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Subject The Pulse on Local Public Health: An Office of Local & Regional Health Bulletin

News, Events, Trainings, and Funding Opportunities for Local Public Health

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Thursday, Feb. 6, 2025

We want to hear from you!

[Contact us](#)

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Announcements Happening Now Webinar

Events & Trainings Careers Equity

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Staying the course | Message from Commissioner Goldstein

OLRH wants to share with you [a message from DPH Commissioner Goldstein](#) to staff at DPH. As we navigate this uncertainty, we are committed to sharing relevant information with partners as it becomes available. Thank you for your partnership and commitment to your communities and the people you serve.

Clinical Advisory: Avian Influenza H5N1 and Pediatric Influenza

- * The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) is highlighting enhanced surveillance for H5N1 avian influenza in people in Massachusetts and providing guidance to prioritize subtyping of certain

New Gastrointestinal Illness Reporting Form for Child Care and K-12

As mentioned in [this month's webinar](#), a new online form is available for reporting gastrointestinal (GI) illness outbreaks in child care programs and K-12 schools: <https://infectious-disease-reporting.dph.mass.gov/pages/CaseReportForms>

A [letter](#) was distributed to child care programs and K-12 schools introducing the new reporting form this week. Included with the letter is a one-page reference sheet outlining reporting guidance and a GI illness symptom checklist to determine when a sick child or staff member should stay home and return to school.

As always, please reach out to the 24/7 state epidemiologist line at 617-983-6800 with any questions relating to an outbreak.

OLRH Fiscal Year 2024 Annual Report Available

OLRH recently published its Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24) Annual Report, which highlights project achievements and milestones during the last fiscal year. The report provides a look ahead at key initiatives and projects the Office currently is working on. [View the FY24 report](#) and other past reports (**FY22 and FY23**) on OLRH's website.

Apply to Host an Intern!

The 2025 Local Health Internship Program, through the Division of Epidemiology at DPH, is looking for local and regional health departments to submit [project proposals](#) for hosting public health student interns this summer.

- * **Application Deadline** (Host): **Friday, February 7, 2025**
- * **Internship Dates**: June 2, 2025 – August 15, 2025
- * **Intern Hours**: 160 paid hours of practicum work

How to Apply: To submit your proposal, please use the following link to the Google form: [2025 Local Health Internship Program Host Application](#)

A Google account is required to submit the proposal, however, if this is a barrier, please reach out and we can find another way. If you have any questions or need further clarification, please reach out to julie.coco@mass.gov.

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FPHS Shared Services Review

The Foundational Public Health Services (FPHS) Shared Services Review is off and running! If you are part of a Shared Service Arrangement (SSA) and didn't get a chance to attend the most recent webinars, you can review:

- * Shared Services Review kickoff meeting: [View the slides](#) and [watch the recording](#)
- * Introduction to the Service Delivery Tool: [View the slides](#) and [watch the recording](#)
- * Introduction to the Cost Tool: [View the slides](#) and [watch the recording](#)
- * View the [FAQ document](#)

Thank you for engaging with us in this process!

Upcoming Special Topic Webinars

Special webinars are accessed using the same link as the monthly webinars and are held Tuesdays from 3-4 p.m. unless otherwise noted.

- * **Feb. 11:** Overview of Infectious Disease Case Investigation & MAVEN Best Practices at the Local Level for Non-MAVEN Users
- * **Wednesday, Feb. 12 (2 - 3 p.m.):** Introduction to the FPHS ISD Tool
- * **Wednesday, Feb. 19 (2 - 3 p.m.):** Local Public Health Nurse Regional Consultant Program Kickoff
- * **Feb. 25:** Local Public Health Data Solution Task Order 2

Mark Your Calendar for a Local Public Health Data Solution Special Webinar

Please join OLRH on **Tuesday, Feb. 25 from 3 to 4 p.m.** for a special webinar on the Local Public Health Data Solution (LPHDS). We'll be updating you on progress and next steps for building the solution. We'll discuss:

- * The goals of the LPHDS
- * Where we are in the timeline, including when you can expect the pilot phase to begin
- * What we're building and how we're testing the solution to ensure it's useful to LPH
- * How the LPHDS will handle data collection, migration, and management
- * Ways that we'll be supporting LPH in using the LPHDS, including through training
- * How you can continue to provide input to help us shape the solution

We look forward to talking with you about this exciting work! You can use the same Zoom link as the regular monthly LPH webinar. If you need to register for the webinar series, please email localregionalpublichealth@mass.gov.

Executive Office of Elder Affairs Renamed to Executive Office of Aging & Independence (AGE)

On Jan. 9, Governor Maura Healey [signed legislation](#) to rename the Executive Office of Elder Affairs to the Executive Office of Aging & Independence to better represent and reflect the values of older adults in Massachusetts. Renaming the agency reduces negative images around aging, normalizes aging as a natural process, and recognizes that older adults value independence and self-determination, while emphasizing that the Healey-Driscoll Administration is here to support residents as they age. To learn more about the Agency and its programs, visit [Mass.gov/Aging](https://www.mass.gov/Aging).

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February Webinar

Each month, the Office of Local and Regional Health provides webinars on various topics relevant to local public health. This month's topics included avian influenza, gastrointestinal illness reporting, Foundational Public Health Services webinars, and other updates. [View slides, answers to questions](#) asked during the webinar, and [related resources](#).

We Want to Hear From You!

Submit your questions and recommended topics for the next monthly webinar, on **Tuesday, March 4**, to us via email to localregionalpublichealth@mass.gov by **Wednesday, Feb. 26**. We value your input and welcome your suggestions for future webinar topics.

Need to register?

- * If you have **not yet registered** for this webinar series, [use this link](#).
- * Please note this is a recurring event. **You only need to register once.**
- * After registering, you will receive a confirmation email from Zoom with your unique link to attend the webinar and import the events into your calendar ([how-to guide](#)).

Accessibility

We want to ensure that our webinar is accessible to our audience. If you need accommodations, such as American Sign Language (ASL) or Closed Caption, please email us at localregionalpublichealth@mass.gov.

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Join Office Hours to Discuss the Local Public Health Data Solution

Do you have questions or feedback about the new data and workflow solution that we're building? We want to hear from you! Staff from OLRH's Performance Standards and Data Systems team are continuing to hold **open office hours** to discuss the solution. During these sessions, OLRH staff listen to your questions, answer as many as they can, and take questions they can't yet answer back to the data solution development teams.

Join any of the office hours listed below using this Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81630509245>

- * 2 - 3 p.m. Friday, Feb. 7
- * 1 - 2 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 11
- * 9 - 10 a.m. Wednesday, Feb. 19
- * 12 - 1 p.m. Monday, Feb. 24

Interested in other opportunities to provide your feedback on the solution? [Please complete this form](#).

Model Tobacco Sales Regulation Information Training

This program will provide an overview of the new model tobacco sales regulations with technical assistance providers. It will also go over policy and strategy recommendations for improving local tobacco control including how to work with your board of health on adopting or updating your tobacco sales regulations. The most recent model regulations will be provided to attendees following the course.

Friday, Feb. 7

Massachusetts Health Officers Association: Local Public Health Career Panel

Discover the inspiring journeys of local public health professionals as they share their experiences in the field and the paths that shaped their careers. The event will feature a slide presentation and a panel discussion, moderated by Amy Ewing, exploring how these professionals found their way to public health and the steps they've taken to reach where they are today.

Tuesday, Feb. 11

12 - 1 p.m.

[Register to attend](#)

Technical Support Sessions

Growing a New Heart will be hosting topic-based [technical support](#) Tuesdays from 2 - 3:30 p.m.:

- * Feb. 18 - Community Engagement
- * Mar. 18 - Workforce Diversity
- * Apr. 15 - Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Standards (CLAS)
- * May 20 - Linguistic Justice

[Register to attend on Zoom](#). If you have any questions, please contact Amparo Cruz at acruz@growinganewheart.org.

OPEM Third Annual Volunteer Training Day

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health's Office of Preparedness and Emergency Management (OPEM) is organizing an **in-person training day specifically for public health volunteers**. This training is intended to enhance the knowledge and skills of public health volunteers to help prepare for the challenges faced across the state, to recognize available resources, and to continue building public health preparedness, education, and resiliency across the Commonwealth. **Limited space available, register by Tuesday, Feb. 25!** Questions? Email [Liz Foley](#).

Tuesday, March 4

9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Assumption University, Worcester

[Register to attend](#)

MassDEP and MHOA 2025 Seminars

The Massachusetts Health Officers Association (MHOA) and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) are excited to announce their 2025 Seminars! [Check out the agenda](#) and [register to attend](#).

Tuesday, Feb. 25 - Holyoke, MA

Wednesday, Feb. 26 - Virtual Day 1 (Part 1 of 2)

Tuesday, March 11 - Boylston, MA

Wednesday, March 12 - Virtual Day 2 (Part 2 of 2)

Note: **This is a one-day training, repeated in 3 ways.** Two in person options (Holyoke and Boylston) and one virtual day, split into two parts.

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Needham is Hiring!

The Town of Needham is hiring an **Assistant Director of Public Health for Nursing and Behavioral Health**. This position spearheads vaccine administration and outbreak investigation efforts, manages two teams of substance use prevention professionals, oversees maintenance and revision of public health records, manages nurses and volunteers in their clinical work, supervises a full-time epidemiologist, leads Needham's Medical Reserve Corps volunteers, and provides community outreach and training on a variety of health-related topics. [Learn more about this position and apply.](#)

Valley Health Regional Collaborative is Hiring!

The City of Greenfield is hiring an **Health Inspector**, covering the towns of Greenfield, Montague, Deerfield, Sunderland, Shutesbury, and Leverett. The position is responsible for the investigation of complaints of unsanitary conditions, practices, and nuisances affecting the public's health in accordance with local, State and Federal law. [Learn more about this position](#) and [apply here](#).

Eastern Hampden Shared Public Health Services is Hiring!

The Town of Longmeadow is hiring an **Health Inspector**, covering the towns of Hampden, Monson, Longmeadow, and Wilbraham. The position is responsible for administering state and local health and environmental codes, laws, and policies, including regulations from DPH and MassDEP, as well as Board of Health policies and other state and local public health regulations. [Learn more about this position.](#)

Berkshire is Hiring!

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission's Berkshire-Hampden Public Health Training Hub is looking for a **Public Health Training Specialist** to join our team of public health professionals to provide training and support to local boards of health inspectors in Berkshire and Hampden County. [Learn more about this position.](#)

Join the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission's Public Health team as a **Planner/Senior Planner** and help strengthen local emergency planning, response, and training while collaborating with regional and state partners to enhance community resilience. [Learn more about this position.](#)

Find Your Future with the Commonwealth

[Find job opportunities](#) across industries including health and human services, transportation, IT, finance, housing and economic development, energy and environmental, public safety and security, and education. First consideration is given to those who apply within the first 14 days.

DPH Bureau of Health Care Quality and Safety (BHCQS):

- * [Health Care Facility Inspector, RN](#) | Marlborough

DPH Bureau of Substance Addiction Services (BSAS):

- * [Harm Reduction Grant Specialist](#) | Boston
- * [Unit Support Coordinator - Contractor](#) | Boston

DPH Western Massachusetts Hospital:

- * [Quality Office Support Specialist](#) | Westfield

DPH Tewksbury Hospital:

- * [Chief Operating Officer](#) | Tewksbury
- * [Staff Development Instructor, RN](#) | Tewksbury

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The Importance of Different Perspectives for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice

Input from different perspectives is necessary to create genuinely inclusive workplaces. Hear from Jade Ramsdell, the Performance Improvement Director for the Kansas Department of Health and Environment and Public Health Foundation (PHF) Expert Consultant on why [multiple perspectives and engaging interactions are crucial for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice initiatives](#).

Want to hear more? Explore the full session, "[Pathways to Justice: Inclusive Practice Shaping the Kansas Heartland](#)" and learn how Jade's services can best support your health department.

Racial and Health Equity Technical Support from Growing a New Heart

Looking for guidance or have questions about integrating racial and health equity goals into your work plans? Feel like racial equity is hard to put into action? Growing a New Heart is available to provide the guidance you need and be a thought partner to troubleshoot your questions. To request tailored technical support today, please contact Amparo Cruz at acruz@growinganewheart.org.

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FPHS Newsletter

The *FPHS Newsletter* is designed to provide local public health (LPH) with useful content about FPHS's value. It also offers updates about what FPHS means for Local Public Health and other updates.

The most recent addition included a story on a local epidemiologist from the Cape showing how the FPHS framework can be applied to address the spread of pertussis in their community. Check out the [newsletter archive](#)!

Didn't receive it or want to share with those interested? [Sign up!](#)

FPHS Website

Check out our new [FPHS page](#) on Mass.gov to learn more about what FPHS means for local public health and share with your networks.

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RFP: Leveraging Intersectional Frameworks and Tools for Data-to-Action at the Local Level Project

In partnership with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) is pleased to announce the Leveraging Intersectional Frameworks and Tools for Data-to-Action at the Local Level (LIFT) Project. The project aims to recruit local health departments (LHDs) with interest or experience in working at the **intersection of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), positive childhood experiences (PCEs), substance use disorder (SUD), and overdose** to pilot and provide feedback on an intersection-focused Data-to-Action Framework.

For full details about the funding opportunity, please review the [Request for Proposals](#).

A recording is available via the [registration link](#) from the informational webinar. Email any questions to the Injury and Violence Prevention Team at IVP@naccho.org with the subject line "LIFT RFP Question"

Applications are due **Friday, Feb. 14 by 5 p.m.**

Apply for the Municipal Master Services Agreement (MSA) RFR

The purpose of this [Request for Responses \(RFR\)](#) is to establish a pre-qualified list of approved vendors, namely **local and regional public health entities**, to be eligible for potential to receive future funding from the Department of Public Health (DPH).

All municipalities and/or regional health districts are strongly encouraged to apply as many future DPH grants will be distributed through this municipal master services agreement (MSA). **NOTE:** PHE lead grantees are already in the MSA and do not need to apply.

[Visit the RFR posting](#) for the application and Confidentiality Agreement (can be found in the REQ zip file on COMMBUYS). Please return the completed forms to Brian.W.Sheehan@mass.gov along with any other questions.

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If you have any comments, questions, or feedback, please email:
localregionalpublichealth@mass.gov

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