

Recommendation Drafts Discussion

Task Force of Border Health Officials
2025-2026 Recommendations Report Process

June 10, 2026

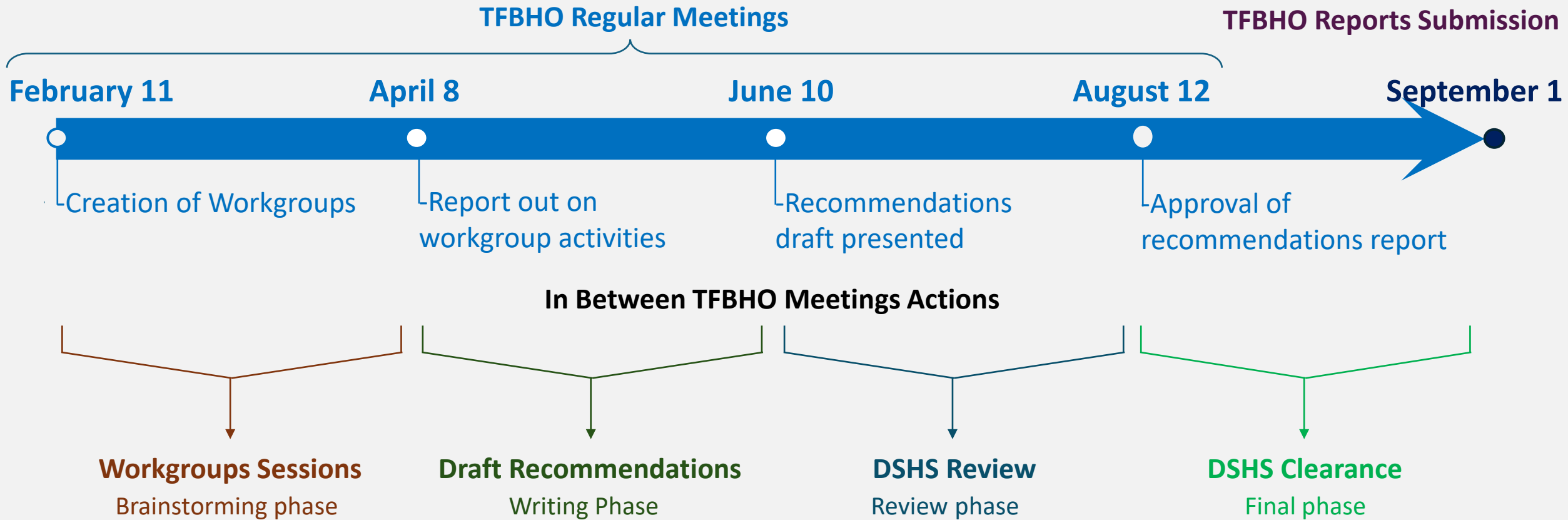


TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

Texas Department of State
Health Services

Office of
Border
Public Health

2025-2026 TFBHO Recommendations Report Timeline



TFBHO Suggested Recommendations

- 6 recommendations within 3 main areas:
 - ▶ Chronic Disease (1)
 - ▶ Communicable Disease (3)
 - ▶ Public Health Workforce (2)



Texas Department of State
Health Services

Chronic Disease



Advance coordinated, obesity prevention-focused strategies across the Texas border region amongst multiple generations.

Chronic Disease



Advance coordinated, obesity prevention-focused strategies across the Texas border region amongst multiple generations.

The Texas border region experiences increasing rates of obesity and diabetes among children and younger populations, as well as rising prevalence among adults. Multiple ongoing efforts are focused solely on one age group, like children, but they must consider different generations at the same time, like their families, to increase the adoption of sustainable healthy behaviors. They need to consider a multigenerational scope for the efforts to be sustainable. Collaboration between public health, healthcare providers, education systems, and community organizations is essential for making better use of existing resources.

Community-based and school-based prevention efforts to create lifelong healthy habits need to continue at early ages. Those actions can be strengthened by involving the youth population as ambassadors who inspire their peers by leading by example. They can also incorporate the different elements of lifestyle medicine approach, that includes nutrition, physical activity, sleep, stress management, and social connection. Also, they must consider local context to avoid limitation by food deserts and limited access to healthy, affordable options.

Communicable Disease



Increase local laboratory and preparedness capacity in the Texas border region.

Amplify laboratory capacity for tuberculosis mutations.

Raise awareness for New World Screwworm among first responders and healthcare providers.

Communicable Disease



Increase local laboratory and preparedness capacity in the Texas border region.

Local health departments are the first responders for any possible outbreak or emerging disease situation. DSHS Public Health Laboratory can provide them with technical training, validation materials and protocols for novel influenza viruses, arboviruses and other emerging infections. DSHS can also facilitate any possible coordination with Laboratory Response Network labs when needed.

This continuous collaboration would help to strengthen infectious disease surveillance and to allow timely prevention or containment of any outbreak.

Communicable Disease



Amplify laboratory capacity for tuberculosis mutations.

The Texas border region has a higher rate of tuberculosis (TB) when compared with the state rate. To control the spread of disease, early detection of drug resistance is critical so that patients can be placed on effective treatment earlier. Cultures for TB can take up to eight weeks to finalize and then drug susceptibility tests require an additional two to three weeks.

With an upgrade to the DSHS Public Health Laboratory to detect any mutations in genes related to TB drug resistance, treatment and care could be more effective.

Communicable Disease



Raise awareness for New World Screwworm among first responders and healthcare providers.

New World Screwworm, eradicated from the U.S. decades ago and recently present in Texas, is a zoonotic disease that could impact humans in some way. While the state is facing this threat, it is important to focus on preparing emergency professionals and healthcare providers into how to detect any human cases. People with diabetes could not be aware of being infected in any wound since their pain receptors are low.

Public Health Workforce



Ensure representation of institutions along the Texas border region within the Academic Public Health Consortium.

Establish regional training hubs and peer-learning collaboratives in the Texas border region.

Public Health Workforce



Ensure representation of institutions along the Texas border region within the Academic Public Health Consortium.

The Academic Public Health Consortium focuses on student and early career support, workforce development, and joint initiatives. Increasing representation of institutions of the Texas border region will allow the consortium to receive input as it strives to achieve statewide goals. The consortium could support expansion of internships.

That would help to build a coordinated regional network that strengthens the public health workforce in the Texas border region. This regional network would support a workforce pipeline that formally begins in high school, through certifications such as Community Health Workers, and continues through internships and academic pathways.

Public Health Workforce



Establish regional training hubs and peer-learning collaboratives in the Texas border region.

Rural and border local health departments often lack access to training opportunities available in urban areas. DSHS can coordinate regional training hubs in Texas border region jurisdictions to ensure equitable access to standardized training, technical assistance, peer-to-peer learning, shared curricula and competency frameworks. That way, border regional hubs reduce disparities and strengthen statewide workforce consistency. DSHS can also help coordinating and sharing with local health departments different trainings of interest.

Thank you!

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