Updates to 2024 EHOG:

The EHOG is the standard by which LPHAs performing environmental health services in cooperation with BEHS will operate. Based on concerns from multiple LPHAs, the words recommend(ed) and suggest(ed) were removed or modified, as necessary, to establish clear expectaitons. Update includes changes to minor verbiage, formatting, hyperlinks and email addresses throughout. Below are some of the highlights of changes made within each chapter.

Chapter 1: Moved “Community Assessment” from Ch.8 to Ch. 1, added clarifying language that BEHS will be conducting structured LPHA program assessments and evaluations (i.e., EH-LEAP type assessment) at least once every three years. Made clear that the EHOG provides “standards” by which the LPHAs must operate, not just “guidance”; provided structured on-boarding and training guidance for new EHS staff; added language reflecting Environmental Health as a foundational health capacity in-line with updated national and Departmental guidance; updated EHS job requirements to be in-line with Department and OA job classification and educational requirements.

Chapter 2: Updated language in Criteria for Closing a Food Establishment. Added information regarding probable cause statements. Updated language on backflow prevention, OWTS, Farmer’s Markets, quail processing, Cottage Food Law, Food Code Exemption and Home-Based Kitchen Food Production Guidance. Updated language in Fairs, Festivals and Temporary Events. Updated language in Recalls. Updated and added language in SFSP and At-Risk, including the inspection report audit process for reimbursement. Added section on Training for New Environmental Health Specialists. Updated language in Manufactured Food Program. Updated language regarding the elimination of the Frozen Dessert Program.

Chapter 3: Added directions for DH-50 Change Order form; changed Inspection Report distribution instructions; updated Inspection Process; added language on probable cause statements.

Chapter 4: Clarification on various technical issues such as Open Roads Initiative, on-call expectations, distressed food, etc.

Chapter 5: Updates for clarification; provided links to forms so LPHAs do not need to request from OWP; added a section with Job Aids. Program name change from Onsite Wastewater Treatment Program (OWTP) to Onsite Wastewater Program (OWP).

Chapter 6: Incorporated language to include DESE – Office of Childhood as the lead regulatory agency. Added section regarding Animal Interactions in Childcare Setting; revised section on Shigellosis to include various Diseases in Childcare Facilities.

Chapter 7: Clarification on various technical issues such as boil order/advisory procedures for food establishments and childcare facilities; language regarding course of action if owner/operator refuses or fails to follow procedures; added information about ultraviolet microbiological water treatment units; added section on backflow prevention.

Chapter 8: Added language regarding the LCPP; addressed citizen complaints regarding conditions where a loved one is incarcerated; updated language in Lead section.

This is not meant to be an all-encompassing synopsis of the changes made. The Bureau strongly encourages LPHAs to read the EHOG to ensure your environmental program is in compliance with the updates.