

# State Offices of Rural Health



National Organization of  
State Offices of Rural Health

## What is a State Office of Rural Health?

The State Office of Rural Health (SORH) program is a unique, federal-state partnership through the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy (FORHP) within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA).

State Offices of Rural Health (SORHs) are **neutral conveners** of state partners, healthcare providers and communities. They lead **coordination** of efforts in workforce economic development, as well as innovation in rural hospitals, emergency services and rural health care delivery systems.

SORHs **connect state and federal resources** to over 1,300 Critical Access Hospitals, thousands of rural health partners, and millions of rural people across the United States.

## Goals of a State Office of Rural Health

SORHs have a core charge of providing **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE** to rural health organizations, **INFORMATION DISSEMINATION** of rural relevant information to key stakeholders and rural health entities, and providing **COORDINATION** efforts for rural health activities to reduce duplication.

## SORH Technical Assistance Examples

- Assist and facilitate Community Health Needs Assessments in rural communities
- Quality initiative enrollment for certified Rural Health Clinics
- Alternative Payment Methodology initiatives
- Substance abuse and mental health initiatives
- Recruitment and retention programs
- Telehealth, community health workers, and other innovative health care delivery models

## 5 Reasons Why Your SORH is an important member of your team:

1. Builds capacity to support small town hospitals and clinics working to improve the health of their communities.
2. Meets the increased and growing demand for education and technical assistance to rural providers and administrators.
3. Serves as a responsive rural health safety net resource.
4. Encourages innovation in rural communities and health care facilities.
5. Collects and disseminates data and information on resources for rural communities.

## Rural Matters

**57** Million Americans live in rural areas

**60%** of the nation's counties are rural

There are **2,157** Health Professional Shortage Areas in rural areas compared to 910 in urban areas.

**1,330** Critical Access Hospitals make up **30%** of America's hospitals.

Learn more about your State Office of Rural Health and how they can support your efforts!

Find a listing of SORH staff in your state at:

[nosorh.org/nosorh-members](https://nosorh.org/nosorh-members)

**NOSORH**, the membership organization of **all 50 State Offices of Rural Health**, works to build local capacity of SORHs, and to draw attention to the challenges and successes in rural health care throughout the nation through National Rural Health Day.

With the support of HRSA, NOSORH works closely with the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials to support coordination and information sharing on rural health issues within State Health Agencies.