



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

**Mercer County  
Health Department**

# ANNUAL REPORT

## FY 2022 & 2023

DECEMBER 1, 2021 -  
NOVEMBER 30, 2023

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305 NW Seventh St.

Aledo, IL 61231

Monday - Thursday

8:00 am - 5:00 pm or by  
appointment





# MISSION

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Our mission at Mercer County Health Department is promoting health and well-being, preventing and managing disease, and protecting the community through education, intervention, and inspection management.

# VALUES

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Our work will be guided by the following beliefs and commitment to:

**Diversity and Inclusion** - we respect people, value diversity, and seek to include all.

**Integrity** - we value honesty and strong moral principles when serving our clients.

**Quality** - we commit to striving for excellence in service to the public of Mercer County by continually evaluating and educating ourselves to best practices and community need.

# VISION

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To promote a community in which all people achieve their full potential for health and well-being across the lifespan. We work to be trusted by clients, a valued partner in the community, and creators of positive outcomes.





# Mercer County Board of Health

The Mercer County Board of Health meets the third Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm at the Mercer County Health Department.

## Officers:

Dr. Crystal Simpson, D.D.S ..... President  
Myron Higgins ..... Vice President  
Larry Rhodenbaugh ..... Secretary

## Members at Large:

Tim Arbet, O.D.  
Elaine Wheeler  
Kristin Wurzburger, MD



# OPERATING SUMMARY

## YEAR ENDING NOVEMBER 30, 2022 (AUDITED)

### Revenue

Property Taxes	\$173,929.95
State & Federal Grants & Reimbursements	\$1,005,405.40
Environmental and Immunization Fees	\$267,765.12
Donations, Contracts & Other Reimbursements	\$93,461.62

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<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$1,540,562.25</b>
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### Expenditures

Personnel Wages & Benefits	\$1,128,389.98
Purchased Services	\$113,082.11
Travel & Education	\$16,064.01
Fuel	\$2,163.80
Supplies	\$126,170.82
Capital/Equipment/Principal	\$27,325.81
Misc./Other Exp	\$1,350.00

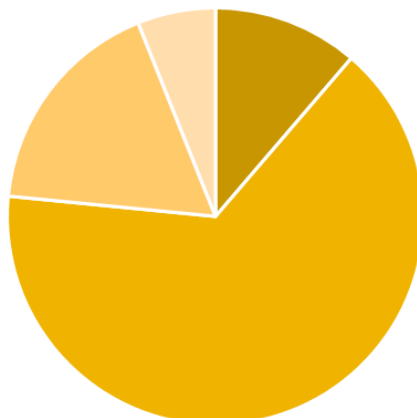
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<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$1,414,546.53</b>
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### Other Financial Uses

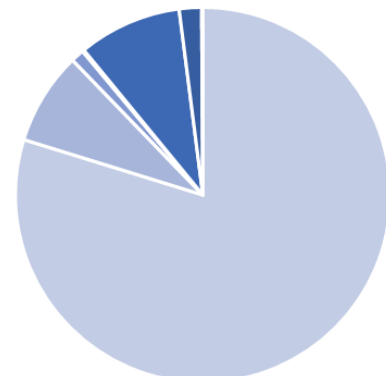
Excess <deficiency> of revenue over Expenditures	\$126,015.72
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2022 Revenue



■ Property Taxes ■ State/Fed Grants ■ Fees ■ Donations/Other

2022 Expenses



■ Personnel ■ Purchased Svc ■ Travel/Edu ■ Fuel  
■ Supplies ■ Cap/Equip/Princ ■ Misc



# OPERATING SUMMARY

## YEAR ENDING NOVEMBER 30, 2023 (UNAUDITED)

### Revenue

Property Taxes	\$181,215.91
State & Federal Grants & Reimbursements	\$785,647.48
Environmental and Immunization Fees	\$327,297.47
American Rescue PA (ARPA)	\$199,000.00
Donations, Contracts & Other Reimbursements	\$56,525.19

**TOTAL REVENUE** **\$1,549,686.05**

### Expenditures

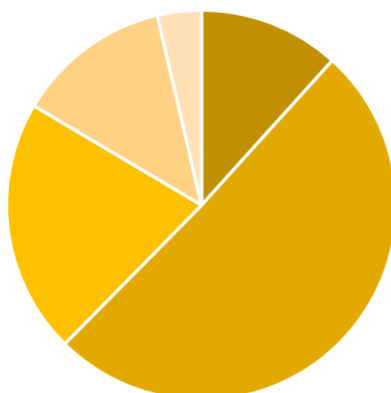
Personnel Wages & Benefits	\$959,202.60
Purchased Services	\$159,576.30
Travel & Education	\$8,393.75
Fuel	\$2,089.93
Supplies	\$181,396.24
Capital/Equipment/Principal	\$43,488.14
Misc./Other Exp	\$1,431.60
ICRMT Insurance 2021, 2022, 2023	\$48,312.86

**TOTAL EXPENDITURES** **\$1,403,891.42**

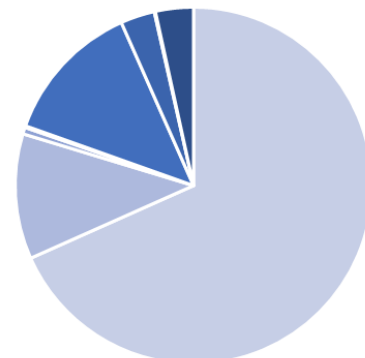
### Other Financial Uses

Excess <deficiency> of revenue over Expenditures **\$145,794.63**

2023 Revenues



2023 Expenses



■ Property Taxes ■ State/Federal Grants ■ Fees ■ ARPA ■ Donations/Other ■ Personnel ■ Purchased Services ■ Travel/Education ■ Fuel ■ Supplies ■ Capital/Equip/Prin ■ Misc/Other ■ ICRMT Ins

# STAFF

## FULL-TIME

Angie Litterst, BS ..... Administrator (as of January 2023)  
Annette Doonan ..... Program Director, Increasing Well Women Visits  
Ashley Walthall ..... WIC/FCM/Imm Secretary  
Carla Ewing, BA ..... Administrator (through December 2022)  
Christina Monson ..... WIC/FCM/Imm Secretary  
Diana Eggen ..... Business Office Coordinator  
Hannah Garrett, CHES ..... Public Health Educator  
Jenifer Frere ..... MHAP School-Based Case Manager  
Jesse Hoffeditz, BS, MHP ..... MHAP Adult Case Manager  
Krissy Dixon, RN, QMH ..... MHAP Nurse Navigator/ Program Director  
Kyle Lloyd, MS, LEHP ..... Director of Environmental Services  
Megan Bull, BS, MHP ..... MHAP School-Based Case Manager  
Megan Koresko, RN, BSN ..... WIC Coordinator  
Melissa Hajostek, APRN ..... Public Health Nurse Navigator  
Mindy McManus ..... MHAP Care Coordinator  
Peggy Kaufman, LPN ..... Public Health Nurse  
Stephanie Retherford ..... Dental and Billing Coordinator  
Tina Matlick ..... WIC/FCM/Imm and Environmental Secretary  
Todd Walthall ..... PHEP Coordinator  
Wendy Bigham, RN ..... Supervisor, Maternal Child Health; CD Coordinator

## PART-TIME

Diane Dunn ..... Housekeeping  
Drue Griffin, RN ..... Public Health Nurse  
Felicia Bonyngne ..... Breastfeeding Peer Counselor  
Jim Sharp ..... Maintenance  
Peggy Kaufman, LPN ..... Public Health Nurse





# COVID-19 MITIGATION STAFF

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## FULL-TIME

Barbara Bryant, MS Ed .....	Contact Tracing
Katie Hook, RN, BSN .....	Contact Tracing
Mari McCarty .....	Testing
Tori McCullough .....	Contact Tracing

## PART-TIME

Carol Hall-Winbigler, RN .....	Contact Tracing
Hannah Lingle .....	Contact Tracing
Peyton Bizarri .....	Testing
Sheila Brown .....	Contact Tracing



# OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

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## Public Health Emergency Preparedness

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The Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) program plans for all hazards, including receipt and distribution of the Strategic National Stockpile of Pharmaceuticals, emergency response for natural disasters, infectious disease pandemics, terrorism, bioterrorism, communication strategies, volunteer management, shelter management, NIMS compliance, and training and exercise development for disasters. Activities include quarterly call-down drills with health department staff as well as community partners and the completion of appropriate training opportunities and NIMS courses. At least one exercise is held every year in which partners with community emergency response agencies and tests emergency plans in place to identify strengths and areas of improvement.

We have also begun offering 3 in-person presentations to the community, Senior Citizen Scam Prevention, Retail Security Awareness, and Child Care Facility Safety. Our PHEP Coordinator is also certified by ALERRT through Texas State University to present Civilian Response to Active Shooter Events.

The Senior Citizen Scam Prevention program has been presented 3 times with great success.

Our PHEP Coordinator will be presenting the programs to various organizations throughout 2024.

## Medical Reserve Corps

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Medical Reserve Corps is “a national network of local groups of volunteers engaging local communities to strengthen public health, reduce vulnerability, build resilience, and improve preparedness, response and recovery capabilities.” Mercer County MRC is comprised of medical and non-medical volunteers. Volunteers are able to stay engaged throughout the year in a variety of ways; Incident Command System trainings, miscellaneous emergency and disaster trainings, community events, exercises, and other non-emergency events. Several volunteers serve on the Mercer County Local Emergency Planning Committee to enhance planning for chemical transportation emergencies. Others are serving through the Mental Health Action Program assisting the program’s Food Mission and/or conducting spiritual counselling as part of the Spiritual Care Team. Volunteers stand ready for activation for emergency events. Each member is provided an ID badge and t-shirt. Mercer County Medical Reserve Corps is always seeking new applicants to serve the community.



# OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT (CONT.)

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## Emergency Management Agency

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The Mercer County Emergency Management Agency works on prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery activities in the county with a focus on natural disasters, chemical emergencies, and epidemics. Mercer County remains active as a STORM READY community, working closely with the National Weather Service. Bi-annual updates are completed for state approval to the Mercer County Emergency Operations Plan. Additional updates and plan maintenance are part of an ongoing process to the Disaster Recovery Plan, Hazard Mitigation Plan, Communications Plan, Training and Exercise Plan, and Shelter Plan. Partnership continues with Mercer County Medical Reserve Corps for volunteer recruitment, retention, and training. This program also conducts several training and exercise events annually to enhance preparedness and resiliency county-wide. In early 2023, the county contracted Henry County Office of Emergency Management to conduct all Emergency Management Services for Mercer County. Mercer County Health Department has been working to transition grant facilitation from MCHD to Mercer/Henry County officials as seamlessly as possible.

## Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness

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Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness focuses on building LEPC membership, planning and training on chemical emergencies and transportation concerns. Extensive work has been invested in building an active LEPC membership committed to planning and education related to chemical safety and emergencies. Annual anhydrous trainings are a key focus. Under normal circumstances, LEPC meets quarterly with consistent support and membership from up to 20 partners. As this is typically an EMA function, MCHD is working towards transitioning this program along with the EMA program.

# OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

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## Food Service Program

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MCHD inspects for health and safety: restaurants, convenience stores, grocery stores, etc. (any establishment selling prepackaged or preparing and serving food to the public). Educational services on food preparation and proper sanitation techniques are available. Food Safety information is provided monthly in the local newspaper as an outreach service. MCHD works closely with local schools to provide educational materials focusing on the importance of handwashing and prevention of cross-contamination.

FISCAL YEAR	2022	2023
Food Service Licenses Issued	76	80
Food Service Inspections	116	119
Temporary Food Licenses Issued	65	75
Complaints Investigated	1	2
Pre-operational	2	2
Food Classes Taught	5	7
Students	65	102



# OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES (CONT.)

## Private Sewage

MCHD issues required permits and inspects all new and renovated septic systems within the county. Sewer and water inspections for bank loans are completed upon request.

FISCAL YEAR	2022	2023
Private Sewage Permits Issued	32	25
Septic Inspections Completed	32	25
Bank Loan Inspections	9	6
Contractors Registered in County:		
Installers	9	9
Pumpers	6	6

## Water Well Program

MCHD provides water sampling for wells with the county. We approve, issue required permits, inspect, and sample new wells. Water sample bottles are available to the public for a fee. MCHD approves the required plans for sealing abandoned wells located in Mercer County. Non-Community wells are also monitored quarterly or annually depending on classification.

FISCAL YEAR	2022	2023
Water Well Permits Issued	22	21
Water Wells Inspected	22	21
Water Samples Collected	88	71
Abandoned Wells Sealed	2	4

# OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES (CONT.)

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## West Nile Virus Prevention and Surveillance

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The goal of the project is to educate about West Nile Virus and Encephalitis prevention, detection, and treatment. This program is designed to track progression of the virus within the community and enhances existing interventions regarding WNV community education and community surveillance. In addition, surveillance and testing, of both mosquitoes and birds for West Nile Virus from vulnerable areas, was conducted. Mosquito kits and education were created and disseminated to the public. Information was distributed throughout the county, including the MCHD booth at the Mercer County Fair. A public informational tri-fold poster set was displayed throughout the season. In 2022 and 2023, several mosquito batches tested positive for WNV. There were 50+ mosquito batches collected each year. No birds collected tested positive in 2022 or 2023.

## Tick Surveillance

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The goal of the Tick Surveillance Program is to sample the tick population in the county, test the collected ticks for various diseases and educate the community of the hazards. This is a new program in its current form. Tick drags are performed and collected ticks are submitted to the state lab for testing. We have completed the first 2 drags and submitted the ticks to the state. Public information and tick kits were presented at the county fair and seasonal information has been posted on social media. We will restart the dragging process in the spring and early summer.



# OFFICE OF HEALTH PROMOTION

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## Well Woman Program

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The Women's Wellness Planning Grant was implemented in 2020 to address reducing barriers to well-woman prevention visits, screenings, counseling, and immunizations. These visits play a critical role in diagnosing and managing disease, chronic disease, and mental health conditions for the target group of women aged 18-44 years. The grant allowed us to create a stakeholder list, conduct a needs survey, create a resource directory of women's health and screening providers, promote women's health through mail and social media, create and distribute a women's wellness brochure, and assist community members in accessing women's wellness care and reducing barriers to service such as transportation, insurance, and food insecurity. In 2021 MCHD received funding for the implementation phase of 'Increasing Well-Woman Visits' with the grant year 7/01/21 through 6/30/23—a navigation/case management approach utilizing the evidence-based 'Patient Navigation Toolkit' from Boston Medical Center was used. The approach focused on reducing barriers to care and establishing wrap-around services to meet the county's women's wellness needs.

93 women in Mercer County who were behind in their preventative care visits were successfully navigated.

### FISCAL YEAR 2022

Cases Attempted	424
Successfully Navigated	93

The 'Increasing Well-Woman Visits' grant year 7/01/23 through 6/30/25 was awarded again to the MCHD. This assists women with accessing quality, comprehensive preventative care while continuing to utilize the 'Patient Navigation Toolkit' from Boston Medical Center. This approach focuses on reducing barriers to care and establishing a holistic approach to the preventative needs of the women in the county.

### FISCAL YEAR 2023

Cases Attempted	116
Successfully Navigated	34

# OFFICE OF HEALTH PROMOTION (CONT.)

## Breast Cancer Navigation Program

The Breast Cancer Navigation Program identified barriers to receiving care and helped navigate patients through their breast cancer journey, if needed. Women aged 40 and older who were overdue for their annual mammogram were the target population. Patient Navigators assisted with reducing barriers to care such as scheduling assistance, financial assistance, and transportation.

FISCAL YEAR 2022-23	
Cases Attempted	644
Successfully Navigated	124
Barriers Found:	
Care Coordination	98
Insurance/Medical Costs	11
Distress/Behavior	22
Education	14
Logistical	7
Work/School	7

## Dental Program

In 2022 the Dental program educated 472 children in Mercer County by going to the two local schools districts. The target age range was 3 to 12 years old. The mobile dental clinic was held in April and May of 2022 and 151 children at the local schools were seen. We referred 73 children with dental treatment needs to FQHCs in Oquawka and Rock Island. In 2023 the Dental Program was able to educate 626 Mercer County children by going to the local schools. Through the Delta Dental Grant, we purchased 2 mobile dental units and 2 light weight portable dental chairs. The mobile dental clinic was held in March, April, and May of 2023 and saw 122 children at the local schools. We referred 88 children with dental treatment needs to FQHCs in Oquawka and Rock Island.

## Tobacco Enforcement Program

Tobacco Program Coordinator, local law enforcement, and special agent(teenager) conduct county wide compliance checks through the Tobacco Enforcement Program at all tobacco retail locations 3 times annually throughout the county.



# OFFICE OF HEALTH PROMOTION (CONT.)

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## Adolescent Health Program

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The Adolescent Health Program is focused on education and patient navigation. The program works closely with our local school districts to implement age-appropriate education on various health topics – The ones given so far are navigating the transition from pediatric to adult healthcare, nutrition, and healthy habits, good personal hygiene, and healthy social media practices, but the intent is to expand the topics moving forward. Educational flyers are being created to put inside the schools as well with a QR code to fill out if students need navigation services. The program helps to provide scheduling, transportation, and insurance assistance for preventative healthcare appointments. Partnerships have been formed with other MCHD programs, such as the Mental Health Action Program, Immunizations, and Dental programs. In doing so, the programs can assist MCHD clients to be taken care of in every aspect of their health.

The Adolescent Health Program also works closely with our local hospital and clinics to help get adolescents and their families up to date on their preventative health care. Bright Futures Guidance has started to be implemented at the clinics due to this partnership.

The Anticipatory Guidance portion of Bright Futures helps identify barriers to a patient's health and well-being (such as food and housing insecurity, financial hardship, alcohol and drug misuse, violence in the home, etc.) and in return, the clinics can provide the program with a referral to try to assist them and reduce those barriers if possible. However, this part is a work in progress.

### FISCAL YEAR 2023

Educational Reach	1315
Adolescent Well Visits	582

## Tobacco Grant - Smoke Free Illinois Act

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Mercer County Tobacco Program is also responsible for the enforcement of Smoke-Free Illinois Act. Public places are checked for signage and receptacle compliance and the program is also responsible for checking complaints for violation. The program promotes events that highlight SFIA; prevention in schools related to tobacco, juuls, and e-cigarette use; and celebrates Take Down Tobacco Day of Action. MCHD conducted compliance visits on over 250 businesses in the county. 7 letters were sent out with 100% compliance without further warnings. No fines were given during this time.

# OFFICE OF HEALTH PROMOTION (CONT.)

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## Mental Health Action Program

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The Mental Health Action Program (MHAP) provides free navigation and case management services to individuals with a mental health diagnosis and barriers to care, such as: lack of transportation, lack of insurance, housing or food insecurities and financial barriers. The program assists clients with finding a mental health provider for counseling and medication management if needed, and helps ensure that clients can be successful with their recommended treatment plan. Youth has been a focus area for the program, bringing two mental health case managers into the local school districts to provide 1:1 sessions for coping skills/life skills education and screening/referrals and a Licensed Clinical Social Worker for mental health counseling. Suicide prevention programming is completed yearly at Mercer County and Sherrard Junior High and High School, with a goal of identifying and assisting students at the first signs of depression and suicide risk factors. Substance abuse counseling is provided on-site at the Health Department through collaboration with Rock Island County Council on Addictions (RICCA), and MHAP has collaborated with 84 partner agencies to better serve those with mental health illness.

## Emergency Food Pantry

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The Emergency Food Pantry is a volunteer-based mission through partnership with the Loving Hands-Food Ministry from the United Methodist Church in Aledo, IL, Riverbend Food Bank, and MCHD/MHAP. This program has been implemented to fill the gaps in food accessibility for those with financial challenges and to provide referrals to appropriate public aid services such as the local food pantries, SNAP, TANF, Medicaid, etc. A focus has been put on screening individuals who are not established clients, to provide further assistance if needed. Food is provided in the form of 'power packs' which include ingredients to make meals, frozen casseroles, sandwiches, and miscellaneous fresh and non-perishable food. There are also toiletry items and cleaning essentials available to those in need. The pantry underwent minor renovations in 2023: creating a designated room for storage of food and toiletry items, increasing refrigeration space, and installing more shelving.

# OFFICE OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PREVENTION

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## Immunization Program

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MCHD offers immunization services on Wednesdays by appointment. Immunization services are provided for infants, children and adults in need. We continue to work with parents, doctors, schools and the Illinois Department of Public Health in Springfield to ensure children are given the proper immunizations at the appropriate age. The Mercer County Health Department and Genesis Health Group collaborate every year to provide physicals and immunizations onsite at the Mercer schools. The school clinics make it convenient for students and their parents to complete physical and immunization requirements for the following year. Adult Hepatitis B clinics have also been offered on site to organizations who may be at higher risk of disease such as local fire and police departments.

BE WISE - IMMUNIZE

## Tuberculosis Program

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MCHD offers the following services for tuberculosis prevention and treatment: TB Skin Testing. Follow-up on Positive Skin Tests, education and treatment.

## Foreign Travel Program

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Mercer County Health Department provides residents with information on required and recommended immunizations for traveling outside of the United States. Many of the immunizations can be given at the health department although some may need to be referred to foreign travel clinics for vaccines such as typhoid and yellow fever. Residents are given information about precautions they can take to avoid disease and illnesses so they may have a more enjoyable trip. Residents are urged to call as soon as they know their itinerary to ensure that they are fully immunized before departing. Consultation is free of charge.

## Communicable Disease Program

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There are more than 70 reportable diseases or conditions in the State of Illinois. The CD program conducts communicable disease surveillance, investigation, prevention and reporting of infectious diseases as mandated by Illinois State Law.



# OFFICE OF MATERNAL CHILD HEALTH

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## Maternal Child Health Family Case Management Program

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The Family Case Management Program serves all pregnant women, infants, and children who meet eligibility requirements and agree to services. This program assists new mothers and families by providing information and assistance with receiving services vital to family health and safety.

## Vision and Hearing Program

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The vision and hearing program offered by MCHD provides vision and hearing screenings to preschool children in Mercer County. A certified vision technician screens children ages 3-5 years at preschool screenings in two (2) Mercer County school districts. Screenings are also provided at preschools in the area at HeadStart, Time for Tots, Tiger Tales, and the YMCA Preschool. Children who are unable to complete the initial screening are rescreened and, if necessary, are referred to a specialist for follow-up care. MCHD also screens children from age 6 months for vision using a special photo screener called the SPOT Vision Screener, a handheld portable device designed to help users quickly and easily detect vision issues on patients from 6 months through adult.

It can also be used to help screen otherwise difficult patients. This screening can allow for earlier intervention, particularly in children with amblyopia (lazy eye). This machine is used in partnership with other agencies. Approximately 200 children are screened annually.

## High Risk Infant Care

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Infants and children (ages 0-2 years old) are referred to the high risk infant follow up program either through the IDPH Adverse Pregnancy Outcomes Reporting System (APORS) or based on assessments done in the Family Case Management program which determine: that the infant has been diagnosed with a serious medical condition after newborn discharge; when maternal alcohol or drug addiction has been diagnosed; or when child abuse or neglect has been indicated based on investigation by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. The case manager helps link families to pediatric primary care including well child, immunization and specialty visits. Case manager provides referrals to appropriate community resources based on family needs. She works with the parents to educate them about their child's condition and provides regular developmental screenings to make sure child is meeting age appropriate milestones.

# OFFICE OF MATERNAL CHILD HEALTH (CONT.)

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## Lead Case Management

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Capillary lead screening are done upon request or by appointment. Many times the draws are done in conjunction with WIC hemoglobin screenings. Per IDPH's recommendations, a capillary blood level greater than or equal to 5ug/Dl in a child requires follow up with a venous draw. If that result is still elevated, then case management must begin. Case management includes education, home visits, environmental home testing, and follow ups. It is an Illinois requirement that a child has a lead screening done before entering school. Mercer County Health Departments has both a lead case manager and an environmental specialist for lead

FISCAL YEAR	2022	2023
Home Inspections	0	6

## Loving Bottoms Diaper Bank

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In April of 2019 Mercer County Health Department partnered with Loving Bottoms Diaper Bank in Galesburg, IL. Loving Bottoms Diaper Bank provides diapers, pullups, feminine products, and adult diapers free of charge for those in need. Majority of the families we serve are within our WIC program, although that is not a requirement to receive products. From January 1st, 2023 to November 31st, 2023 we distributed over 20,000 diapers to child in our county. Clients are able to receive products every 30 days.

## Fecal Immunochemical Test (FIT)

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FIT screening is a non-invasive screening for colorectal cancer. The clients are able to do to the kit at their own home and then bring it in for testing. Once tested, the nurse is able to provide the client with education and further follow up if the test indicates. We completed this grant on June 30th of 2022.

# OFFICE OF MATERNAL CHILD HEALTH (CONT.)

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## Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program

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WIC is a special supplemental food program for Women, Infants and Children funded by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). WIC provides supplemental foods for those income-eligible who are pregnant, postpartum, or children up to age 5. WIC focuses on healthy eating and nutritional education for families. Families who participate in WIC can also receive referrals for developmental and physical assessments, immunization, breastfeeding counseling, early intervention services, family case management, lead and hemoglobin screenings, and the diaper bank.

## Breastfeeding Peer Counseling

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In keeping with USDA's goal for nutrition, the breastfeeding peer counselor (PC) program was established. The PC program educates perinatal women, their families, and the community to the benefits of breastfeeding and provides ongoing support throughout the breastfeeding period for moms and infants. Our PC works both remotely and in office to better serve everyone.

She does frequent follow ups with those pregnant and breastfeeding to provide ongoing, positive support. Our PC maintains knowledge through frequent education.

## Bright Smiles

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We began providing fluoride varnish through the Bright Smiles program in October of 2023. We previously had provided this service up until the COVID-19 pandemic when we were serving a lower number of clients in house. We are thrilled to be able to provide this service to our clients. Fluoride varnishes can be applied every 3 months. We begin applying with parental permission from the time of first tooth up until 36 months. This service is able to be billed to the client's insurance.