

PDPH-Drexel Urban Epidemiology Fellowship 2026

The goal of the Urban Epidemiology Fellowship (UEF) is to promote development of the skilled epidemiology workforce in local public health departments through a structured fellowship for master's-level public health students. The fellowship is a collaboration of the Philadelphia Department of Public Health (PDPH) and the Urban Health Collaborative (UHC) and Department of Epidemiology & Biostatistics (Epi-Biostat) at Drexel University's Dornsife School of Public Health (DSPH).

Each fellow will be assigned a PDPH preceptor who will serve as their primary supervisor. Under the preceptor's direction, the fellow will contribute to one or more defined epidemiological research projects. The student will also participate in regular professional development activities. Duties may vary depending on project needs and the student's skills and interests, but may include data collection, management and analysis; development of reports and other research communication products; assistance with literature review and study design; and assistance with research implementation and coordination.

For MPH students, the expectation is that students will fulfill their Applied Practical Experience (APE) requirement through the fellowship. The APE—also commonly called a practicum—is a community-based experience in the practice of public health. APE requirements are the same for all MPH students, regardless of their major. The APE is generally completed in July-August.

The student may also identify a project to use for their culminating experience—called the Integrative Learning Experience (ILE) (MPH students) or Data Analysis Project (MS students) with their preceptor—if the student, preceptor, and student's DSPH faculty mentor agree. The student's major determines the requirements for their ILE or Data Analysis Project. The ILE or Data Analysis Project is generally completed in September-March.

Eligibility

The fellowship is open to full-time DSPH MPH or MS students who will graduate in March 2027 or after. Up to three fellowships will be awarded for the summer 2026 cohort. At least one fellowship slot will be awarded to a student in the Department of Epidemiology & Biostatistics, provided there is an appropriate applicant.

Duration and Commitment

Fellowships will be 9 months long, from July 1, 2026, through March 31, 2027. During the fellowship, students will work with their preceptor 37.5 hours/week during the months of July and August, and 15 hours/week during the months of September through March. Professional development activities organized as part of the fellowship will count toward the fellowship hours. The work schedule will be determined by the preceptor and student.

All fellows should expect some required in-person attendance but these requirements may vary by placement.

Compensation

Fellows will be paid a monthly stipend based on the DSPH master's student rate of \$18.58/hour. The stipend will be \$2,787 for the months of July and August (37.5 hours per week) and \$1,114.80 for the months of September through March (15 hours per week).

How to Apply

Applicants must apply through the Drexel University Office of Research InfoReady funding portal: <https://drexel.infoready4.com/#freeformCompetitionDetail/2007513>

Applications must contain the following:

- Applicant information
 1. Name
 2. Email address
 3. Academic department
 4. Degree program and quarter in which the applicant began this program
- Brief (limit 300 words) statement of interest describing interest and/or applicable skills. Please include specific areas of interest in a fellowship at an urban public health department. Possible projects for the 2026 cohort include, but are not limited to, work related to substance use prevention and harm reduction; HIV health; and reproductive, adolescent, and child health.
- CV or resume
- Graduate transcript (unofficial)
- Letter of recommendation from a supervisor or instructor. Recommenders will submit their letters directly into InfoReady.

Selection Process

Interested students will apply in the winter of their first year. There will be a two-stage selection process. A DSPH selection committee with representatives from UHC and Epi-Biostat will identify a short-list of 8-10 candidates. PDPH will then review these short-listed candidates for merit and fit with project needs. This review may include scheduled interviews with short-listed candidates. PDPH will make the final selection of fellows and match fellows with preceptors.

Selection Rubric

Final score is based on consideration of the criteria below.

Criteria	Description	
Understanding and interest	Statement of interest demonstrates understanding of applied epidemiology and its uses in an urban public health department. Statement of interest demonstrates interest and motivation that align with the goals of the fellowship.	1: Interest and/or understanding is limited 2: Moderate understanding and interest 3: Excellent understanding and interest
Evidence of applicable skills	Evidence in statement of interest, transcript, and/or recommendation letter of applicable skills (e.g., literature review, GIS, qualitative data collection or analysis, survey data collection or analysis, statistical analyses, community research engagement, research dissemination and communication).	1: Little evidence of applicable skills 2: Moderate evidence of applicable skills 3: Excellent evidence of applicable skills
Endorsement by recommender	Recommendation letter demonstrates strong support by the recommender.	1: Little evidence of support 2: Moderate evidence of support 3: Strong evidence of support
Alignment with PDPH project needs	Applicant's interests and skills align with current PDPH project needs.	1: Little evidence of alignment 2: Moderate evidence of alignment 3: Excellent evidence of alignment

Timeline

- Application submission deadline – March 20, 2026
- Notification of fellowship decisions – April 24, 2026
- Hiring paperwork – April/May 2026
- Fellowship start date – July 1, 2026
- First stipend payment date – July 31, 2026
- Fellowship end date – March 31, 2027
- Last stipend payment date – March 31, 2027