

# Involve/Collaborate

## STEP 1 ▶ Review the “Guide to Using the Community Engagement Framework” in this kit.

The guide explains the four categories of community engagement and provides some key terms and definitions.

## STEP 2 ▶ **Involve/collaborate projects create two-way communication between the Health Department and the community to ensure mutual decision-making.**

Follow the guidelines below for projects in the **involve/collaborate** category.

- ▶ Initiate ongoing relationships with stakeholders around the project of interest.
- ▶ Shift some power and control to stakeholders throughout the project.
- ▶ Engage in varied and consistent communication.
- ▶ Minimize the burden on the stakeholders throughout the project.
- ▶ Allocate sufficient resources to enable meaningful engagement.

**The following is one example of a project that falls within the involve/collaborate category:** As part of the Health Department’s community engagement strategy for post-emergency canvassing after a coastal storm, the agency met regularly with LES Ready! The organization is made up of community representatives who play an active role in disaster planning for the Lower East Side (LES), where close to 20% of residents have a disability and 32% live in high poverty. During their meetings, the Health Department and LES Ready! shared planning details, agreed upon areas of collaboration and began to formally integrate their emergency plans.

## STEP 3 ▶ Use the following standards and questions to shape each phase of your community engagement.

If needed, adjust your community engagement strategy to meet these standards.

### Standards During Planning

1. Identify the communities you would like to involve.  
*Tip: Check Partners Connect to identify potential partners and existing Health Department relationships.*
2. Identify how the lasting effects of structural racism have affected this community. Consider the Health Department’s historical practices in this community as well.
3. Identify possible opportunities for collaboration with stakeholders.
4. Identify how collaboration might burden or benefit the community members or partners. Determine how to minimize the burden.
5. Identify ways to promote agreement with the community and share decision-making power.
6. Work with the Bureau of Communications to make your content for external audiences simple and accessible and to translate your materials. For plain language guidelines and tips, visit [plainlanguage.gov](http://plainlanguage.gov).
7. Determine what methods of communication are most appropriate and accessible for your partners and communities.

8. Identify ways to address racial inequity and social oppression by including communities in project development and implementation.
9. Determine if you have the resources (budget, staff, time, etc.) needed to meet the goals of your project or activity.
10. Refer to the Considerations During Post-Implementation and the suggested metrics in Step 4 as you plan your evaluation strategy.

### Standards During Implementation

1. Note any challenges to community engagement and identify what processes or structures you can change.
2. Ask the community for feedback on the collaboration process.
3. Identify additional ways to share power, build trust and sustain community involvement.

### Questions for Post-Implementation

1. What decisions were made and who was responsible for making them?
2. What processes and structures promoted community buy-in and ownership?
3. How involved were key stakeholders in the activities? How likely is it that the key stakeholders will agree to work again with the Health Department?

## **STEP 4 ▶ Choose from the suggested metrics to measure your community engagement efforts.**

You can also track some of these metrics in Public Health Partners Connect.

Below are suggested quantitative, process indicators to measure your outreach efforts.

These indicators are not exhaustive and can be modified for your project or activity.

You can track most of these indicators by target audience demographics, language and geographic unit (e.g., ZIP code, community district, Neighborhood Health Action Center area, etc.). Items marked with an asterisk can be tracked in Partners Connect.

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|---|--|
| ▶ Agreements executed by stakeholder type*  | ▶ Level of investment (money, time, etc.) by stakeholder |
| ▶ Type of event/activity and community engagement category of activities carried out and by whom* | ▶ Decisions reached by consensus                         |
|   | ▶ Meetings held or calls made*                           |

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This document is one of four assessment and metrics guides developed to help employees who work with external partners plan, implement and evaluate community engagement efforts. The questions in this guide are not exhaustive and may be different for your project or activity. All community engagement efforts use information that is data-driven, community-informed, culturally sensitive and accessible to New Yorkers with limited English proficiency. For more information on culturally sensitive language, see the "Language Use Guide" in this kit. For interpretation and translation resources, email [languageaccess@health.nyc.gov](mailto:languageaccess@health.nyc.gov).