

MESSAGES

For Counties that Rank Among the Healthiest, in the Middle, or Least Healthy

This year, the Rankings will display a county's rank within the state as part of a group of counties (e.g. quartiles) rather than the county's specific rank. While specific ranks are still accessible, this change in display is intended to encourage a focus on the underlying data. The following messages offer a few suggestions for how you may want to discuss your county's Rankings. These messages are not meant to be all-inclusive or prescriptive.

All Ranked Counties

The Rankings show us the many factors that impact how long and how well we live and help us to understand how we compare to other counties in the state. With this knowledge, we can take steps to improve the health of our residents.

- Counties ranked among the healthiest in **[state]** include **[county 1]** and **[county 2]** and counties ranked among the least healthy include **[county 3]** and **[county 4]**. **[insert your county]** is ranked among the **[healthiest/least healthy]** in the state in health outcomes.
- The County Health Rankings show how **[insert county]** ranks on factors that influence its overall health. For example, **[insert county]** does have some strengths in the area(s) of **[insert here, e.g., health behaviors, such as access to exercise opportunities and low teen birth rates]**.
- The Rankings also indicate that **[insert county]** has opportunities to improve when it comes to **[insert here, e.g., social and economic factors that affect health, such as poverty rates and unemployment]**.
- The Rankings give us information we can use to work together to take action to implement program and policy changes that improve health for all in **[insert county]**.

The Rankings provide us with an opportunity to make people aware of **[insert here any programs or policies you are implementing to address challenge areas outlined in the County Health Rankings]**.

- **[Provide updates on outcomes of implemented programs/policies or partnerships that are under development]**.

We all have a role to play. Working together, we can make **[insert county]** a healthier place for everyone to live, learn, work, and play.

- ***[Describe how partners in your community are coming together to improve health.]***

Tools and resources to help move your community with data to action:

In addition to reviewing your county's ranks in specific areas, explore how your county is performing on individual measures to identify both areas where you are doing well and areas where you can improve.

- The [Use the Data](#) guide, the Areas to Explore and Areas of Strength features, individual measure trend graphs, and data for racial/ethnic groups available on the County Health Rankings & Roadmaps website can assist you with this review.
- The County Health Rankings & Roadmaps program also offers [What Works for Health](#), an easy-to-use, online tool to find evidence-informed policies, programs, and systems changes to improve health for all.
- The [Action Center](#) provides your community with tools and guidance on ways to take action to improve health.
- The [Partner Center](#) shares guidance to help changemakers find the right partners and engage with them effectively.
- The [Action Learning Guides](#) help communities dig into specific topics with a blend of guidance, tools, and hands-on practice and reflection activities.

The Rankings also show which of your neighboring counties you might learn from to improve specific health factors in our community.

- With Compare Counties, leaders can compare ranks and measures for multiple counties across the country.
- The [Peer Counties Tool](#) allows communities to compare counties nationwide with similar populations matched on 19 key demographic, social, and economic indicators.

Counties Ranked Among the Least Healthy

*We've known for some time that our county faces challenges. In the 2021 County Health Rankings, **[insert county]** ranked among the least healthy—**[insert ranking, e.g., 63 out of 65]**—compared with other counties in the state.*

County Health Rankings & Roadmaps

Building a Culture of Health, County by County

- The Rankings offer an opportunity for the community to work together to uncover the root causes for poor health outcomes in **[insert county]**. Rankings data can also shed light on where there are opportunities to improve and make **[insert county]** a healthier place for everyone to live, learn, work, and play.
- **[Community]** has taken steps to address **[specific health factor]** by **[describe strategy to address that factor]**. We have seen progress in the following ways **[describe indicators of progress]**.
- The Rankings also show us which of our neighboring counties we might learn from to improve the health of our community. Consulting with leaders in counties that ranked higher in certain areas can help us learn about best practices already working in our state.
- We also know that some groups in our community may not be doing as well as others. There are stark differences in health and opportunity, particularly among communities of color and lower income communities. We are working to address differences by **[insert specific efforts underway to address gaps among different racial and ethnic groups and lower-income communities]**.

Counties Ranked in the Middle

*While we have taken important steps to improve the health of our community, there is more we can do to help our residents lead healthier lives. In the 2021 County Health Rankings, **[insert county]** ranked in the middle on overall health—**[insert ranking, e.g., 33 out of 65]**—compared with other counties in the state.*

The Rankings show us where we are doing well and highlight what is working.

- The County Health Rankings show how **[insert county]** ranks on factors that influence its overall health. The Rankings show that **[insert county]** has strengths in the area(s) of **[note here]**.
- We can use this report to build on our successes and mobilize community leaders to take action and implement programs and policy changes in areas we need to improve here in **[insert county]**.
 - **[Insert here any programs or policies that are being implemented to address areas where the county is doing well in the County Health Rankings]**.

The Rankings also shed light on factors that are making our residents unhealthy and what more we can be doing to make **[insert county]** a healthier place for everyone to live, learn, work, and play.

- The Rankings indicate that **[insert county]** is at-risk for poor health when it comes to **[insert here, e.g., social and economic factors that affect health, such as poverty rates and unemployment]**.
- **[Community]** has been taking action to address **[specific health factor]** by **[describe strategy to address that factor]**. We have seen progress in the following ways **[describe indicators of progress]**.
- We also know that some groups in our community may not have the necessary conditions to be healthy, such as a living wage job, affordable housing, or access to healthy foods. We need to examine and address the gaps in neighborhood conditions that keep everyone in the community from realizing our full health potential.

Counties Ranked Among the Healthiest

*In the 2021 County Health Rankings, **[insert county]** ranked among the healthiest—**[insert ranking, e.g., 2 out of 65]**—compared to all counties in the state.*

The Rankings help us understand what factors influence good health in our community and how we can make **[insert county]** a healthier place for everyone to live, learn, work, and play.

- The County Health Rankings show how **[insert county]** ranks on factors that influence its overall health ranking. For example, **[insert county]** has strengths in the area(s) of **[note here]**.
- Our ranking reflects the priority this county has placed on improving the factors that affect residents' health, and it also shows how important it will be for us to sustain those programs if we want to stay healthy. **[Insert specific policies and programs that have been implemented in your community and show how these have led to healthy outcomes. Be sure to communicate how community investments in many health factor areas help improve health outcomes.]**
- We look forward to sharing what has worked well in our community with other counties in our state and learning about the work others are doing.

Even though we ranked among the healthiest in the state for some factors **[e.g., rates of obesity]**, these rates are far from ideal and do not meet the goals we have set for our county.

- **[Insert goals and steps being taken in your community to address these issues.]**

The Rankings help us identify factors that are making our residents unhealthy and understand how we compare to other counties in the state. With this knowledge, we can take steps to improve the health of our residents.

County Health Rankings & Roadmaps

Building a Culture of Health, County by County

- While we ranked among the healthiest overall, this report helps us identify areas where we still need to do more to ***[insert here, e.g., invest in affordable housing, support quality education, and develop youth leadership programs etc.]***.
- The Rankings also indicate that ***[insert county]*** has opportunities for improvement when it comes to ***[insert here, e.g., environmental factors that affect health, such as adequate and affordable housing or transportation]***.
- We also know that some groups in our community may not be doing as well as others. We know there are stark differences in health and opportunity particularly among communities of color and lower income communities. It is important to bring partners together to address the disparities that exist in ***[identify measures of opportunity]*** so that all in our community have the opportunity to thrive.