



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

Texas Department of State
Health Services

Health Authorities in Texas

Current Statute

HSC Chapter 121, Subchapter B, Section(s) 121.021-121.025 - Health Authorities

Chapter 81 - Communicable Disease Prevention and Control Act

General Information

Established during the 79th Legislative session, Health Authorities (HA) serve as a critical part of the state's public health system.

Health and Safety Code establishes and defines a Health Authority in Texas as a physician appointed under the provisions of **Chapter 121**, to administer state and local laws relating to public health within an appointing body's jurisdiction. Health Authorities are considered an officer of the state when performing duties to implement and enforce laws that protect the public's health.

Duties

- Establishing, maintaining, and enforcing jurisdictional quarantine orders;
- Aiding local boards of health, local health departments in quarantine inspections, disease prevention and suppression efforts, birth and death statistics, and general sanitation issues within their jurisdiction;
- Reporting the presence of contagious, infectious and dangerous epidemic diseases to local and state authorities;
- Aiding local jurisdictions and boards of health in carrying out public health required rules, ordinances, sanitation laws, quarantine rules, and required reporting of any vital statistics collected.

Qualifications, Appointments and Terms

A Health Authority must be:

- A competent physician with a reputable professional standing who is legally qualified to practice medicine in the state of Texas and
- A Texas resident.

Health Authority appointees must:

- Take and subscribe to the official oath; and
- Using the [required forms](#), file the original copies of the Statement of Appointed Officer, Oath of Office and Certificate of Appointment with their local jurisdiction, as well as submit copies of the originals to the appropriate **Regional Medical Director/Public Health Region** at the Department of State Health Services.

Health Authorities are appointed for two-year terms. In the event the acting Health Authority is absent or incapacitated, alternate Health Authorities can be appointed through the process noted above.

Appointment Forms and Instructions

General Instructions for Completing Forms for Newly Appointed/Reappointed Health Authority (pdf, 44 kb)

<u>Statement of Appointed Officer</u> (PDF, 28 kb)	<u>Instructions</u> (PDF 24 kb)
<u>Certificate of Appointment</u> (PDF, 31 kb)	
<u>Health Authorities Oath of Office</u> (PDF, 29 kb)	<u>Instructions</u> (PDF 24 kb)

[Training and Resources](#)

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