) represents the nation's nearly 3,000 local health departments. These city, county, metropolitan, district, and tribal departments work every day to protect and promote health and well-being for all people in their communities. For more information about NACCHO, please visit www.naccho.org.

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