

Understanding the Recruitment and Retention Needs of the Next Generation



The public health laboratory (PHL) community is challenged to find creative yet practical solutions it can implement to attract, support and sustain the next generation of laboratorians. Data shows that this group, known as millennials*, tends to be a more mobile workforce as compared to previous generations.

STATE PHLs	LOCAL PHLs
2345 total staff	402 total staff
482 total millennials	129 total millennials
21% millennials in state PHLs	32% millennials in local PHLs

Based on 2019 APHL Survey Responses, "Recruitment and Retention"

Millennial Characteristics



Laboratory Directors

Lab directors identified their top 5 barriers in recruitment and retention of millennials in their laboratory.

Barriers to Recruitment

- 1 The salary scale for employees
- 2 Lack of required experience
- 3 Lack of career path of employee growth/ opportunity for promotion
- 4 Lack of required certification or licensure
- 5 The complexity of administrative bureaucracy

Barriers to Retention

- 1 The salary scale for employees
- 2 Lack of career path for employee growth/ opportunity for promotion
- 3 The complexity of administrative bureaucracy
- 4 Continuing education opportunities
- 5 Lack of workforce engagement, such as reward and recognition, volunteering, potlucks, etc.

Millennials

Millennials gave suggestions for recruiting, hiring and retaining their generation.

Recruitment Suggestions

- Use bench level staff at career fairs / Use personal stories and case studies for recruitment
- Promote university and web-based job sites
- Share benefits and other incentives
- Promote PHLs on social media

Retention Suggestions

- Career paths to promote or increase skills and responsibilities
- Competitive pay
- Increase opportunities for networking
- Cross train to reduce redundancy and support growth
- Continued opportunities for training

What's working from a laboratory director perspective?

"I find free webinars and training for the staff. When I go to conferences I give a presentation on topics that were discussed."

"Supervisors meet with their direct reports monthly, one on one, solely focused on professional growth."

"We advocate for staff to attend trainings and conferences. Our state has union dollars that staff can use for trainings, certifications, etc."

*1 The Pew Research Center, defines millennials as born from 1981 to 1996 <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/01/17/where-millennials-end-and-generation-z-begins/>

Acknowledgments

Knowledge Management Committee 2019-20, 2020-21: Amanda Hughes (Chair), Tamara Theisen (Co-chair), Ellen Basinger, Jack Bennett, Susanne Crowe, Angie Schooley, Shelly Matheson, Robert Rej, Larry Seigler, Emily Travanty, Victor Waddell, Terry Dunn, Joanne Bartkus (BOD Liaison), Sanjib Bhattacharyya (BOD Liaison), Rex Astles (CDC Advisor), Andrea Wright (APHL), Adom Yusuf (APHL), Lorelei Kurimski (APHL)

Association of Public Health Laboratories
8515 Georgia Avenue, Suite 700
Silver Spring, MD 20910