



## South Central Public Health Partnership

### TRAINING PROFESSIONALS TO PROTECT THE PUBLIC

<http://lms.southcentralpartnership.org/scphp>

### **Preparedness, Public Health Policy, and Law**

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The aftermath of Hurricane Katrina has presented manifold direct and indirect public health problems such as contaminated water, soil and food; mold problems; hazardous waste and debris hazards; vector infestation; and damage to health infrastructure, residential and commercial buildings, etc. This experience has uncovered the inadequacy of policies in areas such as land-use practices, wetland management, building code, food safety, sanitation and emergency preparedness. For this reason, it is imperative to develop better policies or improve the current ones to guarantee public health security now and in the future. Toward this end, it is particularly important to increasingly bring precautionary principles to bear on policy development and compliance. An appropriate test would be: (1) whether a particular policy is oriented toward a “worst case scenario” regardless of whether a potential situation may be disastrous or not, and (2) whether the policy is adaptive with flexibility in compliance procedures to better respond to situational dynamics. The fact that this type of test is almost absent in policy development and compliance left the affected communities seriously vulnerable. Post-Katrina policy development initiatives should be about precautionary principles and proactive measures. The topics covered in this course include:

#### **Learning Objectives**

##### Module 1: Preparedness & Response

- Describe the pre-Katrina status of emergency preparedness
- Identify some public health issues
- Evaluate some pre-Katrina policies
- Describe post-Katrina policy response and rationale

##### Module 2: Law of Public Health Preparedness

- Describe the pre-Katrina legal regime of public health preparedness in the contexts of state public health emergency powers, emergency treatment of patients, liability of emergency healthcare workers, and use or disclosure of protected individual health information.
- Evaluate the pre-Katrina policies
- Describe post-Katrina policy response

##### Module 3: Safeguarding Environmental Media: PART 1: Air and PART 2: Water

- Describe the science of contamination of the two environmental media
- Identify some public health issues
- Evaluate some pre-Katrina policies
- Describe post-Katrina policy response and rationale

##### Module 4: Wetlands Management

- Describe the functions of wetlands and factors inimical to them.
- Identify some public health issues
- Evaluate some pre-Katrina policies
- Describe post-Katrina policy response and rationale

#### Module 5: Land Use Practices and Safe Building

- Describe the pre-Katrina land use and building practices
- Identify some public health issues
- Evaluate some pre-Katrina policies
- Describe post-Katrina policy response and rationale

#### Module 6: Sanitation & Waste Management: PART 1: Sanitation and PART 2: Waste

- Describe the pre-Katrina status of sanitation and waste management
- Identify some public health issues
- Evaluate some pre-Katrina policies
- Describe post-Katrina policy response and rationale

#### Competencies

- Apply creative problem solving and flexible thinking to unusual challenges within his/her functional responsibilities and evaluate effectiveness of all actions taken.

\* *Bioterrorism and Emergency Readiness*

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