

Student Strategies for Contacting Public Health Organizations

Pursuit of a practice experience with a public health organization that aligns with your professional goals is one of the most exciting milestones of the MPH program. Since there is a great deal of freedom in this endeavor, there is more than one way to contact public health organizations to create practice experience opportunities. Below are two strategies, indirect and direct, to consider when emailing public health organizations. Ultimately, which route you choose depends on your personality and preference.

Indirect

Email the contact/site directly and ask for an informal interview to learn more about the point of contact's career and the current initiatives they have going on at the organization. Towards the end of the conversation, explain that you are interested in the public health site's work, that their initiatives would fit nicely with your academic requirements of completing a practice experience, and that you would love to complete this with the organization if possible. Make sure to indicate that while some practice experience opportunities are paid, there is no expectation that the experience be paid.

Potential script

"Dear *(name of contact)*, my name is *(put your name here)* and I am an MPH student at the Arnold School of Public Health specializing in *(insert department name)*. I am contacting you because I am interested in the work that *(insert organization's name)* does. I would like to hear more about the current initiatives that *(insert organization's name)* is completing, and about your own public health career path. If you could take a few minutes to talk with me, I would appreciate it very much. I am happy to meet in person or send a Zoom/Teams link based on your preference. If you are willing, please let me know a few times that work for you and I can make those arrangements. Thank you so much in advance.

-(insert email signature)

Direct

Use the template below to directly ask if the organization is open to hosting a student to complete their practice experience.

Potential script

Dear *(name of contact)*, my name is *(put your name here)* and I am an MPH student at the Arnold School of Public Health specializing in *(insert department name)*. I am contacting you because I am interested in completing a practice experience with your organization. To complete the practice experience, I must complete at least two work products that demonstrate public health competencies for my academic discipline. Some examples of work products include *(select examples that make most sense for your given situation written assignments, projects, videos, multi-media presentations, spreadsheets, websites, posters, photos, white papers, literature reviews, surveys, curriculum, policy briefs, training manuals, evaluation reports, needs assessments, interview guides, infographics, logic models, quality improvement plans, community health assessment, SWOT analysis or other digital artifacts of learning)*. Does your organization have any initiatives that could use my skillset? While some practice experience opportunities are paid, there is no expectation that the site pay for my services. I have attached my resume to this email for your review. Don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions. I look forward to hearing back from you soon. Thank you so much in advance.

-(insert email signature)