



Executive Summary

The Meta-Leadership Summit for Preparedness is a unique national initiative to better prepare business, government and nonprofit leaders to work effectively together during a public health or safety crisis. Through the Summit, leaders learn skills needed for effective action during times of crisis and build organizational connections to strengthen community preparedness for responding to and recovering from emergencies.

The Summits were launched by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Foundation, CDC, the National Preparedness Leadership Initiative – Harvard School of Public Health and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to foster greater cross-sector collaboration during emergencies. The dynamic curriculum is designed by Harvard University faculty and tailored to the challenges business, government and nonprofit leaders face.

More than 30 Meta-Leadership Summits are engaging thousands of leaders in states and metropolitan areas nationwide. Up to 200 leaders from business, government and nonprofit organizations attend each Summit. These include state and local health officers/commissioners, state and local emergency management directors, corporate and nonprofit chief executive officers and chief operating officers, continuity of operations directors, foundation presidents, communications directors, emergency operations senior staff members, medical society directors, senior nonprofit disaster relief and faith-based organizational leaders, regional federal authorities, and elected officials.

Hosts for the Summits usually include the governor's or mayor's office, local corporations, nonprofit/philanthropic organizations, and other community entities with an interest in ensuring effective response to and recovery from public health and safety crises. Recent Summits have been hosted by the states of Illinois, Maryland and North Carolina; the cities of Atlanta, Boston, Dallas, Denver and Minneapolis; and the multijurisdictional National Capital Region.

Evaluation results indicate high levels of satisfaction with the Summits. More than 90 percent of evaluation participants report that the Summit is a valuable use of time, and that they intend to apply information learned at the Summit to their work.

On a national level, the Meta-Leadership Summit for Preparedness is supported by a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, which covers programming and administrative costs. Additional programmatic support is provided by the CDC and the CDC Foundation. In lieu of a registration fee for Summit participants, local sponsors cover the Summit's operational expenses, including meeting space rental, audiovisual equipment, food and beverage and meeting materials.

Following each Summit, a dedicated CDC team works with state and local leaders to organize a post-Summit activity to continue the momentum of meta-leadership efforts. The activity, offered within three to six months of the Summit, reconvenes participants and other community leaders, addresses preparedness gaps identified at the Summit and is unique to each community's needs. Additional community-driven post-Summit activities may help further define and solidify cross-sector collaborations and assist participants in building plans to ensure the continued practice of meta-leadership in their communities for enhanced emergency preparedness, response and recovery efforts.