



# The Texas Public Health Information Network



The Texas Public Health Information Network (PHIN) is an online portal containing a collection of applications, such as the Health Alert Network and Rollcall, which provide users with a range of functions to carry out public health preparedness goals and duties. Examples of these functions include call down and alerting, bio-surveillance tools and communication systems designed to enhance collaboration between public health preparedness stakeholders. PHIN is a national initiative created by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to increase the capacity of public health to exchange data and information electronically across organizational and jurisdictional boundaries. This is done by promoting the use of standards and defining functional and technical requirements. More information about the CDC's PHIN concept is available at [www.cdc.gov/phn/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/phn/index.html) The Texas PHIN portal is an implementation of CDC's PHIN concept, plus much more.

Users in Texas will have the ability to learn and share critical information amongst themselves by accessing an efficient, effective and interoperable public health information system. The Texas PHIN portal is utilized by a variety of people involved in public health activities, and in particular public health preparedness and emergency response. Users include persons from state and local governments, hospitals, physician offices, emergency responders and community based organizations. These users represent a wide array of professionals including public health and hospital administrators, physicians, nurses, epidemiologists, emergency responders, laboratory specialists, communicable and infectious disease specialists, public information officers and more.

The Department of State Health Services (DSHS) manages the Texas PHIN. The portal is under constant development through collaboration between DSHS and Texas Association of Local Health Officials (TALHO). Many more applications, features and refinements will be added to the portal in the future. This is the third major version of the PHIN portal in Texas.

## GAINING ACCESS TO THE TEXAS PHIN PORTAL

To access the Texas PHIN, go to the website at <https://www.txphin.org>. On the front page you will be asked to sign in to your account. This will require you to have a username and password.

**If you are a previously registered Texas PHIN user** you will need to reset your Password and use your current email address as your username. Accounts from the previous PHIN portal at <https://texphin.dshs.state.tx.us> were migrated to the new TxPHIN with your email address as the user ID. Your previous username and password are not valid on the new portal. The new portal implements changes in username and password policy that are intended to make the portal easier to use. For security purposes, passwords were not migrated, therefore, we ask that users go to the "Forgot password" link to request a password reset. On the PHIN Sign in page, click on Forgot Password. Enter your current email address and click on Reset Password. You will be directed back to the PHIN Sign In.

### Sign In to Your Account

Email

Password

[Forgot password?](#)

☐ Remember me

Log In

Need an account?  
[Sign up.](#)

## Change your password

We will email you a link to change your password.

Email address

Reset password

An email confirmation will be sent to you with a link to change your password. Click on the link or copy it into a browser address bar if your email client has disabled the link. The link will take you to a webpage on which there are controls for changing your password. Follow the instructions to change your password.

If you encounter issues during this process, send an email to [phinadmin@txphin.org](mailto:phinadmin@txphin.org)

**If you are a new user** click on the link labeled “Sign Up”, located to the right of the “Log In” button. Your browser will be directed to a form on which you should fill in the required information: First Name, Last Name, Email Address, and Password. Please take the time to fill in the optional information as well. Listed below are the different profile attributes the form requests:

Language: Check your preferred language as either English or Spanish.

Job Title: Please provide your job title so administrators can better decide what roles to grant you.

Home Jurisdiction: When choosing your Home Jurisdiction, from the drop down box click on the county or DSHS Health Service Region that you operate in for your job. If you have responsibility for statewide activities that are not limited to a certain county or region, click on “Texas”. Your choice of jurisdiction is very important. The portal presents content and functionality based on this attribute. For example, it is possible for jurisdiction administrators to load news content that specifically pertains to their county. If you are not registered in that county, you won’t see that custom, localized content.

Requesting a Public Health Professional Role Be Assigned to You: Access to applications and features within the Texas PHIN portal is highly dependent upon what Roles are assigned to your user profile. Check the box next to the question “Public Health Professional?”. When the box is checked more form fields will appear. Scroll through the list of Roles and click on the one that best describes your designated role in public health or emergency activities. You do not have to choose a Role. You will automatically be assigned the Role of Public if you do not choose a different Role. You will have the opportunity to request more Roles after gaining access to the portal.

Professional Organization: If you are affiliated with any of the professional organizations listed in the next drop down box, click on the appropriate organization. If you are not affiliated, you do not have to choose an organization.

Role: Briefly describe your role in your organization. This information will assist administrators in evaluating your user application and deciding to grant Roles to your user profile.

Are you a public health professional? ☒

#### Health Professional Information

What is your primary role in public health or emergency response?

(your role will be 'public' if you do not check that you are a public health professional)

Public

Emergency Management Coordinator

Emergency Medical Services Authority

Emergency Operations Center Coordinator

Emergency Room Director

Emergency Training Coordinator

Environmental Health Director

Epidemiologist

FBI WMD/BT Agent

Health Alert and Communications Coordinator

Health Officer

Immunization Director

Infection Control Practitioner

Laboratory BT

Laboratory Director

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Lastly, click on the Submit button when you have entered all required information. After submitting the registration you will receive an email from the [phinadmin@txphin.org](mailto:phinadmin@txphin.org) asking you to confirm your email address by clicking on the link within the email. If your email client disables the link, copy it out of the email and enter it in your browser address bar.

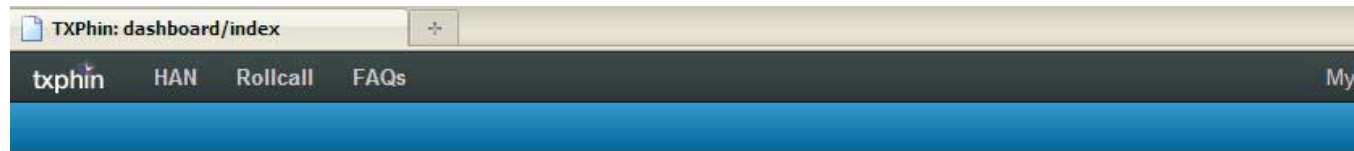
You will also receive an email confirming your Role assigned by the PHIN administrator. This role is the public health professional role you chose during the registration process.

Once you have confirmed your email address you will be directed to the Texas PHIN webpage.

## UNDERSTANDING THE TEXAS PHIN PORTAL'S DASHBOARD

After successfully logging in, you will see the Dashboard. The Texas PHIN Dashboard is the main navigation page that allows you to see and share information, update your profile and find people within the PHIN network. There are two main navigation tool bars on the page. The TxPHIN Navigation Tool Bar is at the top of the page and the Mini-Applications Tool Tabs are at the bottom of the page. Dashboard options will vary with different Roles. For instance, if you are assigned the 'administrator' Role, you will see more options on your dashboard upon sign in, such as "admin" and "manage groups." For now, we will explore only the Dashboard elements available to normal users.

The TxPHIN navigation toolbar at the top of the page contains links for different public health program applications, such as the Health Alert Network and the Rollcall Surveillance System. It also contains links to your personal profile and a directory of people within the PHIN community. If you only have the “Public” Role, you will not see a link for the PHIN Directory.



## New Texas PHIN Portal Debuts - [www.txphin.org](http://www.txphin.org)

Oct 05, 2009

On Monday, the 5th of October, the newest version of Texas' Public Health Information Network (PHIN) became available online. This new website, located at [www.txphin.org](http://www.txphin.org), will begin replacing older version public health applications that currently reside at other websites. Two of the websites to be replaced are

The TxPHIN icon located to the far left of the toolbar can be used at any time to navigate back to the main page. The “My Dashboard” link on the right side of the toolbar does the same. The Dashboard’s main page acts as a news section for articles relevant to health issues on local, state, and national levels. Notice that the news articles are truncated, with a clickable link that will expand the article to its full length. These links can be toggled to collapse the article back to its truncated size.

Users are encouraged to submit their own articles or articles read elsewhere that might be of interest to PHIN Users. If you would like to submit an article or become a featured writer please contact Jason Phipps at [jason@texashan.org](mailto:jason@texashan.org) or Shelly Robinson at [shelly.robinson@dshs.state.tx.us](mailto:shelly.robinson@dshs.state.tx.us)

Immediately to the right of the TxPHIN icon is a list of available applications. In the picture above, those applications are HAN, Rollcall, and FAQs. Clicking on these links will take you away from the Dashboard’s main news page and will bring you into that particular application. Training for each of these applications is separate and is not covered in this tutorial.

## VIEWING AND EDITING YOUR ACCOUNT PROFILE

This is where all details of your profile are stored for personal viewing and editing. You can request Roles here, change language, change your email and/or password, and add information

about yourself such as current employer, credentials, biography, job title, job description and experience in your field. There is also an option to upload your picture. This information is what is displayed to other users if you add your profile to public access.

Click on the “My Account” option on the top right hand corner of your home screen. This should direct you to the “Editing this Profile” page. You will be able to view all details that are currently in your profile. If you wish to edit your professional details, type text into the desired box(es).

To change your language, locate the “Preferred Language” option underneath the password boxes. You can choose English or Spanish.

To change your password, enter desired password into the “Password” boxes. Be sure to enter the same password into both boxes.

To request a new Role, choose your jurisdiction and Role from the drop down menus. To delete a Role, simply click the red “x” button located next to each Role listed. This will remove that Role from your profile.

You may add contact devices to your profile that will allow people to contact you through multiple outlets. You may add an email, phone, SMS, fax, and even blackberry PIN number. On the right column of the page in blue writing you will see your current devices which should include your log-in email as a default contact option. Click the blue “Add Device” link and a drop box will appear next to it. Click the arrow and select which type of device you would like to add and a text box will appear beneath it. Type in the number or email address in the box and click the blue “Add” link.

To delete any of your contact devices, click the red circle X next to the device. A dialogue box will pop up asking, “Are you sure you want to delete?” Click OK and your device will be permanently deleted. You may click cancel if you change your mind or accidentally hit the red circle X.

To upload a photo, click the “Browse” button and a dialogue box will pop open. Search the pictures on your computer’s hard drive. Once you find the photo you would like to upload, click the photo and click open. The box will close and you can now click “Upload Picture” under the “Browse” search bar. The link to the photo should appear in the “Browse” search bar.

When you are done editing, click the “Save” button on the bottom of your screen to ensure all changes made to your profile are submitted. It is not required that you fill out any part of this profile or that you make the information available to the public.

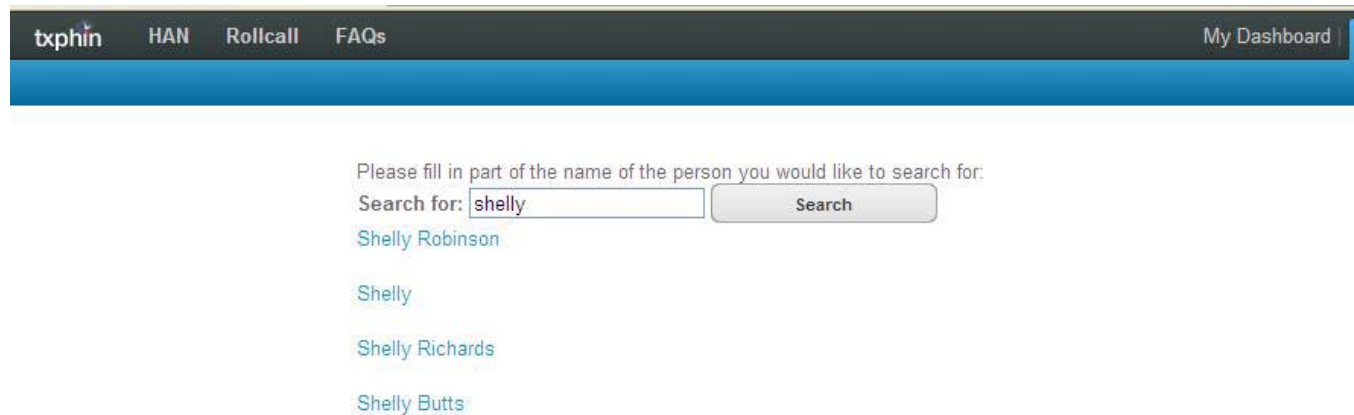
As a registered user, you have the option to allow or disallow public access to your profile through the TXPhin directory. All information entered in “My Account” will be viewable to others should you choose to allow public access. This feature allows other users to view you through the “Find People” option and is a great tool for networking and connecting with peers, however, this step is not the same as obtaining a “public” role in a jurisdiction. To allow public

access, simply check the “Make this profile public?” box on the right hand side of your screen. If you currently allow public access and wish to disallow, uncheck the “Make this profile public?” box. When complete, click “Save Changes” on the bottom of the screen.

## USING THE “FIND PEOPLE” LINK TO SEARCH THE TXPHIN DIRECTORY

This feature allows you to search for any individual who is currently registered on the TXPhin. If the individual has chosen to make their profile visible to the public, you will be able to view their full profile. If a profile is kept private, you will only be able to view their name within search results. This tool is especially helpful for networking with peers and obtaining important contact information.

Click on the “Find People” option located on the top right hand side of your home screen. You will be directed to a search tool where you can enter either a partial or full name of the individual or individuals you are searching for. After results are returned, you will be able to view profiles by clicking on each name. If the user has a private profile, you will receive the message “This user's profile is not public” and will not be able to view details regarding the user. You may also enter an email address as search criteria.



The screenshot displays the TXPhin website's search functionality. At the top, a navigation bar includes links for 'txphin', 'HAN', 'Rollcall', 'FAQs', and 'My Dashboard'. Below this, a search prompt asks the user to 'Please fill in part of the name of the person you would like to search for:'. A search bar contains the text 'shelly', and a 'Search' button is positioned to its right. Below the search bar, a list of search results is shown, each with a small profile picture and the name: 'Shelly Robinson', 'Shelly', 'Shelly Richards', and 'Shelly Butts'.

## USING THE MINI-APP TABS

The Mini-Applications navigation toolbar at the bottom of the page site contains popup tools that can help you plan and develop public health activities with other PHIN users.

## Latest Seasonal and H1N1

By Claire Ashton, Texas Association of Local Health Departments  
Oct 02, 2009

As of October 2, 2009, the Texas Department of Health Services (DHS) has announced that the state is experiencing a significant increase in influenza-like illness (ILI) activity.

