

# JOINT FINANCE COMMITTEE HEARING FISCAL YEAR 2023 BUDGET



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DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH  
Department of Health and Social Services  
February 22, 2022  
Virtual Conducted Via Zoom

Comments available online at <https://dhss.delaware.gov/>

Good Afternoon Senator Paradee, Representative Carson, members of the Joint Finance Committee and members of the public.

I'm Karyl Rattay, Director of the Division of Public Health. With me today are Crystal Webb, Deputy Director, and Michelle Bruner, Chief of Administration.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today and present our accomplishments and Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 Governor's Recommended Budget.

## DIVISION OVERVIEW



- Our **mission:** to protect and promote the health of all people in Delaware
- Our **vision:** healthy people in healthy communities



Delaware Tourism photo



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The Division of Public Health's (DPH) mission is to protect and improve the health of all people in Delaware. Our vision is healthy people in healthy communities. We do this in many ways.

COVID-19 continues to challenge every area of Public Health since March 2020. We now have over 900 dedicated staff who are working night and day to support Delaware residents.

Before reviewing the Governor's Recommended Budget, I will highlight some of our accomplishments over the last year and some challenges that we face moving forward.

## COVID-19 ACCOMPLISHMENTS, 2021



### Overall DPH vaccination efforts and results

As of January 24, 2022, 581,614 Delawareans were fully vaccinated against COVID-19. Of that number, 262,632 had received a booster dose or additional doses and 95,610 were partially vaccinated.



### Overall testing efforts and results

As of January 24, 2022, Delaware had processed 2.9 million total COVID-19 tests representing 979,849 individuals.



### Overall PPE and therapeutic efforts

DPH has dispersed about 7,108 units of various therapeutic medications. 1,685,279 units of testing kits supplies throughout Delaware. 4,577,124 units of PPE (gowns, gloves, face masks, etc.). DPH disbursed 2,996,952 N95 respirators alone.



### Call Center statistics

In 2021, the COVID-19 Call Center and the COVID-19 Vaccine Call Center answered 163,807 calls and 100,418 emails.



### Contact Tracing

>106,980 interviews completed from June 2021 to January 2022

During the December 2021-January 2022 surge, NORC had a record almost 6,000 outbound calls for interviews to contacts and cases to date.



### School Testing

Quidel Corp. and the State of Delaware implemented a COVID-19 K-12 school testing program through a \$15M partnership. Between August 27, 2021 and December 22, 2021, there were 264,201 tests of Delaware K-12 students and staff members.

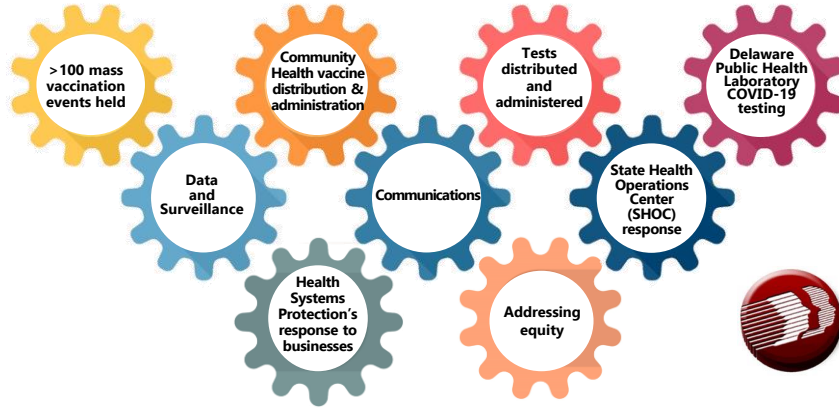


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Delaware has put forth a tremendous effort in mitigating the COVID-19 pandemic. DPH certainly did not do this work alone. There are so many partners that have contributed to these outcomes that it would be impossible to name them all.

As of February 17th, over 650,000 Delawareans have been fully vaccinated against COVID-19. Delaware has processed over three million COVID tests. DPH has distributed over seven thousand units of various therapeutic medications, 1.6 million units of testing kits and 4.5 million units of personal protective equipment or PPE from our warehouse. In 2021, the COVID-19 Call Center and the Vaccine Call Center answered over 160,000 calls and over 100,000 emails. Our Contact tracing partner NORC completed over 100,000 interviews between June 2021 and January 2022. And our school testing partner, Quidel, performed more than 260,000 tests of Delaware K-12 students and staff members this past fall.

## COVID-19 ACCOMPLISHMENTS: CRITICAL DPH FUNCTIONS, 2021



All of DPH has been involved in the COVID response. Here are more examples of our critical DPH functions:

### **Vaccines distributed and administered:**

In 2021, DPH staff coordinated and supported over 100 mass vaccination Point of Dispensing (POD) events across the state. Our Bureau of Health Planning and Resources Management stepped in and processed over 150,000 Vaccine Administration Records (VARs) from these PODS.

### **Community Health vaccine distribution and administration:**

In 2021, while continuing daily clinic operations, Community Health staff statewide administered over 47,000 COVID-19 vaccinations and tested individuals at a variety of sites statewide. Special efforts were made to administer vaccine to individuals who are homebound or may be harder to reach.

### **Tests distributed and administered:**

DPH distributed and administered COVID-19 tests across the state.

### **Delaware Public Health Laboratory COVID-19 Testing Volume:**

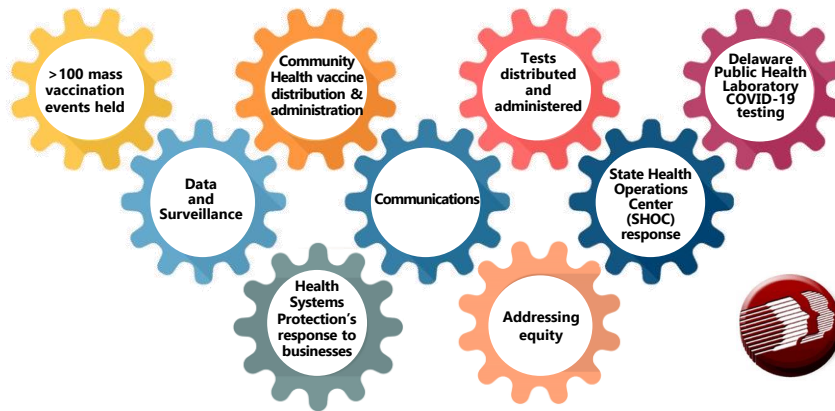
In 2021, Delaware Public Health Laboratory (DPHL) performed over 250,000 total tests and over 10,000 COVID-19 genetic sequences to detect variants. Despite space and staffing constraints, DPHL has performed up to 10 percent of COVID-19 testing in Delaware since the pandemic began.

### **Data and Surveillance:**

The COVID Epidemiology Team has evolved over the past year and half from a small team to approximately 35 staff including epidemiologists, data analysts, and planners. This team conducts case, cluster, outbreak investigations, and contact tracing activities and works with a multitude of surveillance systems and datasets.

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## COVID-19 ACCOMPLISHMENTS: CRITICAL DPH FUNCTIONS, 2021



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### **DPH communications:**

DPH's Office of Communications (OComms) makes almost daily updates to the [de.gov/coronavirus](https://de.gov/coronavirus) website and has launched multiple COVID-related public awareness campaigns focused on topics such as vaccine safety and efficacy while combatting misinformation. Last year, OComms answered over 1,400 total media inquiries.

### **State Health Operations Center (SHOC):**

Our State Health Operations Center, or SHOC, coordinated countless missions - supporting vaccination POD support and logistical support including shipping, receiving, and packing test kits, personal protective equipment and other medical equipment; managed call center activities in multiple locations, and recruited, trained and assigned special response units while providing workplace support for upwards of 175 persons daily at the height of the pandemic last year.

### **Health Systems Protection:**

Our Health Systems Protection staff provided more than 500 site visits to check compliance in restaurants, retail establishment, and other facilities related to COVID-19.

### **DPH addresses equity:**

Community Health Services' Bureau of Population Health invested significant federal resources to address health inequity, social determinants of health and the COVID-19 response through community partnerships. The Bureau of Health Equity supported the purchase of computers for domestic violence shelters to enable access to Telehealth services to support clients.

## NON-COVID-19 ACCOMPLISHMENTS



### **Tuberculosis Elimination Program responded to:**

- largest active TB infection cluster of patients.
- 23 individuals receiving a spine graft contaminated with TB.



### **Community Health Section implemented a new Electronic Medical Records system in 2021**

### **Bureau of Oral Health and Dental Services:**



- 1,432 in-person dental screenings and 1,061 preventive dental therapies.
- Case management for 556 children and connected 776 children in addition to their family members to dental homes.



### **Delaware Animal Services:**

- Handled over 2,200 cases of potential human exposures to rabies that occurred through animal bites and attacks.
- Funded 2,400 sterilizations and rabies vaccinations to pets.



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DPH has responded to multiple non-COVID infectious disease outbreaks. In 2021, the Tuberculosis (TB) Elimination Program successfully assessed and is nearing completion of the state's largest active TB infection cluster. Additionally, we responded to 23 individuals having received a spine graft contaminated with TB.

Our Community Health Section implemented a new Electronic Medical Records system which has already shown improvements in clinical care and efficiencies; as well as, increases in revenue.

The Bureau of Oral Health and Dental Services completed over 2,500 in-person dental screenings and preventive dental therapies and provided case management for over 500 children and connected nearly 800 families to dental homes.

Delaware Animal Services, the enforcement unit of the Office of Animal Welfare, handled over 2,200 cases of potential human exposure to rabies and the State Low Cost Spay Neuter Fund made possible over 2,400 sterilizations and rabies vaccinations to pets.

## LOOKING AHEAD – IDENTIFIED AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT

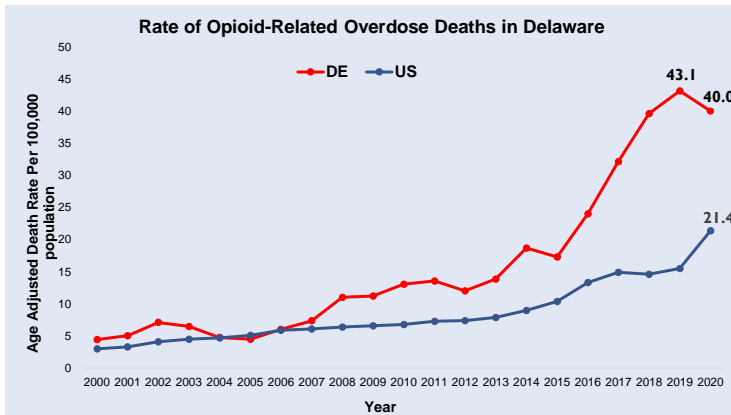


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Delaware faces many health challenges. Our priorities include the need to:

- **Reduce Opioid Deaths**
- **Address social determinants of health to improve:**
  - Health Equity;
  - The mortality gap for African-American babies and moms; and
  - The drivers of disparities in chronic disease and life expectancy.

## REVERSING THE OPIOID CRISIS



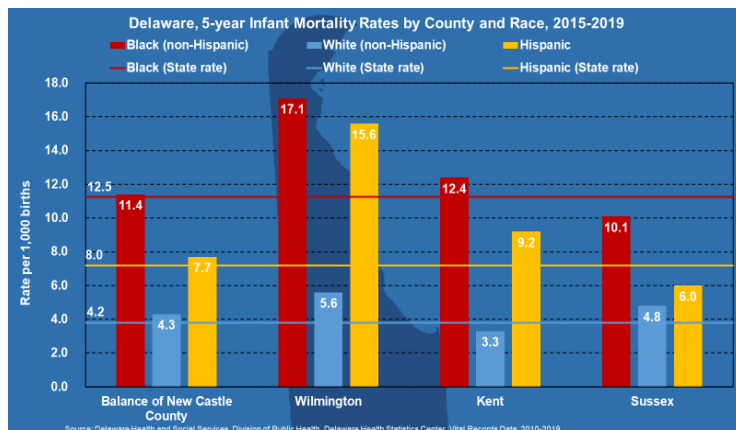
While Delaware had seen yearly increases for over a decade, Delaware is one of only four states showing a slight decrease in overdose deaths for 2020. Although these are promising statistics and may be a sign of the rates slowing down, we clearly have a lot of work yet to do.

Some DPH initiatives include:

- Leveraging local community champions, such as: Community Response Teams in each county; the Faith Forward Collaborative - uniting faith organizations on how to educate and support their congregations; and construction and restaurant industries supporting employers with tools to address addiction and drug use in the workplace.
- Continuing prescriber education on safe and effective treatment of pain as well as pharmacists on responsible drug dispensing.
- Educating the public thru campaigns on addiction, treatment and overdose rescue tools including free Narcan.



## ADDRESSING SOCIAL DETERMINANTS FOR INFANT MORTALITY



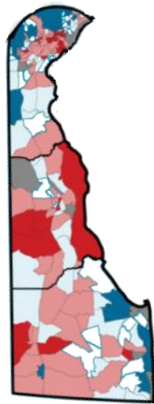
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There has been a steady decline in the infant mortality rate in the past decade since the inception of the Delaware Healthy Mother and Infant Consortium (DHMIC). Unfortunately, the unacceptable racial disparity persists. The black infant mortality rate remains more than two and half times as high as the white rate.

DPH has been working over the last several years to address the social determinants of health to improve pregnancy outcomes. Some of those initiatives include:

- A grant program which is currently funding eight community-based organizations to directly address the social determinants in identified high risk communities.
- A two-year demonstration project to provide pregnant women with housing and wrap around health and social supports - leveraging the existing infrastructure and partnerships.

## ADVANCING HEALTH EQUITY



### Delaware Life Expectancy:

- High: 86.1
- Average: 78.7 years
- Low: 68.2 years



- 10 year difference between the lowest and the average
- 18 year difference between the lowest and highest



Life Expectancy at birth (Quintiles)



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Geographic differences in overall life expectancy provides a stark representation of how place impacts health. Advancing health equity is a strategic priority for DPH. We are engaged in many health equity initiatives and are making significant investments.

Healthy Communities Delaware or HCD, is a collaborative place-based approach to enable communities to address their most important health determinants. The state has made a \$500.0 thousand investment in operating support for HCD and a \$1.5 million investment in innovation funding to support community-based partners in addressing health equity.

The Division of Public Health has supported Health Equity by leveraging approximately \$19 million in federal funds. Some examples are:

- Federal grant to address Social Determinants of Health and Disparities related to the pandemic.
- Federal grant related to enhancing Community Health Workers in Delaware who are instrumental in addressing Social Determinants of Health to improve Health Equity.
- Federal grant for Immunizations that is strategically being used by community-based organizations and partners to increase vaccination uptake in vulnerable communities.

Now I will turn to the Governor's Recommended Budget for Fiscal Year 2023.

## COVID-19 IMPACTS ON WORKFORCE

- Record number of retirements and resignations over the course of the pandemic
  - Currently 227.8 Vacancies
    - Retirements
      - FY21 - 14
      - FY22 - 22 (as of January)
    - Resignations
      - FY21 – 85
      - FY22 – 68 (as of January)
- Critical Staff Shortages
- Positions to go away



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DPH has seen record number of retirements and resignations over the course of the pandemic. As of January 2022, we have 227.8 vacancies. Last fiscal year we had 14 employees retire and 22 who have retired as of January this year. We had 85 resignations in fiscal year 21 and as of January we had 68 resignations in fiscal year 22.

We continue to face unprecedented staff shortages and difficulties recruiting qualified staff in key areas such as epidemiology, management, and nursing. Each day, the employees at DPH work extremely hard to meet the demands of their job responsibilities during these difficult and challenging times.

## FY 2023 GOVERNOR'S RECOMMENDED BUDGET

### FY 2023 Governor's Recommended Budget (\$ in thousands)

	GF	ASF	NSF	Total
FTEs	344.3	58.5	410.4	813.2
Dollars (\$)	51,492.3	38,101.4	68,466.1	158,059.8

**Budget Definitions:**

GF – General Funds  
 ASF – Appropriated Special Funds  
 NSF – Non-Appropriated Special Funds  
 FTEs – Full Time Equivalent Positions



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- The slide above shows the budget included in the FY 2023 Governor's Recommended Budget (GRB).

Our Division's FY 2023 GRB is:

- \$51,492.3 [Fifty-One Million, Four Hundred Ninety-Two Thousand, Three Hundred dollars] in General Funds (GF)
- \$38,101.4 [Thirty-Eight Million, One Hundred One Thousand, Four Hundred dollars] in Appropriated Special Fund (ASF) spending authority; and
- \$68,466.1 [Sixty-Eight Million, Four Hundred Sixty- Six Thousand, One Hundred dollars] in Non-Appropriated Special Funds (NSF).

# FY 2023 GOVERNOR'S RECOMMENDED BUDGET

## ONE-TIME SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDS



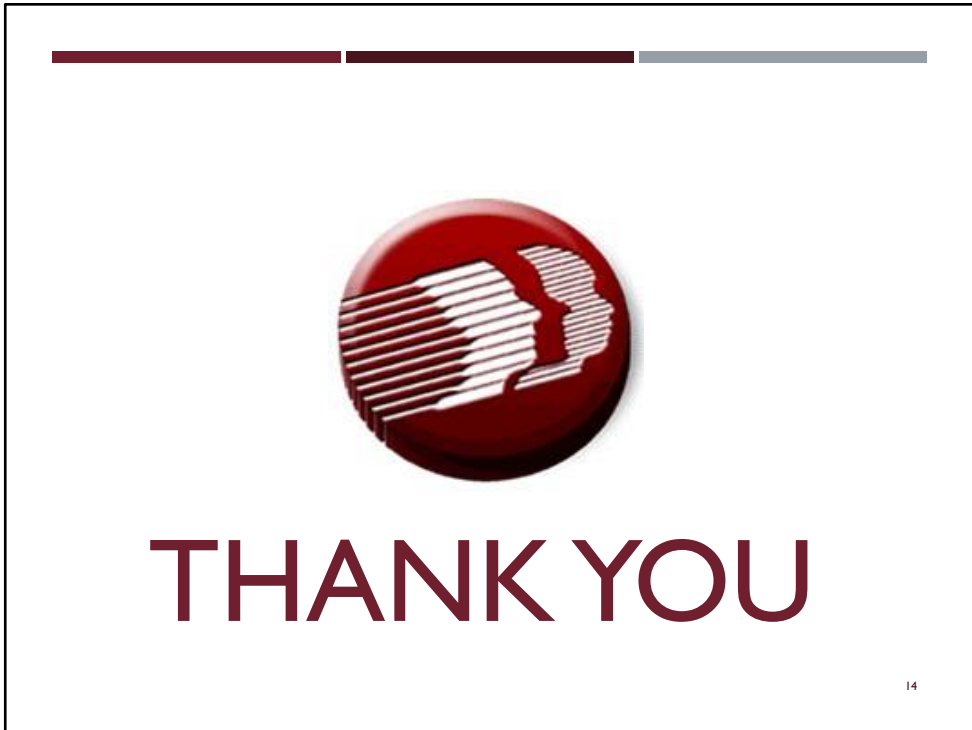
Health Equity  
My Healthy Community Data Portal  
\$200.0



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\$200.0 [Two Hundred Thousand dollars] in one-time funds for Health Equity. This one-time supplement will allow DPH's Office of Minority Health to achieve the following:

- Support community-driven initiatives identified through the State Health Improvement Plan process and collaborate with Healthy Communities Delaware to address social determinants of health.
- Maintain costs and continued development of social determinant indicators for the My Healthy Community Data Portal.



Thank you for the opportunity to share with you the challenges and opportunities facing the Division of Public Health.

I am happy to answer any questions you may have.