



Utah Department of Health and Human Services Strategic Results-Based Accountability Plan

July 2026



Department of Health
& Human Services



Problem Statement

The current health and human services model and accompanying policies have led to a fragmented system of services creating unnecessary barriers and challenges to accessing care for those most in need. These systemic challenges contribute to differences in health outcomes and determinants of health.

Mission

The Utah Department of Health and Human Services will support and serve all individuals and communities throughout Utah. It will do so through effective policy and the operations of an effective and efficient seamless system of services and programs that is centered around the individuals and communities the department serves.

Vision

The vision of the Utah Department of Health and Human Services is to ensure that **all Utahns have fair and equitable opportunities to live safe and healthy lives.**

To get to our vision, we will:

- Ensure quality care, services, and programs are accessible where and when they're needed
- Foster safe and supportive environments
- Improve health outcomes, both physical and mental
- Maintain DHHS as a high-quality, innovative, and trusted organization



DHHS Values

DHHS pursues its vision and accompanying strategies guided by a set of core values. The values below come from extensive engagement and input from employees from across the department.

Innovation

- We are innovative— creative problem-solvers who rise to challenges.
- We embrace scientific progress.
- We are courageous, adaptable and resilient in challenging times.
- We are always improving and increasing our impact.

Support

- We are supportive.
- We help each other, and we are responsive when people express their needs.
- We empower people to be the agents of their own lives.
- Our services treat the needs of the whole person.

Equity

- We are equitable, internally and externally.
- We provide services that are accessible, safe, and unbiased.
- We empower our clients and advocate for their needs.
- We create a fair and inclusive workplace where we address disparities and empower diverse voices.

Accountability

- We are accountable to each other and the people of Utah.
- We are fair, consistent and transparent as a government agency and as an employer.
- Our clients can trust and depend on us, and we can rely on each other.

Empathy

- We are empathetic.
- We treat our clients and colleagues with kindness and compassion.
- We provide services that are validating and trauma-informed.
- We make sure everyone feels heard and supported.
- We encourage one another and express appreciation.



Impact

- We make a difference.
- We meet essential needs of the people we serve.
- We are passionate about the important work that we do, and proud of the impact we make.
- Our leaders value our skills and recognize our contributions.
- Our service is a source of meaning in our lives.

Connection

- We are connected and collaborative.
- We are integrated into the communities we serve, and are responsive to their needs.
- We want everyone in our department community to feel connected, aligned, appreciated and supported.

Efficacy

- We are effective at what we do.
- We are data-driven and embrace evidence-based approaches.
- Our programs and services consistently result in positive outcomes.
- We streamline bureaucratic processes for employees and clients. Our system is accessible and easy to navigate.
- We plan strategically to ensure efficiency and impact.

Introduction

The Utah Department of Health and Human Services utilizes metrics to ensure it is progressing toward achieving its vision. This plan outlines the purpose of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), its mission, vision, and values; implementation strategies; and a summary of the population indicators and performance measures to which the department is accountable. The plan provides broad strategies that must be aligned to achieve the vision that “all Utahns have fair and equitable opportunities to live safe and healthy lives”. While the plan articulates indicators that will be measured by the department, it is designed to be utilized by external stakeholders. It will be through this collective focus and common measures that the vision will be achieved.

In addition to this document, specific planning objectives are found in each of the strategic plans written and implemented in the various operational units (OUs) across DHHS, as well as in other strategic planning documents.¹

Strategies for Achieving the DHHS Vision

The department applies the methods of Results-Based Accountability (RBA) as a framework to identify strategies intended to improve entrenched and complex social problems and achieve the vision that “all Utahns have fair and equitable opportunities to live safe and healthy lives.” (See Appendix B).

Among the strengths of RBA is its emphasis on partnerships to affect positive change for whole populations. The department, with its 6,200 employees, includes critical partnerships that will be leveraged to implement this plan. Partners in child and family health and wellbeing, adult and aging services, mental health, child welfare, juvenile justice, and services for people with disabilities join with preparedness, disease control and prevention, Medicaid and health financing, and other allied programs and services to promote the united agency’s vision.

Four terms used in this document that are key to the department vision are:

¹ Utah Health Improvement Plan (UHIP), Quality Improvement Plan (QIP), and the Workforce Development Plan (WDP)



- **Fair** - All programs and services are administered in accordance with applicable rules or standards. They are free from self-interest, prejudice, or favoritism and they conform with established statutes and regulations.
- **Equitable** -All individuals are treated fairly and impartially.
- **Safe** - Children, youth, families, and adults are free from violence, exploitation, abuse, neglect, and hazards.
- **Healthy**² - The definition of health utilized by the department is one that encapsulates the concept that an individual's health includes a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being which goes beyond merely the absence of disease and infirmity.

Realization of the DHHS vision is more achievable as the agency works closely with partners that share similar goals and objectives. A partial list of partners includes:

- Recipients of department services
- Department operational units
- Allied state agencies and programs
- Local health authorities
- Local mental health authorities/local substance abuse authorities
- Area agencies on aging (AAAs)
- Community-based providers
- Long-term care facilities (LTCFs)
- Home and community-based services (HCBS) providers
- Child care providers
- Residential treatment providers
- Youth providers
- Healthcare systems and providers
- Family support agencies
- Schools

Population accountability refers to the responsibility public-sector partners share as they work together to achieve the vision of the department. This plan clarifies the condition of well-being desired for Utah children, adults, families, and the community and the five strategies we will pursue to move us closer to this outcome. These strategies drive actions that contribute to success for those served by DHHS.

² World Health Organization.

Population Result: All Utahns have fair and equitable opportunities to live safe and healthy lives. The following strategies are implemented by the department to progress toward realizing this vision:

Strategy 1: Ensure quality care, services, and programs are accessible where and when they're needed.

Strategy 2: Foster safe and supportive environments.

Strategy 3: Improve health outcomes, both physical and mental.

Strategy 4: Maintain DHHS as a high-quality, innovative, and trusted organization.

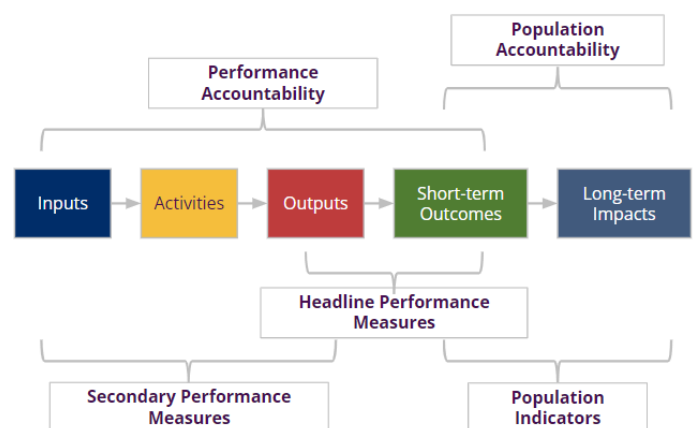
Population indicators are community-level measures that quantify the achievement of desired conditions expressed in the outcome statement. As population indicators typically take several years to observe improvements, these high-level indicators serve as beacons that help the agency to remain focused on legislative and stakeholder goals and objectives.

Performance accountability holds DHHS divisions responsible for the execution of their key strategies. Performance measures communicate the effectiveness of agency activities in the short-term. The combined organizational units of DHHS use hundreds of performance measures to inform operational decisions and to comply with reporting requirements.

Most performance metrics fit into one or more categories that gauge workload, output, efficiencies, effectiveness, outcomes, and/or financial accountability. Within the context of this summary, performance measures address these questions:

1. How much did we do? (Quantity)
2. How well did we do it? (Quality)
3. Is anyone better off? (Impact)

The relationships between population indicators and performance measures are illustrated in the graphic to the right.



Population outcomes

All Utahns have fair and equitable opportunities to be healthy and safe.

Experiences: All Utahns will have access to the highest possible standards of health, including among populations and communities at greatest risk for health and safety disparities. Statewide, residents will have opportunities to be in good physical and emotional condition. Utahns are free from harm, abuse, and neglect at school, at work, and at home. Each person has a say in the decisions regarding their health and well-being, and a voice in their community. Individuals have access to stable housing, food and nutrition services in their neighborhoods, reliable transportation, safe and accessible opportunities for physical activity, and other basic drivers of health, safety, and overall well-being.

Population Indicators

- Percent of indicators by geography which show an improvement in disparity gap
- Percent of indicators by race and ethnicity which show an improvement in disparity gap
- Percent of Utah adults reporting their physical health is good, very good, or excellent
- Percentage of Utah adults reporting poor mental health
- Percent of Utah children with high mental health treatment needs
- Rate of abuse or neglect for children
- Rate of abuse or neglect for adults
- Life expectancy at birth for Utah adults



Strategy 1: Ensure quality care, services, and programs are accessible where and when they're needed.

Experiences: Healthcare is affordable and accessible. There are sufficient providers (doctors, dentists, therapists, and other healthcare professionals) and services accessible in every community. Information about how to access services is readily available in multiple formats. Individuals are empowered to make their own choices and decisions regarding their health and well-being. The processes for inquiring about, applying for, and accessing services are user friendly.

Strategic Indicators

- Percent of total population with health insurance (includes public health insurance)
- Percentage of Utah population residing in health professional shortage areas (Built Here)
- Percent of children who had a preventative health appointment in the past year
- Percent of children (age 1-17) who saw a dentist or oral health care provider in the past year
- Percent of adults (age 18+) who saw a dentist in the past year
- Percent of Medicaid adults and adolescents with major depressive episodes who receive treatment



Strategy 2: Foster safe and supportive environments.

Experiences: All Utahns enjoy safe and supportive settings in their homes, schools, workplaces, and communities. Programs and services help to safeguard children, youth, families, and adults from violence, exploitation, abuse, and neglect. Individuals experience meaningful relationships with family, friends, coworkers, and social groups. Children are prepared to enter and succeed in school. Individuals served by the agency maintain a maximum degree of self-determination in their choices.

Strategic Indicators

- Youth delinquency rate, ages 10-17
- Percent of 9th-12th graders who indicate three Positive Childhood Experiences (Built Here)
- Percent of Utahns (adults) who feel socially isolated
- Percentage of licensed providers with noncompliances that are high and extreme
- Number of individuals in custody or government services who enter homelessness upon release (Built Here)
- Average number of placements (including foster families) per child



Strategy 3: Improve health outcomes, both physical and mental.

Experiences: Health is considered holistically, considering various drivers such as social, economic, and physical environments. Poor physical and mental health outcomes are minimized by prioritizing the prevention, early detection, and management of illness. The connection between physical and mental health is well understood and efforts to integrate physical and mental health care are part of everyday practice.

Strategic Indicators

- Rate of suicide deaths, per 100,000 Utahns
- Rate of obesity-related chronic conditions in Utah Adults
- Number of youth who report having a caring adult to talk to
- Rate of drug related deaths, per 100,000 Utahns (Built Here)
- Rate of infant mortality in Utah, per 1,000 births
- Rate of maternal mortality in Utah, per 100,000 births
- Percent of Utahns (adults, ≥ 18) who have received a seasonal flu vaccine



Strategy 4: Maintain DHHS as a high-quality, innovative, and trusted organization.

Experiences: Utahns have confidence in DHHS to establish and continually improve a seamless system of evidence-based services and programs that measurably improve public health and safety. DHHS is accountable for increasing government transparency, improving community cooperation, and performing individual acts of kindness. DHHS programs and services are fully supported with robust and functional internal department infrastructure. Strong administrative support and implementation of organizational best practices are provided so that employees are empowered, knowledgeable, innovative, and effective in their work. The DHHS workforce is diverse, resilient, and healthy. Quality data is collected, analyzed, reported, and used to drive decision making. Programs and services are fully integrated and equitable. DHHS provides effective, efficient and timely services.

Performance measures

- Percent of the public who reports trust in DHHS
- Number of audit recommendations unresolved after 1 year
- Number of quality improvement projects completed (GRIT)
- DHHS employee retention rate

Reporting outcomes

At DHHS, we hold ourselves accountable to these population indicators and headline performance measures through regularly scheduled accountability sessions. Led by RBA Certified employees from the Office of Innovation, these accountability sessions are held with each operational unit (OU). Each OU has its own strategic plan with performance measures related to their specific areas of responsibility that is reviewed at least quarterly, though many OUs hold these accountability sessions more often. The Commissioner's Office (CO) reviews the department's strategic plan on a quarterly basis to determine progress made at the department level.

These sessions are one way we hold ourselves internally responsible for taking action on objectives and strategies that will lead to our vision that "all Utahns have fair and equitable opportunities to live safe and healthy lives."

To live up to our values of accountability and transparency, we also developed our [Performance Measure Scorecard](#) and placed it on the DHHS website for public viewing. The scorecard reflects progress on the measures outlined in this plan. It is updated and reviewed regularly to keep our clients and all Utah citizens informed on the steps DHHS is taking to positively impact our communities.



Appendix A: DHHS Work Plan

RBA Strategy	2025 Priority	Tactic	EDO Sponsor	ELT Sponsor(s)	Process Status	Estimated Time to Completion
Strategy 2 Strategy 3 Strategy 4	Employee Wellness	Improve use of surveys to identify and address employees' needs	Amanda	Tim Mathews	Completed	
Strategy 1 Strategy 4		Implement Leadership development & training	Tracy	Donovan Bergstrom	Completed	
Strategy 4		Review policies & practices to reduce OT	Nate W.	Don Moss	Pending	
Strategy 4		Maximize the value of in-person office days by ensuring they are purposeful, focused and strategically planned to enhance collaboration and team engagement	Tracy	Carrie Bambrough	Completed	11/25/2025
Strategy 1 Strategy 3 Strategy 4	Strengthen DHHS	Optimize Data sharing across DHHS with a focus on business needs	Nate W.	Kyle Lunt	In Process	
Strategy 2 Strategy 4		Mitigate the risk of sexual misconduct against people in our care	Tonya	Amanda Rapacz	In Process	
Strategy 4		Continue to build a unified DHHS identity and culture of belonging	Tracy	Mike Grass	In Process	
Strategy 3 Strategy 4	Comprehensive System Design	Standardize investigations across DHHS	Tonya and Amanda	Shannon Thoman-Black	Pending	
Strategy 1 Strategy 3		Behaviorally complex youth	David	Angie Pinna	In Process	
Strategy 4		Create a "No wrong door" CX experience	Amanda	Donovan Bergstrom	In Process	
Strategy 4 Strategy 1		Implement the plan to centralize finance operations and accounting practices at DHHS	Nate W.	Don Moss	In Process	
Strategy 4 Strategy 1		Finalize enhancement & optimization of IT systems (ARPA, PRISM, & USTEP)	Tracy	Rachael Stewart	In Process	
Strategy 1 Strategy 2 Strategy 3		Redefine the public health framework between state and local health departments	Heather	Janae Duncan	In Process	
Strategy 1 Strategy 3		Implement the Justice-involved waiver	Nate C.	Julie Ewing	In Process	
Strategy 1 Strategy 2 Strategy 3		Recruit additional foster families to meet need	David	Mike Grass	In Process	Early may
Strategy 1 Strategy 3	Support Governor Cox's Built Here strategic plan	Complete Health Integration Project (One UT Health Collaborative & Legacy Project)	Nate C.	Julie Ewing	In Process	
Strategy 1 Strategy 2 Strategy 3		Increase access to Home and Community-based settings for youth in DCFS or JJYS (Legacy Project)	David	April Graham	In Process	
Strategy 4		Complete & submit a GRIT project from every Division, Office, and major program (GRIT)	Amanda	Carrie Bambrough/Abby Acton	In Process	
Strategy 3 Strategy 1		Implement Youth-based behavioral health prevention (Built Here)	Heather	Janae Duncan	In Process	
Strategy 2 Strategy 3		Improve Behavioral health infrastructure (Built here)	Nate C.	Dallas Earnshaw	In Process	
Strategy 1		Improve Rural Health (Built Here)	Heather	Ashley Moretz	In Process	
Strategy 1 Strategy 3		Further BH Continuum Homelessness: Addressing gaps when clients move from DHHS Services (Homeless Services Plan for DHHS)	Nate C.	Nune Phillips	In Process	
Strategy 1 Strategy 2		Develop WISE 10-year plan to support older adults (WISE Initiative)	Tonya	Nels Holmgren	Completed	
Strategy 1 Strategy 3		Eliminate drug related deaths (Built Here)	Nate C.	Eric Tadehara	In Process	

Appendix B: Definitions

Results Based Accountability (RBA): RBA is an approach to strategic planning and quality improvement, which is designed for health and human services environments. RBA focuses on organizational accountability for the desired results for the communities it serves and accountability for the performance of organizational units (OU) as they pursue those outcomes.

As a framework, RBA helps communities and agencies improve lives and program performance. Disaggregating data is a key part of RBA implementation and involves breaking down a single data point into multiple data points that reflect specific subpopulations. This can help people better understand the populations they serve and identify areas where change might be needed. For example, data totals might indicate success, but some groups may be falling behind others. Disaggregating data can help people target improvements for those most affected.

Indicators: Data points which are a direct measure of the result. If the result is “Utah children are safe at home” an indicator could be the number of ER visits related to in-home accidents. If the result of a project is “The DHHS onboarding process is easy and efficient.” then the outcome measure could be the results of a satisfaction survey for new hires. These are often referred to as “outcome” measures or “population impact” measures. In an OU strategic plan, there are typically 3-5 indicators.

Performance Measures: Data points which tell us whether the work we are doing is influencing our indicators and work towards our results. There are three types of performance measures:

- What/how much we do (quantity measures)
- How well we do it (quality measures)
- Is anyone better off (customer impact measures).

Quantity and quality measures are often referred to as “output measures.”



Strategies: These refer to the broad categories of intervention or priority, and serve to guide us to areas we need to focus on. They represent what we want to achieve, but need to be clear on how they will support meeting the overall result.

Example: “All Utahns have fair and equitable opportunities to be healthy and safe” is supported by this strategy “Ensure quality care, services and programs are accessible where and when they’re needed”

Result: The indented outcome of the department/OU/team/project/contract, etc. This defines what you are trying to achieve, or what is the intended outcome of the work you’re doing? This can be a brief statement and doesn’t need to include the “How.” This usually defines the people who will benefit, where they are, and what benefit this will receive.

Example: Utahns have fair and equitable opportunities to live safe and healthy lives.

Example: All Utahns have fair and equitable access to culturally appropriate public health, healthcare, and social services through a transformative health equity practice within DHHS.

Appendix C: Results-Based Accountability (RBA)

Results-Based Accountability

DHHS Framework for Success



Results Based Accountability (RBA) is a model to promote positive community outcomes and improve the performance of programs. The RBA framework is being used in the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) at all levels to inform strategic planning and performance management activities.

Focus on Results

Results Based Accountability starts with the desired end and works backwards to the means of achieving those ends. RBA encourages organizations to constantly think about their intended results, or outcomes, not just their activities.

RBA focuses on results for whole populations as well as internal and external customers. It requires articulation of specific strategies and objectives to get closer to the desired results.

Meaningful Measurement

Measures help organizations and their programs know if they are moving toward their intended results. They also inform them how operational units are performing in their day-to-day work. RBA organizes measures in terms of:

1. How much did we do? (Quantity)
2. How well did we do it? (Quality)
3. Is anyone better off? (Impact on customers and populations)

Impact measures are the most meaningful although often the most difficult to change because other variables influence them. This promotes collaboration with internal and external partners toward the desired outcomes. Disaggregating data is a key part of RBA implementation and involves breaking down a single data point into multiple data points that reflect specific subpopulations. This can help people better understand the populations they serve and identify areas where change might be needed.

Accountability for Performance

RBA requires accountability for the results the organization is pursuing, both for customers and populations, while recognizing the need to engage with partners to affect whole population outcomes.

The accountability process is geared toward reviewing progress, making decisions, and constantly reviewing the impacts of those decisions on our measures and objectives.

"All Utahns have fair and equitable opportunities to be healthy and safe."

DHHS has identified four strategies to achieve the above result under which there are specific measures of success (see reverse). Department leaders meet monthly to review progress on these key measurements.

Each DHHS operational unit has a strategic plan aligned with the department plan and grounded in RBA principles. They hold routine accountability sessions to review progress on their key measures and strategic objectives.

Turning the Curve

This refers to linking measurement data to action plans designed to move the data in a positive direction, or turn the curve. This is a continual accountability cycle.

