

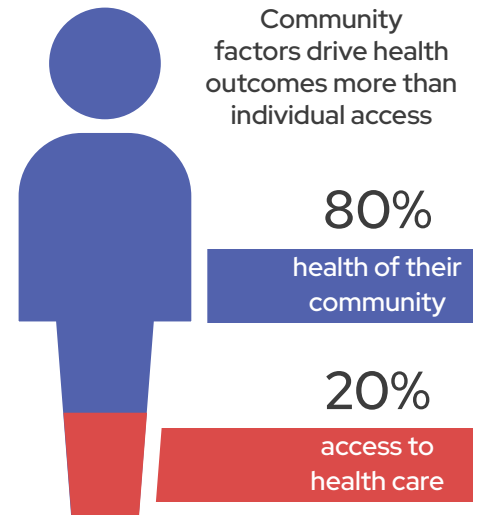


Building Your Legacy

Strengthening Economies Through Healthy Communities

Where people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age have a greater impact on health outcomes than how often they go to the doctor. Only about **20% of a person's health is determined by access to clinical care; the other 80% is largely driven by the opportunities they have to be healthy within their community.**

Public health leverages local policies and practices to promote health and well-being in communities. Public health investments – such as improving access to quality housing, clean air and water, and safe and accessible transportation – improve the health of entire populations rather than treating individual patients. Because healthy communities are the backbone of strong local economies, public health interventions can produce powerful returns on investment (ROI) for local economies. By leading with public health, county officials can have a greater influence on the health of a community than all its doctors combined while also strengthening the local economy for generations to come.



What is the connection between healthy communities and local economies?

1. Investing in public health can prevent chronic disease.

Chronic health conditions, such as obesity, diabetes, and heart disease, account for the most illness, disability, and deaths in the United States, and **can limit the economic opportunity available to individuals and families.** Investing in public health through policies such as increasing access to parks and physical activity, supporting active transportation, and improving access to healthy food can vastly improve chronic disease rates. This can translate into direct dollars saved by reducing health care spending, improving worker health, and increasing worker productivity.

2. Investing in public health has a strong return on investment.

Investing more dollars in public health prevents illness and **decreases mortality**, reducing future health care spending and strengthening the workforce. Currently, the U.S. directs **less than 3% of the estimated \$3.6 trillion** spend on health toward public health and prevention. Those dollars could be transformative if invested in public health. In fact, the median ROI of public health interventions is **14.3 to 1**. So, for every dollar spent on a public health intervention, the return is over \$14. Further, policies like high-quality, affordable pre-K are linked to increased high school graduation rates and greater economic mobility, boasting an estimated return of **\$7-\$10** for every dollar spent.

3. Investing in public health improves the economy.

A community where people live healthier, longer lives translates into a workforce with fewer sick days, more productive years, and lower health care costs. For example, public health policies like guaranteed earned sick leave help employees feel secure in their jobs when they fall ill – and protect communities by curbing the spread of contagious illness. In addition to supporting economic security for workers, providing earned sick leave can also save employers **as much as \$1 billion per year** as employees can take the time they need to recover from illnesses – and prevent the spread to other employees. A healthy community and a robust workforce – with fewer sick days and lower healthcare costs – is a strong selling point for businesses expanding to new markets.

Counties Supporting Paid Sick Days Laws

Allegheny County, PA enacted paid sick leave in 2021. Under this ordinance, employers with 26 or more employees have an obligation to notify employees that they are entitled to paid sick leave time.

Montgomery County, MD has protected paid sick leave since 2016. Under this law, an employer with five or more employees must provide one hour of leave for every 30 hours worked.

Bloomington County, MN approved earned sick leave in 2022, requiring that employees earn at least one hour of sick leave for every 30 hours worked.

Cook County, IL passed a paid leave ordinance in 2023 which guarantees at least 40 hours of earned leave to every employee in each 12-month period.



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