



HEALTH DISTRICT



FIRST QUARTER REPORT 2026

999 East Main Street * Ravenna * Ohio * 44266
330-296-9919 * www.portagehealth.net

Portage County Combined General Health District Employees

Administration

Becky Lehman, MPH, MPA, CHES, Health Commissioner
Dr. Mark Arredondo, MD, Medical Director
Sarah Meduri, BSPH, SHRM-CP, PSHRA- CP, PIO, Administrator
Christina M. Jewell, Administrative Assistant
Olivia Card, MA, Epidemiologist
Sarah Power, Marketing Coordinator

Finance

Branden Burns, MBA, Director of Finance
Lisa Miley, Grants Fiscal Manager
Maria Gill, Account Clerk
Julia Sykes, AAS, Account Clerk

Community Health

Amy Cooper, BSND, RD, LD, Director of Community Health
Joshua Sexton, BSPH, Accreditation Coordinator
Kimberly Plough, MEd, CHES, Health Educator
Kylee McCracken, BS, Health Educator
Rachel Belvin, BSPH, Health Educator
Robert Walker, BA, Public Health Emergency Preparedness Coordinator
Kirsten Orr, BSN, RN, Public Health Nurse
Morgan Cole, MHHS, BSN, RN, Public Health Nurse
Philesia Condor, Clerk
Danielle Steighner, RD, LDN, CLS, WIC Supervisor
Rachael Stratton, BA, CLC, Breastfeeding Peer Helper & Clinic Assistant
Briana Robison, MS, MPH, RD, LDN Health Professional 2
Cynthia Hilbish, RDN, LD, CLC, WIC Supervisor
Lindy Goist, BSAS, RD, LD, CLC, CLS, Health Professional 3
Amy Hall, MS, RD, LD, Health Professional 2
Renee Howe, Clinic Assistant
Victoria Caddell, Clinic Assistant
Julie Seifert, BHE, CLC, CLS Health Professional 3
Abbie Fitch, BSAS, RD, LD, Health Professional 2
Anita Mackey, Clinic Assistant
Amanda Casto, Clinic Assistant
Melissa Colella, BS, Peer Helper
Amelia Donovan, Clinic Assistant

Environmental Health

Justin Rechichar, MPH, MHHS, REHS, Director of Environmental Health
William Duck, BA, REHS, Environmental Supervisor
Natalie Menke, BA, REHS, Environmental Supervisor
Emily Speck, BS, Registered Environmental Health Specialist, GIS Coordinator
Leah Luli, MPH, Registered Environmental Health Specialist
Samantha Mellott, BSPH, Registered Environmental Health Specialist
Jim Meyer, BS, AA, Registered Environmental Health Specialist
Nicole Lipchik MPH, Registered Environmental Health Specialist
Cassie Anthony, MSSR, Environmental Health Specialist in Training
Seth Nolte, BS, Environmental Health Specialist in Training
Brandon Santiago, BASc, EHSIT, Environmental Health Specialist in Training
Aaron Belknap, Plumbing Inspector
Debbie Wine, Environmental Health Clerk
Veronica Victoria, Environmental Health Clerk

*Portage County Combined General Health District (PCCGHD) provides comprehensive public health services throughout Portage County (*excluding Kent City).*

**PCCGHD does provide Private Water and Septic System Evaluations by contract in Kent City. PCCGHD also provides WIC Services, Cribs for Kids Program, Child Fatality Review, Complex Medical Help Program and Project DAWN Program to Kent City.*



ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE



The Administration and Finance Divisions continuously strive to support and ensure the Health District is meeting the 10 Essential Services of Public Health. This is achieved through public health workforce planning, workforce development, financial and strategic planning.

The Portage County Health District, in partnership with the Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank, organizes monthly pop-up food pantries on the **first Thursday** of each month from **1:00 PM to 3:00 PM** at the Portage County Health District, located at 999 East Main Street, Ravenna, Ohio.

The pantry serves as a public health initiative and emergency preparedness exercise, advancing health equity and access to essential resources. Our pop-up pantry is the **largest pop-up pantry across eight counties**.

The program also provides vital public health services on-site, including vaccinations, WIC support, and community partners onsite, strengthening community resilience and preparedness.



599 Families Served
First Quarter

2,936 Families Served
in 2025



On March 18, the Portage County Health District hosted the annual District Advisory Council (DAC) Meeting, bringing together Township Trustees, mayors, elected officials, Board of Health members, and staff to reflect on 2025 accomplishments and discuss the future of public health in our community.



Find Food Resources Easily with Our New Dashboard!

Helping Portage County residents access nutritious food options.

Scan to Find Food Near You



Introducing the Food Resource Dashboard

- Find Food Help Near You!
- Search food pantries, farmers markets, WIC & SNAP.
- View locations on an interactive map with contact info.
- Filter by day to see what's open today!



1 in 7

U.S. residents are at risk of hunger



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ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

The Environmental Health Division focuses on prevention of disease through sanitation, safe food and water, proper disposal of waste, and promoting safe and healthy environmental conditions throughout Portage County.

WATER QUALITY PROGRAMS



522

Food Safety Inspections



0

Tattoo/Body Art Inspections



5 SW

Solid Waste Inspections & Nuisance Complaints



1

Camp Inspections



40

School Inspections



38

Swimming Pool & Spa Inspections



0

Mosquito Site Assessment and Trappings

Home Sewage Treatment Systems



33 HSTS Permits Issued

45 HSTS Rough/Final Inspections

38 O+M Inspections



Private Water Systems

36 PWS Permits Issued

36 PWS Field Inspections

30 PWS Bacterial Water Sample Requests



Waste Water Nuisances

2 inspections/Consults



Plumbing Program

82 Residential Inspections

6 Commercial Inspections

1 Clearwater Inspections



Stormwater Program

14 Illicit Discharges Identified

10 Illicit Discharges Eliminated



Semi-Public Commercial Wastewater

38 Inspections

0 Consultations



Point of Sale Program

9 Inspections/Consultation/File Review



2

New Data Visuals Implemented

+

261

STS Files Updated to GIS Map

PORTAGE COUNTY MOSQUITO AND TICK SURVEILLANCE DASHBOARDS

Mosquito Surveillance



PCHD traps for mosquitos throughout Portage County, except in the city of Kent. Specimens are sent to ODH to test for West Nile Virus. PCHD uses a GIS dashboard to show where the positive locations are for mosquitos who have tested positive for West Nile Virus.

Tick Surveillance



PCHD uses data from the Ohio Disease Reporting System (ODRS), ArcGIS Living Atlas iNaturalist observations, and Portage Tick Surveillance Form that are filled out using our signage posted at locations throughout Portage Parks. PCHD tracks tick exposures and locations of where ticks have been found.

STANDING WATER LEFT ALONE...



Potential mosquito habitats
in and around your home

KEEPS MOSQUITOES CLOSE TO HOME

The best way to protect against mosquitoes is to eliminate mosquito breeding sites where you live. Empty all sources of standing water around your home.



How to Remove a Tick

- 1 Use fine-tipped tweezers to grasp the tick as close to the skin's surface as possible.
- 2 Pull upward with steady, even pressure to remove the tick. Avoid twisting or jerking.
- 3 Clean the bite area and your hands with rubbing alcohol, iodine scrub, or soap and water.

Notes:

- Remove the tick as soon as possible.
- If tick mouth parts remain in the skin, leave them alone. In most cases, they will fall out in a few days.
- Don't use nail polish, petroleum jelly, or a hot match to make the tick detach.
- If you develop a fever or rash within several weeks of removing a tick, see your doctor. Be sure to tell the doctor about your recent tick bite, when the bite occurred, and where you most likely acquired the tick.

COMMUNITY HEALTH

The Community Health Division strives to help bridge the gap between Portage County residents and health care providers, social service agencies, community organizations, etc. in the provision of community health services such as immunizations, injury prevention programming, harm reduction programming, communicable disease investigations, environmental health education, and emergency preparedness.

INJURY PREVENTION



21

Convertible/Booster Seats Distributed



6

Cribs For Kids/
Pack n' Plays Distributed



529

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



313

Project DAWN (Narcan) Kits Distributed



199

People Trained in Project DAWN



7

Prevention, Retention, Contingency (PRC) Family Support Milestones Completed

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE



140

Child & Adult Immunizations



193

Communicable Disease Investigations

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS & SERVICES



186

monthly average
Complex Medical Help Clients



35

Animal Bites/Rabies Exposures



10

Emergency Preparedness Trainings & Events

WOMEN, INFANTS, & CHILDREN (WIC)

The Women, Infants, & Children (WIC) program is an Ohio Department of Health grant funded program that provides nutrition education & supplemental food program for women, infants, and children. The program provides highly nutritious foods, breastfeeding support, nutrition education, and connects families with other area resources.

WIC serves income eligible pregnant, breastfeeding and postpartum women, infants, and children to age 5.

PCHD administers WIC services in Portage and Columbiana County.



1,932

Participants Served
in Portage County WIC



25

Community Outreach &
Education Programs



1,600

Participants Served
in Columbiana County WIC



4

Nutrition Education
Programs

BREASTFEEDING BENEFITS:

Breastfeeding Mothers

- Reduces their risk for:
- Ovarian cancer
 - Breast cancer
 - Type 2 diabetes

Breastfed Infants

- Have a reduced risk of:
- SIDS
 - Lower respiratory infections
 - Type 2 diabetes
 - Asthma
 - Obesity

Workforce & Environmental

- Infants have less illness so mothers miss less work
- Less trash & plastic waste compared to formula & bottle supplies



1,295
Breastfeeding
Education & Support



77.26%
Breastfeeding
Initiation Rate

WIC supports all mothers and babies, regardless of their feeding decision. Staff are trained to promote and protect breastfeeding as the optimal feeding method for all infants. WIC staff provide the necessary resources and referrals to assist mother and baby in achieving their breastfeeding goals.



THRIVE TOGETHER FARMERS' MARKET

Every Tuesday June 16- September 1
3-6 pm

Portage County Health District Front Lawn
999 E Main St, Ravenna

Market Highlights Include:

- Food demonstrations and taste testing
- Blood pressure screenings
- WIC, Senior FMNP coupons, and SNAP accepted
- Locally grown fruits and vegetables
- Healthy foods and cottage goods
- Yoga on the lawn



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COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2025-2028 PRIORITIES



Chronic
Disease



Mental Health &
Substance
Misuse



Population Health
& Safety



Cross Cutting Factors
Equitable Access & Sustainability
of Community Resources

- Transportation
- Housing
- Healthy Foods
- Specialized Care Providers
- Insurance Access

*Portage County
Community Health Assessment &
Improvement Plan
are available on our website:
portagehealth.net*

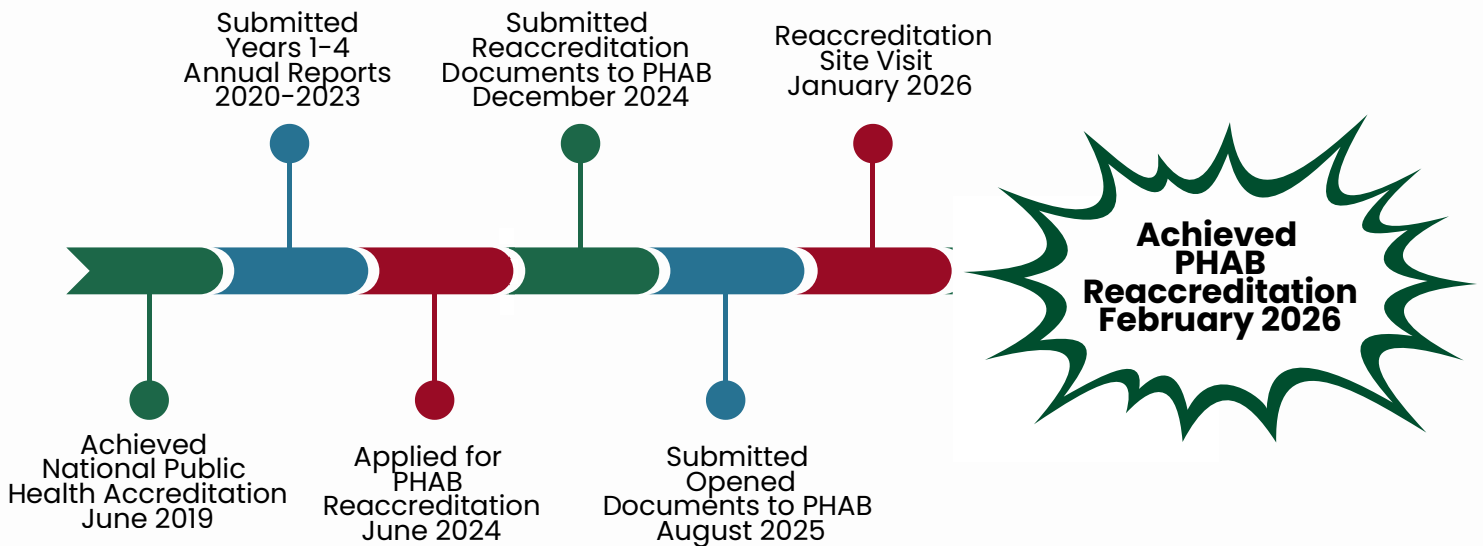
Portage County Health District partnered University Hospitals, Mental Health & Recovery Board of Portage County, and Kent City Health Department along side with community organizations and residents to assess the health of Portage County through the Community Health Assessment (CHA). Together, we collected and analyzed local data, listened to community voices, and identified both challenges and strengths.

Building on this collaborative work, we developed the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), which outlines priority areas for the next three years, reflecting the issues that matter most to our community and where we can make the greatest impact together.

PUBLIC HEALTH ACCREDITATION

Public health accreditation measures a health district's performance against a set of nationally recognized, practice-focused and evidence-based standards. It focuses on the continual development, revision, and distribution of public health standards.

Accreditation Timeline:



Overall, the department is characterized by passionate, dedicated staff and a strong sense of trust within the community it serves. The department maintains positive, collaborative relationships with community partners and the Board of Health, which supports effective problem-solving and shared goals. The team demonstrates a willingness to embrace challenges, adapt as needed, and remain committed to continuous improvement in service to the community.

--PHAB Site Visit Report

Awarded National Accreditation for Public Health Excellence!

