

From "Office of Local & Regional Health"
<localregionalpublichealth@notice.mass.gov>

To jbelmonte@doverma.gov

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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, Jan. 23, 2025

We want to hear from you!

[Contact us](#)

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Announcements Happening Now Webinar

Events & Trainings Careers Equity

DPH Updates FPHS Funding

State Officials Suspect HPAI Outbreak Impacting Geese and Other Wildlife

State environmental and health officials are informing the public that Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI), which very rarely infects humans, is suspected to be the cause of over 60 deceased Canada geese, swans, and other birds in Plymouth. The Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (MassWildlife), the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR), and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) are advising the public to refrain from handling birds or other animals that are dead or appear sick. [Read the full press release.](#)

Report observations of dead wild birds: <https://www.mass.gov/forms/report-observations-of-dead-wild-birds>

MassWildlife is collecting information on wild birds to monitor possible outbreaks of Avian Influenza. We are particularly interested in sick/dead seabirds washing up along coastal areas. Please complete the form and include a photo if possible.

When to report:

- * If you find sick or dead seabirds (i.e., gulls, terns, cormorants, sea ducks)
- * If you find 5 or more wild birds of other species at a single location

Poultry Disease Reporting Form: <https://www.mass.gov/forms/poultry-disease-reporting-form>

This form should be used to report sickness or death in DOMESTIC poultry, such as chickens, turkeys, gamebirds, pigeons, guinea fowl, and domestic ducks and geese.

How to Report Sick or Dead Birds:

This form should only be used to report sickness or death in DOMESTIC poultry. You may submit the below information through this form OR through a call the Division of Animal Health at 617-626-1795. Division of Animal Health Staff will contact you for more information as needed.

Please visit MDAR's Avian Influenza [webpage](#) for more information. People with questions about the public health impact of HPAI can visit DPH's Avian influenza [webpage](#) or call the Division of Epidemiology (available 24/7) at 617-983-6800.

Drought Update as of Jan. 10

As a result of the recent normal to above-normal rainfall that the state received in December, **drought conditions have improved**. Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) has declared the following:

- * Level 2 - Significant Drought in the Connecticut River Valley, Central and Northeast Regions, down from a Level 3 - Critical Drought last month
- * Level 1 - Mild Drought in the Western and Southeast Regions, down from a Level 3 - Critical Drought last month, and
- * Level 1 - Mild Drought in the Cape Cod and Islands Regions

EEA continues to ask local partners to assist in disseminating this information to their communities. **Attached is a one page “Drought Alert”** that provides information on the current drought conditions and how individuals and communities across the Commonwealth can do their part in [water conservation](#) and [drought preparedness and response](#).

Upcoming Local Public Health Data Solution Office Hours with OLRH

Do you have questions or feedback about the new data and workflow solution that we're building? We want to hear them! Staff from OLRH's Performance Standards and Data Systems team are holding **open office hours** to discuss the solution. They'll 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>

- * 1 to 2 p.m. Monday, Jan. 27

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

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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](#)

Stay tuned for the Cost Tool webinar on Tuesday, Jan. 28 from 3 - 4 p.m. (more information on special webinars below)

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.

- * **Jan. 28:** Intro to the FPHS Cost Tool
- * **Feb. 11:** Overview of Infectious Disease Case Investigation & MAVEN Best Practices at the Local Level for Non-MAVEN Users
- * **Wednesday, Feb. 19 (2 - 3 p.m.):** Local Public Health Nurse Regional Consultant Program Kick-Off
- * **Feb. 25:** Local Public Health Data Solution Task Order 2

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.

Extreme Cold Safety Tips

With frigid temperatures settling in across the Commonwealth, now is a good time to remind our communities about how to stay safe during low temperatures and winter weather.

- * [Extreme Cold Safety Tips](#) | Mass.gov
- * [Cold Weather Safety](#) | NOAA
- * [Winter Ready Partners Toolkit](#) | FEMA
- * [Winter Storm Safety Tips](#) | MEMA
- * [Warming Centers Guidance](#) | Mass.gov
- * [Indoor Safety During and After Winter Storms](#) | CDC

Calling all Community Health Workers (CHWs) in Local Public Health!

DPH is conducting a survey to gather insights into the current landscape of CHWs working in local public health, including how DPH can best support your workforce growth and development needs. **If you are a CHW in local public health, please complete this survey, even if you use a different job title!** Responsibilities can include the following:

- * Community outreach, advocacy, and relationship building
- * Individual and community assessment of social needs and connection to community resources
- * Cultural mediation
- * Education and promotion of healthy behavior change
- * Care coordination and system navigation

[CHWs in Local Public Health Survey](#)

If you have any questions or need more information, please contact Sophie Brown at sopbrown@pcgus.com and Johanna Lopez at johanna.m.lopez2@mass.gov.

NACCHO: Child Health and Local Health Departments

The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) have released two new guides that highlight how local health departments play a critical role in shaping children's long-term health and development by fostering strong family and community engagement through partnerships with Early Care and Education programs.

- * [*Engaging Families and Communities to Promote Child Health: Strategies for Local Health Departments*](#)
- * [*Collaborating for Child Well-Being: A Toolkit for Local Health Departments and Early Care and Education Programs*](#)

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January 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, accessory dwelling units, data solution update, and the local health internship program. [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, Feb. 4**, to us via email to localregionalpublichealth@mass.gov by **Thursday, Jan. 29**. We value your input and welcome your suggestions for future webinar topics.

How to Register

- * If you have **not yet registered** for this webinar series, use this link: https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_A8RODgL2QtabJJqdNTpV1g
- * 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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Intersections of Substance Misuse and Problem Gambling Prevention

The Massachusetts Center of Excellence for Problem Gambling Prevention (MCOE) is leading a training on the “Intersections of Substance Misuse and Problem Gambling Prevention” that will explore the complex relationship between problem gambling and substance use disorders and will provide collaborative strategies for a path forward.

Tuesday, Jan. 28

1 - 3 p.m. on Zoom

[Register to attend](#)

Building Bipartisan Support for Public Health

In an era of deep political polarization, how can we build bipartisan support for public health? During this fireside chat, Nir Menachemi, Dean of the Fairbanks School of Public Health at Indiana University, will share important insights for winning over allies based on scientific evidence. He will also share his personal experience forging successful partnerships with policymakers in Florida, Alabama, and Indiana to increase investment in public health.

Thursday, Jan. 30

1 - 1:30 p.m. online and in-person

Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health

[Register to attend](#)

Building Trust Through Action: Black History Month Reflections with Community Leaders

This [Boston University Public Health Conversations](#) event will consider the intersection of trust and health. We will reflect on the role that community organizations can play in building trust among historically marginalized communities of color and how this can inform our public health practice.

Wednesday, Feb. 5

1 - 2 p.m. on Zoom

[Register to attend](#)

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

1 - 2:30 p.m.

[Register to attend](#)

Massachusetts Environmental Health Association Annual Title 5 Seminar

The Massachusetts Environmental Health Association (MEHA) is excited to announce the 2025 Title 5 Seminar! This year's conference will feature presentations about accessory dwelling unit regulations, the impact of pharmaceuticals on septic systems, a refresher on the Frimpter method - and more!

Wednesday, March 5

8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Clarion Hotel & Conference Center
Taunton, Mass.

\$125 for members | \$170 for non-members

Agenda and registration coming soon!

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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.](#)

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 Climate and Environmental Health (BCEH):

- * [Senior Inspector](#), Food Protection Program | Boston

DPH Bureau of Community Health and Prevention (BCHAP):

- * [Senior Account Analyst](#) | Boston

Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC):

- * [Rental Assistance Training Coordinator](#) | Boston
- * [Continuum of Care Grants Coordinator](#) | Boston
- * [Emergency Assistance Housing Search Specialist](#) | Boston

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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.

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.

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Problem Gambling Data/Surveillance System

The Office of Problem Gambling Services (OPGS) recently announced the development of the first-ever problem gambling data/surveillance system. The surveillance system establishes **reliable, dependable, and actionable data** to lead and inform the mitigation of gambling-related harms. [Learn more about the work that OPGS is doing and how they are utilizing the Data to Action Framework](#).

Revised MAVRIC Go Live Launch Timing

Due to the importance of all data partners participating electronically in MAVRIC, the go-live has been postponed until **early 2025**. The MAVRIC team is working hard to make additional modifications to the new system so that it meets the needs of all data partners at go live.

What data partners need to do now:

- * Attend or revisit MAVRIC training. Role-specific training and resources are available via [MAVRIC training program | Mass.gov](#).
- * Support MAVRIC enrollment efforts. RVRs will be reaching out to specific groups that have not yet enrolled or participated in training.

For questions, please contact RVRCommunications@mass.gov.

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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](#).

Informational webinar: **Tuesday, Feb. 4**, from 2 - 3 p.m. Register [here](#). A recording will be available via the [registration link](#) after the webinar concludes. 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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COLOR

- * [Color Vaccine Resources page](#)
 - * Questions related to billing can be emailed to vaccine@umassmed.edu.
 - * ColorHelp@mass.gov.
-

COMMUNICATION

- * [Digital Accessibility for Local Public Health Department Websites](#)
 - * [Public Health Communications Collaborative](#)
 - * [MA Health Promotion Clearinghouse](#) | DPH
-

MAVEN

- * [Infectious Disease Tools for Local Health Webinar Series](#)
 - * [MAVEN Help](#)
 - * [MAVEN Guidance Document Series](#)
 - * State Epidemiologist Line (24/7): 617-983-6800
-

RESPIRATORY ILLNESS

Guidance

- * [Respiratory Virus Guidance](#) | CDC
- * [Recommendations for the General Public](#) | DPH
- * [Guidance for Health Care Settings](#) | DPH

Clinics

- * [Mobile Clinics](#) | DPH
- * [In-Home Vaccination Program](#) | DPH

COVID-19

- * [Mobile Clinics](#) | DPH
- * [In-Home Vaccination Program](#) | DPH
- * [Statewide Contract Resources](#) | DPH
 - * PPE, Test Kits, etc.
- * [COVIDtests.gov](https://www.covidtests.gov)
- * [Extended expiration dates](#)

Influenza

- * [Influenza](#) | DPH
 - * [For Health Care and Public Health Professionals](#) | DPH
 - * [For School and Child Care Administrators](#) | DPH
 - * [For Long-Term Care Facilities](#) | DPH
-

TRAIN MA

- * [TRAIN Massachusetts](#) | Online Learning Management System
 - * Questions? Email olrhtrainingsupport@mass.gov
-

WINTER WEATHER

- [Winter Ready](#) | FEMA

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