

HAMILTON COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

A NOTE FROM THE HEALTH COMMISSIONER



**GREG KESTERMAN,
HEALTH COMMISSIONER,
HAMILTON COUNTY
PUBLIC HEALTH**

I'm proud that in 2025, Hamilton County Public Health (HCPH) accomplished great things for the communities we serve.

Together, we helped homes and neighborhoods become healthier; advised business, school and recreation leaders on safe practices; and counseled patients through their health journeys. We investigated diseases and environmental conditions; collaborated with partners to keep residents safe during challenging times; and celebrated local and regional public health wins.

As you'll see in this report, our staff's commitment to Hamilton County continues to shine, and I'm grateful to work with resilient colleagues who are dedicated to improving the health of our residents.

2025 HIGHLIGHTS

ONE-STOP SHOP: THE NEW HAMILTON COUNTY CENTRAL

In 2025, Hamilton County Public Health began preparing to say goodbye to its longtime Corryville home, packing up for an opportunity that's poised to bring greater service and convenience to all county residents.

HCPH will become part of the Hamilton County Central campus in Bond Hill in early 2026, sharing space with Job and Family Services, Developmental Disabilities Services, Environmental Services and other county agencies and offices.

The initiative will allow for greater collaboration among agencies and enhanced services for Hamilton County residents, making the new campus a one-stop shop.

The location also will offer opportunities for new partnerships within Hamilton County Public Health itself. The agency's clinical, overdose prevention and emergency preparedness teams are only a few blocks away.

HAMILTON COUNTY CENTRAL AMENITIES

The Hamilton County Central campus will provide a variety of new ways in which Hamilton County Public Health can serve community members. Visitors to the campus can expect:

- centrally located office
- comfortable, welcoming lobby
- clear wayfinding signage
- enhanced customer service area
- meeting/review rooms
- convenient access to other Hamilton County agencies

INFANT SAFE SLEEP REMAINS A PRIMARY FOCUS FOR HCPH

Hamilton County Public Health continued its strong partnership with Cradle Cincinnati and the Cincinnati Health Department in 2025, working together to reduce infant deaths.

In examining recent data, our teams noticed a troubling trend. Between 2013 and 2023, there were 10 documented sleep-related infant deaths in Hamilton County in which a nursing pillow was present in the sleep environment. But alarmingly, there were four deaths under similar circumstances in 2024 alone, representing 40% of the previous decade's total in just one year.

To bring awareness to this issue and the ongoing danger of sleep-related infant deaths in our community, HCPH, the Cincinnati Health Department and Cradle Cincinnati collaborated on an event and major media strategy. HCPH and its partners also remained committed to reducing infant mortality by educating families, supporting caregivers, and advocating for safer sleep environments.

In October, HCPH joined Cradle Cincinnati at its annual Cradling Cincinnati summit, which gathered community leaders, healthcare professionals, advocates and changemakers. HCPH shared data and findings on infant sleep safety and trends and participated on a panel about the Sudden Unexplained Infant Death (SUID) Prevention Learning Collaborative.

The continued collaboration with Cradle Cincinnati has resulted in steady improvement. In 2011, Hamilton County's overall infant mortality rate was 10.2 deaths per 1000 live births, with Black infants 3.5 times more likely to die than White babies. But by 2023, after strong collaborative efforts, the overall rate had dropped nearly in half to 5.5 deaths per 1000.

Unfortunately, the Black infant mortality rate is back on the rise, and HCPH and Cradle Cincinnati continue to partner with regional health leaders on the issue so that all Hamilton County babies can celebrate their first birthdays.

COMMUNITY EMPATHY KEY TO OVERDOSE REDUCTION

Hamilton County Public Health played a big role in overdose prevention in Hamilton County in 2025.

In August, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recognized HCPH's efforts to expand compassionate overdose response training to first responders. In an interview posted to the CDC's website, HCPH outreach coordinator Hannah Schilling discussed the "Stories Over Stigma" initiative, which provides firsthand insight into the challenges that individuals face during their addiction and recovery journeys.

First responders told HCPH that the expanded training helped them develop more empathy and compassionate skills when encountering individuals with substance use disorder. The CDC noted that overdose deaths in Hamilton County declined 52% from 2017 to 2024, due in part to HCPH's initiatives and regional collaborations.

HCPH was in the community in other ways, too, partnering with local organizations to host a free event in the fall to remember those lost to overdose, support one another through grief and celebrate the hope found in recovery. The event also honored International Overdose Awareness Day and National Recovery Month.

The agency's well-attended outdoor event lifted the community by providing resource tables from local organizations that offer support for addiction, mental health and recovery; a memorial activity to honor those lost to overdose; and connection with others who understand the journey of grief and recovery firsthand.

This event and other initiatives extended the overdose prevention team's mission to reduce stigma and support people exactly where they are in their own journeys.

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF HCPH SERVICES

Do you know about all of the services Hamilton County Public Health offers? The services below are just a fraction of what's available from HCPH.

- birth and death certificates
- clinical services
- community health and wellness
- immunization records
- lead poisoning prevention
- licenses and permits
- overdose prevention
- reports and data

LEAD-REDUCTION TEAM CONTINUES CREATING HEALTHIER HOMES



Hamilton County Public Health's lead hazard reduction program was honored with the Caring Provider Award at the 2025 Hamilton County 513Relief Bus Awards in May for joining the 513Relief Bus stops and providing on-the-spot education and support to families with young children living in homes that could contain lead-based

The award was presented by Hamilton County Commissioner Stephanie Summerow Dumas, who praised the lead-prevention team for their proactive, community-centered approach to addressing lead hazards. During county commissioner's presentation, she highlighted the critical role HCPH's work played in protecting children across Hamilton County and reducing the long-term impacts of lead exposure in young children.

The lead hazard reduction program helps remove lead paint and improve conditions in homes and units built before 1978. The program serves low-income families with children under age 6, pregnant women, or households where a young child spends time.

Eligible families receive an average of \$25,000 or more in home repairs, including replacements for windows, garage doors and other costly structures.

In 2025, the team hit a milestone of more than 100 area homes assessed for safety throughout the lifetime of the program.

GREAT PARKS AND HCPH COLLABORATE ON WATER QUALITY

Water quality is vital to our region, especially as residents and visitors enjoy Hamilton County's recreation areas.

That's why in 2025, Great Parks of Hamilton County asked Hamilton County Public Health to renew its contract to collect weekly water samples at five recreational lakes. HCPH's water quality division checks for E. coli and, if needed, cyanobacteria during the recreation season. HCPH has partnered with Great Parks on this effort since 2022.

That partnership was strong in May when HCPH received a report concerning sewage discharging into Winton Lake from nearby Metropolitan Sewer District (MSD) of Greater Cincinnati's infrastructure. HCPH's water quality team quickly met MSD and Great Parks onsite to begin investigating, finding that a surcharging manhole caused by blockage in the sewer line was the source of the discharge into a stream that flows into the lake.

While swimming is not permitted at Winton Lake, HCPH recommended that

Great Parks temporarily restrict all other recreational water activities during the investigation and repair period.

HCPH then collaborated with Great Parks and MSD on several public messaging pushes about the incident and E. coli information. Together, the agencies also developed a plan to test and monitor the lake water while MSD worked on sewer line repairs and initiated flushing.

After several days, water sampling showed that E. coli counts were back below the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency's criteria for bathing water, and HCPH was happy to recommend that Great Parks resume recreational water activities in time for Memorial Day crowds.

"PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY ARE TOP PRIORITIES IN OUR COUNTY'S BEAUTIFUL PARKS."

**GREG KESTERMAN,
HEALTH COMMISSIONER**

HCPh HEALTH COMMISSIONER TO BECOME NEXT AOHC PRESIDENT

During its fall conference in September, the Association of Ohio Health Commissioners (AOHC) elected HCPh health commissioner Greg Kesterman to serve in a leadership capacity for the upcoming term. AOHC serves as the collective voice for local public health, advocating with the governor's office, state legislature, Ohio Department of Health, and other key stakeholders to advance public health policy and practice across the state.

Kesterman will serve for one year as AOHC's president elect, one year as president and one year as past president. In this role, Greg will participate in regular calls with leadership at Ohio Department of Health leadership to advance public health policy and practice across the state.

This opportunity will help increase HCPh's visibility throughout the state and ensure representation for the public health needs of Hamilton County residents during important conversations with decision-makers.

HCPh IN THE MEDIA

Hamilton County Public Health proactively and reactively connected with local and national news reporters about many issues throughout 2025 in order to share vital information with the public. Topics included:

- Animal handling and avian influenza
- Childhood immunizations
- Disease transmission and prevention
- Emergency preparedness
- Heat illness and summer health
- Hypothermia, frostbite and winter health
- Maternal and infant health
- Measles
- Natural disaster cleanup
- Overdose prevention
- Recovery-friendly workplaces
- Respiratory viruses
- Water quality
- West Nile virus, Lyme disease and other vector-borne diseases

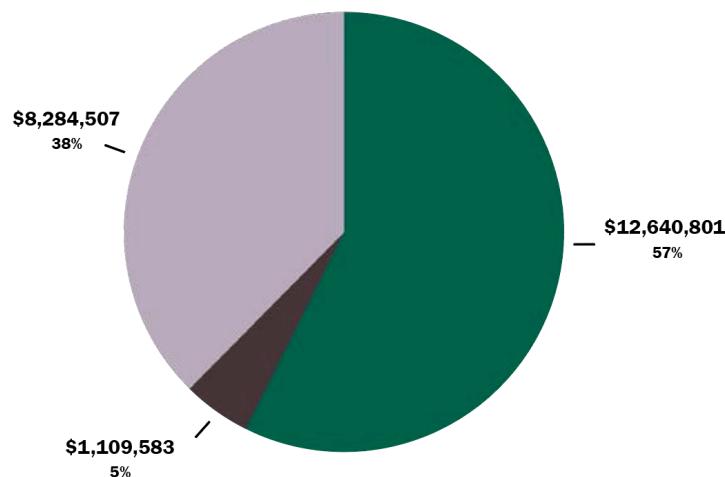
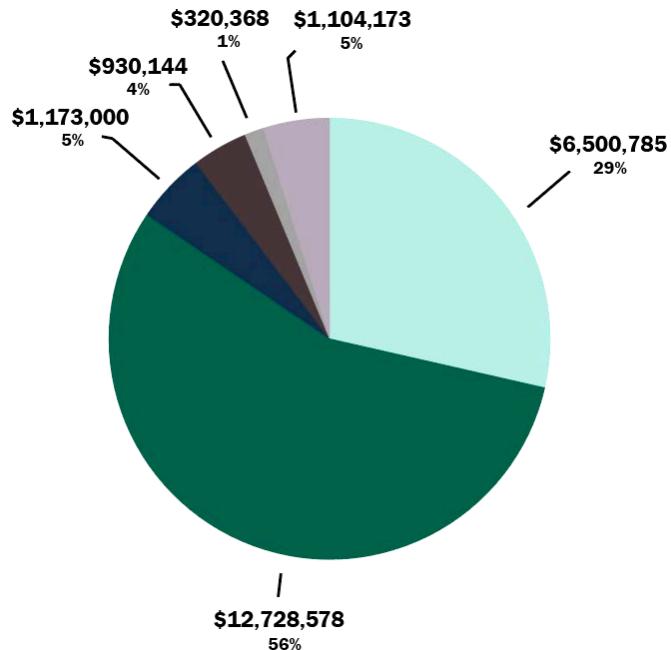
AGENCY INFORMATION

FINANCIAL DETAILS

2025 REVENUE

- Grants and contracts
- Fees and permits
- Levy funds for TB, oral health and overdose prevention
- Cities, townships, villages
- State subsidies
- Other revenue

Total revenue: \$22,757,049



2025 EXPENDITURES

- Personnel services
- State and other agency fees
- Operating expenses

Total expenditures: \$22,034,891

2025 STATISTICS

13,575: birth records issued

28,553: death certificates issued

2,498: clinic patient visits

12,003: SAFE Services client visits

1,103: overdose prevention vending machine transactions completed

23,462: doses of naloxone distributed

172,593: fentanyl test strips distributed

11: new employers onboarded to Recovery Friendly Hamilton County

4: WeTHRIVE!SM partners added

23: emergency preparedness trainings and exercises conducted

328: backflow devices registered

44: campground inspections conducted

8,616: food service inspections conducted

433: individuals trained in food safety

334: school inspections conducted

28: homes enrolled in HCPH's Lead Hazard Reduction Program

71: lead investigations completed

4,663: plumbing permits issued

769: rabies quarantine notices sent

13,092: sewage treatment system inspections conducted

276: stormwater complaints addressed

1,546: swimming pool/spa inspections conducted

50: body art facility inspections conducted

317: waste facility inspections conducted

150+: media stories earned

ABOUT HCPH

MISSION STATEMENT

Hamilton County Public Health educates, serves, and protects our community for a healthier future.

VISION

Healthy choices. Healthy lives. Healthy communities.

SERVICE AREA

Hamilton County Public Health serves nearly all communities within Hamilton County, Ohio, with the exceptions of Cincinnati, Norwood and Springdale.

ABOUT HCPH

DISTRICT ADVISORY COUNCIL

District Advisory Council (DAC) members select the members of the Hamilton County Board of Health, make recommendations to the Board of Health and authorize city contractual agreements. DAC members include presidents of township boards of trustees, village mayors and the president of the Hamilton County Board of County Commissioners. Members are required by law to meet annually in March.

Tony Rosiello
Chair

Dee Stone
Secretary

BOARD OF HEALTH

The Board of Health is the governing body of Hamilton County Public Health. It has the authority to adopt rules and regulations which have the same status as law, enact policies within HCPH's jurisdiction, and hire a health commissioner. Meetings are held at the HCPH office on the second Monday of each month at 4 p.m.

Dan Meloy
President

Eric Knapp
Board Member

Dr. Elizabeth Kelly
Vice President

Max Miller
Board Member

Tracey A. Puthoff, Esq.
Board Member

ADDITIONAL DISTRICT STAFF

Dr. Stephen Feagins
Medical Director

Nee Fong Chin
Chief Assistant Prosecuting Attorney

ABOUT HCPH

HEALTH COMMISSIONER AND ADMINISTRATION

Greg Kesterman

Health Commissioner

Craig Davidson

Assistant Health Commissioner,
Environmental Health Services

Jackie Lindner

Assistant Health Commissioner,
Community Health Services

Allison Babka

Public Information Officer

Ed Moser

Information Technology Manager

Rebecca Stowe

Performance Management and Grants
Coordinator

Stephanie Taylor

Human Resources Officer

Greg Varner

Finance Officer

AGENCY DIVISION LEADERS

Anne Arble

Director, Epidemiology and Assessment

Denise Comeau

Supervisor, Customer Service

Chuck DeJonckheere

Director, Waste Management

Felicia Erwin

Director, Water Quality

Jeremy Hessel

Director, Environmental Health

Christa Hyson

Director, Emergency Preparedness

Mary Ellen Knaebel

Director, Health Promotion and Education

Sean Moore

Director, Plumbing

Darci Smith

Director, Overdose Prevention

Martha Walter

Director, Community Services and Disease
Prevention

Eva Whitehead

Director, Nursing and Clinical Services

CONTACT HCPH

WEBSITE: HCPH.ORG

SOCIAL MEDIA

Account: @HamCoHealth
Platforms: Facebook, Instagram, X/Twitter, LinkedIn

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The 2025 annual report was prepared by HCPH's communications team in January 2026. For more information, email allison.babka@hamiltoncountyohio.gov.