

# PORTAGE COUNTY COMBINED GENERAL HEALTH DISTRICT

## 2024

## Annual Report

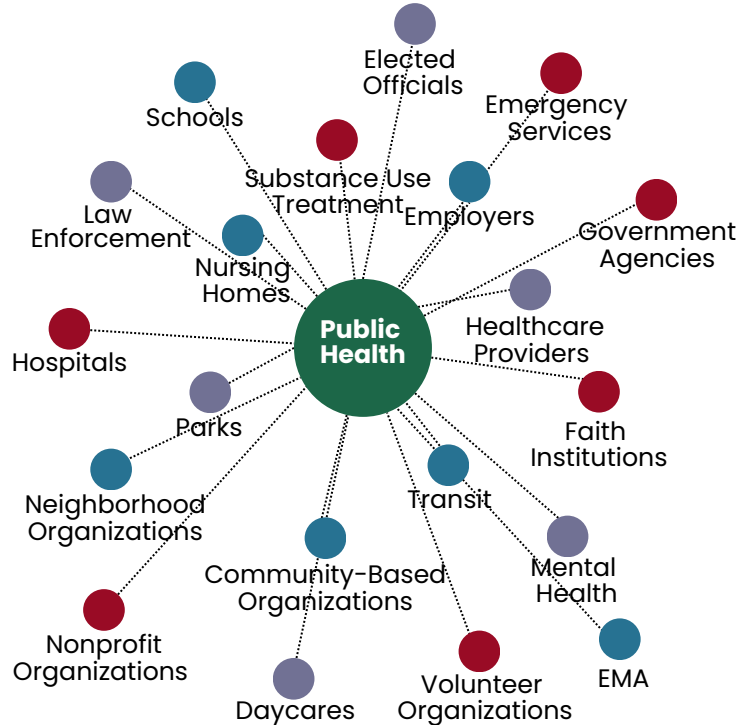


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[www.portagehealth.net](http://www.portagehealth.net)



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## Our Mission

To **promote** public health, **prevent** disease, and **protect** the environment, utilizing leadership and partnership to empower individuals and communities to achieve optimal health.

## Our Vision

Healthy People.  
Healthy Environments.  
Healthy Communities.

## Our Core Values



Accountability



Dedication



Innovation



Communication



Ethics

## Who We Serve

Serving the **Townships** of:

- Atwater
- Brimfield
- Charlestown
- Deerfield
- Edinburg
- Franklin
- Freedom
- Hiram
- Mantua
- Nelson
- Palmyra
- Paris
- Randolph
- Ravenna
- Rootstown
- Shalersville
- Suffield
- Windham

Serving the **Villages** of:

- Garrettsville
- Hiram
- Mantua
- Mogadore
- Sugar Bush Knolls
- Windham

Serving the **Cities** of:

- Aurora
- Ravenna
- Streetsboro

# BOARD OF HEALTH

## Board Members:

Lucy Ribelin, Ravenna City, President

James Bierlair, Vice President

Amy Everett, Member

Charles Delaney, Member

Brock Kertoy, Member

Diana Clark, Member

Dr. Howard Minott, Aurora City (January - May)

Dr. Philip Keyser, Aurora City (November - December)

Linda Grimm, Streetsboro City

*The Board of Health meets on the 3rd  
Tuesday of each month at the  
Portage County Health District in the  
Basement Conference Room.*

## ● Board of Health Duties:

As established by Ohio law, our eight-member Board of Health functions as a policy, governance, advisory, and regulatory board and provides oversight of major financial and programmatic decisions.

The Board of Health provides oversight for the health of the public, the prevention or restriction of disease, and the abatement of nuisances.

The Board of Health members are appointed by elected officials who serve on the District Advisory Council or by the city they represent.

# HEALTH COMMISSIONERS REPORT

It is with great pride that I present the 2024 Annual Report for the Portage County Combined General Health District, highlighting our organizational initiatives, accomplishments, and the impact we've had on the health and well-being of our community.

Thanks to the collaborative efforts of our team, we have made significant strides in enhancing the health outcomes and overall quality of life for individuals and families across Portage County. Two of our key achievements in 2024 were the completion of the 2024-2026 Strategic Plan and the submission for national public health reaccreditation, both are critical steps in strengthening our ability to provide and sustain high-quality public health services.

Our staff of dedicated public health professionals has demonstrated unwavering commitment to making Portage County a safer and healthier place to live, work, and play. This dedication is evident in initiatives such as the PCHD Pop-up Food Pantry, the use of data visualization tools and story maps to enhance data accessibility and drive decision-making, and the successful completion of the second year of our current three-year Community Health Improvement Plan.

While we take pride in our past accomplishments, we also acknowledge the ongoing challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. As we look to the future, the Portage County Health District will continue to adapt, innovate, and collaborate to meet the changing needs of our community and address any unforeseen challenges.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to our dedicated staff, the Board of Health, township trustees, our community partners, MRC volunteers, and stakeholders for their support and commitment to public health. Together, we have achieved remarkable progress, and I am confident that, through continued collaboration, we will build a healthier and more resilient Portage County.

Becky Lehman, MPH, MPA, CHES  
Health Commissioner

# A Year in Review

The staff of the Portage County Combined General Health District dedicated themselves this year to improving the health and well-being of Portage County's residents. In this year's report, we aim to showcase not just the individual achievements of our programs, but also how they connected the dots and worked together to deliver the highest quality public health services.

Our interconnectedness, collaboration, and comprehensive approach to programs and services are illustrated throughout the 2024 Annual Report.

For a complete overview of our programs and services, please visit our website at [www.portagehealth.net](http://www.portagehealth.net).



# FINANCIALS

## Revenue/Resources

Grants/Intergovernmental	\$2,784,873
Health Levy	\$1,177,194
Licenses, Permits, Registrations, Fees	\$1,004,343
Contractual Services	\$352,945
Nursing Fees	\$47,824
Investment Earnings/Interest	\$119,091
Miscellaneous	\$62,236
Special Assessments	\$672
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$5,549,178</b>

## Expenses

Personnel	\$3,847,217
Contracts	\$1,059,879
Materials & Supplies	\$202,823
Capital Outlay	\$46,474
*Mortgage	\$200,077
Tax Assessment	\$34,269
Other	\$60,045
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$5,450,784</b>

*\*PCHD paid an additional \$100,176.59 toward the mortgage principal in 2024.*



The Finance Division plays a critical role in ensuring the financial sustainability and success of public health programs and services, ultimately contributing to the well-being and health outcomes of the community.



# ADMINISTRATION

## 2024 WORKFORCE

49 Employees:

- 44 full-time
- 4 part-time
- 1 seasonal

24 Public Health Interns

### Additional Staff:

Contracts:

- 3 Public Consulting Group
- 2 KSU GIS Students
- 1 MRC Team Leader  
*Above contracted staff were paid through grant funds.*
- 1 Medical Director



The Administration Division plays an integral role in the effective management of the health district, encompassing strategic planning, operations oversight, human resource management, and community engagement.

4.5

I feel satisfied with my job at PCHD.

91%

Employees feel they have opportunities for professional growth and development.

*Results are based on a 5-star rating scale and reflect the percentage of employees who responded through the 2025 PCHD Pulse Survey.*

4.6

I would recommend PCHD as a great place to work.

97%

Employees plan to continue working at PCHD 2 years from now.

## STAFF TRAININGS:

- Sextortion
- Trauma Informed Care
- Employee Safety
- Cybersecurity
- HIPAA
- Essentials in Leadership (Leadership Team)
- LEAN Mastery (QI Team)
- Skillsoft (online trainings available to all staff)

## MILESTONES:

- Revised Personnel Manual
- 79.59% Employee Retention Rate  
(increase of 10.2% from 2023)

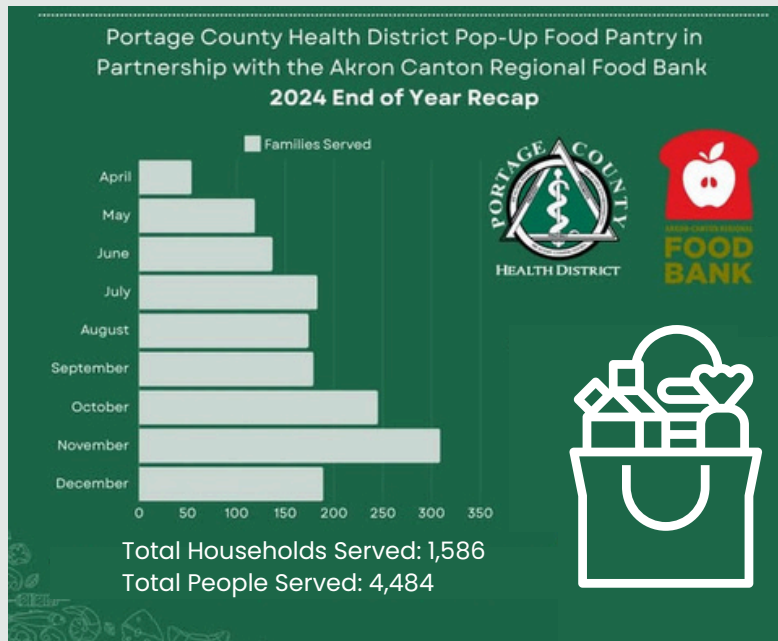
# POP-UP FOOD PANTRY

PCHD is proud to partner with the Akron Canton Regional Food Bank to host monthly pop-up food pantries every first Thursday at the Portage County Health District.

As the largest pop-up food pantry across 8 counties, we've also been joined by ten additional community partners to enhance our efforts at these events. By connecting the dots between local resources and those in need, we ensure that support reaches as many people as possible.

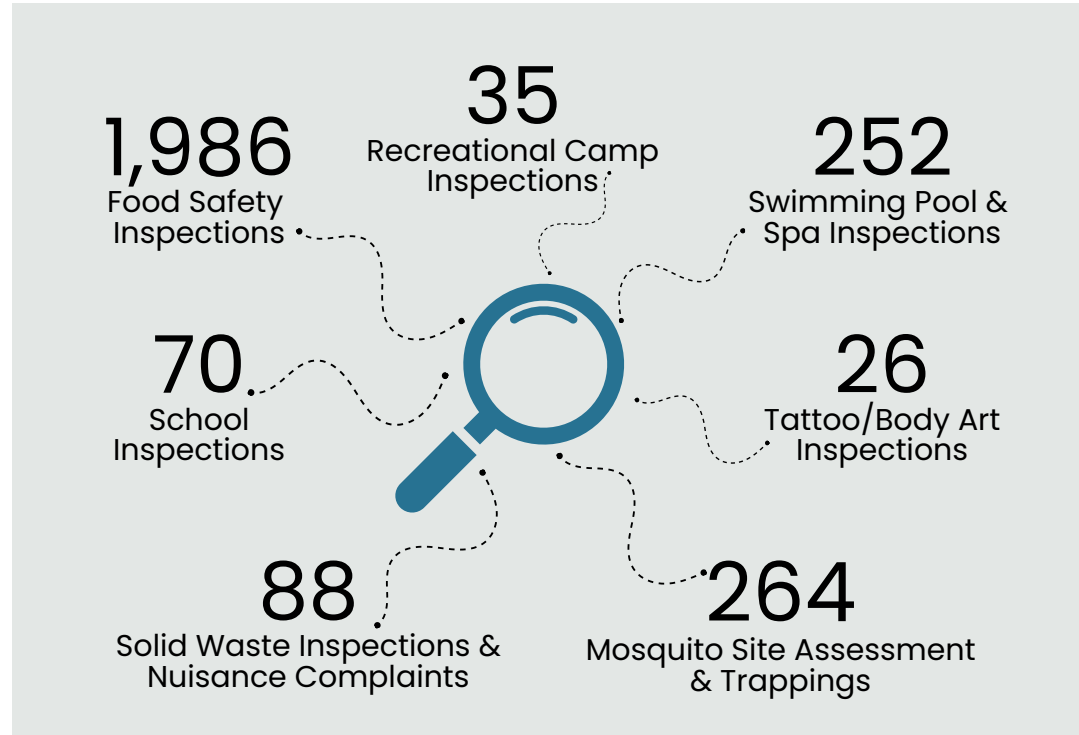
Any leftover food is donated to the Center of Hope, benefiting even more individuals.

This collaboration and the expansion of services have greatly strengthened our ability to support the health and well-being of our community.



# ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

The Environmental Health Division plays a significant role in safeguarding public health by addressing various environmental factors that impact Portage County residents' well-being; including safe food and water, sanitation, waste disposal, and the promotion of safe and healthy environmental conditions.



# WATER QUALITY PROGRAMS

## Home Sewage Treatment Systems

398 Installation Permits  
234 Site & Soil Evaluations  
625 Inspections  
49 Notice of Intent

## Chemical & Bacterial Water Sampling

183 Water Samples  
120 Field Inspections  
94 Site Evaluations

## Waste Water Nuisances

199 Inspections/Consults  
146 Data Collection/  
File Review/Reports

In 2024, PCHD was awarded \$150,000 by the Ohio EPA to assist low to moderate income homeowners in repairing or replacing malfunctioning or prohibited household sewage treatment systems through the Water Pollution Control Loan Fund (WPCLF) program.

Since 2016, PCHD has been successful in securing Ohio EPA WPCLF funds, totaling \$1,700,000 (plus \$115,000 in H2O funds) in support for septic system repair and replacement in Portage County. This funding aligns with our ongoing efforts to enhance community health and well-being, improving the quality of life for families in Portage County.

## Plumbing Program

493 Residential Inspections  
100 Commercial Inspections  
14 Clearwater Inspections  
48 Reinspections

## Stormwater Program

379 Illicit Discharge & Verification Inspections  
210 Dry Weather Screenings  
144 Illicit Discharge Detection Elimination Inspect. & Surface Water Sampling

## Semi-Public Commercial Wastewater

582 Inspections & Consultations

## Point-of-sale

265 Inspections

# ONLINE RECORD DATABASE

## EASY ACCESS TO SEWAGE TREATMENT SYSTEM INFO

PCHD has partnered with Strategic Solutions to scan over 20,000 sewage treatment system records. These records are now available in an online database, "Septic System Records," on PCHD's website. This allows homeowners, buyers, sellers, contractors, and others to search for sewage treatment system information related to properties in Portage County.

You can search by:

- Parcel Number
- Street Number
- Street Name
- Township

Once you find the property, you can access scanned documents:

- Sewage Treatment System Permits
- Pumping Reports
- Maintenance Inspection Reports
- Property Transfer Reports
- PCHD Inspections



Scan me

This online tool helps the public access important information about a property's sewage treatment system, including its history and last service date (like septic tank pumping). For added convenience, the database is now linked to the Portage County Auditor's website, where you can also find septic information on property summary pages.

*Coming soon: Private Water Systems will be available for public viewing.*



# COMMUNITY HEALTH

## INJURY PREVENTION



116

Convertible/  
Booster Seats  
Distributed



49

Cribs For Kids/  
Pack n' Plays  
Distributed



400

Bike Helmets  
Distributed

## HARM REDUCTION



1,498

Project DAWN  
(Narcan) Kits  
Distributed



750,983

People Reached with  
Traffic Safety  
Messaging



1,038

Participants in  
SAIL (Stay Active &  
Independent for Life-  
Falls Prevention)



32

Comprehensive  
Sexuality Education  
Sessions

The Community Health Division engages in proactive community health promotion and education through the development and delivery of comprehensive outreach programs tailored to the needs of Portage County residents. Additionally, the Community Health Division is responsible for the the Women, Infants, and Children program, public health nursing, emergency preparedness, and public health accreditation efforts to advance the health and resilience of Portage County residents.



# WOMEN, INFANTS, & CHILDREN



1,831  
Average Monthly  
Caseload



2,699  
Certifications/  
Recertifications



5,419  
Midcertifications  
(Nutrition Education &  
High Risk Follow-up)

The Women, Infants, & Children (WIC) program, funded by an Ohio Department of Health grant, offers nutrition education and supplemental foods to women, infants, and children. It provides access to nutritious foods, breastfeeding support, and educational resources while connecting families to additional local services.

WIC is available to income-eligible pregnant, breastfeeding, and postpartum women, as well as infants and children up to age 5.

PCHD administers WIC services in Ravenna and Lisbon (Columbiana County).

9,678

Breastfeeding  
Education & Support



76.6%

Average Breastfeeding  
Initiation Rate

***The Portage County WIC program is now a partner of the OhioHealth Mothers' Milk Bank!***

***Portage County WIC is a new milk drop site for pre-screened donated human milk. Donated milk is distributed to the most vulnerable infants in Ohio and across the country.***

# NURSING PROGRAMS

## IMMUNIZATIONS

1,273

Child & Adult  
Immunizations



585

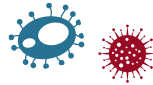
Flu & COVID-19 Shots  
(27 Community Clinics)



## COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

2,473

Communicable Disease  
Investigations



### Top 10 Communicable Diseases

Illnesses	Cases
COVID-19	2259
Chlamydia	285
Influenza Hospitalization	74
Gonorrhea	70
Chronic Hepatitis C	50
Campylobacteriosis	23
Salmonella	23
CPO	22
Syphilis (all stages)	18
Lyme Disease	17

## NURSING PROGRAMS

142

Animal Bites/  
Rabies Exposures



438

Complex Medical  
Help Clients



Public Health Nurses serve as advocates and educators working collaboratively with individuals, families, communities, and healthcare providers to protect and promote the health of the residents of Portage County. Their commitment to population-based services, enabling services, and education plays a part in improving health outcomes and enhancing the quality of life for the community.



# EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS & MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS



**65**

Trainings/Classes  
Provided



**177**

People Trained  
in CPR, Bloodborne Pathogens,  
Psychological First Aid, &  
Community Reception Centers



**477**

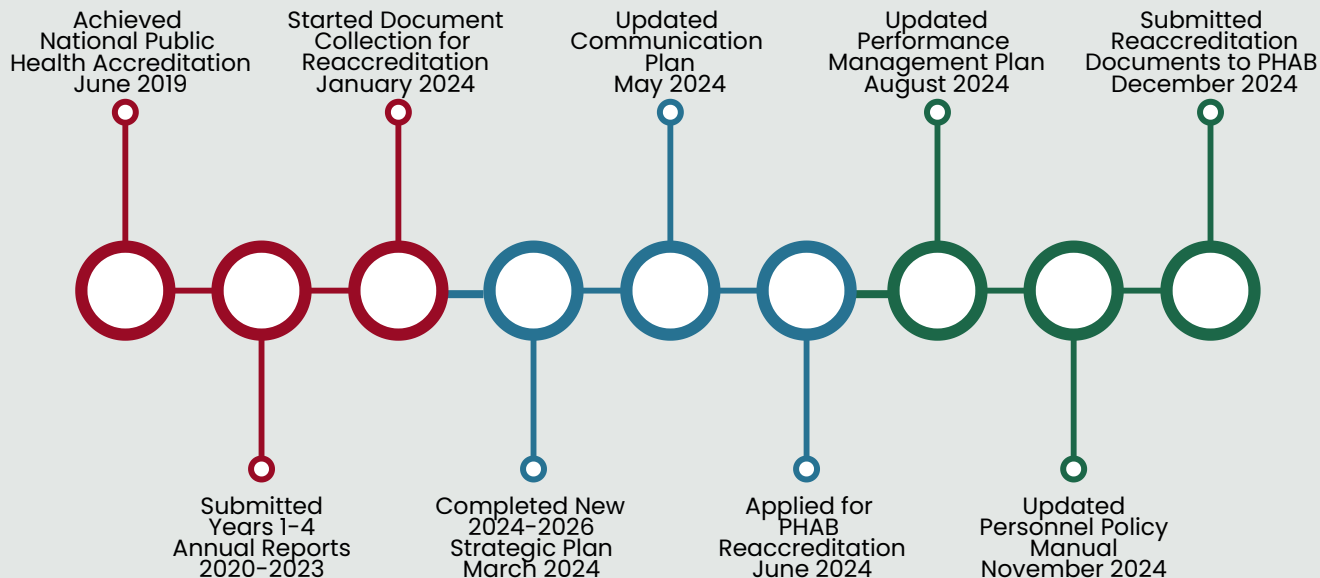
MRC Volunteer Hours  
at Pop-up Food Pantry

Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) is a grant-funded program that builds upon existing systems and partnerships to create a more resilient community, one that is prepared to handle and quickly recover from threats and emergencies impacting public health. By making the connection between resources and those in need, PHEP ensures a seamless response in times of crisis. PCHD is also responsible for the coordination and management of the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC), a volunteer group of both medical and nonmedical professionals who support local public health and emergency medical services during emergency and non-emergency events.

Through NACCHO grant funding, PCHD has continued offering its training programs, which include courses on American Heart Association CPR, Bloodborne Pathogens, and Psychological First Aid.

# PUBLIC HEALTH ACCREDITATION

As part of our ongoing commitment to public health excellence, PCHD has worked diligently to ensure that our services continue to meet the high standards set by the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB). Accreditation demonstrates our commitment to improving the quality of health services, community engagement, and the overall health and well-being of the populations we serve.





# Awarded National Accreditation for Public Health Excellence!



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