cityhealth

AN INITIATIVE OF

the de Beaumont Foundation + Kaiser Permanente

2018 POLICY ASSESSMENT

EMBARGOED UNTIL TUESDAY, MAY 22, AT 9AM PT

BACKGROUND

CityHealth, an initiative of the de Beaumont Foundation and Kaiser Permanente, helps cities thrive through a set of policies that improve people's day-to-day quality of life, well-being, and health. These policies are based in research, backed by qualified experts, and shown to have bipartisan support, making them rich opportunities for cities to pursue.

Last year, CityHealth released the first-ever ratings of the nation's 40 largest cities to show how they stacked up when it comes to policy making shown to improve people's health and quality of life. This year, we updated our initial assessment of all 40 cities to identify which are leading the way.

KEY FINDINGS: Overall Medals

We found that some cities are making real progress across our nine policy recommendations and demonstrating leadership when it comes to implementing policies that will improve residents' lives. **While few cities received overall gold medals, San Jose joined four other overall gold medal cities: Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles and New York.**

Other cities also increased their medal status. **Ten cities improved their overall medal scores, and an additional eight cities improved on at least one policy's medal rating.**

While some cities are making great strides, others still have work to do. **Overall, 15 cities still don't have strong enough policies to warrant an overall medal.**

Some cities saw a decrease in their medal status based on a fuller assessment of their public and charter school programs. Consequently, four cities saw individual policy medal decreases for their pre-kindergarten policies.

OVERALL RESULTS

Out of the nation's 40 largest cities, there were:

5	9	11	15
gold medal cities	silver medal cities	bronze medal cities	Did not have enough strong policies to warrant a medal

There were significant gains since the first CityHealth assessment took place one year ago. In 2017, more than half of the cities did not receive an overall medal, but this year a majority of the cities earned gold, silver or bronze. **In just one year, cities earned 24 new medals for implementing proven policies to better the lives of the people who live, play, learn, and work in their jurisdictions.**

These advances meant that cities gained overall medals. Five new cities earned an overall bronze medal for the first time, four new cities earned an overall silver medal, and one new city earned an overall gold medal. Only one city dropped in its overall medal status, falling from a gold medal to a silver medal.

Still, less than thirteen percent of cities in the top 40 achieved gold—the same as the previous year. For CityHealth, every unearned gold medal represents an opportunity to use policy as a lever to improve people's quality of life and well-being, and to help their communities thrive.

KEY FINDINGS: Policy Medals

Our analysis included nine policy recommendations. Cities were assigned a gold, silver, bronze, or no medal, depending on their performance on each given policy area. The resulting ratings reveal opportunities for city leaders to help residents live healthier lives, and make their cities the best places to live, work, and do business. City leaders can use these criteria to better understand the core components of strong policies.

Affordable Housing

Inclusionary zoning is an affordable housing policy tool that requires developers to set aside a portion of housing units for low- and moderate- income residents. Affordable housing promotes diverse, inclusive neighborhoods and positive mental health, reduces crowding and exposure to environmental hazards, and frees up resources to individuals to pay for health care and healthy food.

CityHealth's assessment of affordable housing policies looks at cities' inclusionary zoning policies, which are planning ordinances that require that a certain share of new residences be affordable to those with low to moderate incomes. We analyzed the size of developments covered by the law, what percentage of units must be made affordable, and whether the program is evaluated for effectiveness.

Thirteen out of 40 cities received a medal for inclusionary zoning policies.

Alcohol Sales Control

Policies that address a high density of alcohol outlets can reduce crime, increase safety and reduce spending on health care and criminal justice costs.

Controlling alcohol sales can be an effective means to improve public safety, yet not all cities have the authority to do so because of a practice used by some states, called preemption. For those cities who do, we awarded medals based on who followed best practices, according to legal experts.

Fifteen out of 40 cities received a medal for alcohol sales control policies.

Complete Streets

Complete streets policies prioritize safety, by harmonizing the needs of all forms of transportation, from walking, to biking, to driving or taking the bus. These policies expand economic growth, improve individuals' health, and can save lives.

Our medal criteria for cities' complete streets policies are based on whether they require compliance, explicitly accommodate all ages, abilities, and modes of transportation, and whether the city assigns an agency to oversee implementation.

Thirty-two out of 40 cities received a medal for complete streets policies, up from 31 in 2017. New medalist for 2018: Kansas City. Five cities increased their medal status to gold: Fresno, Sacramento, San Diego, San Francisco, and San Jose.

Earned Sick Leave

Earned sick leave policies reduce the spread of contagious illnesses, increase employment and income stability, and save cities money in health care costs.

CityHealth rated the quality of earned sick leave policies, based on how many family members and what size employers are covered by the law, as well as the number of hours of earned leave employees can earn.

Nineteen out of 40 cities received a medal for earned sick leave laws, up from 17 in 2017.

Food Safety/Restaurant Grading

Policies that require food establishments to publicly post food safety inspection grades empower consumers, reduce foodborne illness, and save on health care costs.

CityHealth found that strong policies in this area include routine inspections of food establishments, assignment of a rating, and public posting of the ratings outside of the restaurants.

Fifteen out of 40 cities received a medal for restaurant inspection ratings policies, up from 12 last year. New medalists for 2018: Milwaukee, San Antonio, and Seattle.

Healthy Food Procurement

Policies that ensure food sold and served in city buildings meets basic nutritional standards can provide more residents with affordable and healthy food choices and may reduce some of the high medical costs associated with obesity.

Cities with strong healthy food procurement policies set and apply nutrition standards to all foods served and sold on city property.

Sixteen out of 40 cities received a medal for their healthy food procurement, up from 15 in 2017. New medalist for 2018: Louisville.

Smoke Free Indoor Air

These policies protect non-smokers from the harmful effects of tobacco—which is the largest preventable cause of death—and reduce smokers' consumption of tobacco at the same time.

For these laws, the strongest policies ban indoor use of tobacco products in the most locations—such as workplaces and public spaces—while providing no exemptions for places like bars, restaurants, or other facilities.

Thirty-six out of 40 cities received a medal for smoke-free indoor air policies, up from 34 in 2017. Two cities that moved up in 2018: Fort Worth and Louisville.

High Quality Universal Pre-K

High-quality Pre-Kindergarten improves children's school readiness and success. Long-term benefits include higher high school graduation rates, lower rates of crime and teen pregnancy, higher lifetime earnings, and better health outcomes.

In partnership with the National Institute for Early Education Research, CityHealth assessed the availability of high-quality Pre-K in large cities against research-based benchmarks based on the minimums for highly effective programs. CityHealth's medals applied these benchmarks, along with an assessment of the level of enrollment in the city's largest Pre-K program.

Thirty-three out of 40 cities received a medal for high-quality Pre-K, up from 31 in 2017. Two new medalists for 2018: Albuquerque and Seattle.

Tobacco 21

Policies that raise the minimum legal age for the sale of tobacco to 21 reduce the number of young people using these products, which greatly reduces their risk for addiction and disease.

While not all cities have the authority to control the purchasing age for tobacco, we awarded a gold medal where state or local law raised it to 21.

Fifteen out of 40 cities received a gold medal for their Tobacco 21 policies, up from 13 in 2017. New medalists in 2018: Portland and San Antonio.

OUR METHODS

Big cities in the U.S. face many pressing issues and are pioneering many innovations in response. The CityHealth package is not intended to be an exhaustive list; instead, we selected nine policies that met our specific criteria of: 1) being largely under city jurisdiction, 2) backed by evidence, and 3) showing a track record of bipartisan support. We also looked for pragmatic ideas that are both ripe for widespread adoption, and have real, tangible effects on people's health and well-being.

CityHealth's 40-city assessment combined innovative legal analysis with the input of national experts to determine the "gold standard" for each policy. Based on the laws on the books in 2017, we identified which elements are necessary for the best quality policy (gold), a good quality policy (silver), and a passable quality policy (bronze). Cities with no policy received no medal. The analysis notes instances where municipalities are preempted from passing policies by the state, meaning that the state government has blocked the city from adopting the policy.

We then analyzed the cities' total performance and awarded overall medals accordingly:

- **GOLD:** the city received five or more gold medals across each of the nine policies.
- **SILVER:** the city received five or more gold or silver medals across each of the nine policies.
- **BRONZE:** the city received four or more gold, silver, or bronze medals across each of the nine policies.

For a fuller description of how we awarded medals for each policy, please see our separate methodology document, located at cityhealth.org/research.

NEXT STEPS

CityHealth's goal is that all city leaders will use this as a tool to work together and move toward the gold standard for each policy. CityHealth also believes that these data give residents a way to hold their elected officials accountable for taking the steps necessary to make their city thrive.

We invite inquiries from city officials, community leaders, and others interested in advancing policies to make their communities more vibrant, prosperous places to live. This assessment will be updated again next year. Until then, CityHealth will provide technical assistance and support to cities as they advance these policies, with the goal of creating healthier lives, stronger communities, and cities that people are proud to call home.

We invite you to engage with us at: cityhealth.org/join-us.

10 CITIES WITH IMPROVED OVERALL MEDAL STATUS *from 2017 to 2018*

- Albuquerque
- Austin
- Kansas City
- Long Beach
- Louisville
- Milwaukee
- Portland
- San Antonio
- San Jose
- Seattle

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CityHealth presents the 2018 ratings of how the nation's 40 largest cities fare in policy areas that have a tremendous impact on people's well-being and quality of life.

To learn more about how your city stacked up, visit **cityhealth.org**

	2018 OVERALL MEDAL	AFFORDABLE HOUSING	ALCOHOL SALES CONTROL	COMPLETE STREETS	EARNED SICK LEAVE	FOOD SAFETY	HEALTHY FOOD PROCUREMENT	HIGH-QUALITY UNIVERSAL PRE-K	SMOKE-FREE INDOOR AIR	TOBACCO 21
Albuquerque	Bronze			Bronze			Bronze	Bronze	Silver	
Atlanta	Bronze		Silver	Bronze		Silver		Bronze		
Austin	Bronze			Silver	Silver			Bronze	Bronze	
Baltimore	Bronze	Bronze		Silver	Bronze		Bronze	Bronze	Bronze	
Boston	Silver	Bronze	Silver	Bronze	Bronze	Silver	Silver	Silver	Bronze	Silver
Charlotte	Bronze			Bronze		Silver		Silver	Bronze	
Chicago	Silver	Silver	Silver	Silver	Bronze		Bronze	Bronze	Silver	Silver
Columbus						Silver			Silver	Silver
Dallas				Silver				Bronze	Silver	
Denver	Bronze	Bronze	Silver	Bronze				Bronze	Silver	
Detroit				Silver				Bronze	Silver	
El Paso								Bronze	Silver	
Fresno	Bronze		Bronze	Silver	Bronze			Bronze	Bronze	Silver
Ft. Worth				Silver				Bronze	Bronze	
Houston	Bronze			Silver			Bronze	Bronze	Bronze	
Indianapolis				Silver					Silver	
Jacksonville				Bronze				Bronze	Bronze	
Kansas City	Bronze		Silver	Silver			Bronze	Bronze	Silver	Silver
Las Vegas			Silver			Bronze			Bronze	
Long Beach	Bronze		Bronze	Silver	Bronze		Silver	Bronze	Silver	Silver
Los Angeles	Silver	Silver		Silver	Silver	Silver	Silver	Bronze	Bronze	Silver
Louisville	Bronze					Silver	Bronze	Bronze	Silver	
Memphis			Bronze	Bronze				Bronze		
Mesa				Silver	Bronze				Silver	
Milwaukee	Bronze		Silver			Silver		Bronze	Bronze	
Nashville			Bronze	Silver				Silver		
New York	Silver	Silver		Silver	Bronze	Silver	Silver	Silver	Silver	Silver
Oklahoma City								Bronze	Bronze	
Philadelphia	Bronze			Silver	Bronze		Silver	Bronze	Bronze	
Phoenix				Silver	Bronze				Silver	
Portland	Bronze	Bronze			Bronze				Silver	Silver
Sacramento	Bronze	Bronze		Silver	Bronze	Silver	Bronze	Bronze	Bronze	Silver
San Antonio	Bronze			Bronze		Bronze		Silver	Silver	Silver
San Diego	Bronze	Bronze	Bronze	Silver	Silver	Silver		Bronze	Bronze	Silver
San Francisco	Bronze	Bronze	Bronze	Silver	Bronze	Bronze	Silver	Bronze	Silver	Silver
San Jose	Silver	Bronze	Bronze	Silver	Bronze	Silver	Silver	Bronze	Silver	Silver
Seattle	Bronze	Bronze		Bronze	Bronze	Silver	Bronze	Bronze	Silver	
Tucson					Bronze				Silver	
Virginia Beach				Bronze				Bronze		
Washington, D.C.	Bronze	Bronze	Silver	Silver	Bronze		Silver	Bronze	Bronze	Silver

= city improved overall medal status since 2017.

CITYHEALTH, an initiative of the de Beaumont Foundation and Kaiser Permanente, provides leaders with a package of policy solutions based in evidence, supported by qualified experts, and with a track record of bipartisan support. These policies will help millions of people live longer, better lives in vibrant, prosperous communities. CityHealth will evaluate cities regularly on the number and strength of their policies.