



# Public Health

## Merit Badge Workbook



This workbook can help you but you still need to read the merit badge pamphlet.

This Workbook can help you organize your thoughts as you prepare to meet with your merit badge counselor

**Merit Badge Counselors may not require the use of this or any similar workbooks.**

You still must satisfy your counselor that you can demonstrate each skill and have learned the information. You should use the work space provided for each requirement to keep track of which requirements have been completed, and to make notes for discussing the item with your counselor, not for providing full and complete answers.

If a requirement says that you must take an action using words such as "discuss", "show", "tell", "explain", "demonstrate", "identify", etc, that is what you must do.

No one may add or subtract from the official requirements found in Scouts BSA Requirements (Pub. + 33216) and/or on Scouting.org.

The requirements were last issued or revised in 2021 • This workbook was updated in November 2023.

Scout's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Unit \_\_\_\_\_ Date Started \_\_\_\_\_

Counselor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone No.: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please submit errors, omissions, comments or suggestions about this **workbook** to: [Workbooks@USScouts.Org](mailto:Workbooks@USScouts.Org)

Comments or suggestions for changes to the **requirements** for the **merit badge** should be sent to: [Merit.Badge@Scouting.Org](mailto:Merit.Badge@Scouting.Org)

1. Explain what public health is.


Explain how *Escherichia coli* (E. coli), tetanus, AIDS, encephalitis, salmonellosis, Lyme disease, and coronavirus (COVID-19) are contracted.

*Escherichia coli*  
(E. coli):


Tetanus:


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AIDS:


Encephalitis:


Salmonellosis:


Lyme disease:


Coronavirus  
(COVID-19)


Then, pick any FOUR of the following diseases or conditions and explain how each one is contracted and possibly prevented: gonorrhea, West Nile virus, botulism, influenza, syphilis, hepatitis, emphysema, meningitis, herpes, lead poisoning.

	Disease	How Contracted and Prevented:			
1.		<table border="1"> <tr><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td></tr> </table>			
2.		<table border="1"> <tr><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td></tr> </table>			
3.		<table border="1"> <tr><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td></tr> </table>			
4.		<table border="1"> <tr><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td></tr> </table>			

For all 10 diseases, explain the type or form of the disease (viral, bacterial, environmental, toxin), any possible vectors for transmission, ways to help prevent exposure or the spread of infection, and available treatments

**Gonorrhea**

Type or form:	
Possible vectors:	
How to Prevent exposure or Spread:	
Treatments:	

**West Nile virus**

Type or form:	
Possible vectors:	
How to Prevent exposure or Spread:	
Treatments:	

**Botulism:**

Type or form:	
Possible vectors:	
How to Prevent exposure or Spread:	
Treatments:	

**Influenza:**

Type or form:

Possible vectors:

How to Prevent exposure or Spread:

Treatments:

**Syphilis:**

Type or form:

Possible vectors:

How to Prevent exposure or Spread:

Treatments:

**Hepatitis**

Type or form:

Possible vectors:

How to Prevent exposure or Spread:

Treatments:

**Emphysema**

Type or form:

Possible vectors:

How to Prevent exposure or Spread:

Treatments:

**Meningitis**

Type or form:

Possible vectors:

How to Prevent exposure or Spread:

Treatments:

**: Herpes**

Type or form:

Possible vectors:

How to Prevent exposure or Spread:

Treatments:

**: Lead poisoning**

	Type or form:
Possible vectors:	
How to Prevent exposure or Spread:	
Treatments:	

2. Do the following:

- a. Explain the meaning of immunization.
- b. Name EIGHT diseases against which a young child should be immunized, two diseases against which everyone should be reimmunized periodically, and one immunization everyone should receive annually.

Young child

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	

Everyone periodically

1.	
2.	

Everyone annually

1.	
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- c. Using the list of diseases and conditions in requirement 1b (*sic*), discuss with your counselor which currently have no immunization available.


3. Discuss the importance of safe drinking water in terms of the spread of disease.


Then, demonstrate two ways for making water safe to drink that can be used while at camp. In your demonstration, explain how dishes and utensils should be washed, dried, and kept sanitary at home and in camp.


4. Explain what a vector is


5. With your parent or guardian's and counselor's approval, do ONE of the following:

- a. Visit a municipal wastewater treatment facility OR a solid-waste management operation in your community.

Facility Visited: \_\_\_\_\_

- i. Describe how the facility safely treats and disposes of sewage or solid waste.


- ii. Discuss your visit and what you learned with your counselor.


- iii. Describe how sewage and solid waste should be disposed of under wilderness camping conditions.


- b. Visit a food service facility, such as a restaurant or school cafeteria.

- i. Observe food preparation, handling, and storage. Learn how the facility keeps food from becoming contaminated.


- ii. Find out what conditions allow micro-organisms to multiply in food, what can be done to help prevent them from growing and spreading, and how to kill them.




iii. Discuss the importance of using a thermometer to check food temperatures.


iv. Discuss your visit and what you learned with your counselor.


6. Do the following:

a. Describe the health dangers from air, water, and noise pollution.

Air pollution:


Water pollution:


Noise pollution:


b. Describe health dangers from tobacco use, alcohol, and drug abuse.

Tobacco:


Alcohol


Drug abuse.


c. Describe the health dangers from abusing illegal and prescription drugs.


7. With your parent or guardian's and counselor's approval, do ONE of the following:

- a. Visit your city, county, or state public health agency
- b. Familiarize yourself with your city, county, or state health agency's website.

After completing either 7a or 7b, do the following:

- i. Compare the four leading causes of mortality (death) in your community for any of the past five years with the four leading causes of disease in your community.

Mortality (death)

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	

Causes of disease:

1.	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
2.	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
3.	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
4.	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

Explain how the public health agency you visited is trying to reduce the mortality and morbidity rates of these leading causes of illness and death.

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- ii.. Explain the role of your health agency as it relates to the outbreak of diseases.


- iii. Discuss the kinds of public assistance the agency is able to provide in case of disasters such as floods, storms, tornadoes, earthquakes, and other acts of destruction. Your discussion can include the cleanup necessary after the disaster.


8. Pick a profession in the public health sector that interests you. \_\_\_\_\_  
Find out the education, training, and experience required to work in this profession.

Education:


Training:


Experience:


Discuss what you learn with your counselor.


When working on merit badges, Scouts and Scouters should be aware of some vital information in the current edition of the *Guide to Advancement* (BSA publication 33088). Important excerpts from that publication can be downloaded from <http://usscouts.org/advance/docs/GTA-Excerpts-meritbadges.pdf>.  
You can download a complete copy of the *Guide to Advancement* from <http://www.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/33088.pdf>.