



CITY OF MILWAUKEE
HEALTH DEPARTMENT

2024

ANNUAL REPORT

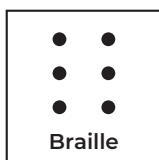


This report was prepared by the City of Milwaukee Health Department in accordance with Ch.59 of the City of Milwaukee Code of Ordinances.

This material is available in alternative formats for individuals with disabilities upon request.

Please contact the City of Milwaukee ADA Coordinator at [\(414\) 286-3475](tel:414-286-3475) or ADACoordinator@milwaukee.gov

Provide a 72-hour advance notice for large print and 7 days for braille documents.



**Large
Print**

Table of Contents

Letter From the Commissioner	4
Letter From the Board of Health	5
How to Use the Annual Report	6
Department Overview	7
Key Accomplishments	9
 COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE	
Finance	10
Staffing	11
MHD Strategic Plan	12
Vital Records	13
 FAMILY AND COMMUNITY HEALTH (FCH)	
Birth Outcomes Made Better (BOMB) Doula	15
Community Healthcare Access Program (CHAP)	19
Direct Assistance to Dads (DAD) Project and Empowering Families of Milwaukee (EFM)	20
Newborn Screenings for Hearing loss and Congenital Disorders	21
Safe Sleep and Strong Baby Programs	22
Women, Infants, and Children Nutrition (WIC)	24
 ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH	
Consumer Environmental Health (CEH)	27
Emergency Preparedness Environmental Health (EPEH)	29
Home Environmental Health (HEH)	31
 CLINICAL SERVICES	
Communicable Disease (CD)	34
Milwaukee Breast and Cervical Cancer Awareness Program (MBCCAP)	36
Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH)	39
Milwaukee Health Department Laboratory (MHDL)	41
Wastewater Dashboard Updates	43
 POLICY, INNOVATION, AND EQUITY (PIE)	
WorkPHORCE Health	45
Fetal Infant Mortality Review (FIMR)	51
 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	
.....	54

Letter from the Commissioner of Health

Dear Milwaukeeans,

The Milwaukee Health Department entered 2024 with renewed energy and deep commitment to serving every corner of our city. From the largest national events to the quiet, everyday moments in our neighborhoods, our public health staff worked tirelessly this year to protect, educate, and empower our community.

In July, Milwaukee hosted the Republican National Convention, and MHD played a critical role in ensuring the health and safety of residents and visitors alike. Our teams coordinated with local, state, and federal partners on food safety, emergency preparedness, epidemiologic surveillance, and communications. The professionalism and dedication of our staff were praised across agencies—and we couldn't be more proud of the role we played on a national stage.

Beyond the spotlight, 2024 was a year of growth and evolution. Our Family and Community Health Division expanded its reach, our Home Environmental Health team strengthened enforcement and transparency, and our Policy, Innovation, and Equity branch advanced MKE Elevate priorities and released the department's first Racial Equity Report. Meanwhile, the Vital Records Office processed nearly 65,000 transactions, providing critical documentation to families navigating life events.

Past, present, and future, our focus remains clear: to build a Milwaukee that prioritizes health, safety, and equity for our communities. I am endlessly grateful to our team, our partners, and the people of this city who inspire our work every day.

Thank you for trusting us with your health. We are honored to serve.

In health and service,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Michael F. Totoraitis". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the end.

Michael Totoraitis, PhD
Commissioner of Health

Letter from the Board of Health

Dear Milwaukee Community,

The Milwaukee Board of Health is proud to reflect on a year of progress, innovation, and dedication from the City of Milwaukee Health Department. We commend Commissioner Mike Totoraitis, PhD, and MHD's staff for their tireless efforts to improve the health and wellbeing of the citizens of Milwaukee, as well as advance health equity across the city.

In 2024, MHD led significant initiatives with far-reaching impact. MHD's role in the successful public health coordination of the Republican National Convention stands out as a testament to MHD's readiness and professionalism. From food safety to emergency response planning, MHD was a vital partner in protecting Milwaukee residents and visitors during this national event.

The Board also applauds MHD's continued work in community-driven planning. This year, MHD collaborated with community partners to advance the goals outlined in the MKE Elevate Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), while also introducing its first Racial Equity Report to the Board of Health. These efforts underscore MHD's long-standing commitment to transparency, accountability, and a future where every resident has the opportunity to thrive.

We are honored to support the work of MHD and remain committed to helping ensure that public health remains a priority for our city.

For those interested in getting involved or learning more about the board of health, we encourage you to visit us online at milwaukee.gov/BoardOfHealth.

With gratitude and hope,

Wujie Zhang, PhD - Board Chair

Tahira Malik - Vice Chair

Dr. Darlene Beck, AGPCNP-BC APNP

Ruthie Burich-Weatherly

Caroline Gómez-Tom

Ian B. K. Martin, M.D., M.B.A., FACEP, FAAEM

Ericka Sinclair

Alderwoman JoCasta Zamarripa, 8th District

Penelope Stewart

How to use the Annual Report

The City of Milwaukee Health Department's 2024 Annual Report includes information on each division, office, and program within the department, with specific Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) highlighted for each program.

A comprehensive presentation of each program's metrics is included in the 2024 Annual Report Data Supplement, which can be found at milwaukee.gov/AnnualReports.

Program information is organized under five primary branches: Commissioner's Office, Family and Community Health (FCH), Environmental Health, Clinical Services, and Policy, Innovation, and Equity (PIE). Each of these branches are broken down into several of their own sub-programs and special initiatives.

Use this report to:



Learn about each public health program

Each program or special initiative includes a brief description of the target population, target geographic area, priority health areas, and evidence-based practices utilized.



Access 2024 operations data

Operations data, including 2024 expense information, staffing structure, and active grants received over the year is included.



Review data on each program's performance

Each program includes five years of performance measure data that highlights key deliverables. Most programs also include population or program outcome data to describe the impact of the program on Milwaukee or the clients served.



Explore our milestones and moments of growth

MHD departments accomplished significant achievements while also navigating several challenges throughout 2024.

Department Overview

Keeping Milwaukee healthy since 1867!

For over 150 years, the City of Milwaukee Health Department has committed to protecting and improving the health of everyone who lives, works, and plays in our city. We work alongside residents, partners, and local leaders to ensure every person has an equal opportunity to be healthy. Today, as the largest local health department in Wisconsin, MHD now serves nearly 600,000 residents through direct services, evidence-based programs, community partnerships, and policy development. **While our programs have evolved over time, our mission remains the same— to build safe, healthy, and equitable communities where everyone can thrive!**

We center our work around 4 core goals

- Control and prevent disease
- Promote health and wellbeing across a person's entire lifespan
- Ensure safe and healthy living environments
- Conduct public health planning and policy development

Vision

Living your best life, Milwaukee.

Mission

Advance the health and equity of Milwaukee through science, innovation, and leadership.

OUR VALUES

Innovation: We believe in nurturing creativity and new ideas that challenge us to do our everyday work better.

Equity: We acknowledge historic and current injustices in Milwaukee and strive to create a community where everyone has an equal opportunity to be healthy.

Collaboration: We convene community members, partners, and elected officials to meet the needs of our community.

Courage: Our teams take strategic risks with bold initiatives to advocate for and prioritize the needs of our community.

Accountability: MHD acts with integrity and transparency to advance the health of our communities.

Quality: We continuously improve and adapt our processes to create sustainable and positive health outcomes.

Structure

The City of Milwaukee Health Department consists of 5 branches. These branches are broken down into several of their own sub-programs and special initiatives.

Four of the branches are managed by Deputy Commissioners, who serve as cornerstones to the foundation of MHD, and are also trained to serve in an “on-call rotation” capacity to the Commissioner of Health.

The need for this backup support was realized during the leadership changes of early 2018. MHD is aiming to address these gaps in order to enhance our ability to provide essential public health services per the state of Wisconsin and federal laws and regulations.

Commissioner's Office	Family and Community Health (FCH)	Environmental Health	Clinical Services	Policy, Innovation, and Equity (PIE)
Administration and Human Resources	BOMB Doula program	Consumer Environmental Health (CEH)	Communicable Disease (CD)	Data and Evaluation
Finance	Community Healthcare Access Program (CHAP)	Emergency Preparedness Environmental Health (EPEH)	MKE Breast and Cervical Cancer Awareness Program (MBCCAP)	Marketing and Communications
Vital Records	EFM / DAD Project	Home Environmental Health (HEH)	Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH)	Public Health Strategy
	Newborn Screening		MKE Health Department Lab (MHDL)	Fetal Infant Mortality Review (FIMR)
	Safe Sleep / Strong Baby			Workforce Development
	Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)			

Department Accomplishments



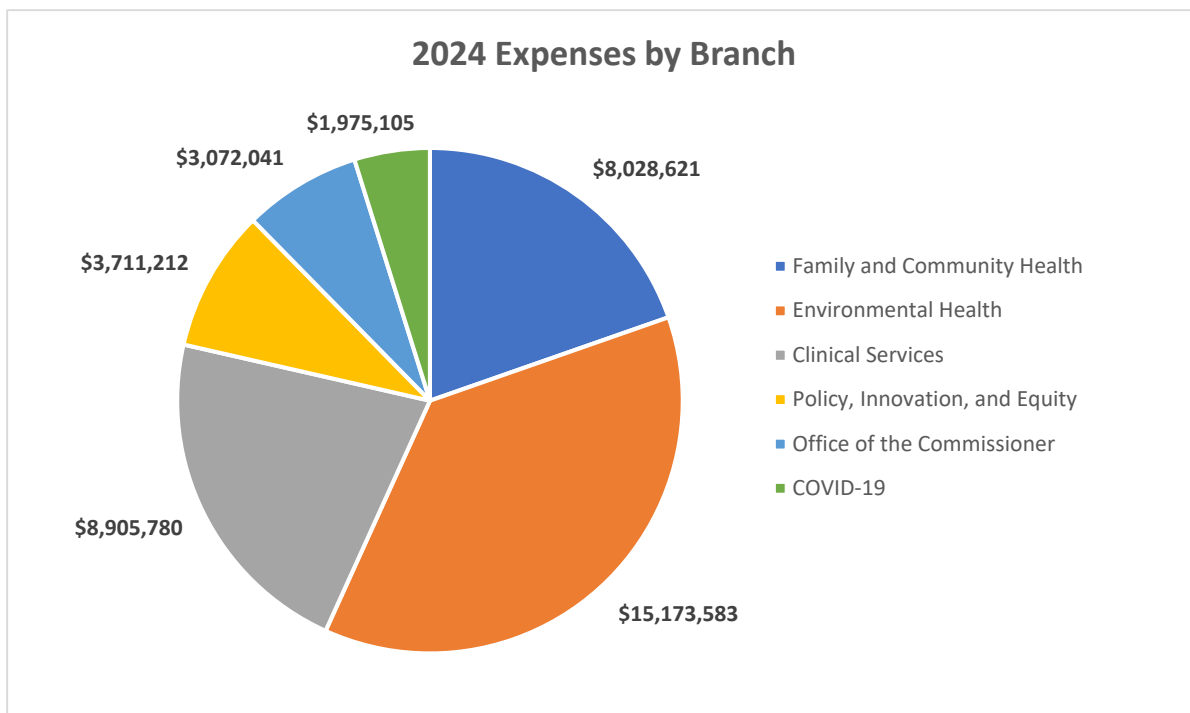
- In 2024, MHD began transitioning to a new Electronic Health Record (EHR) system—OCHIN Epic—to improve efficiency, standardize data collection, and connect with a national network of healthcare providers. Implementation kicked off in September and involved staff from all programs reviewing workflows, forms, referrals, and other items to ensure the system fits our needs.
- The Milwaukee County Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) marked its first formal alignment of the Milwaukee Health Care Partnership's (MHCP) health systems' needs assessments with the City of Milwaukee Health Department's (MHD) Community Health Assessment and the Milwaukee County Department of Health and Human Service's (DHHS) strategic planning processes.
- The MHD Laboratory celebrated its 150th anniversary in December of 2024. Over the past 150 years, the lab has been instrumental in protecting the health of Milwaukee residents through disease surveillance, testing, and innovation. Deputy Commissioner Jefflyn Brown delivered the official proclamation on behalf of Mayor Johnson, highlighting the lab's legacy of excellence and its critical contributions to public health.
- Commissioner of Health Dr. Michael Totoraitis spoke with Versiti and Sickle Cell Warriors of WI at the Annual Sickle Cell Summit — an event focused on the support needed for Milwaukee families affected by Sickle Cell Disease, as well as on addressing barriers to care and reducing stigma to drive awareness and change.

Finance

MHD operations are funded through City Operations and Maintenance (O&M), grants, capital, and to a lesser extent, reimbursable funds. O&M is also known as the “tax levy”.

MHD Expenditures by Funding Source					
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
O&M	\$14,586,057	\$16,884,600	\$12,291,820	\$18,244,554	\$18,437,326
Grant	\$29,805,644	\$33,725,720	\$31,222,619	\$24,130,331	\$22,393,012
Reimbursable	\$349,615	\$265	\$270	\$0	\$0
Capital	\$533,734	\$624,314	\$680,102	\$37,722	\$36,003
Total Expenses	\$45,275,050	\$51,234,899	\$44,194,812	\$42,412,607	\$40,866,341

** financial data is preliminary and subject to change*



** financial data is preliminary and subject to change*

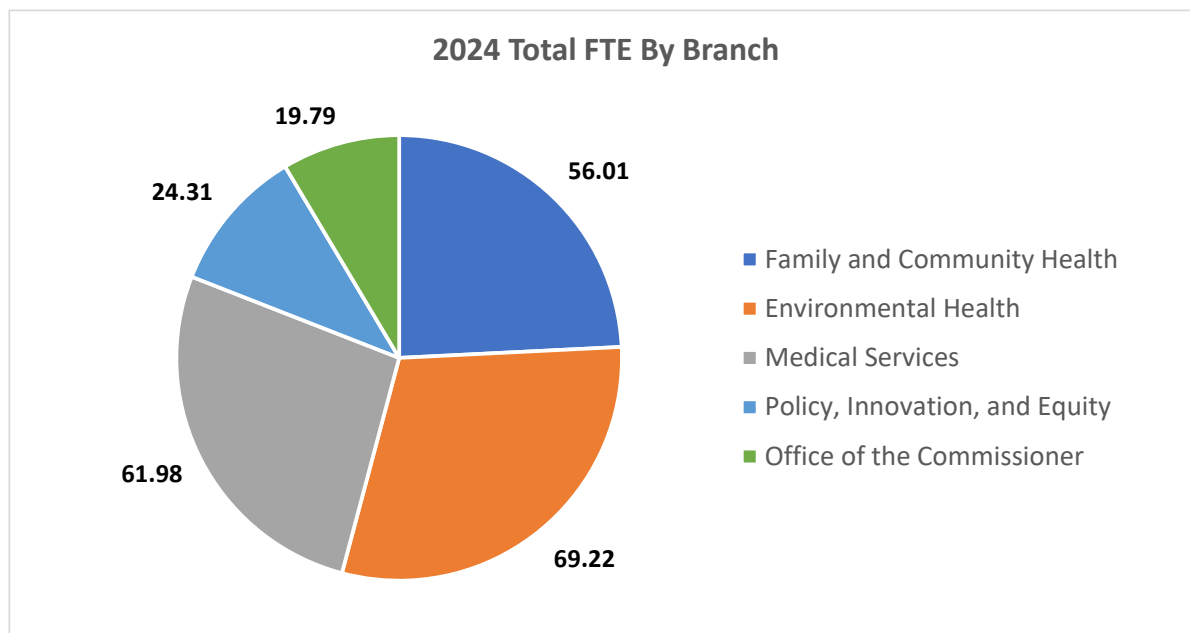
Staffing

On average, the City of Milwaukee Health Department has about 240 full-time staff. With the COVID-19 pandemic, MHD brought on additional staff in 2020 and then significantly more temporary staff in 2021 to respond to the community needs.

MHD Personnel					
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
O&M FTE	164.26	162.12	190.8	141.14	142.53
Non-O&M FTE	120.71	441.85	109.2	92.99	88.77
Total FTE	284.97	603.97	300	234.13	231.3

* FTE = Full Time Equivalent employee (40 hours / week).

* Table does not include temporary staff.



MHD Strategic Plan

In 2022, MHD developed a strategic plan that reflected its commitment to becoming an anti-racist organization. The plan guides the department towards a future where MHD acknowledges the structures, history and persistent impacts of racism and actively addresses racism in our organizational policies, practices, and culture in ways that create an equitable work environment for our staff, in serving our clients, and by engaging with the Milwaukee community.

Anti-racism is a core tenet of Public Health 3.0, requiring institutions with power – like MHD – to critically assess how we use our authority, share and divest of power wherever possible, and commit to restructuring or dismantling systems that create unhealthy or inequitable environments. The Public Health 3.0 framework will evolve our relationship with our community, from one primarily of service-provider to strategist, policy-maker, advocate, and partner.

In July 2025, MHD will enter into Phase 2 of the Strategic Plan. As we exit Phase 1: Recovery and Reset, MHD's focus in the final two years is to complete the transition to a Public Health 3.0 model and further embed anti-racist practices and policies in all aspects of work.



[Full Strategic Plan](#)

[Executive Summary](#)

Goals

1. Anti-Racism Competency Development
2. Re-Center Culture
3. Financial Alignment and Sustainability
4. Program Evaluation and Improvement
5. Electronic Health Record Optimization
6. MHD Staff Recovery
7. Workforce Development
8. Public Health 3.0 Strategy

(Full breakdown in the Data Supplement)

Accomplishments

- Developed the Equity in Program, Policy, and Process Planning Policy, which includes a 12-step process that staff can use to develop or assess programs, policies, or processes with an equity lens
- Conducted Trauma Informed Care training, with 80% of staff attending
- Incorporated Environment Health and Family and Community Health into existing strategies to reflect their contributions to the Strategic Plan.

Challenges

- Lack of compiled historical data for some indicators
- Some strategies and indicators needed to be further clarified and refined
- Need for better education on how daily work connects to Strategic Plan progress for all staff

Vital Records

The City of Milwaukee Health Department provides access to certified birth and death certificates through the State of Wisconsin's Vital Records Office, in accordance with Wisconsin Statutes, Chapter 69. Maintaining a local point of access for these records serves not only City of Milwaukee residents, but also individuals across the state and beyond who require vital records for legal, personal, or administrative purposes.

In 2024, the Vital Records office processed nearly 65,000 customer transactions—representing a 4% increase from 2022 and a 23% increase over a five-year average (2018–2022). With the State of Wisconsin recently discontinuing in-person services for vital records, MHD's continued availability for walk-in, phone, fax, and online requests has become an increasingly important resource for the community.

Vital records play a critical role in securing health insurance, employment, travel documentation, tax filings, and other major life events. The program also supports internal MHD program initiatives and provides data and research services as needed. While the majority of revenue from certificate fees is returned to the State, the City retains fees from rush orders and certain transactions. In 2024, the program generated over \$215,000 in net revenue for MHD.

Website

milwaukee.gov/vital-records

2024 Data Highlights

\$444,290

total gross income, cash receipts, and billing

11,680

births registered

17,855

birth certificates issued

5,025

deaths registered

33,253

death certificates issued

Top Accomplishment

- Successfully met increased demand for birth and death certificates despite operating below full staffing levels, maintaining timely service and customer satisfaction.

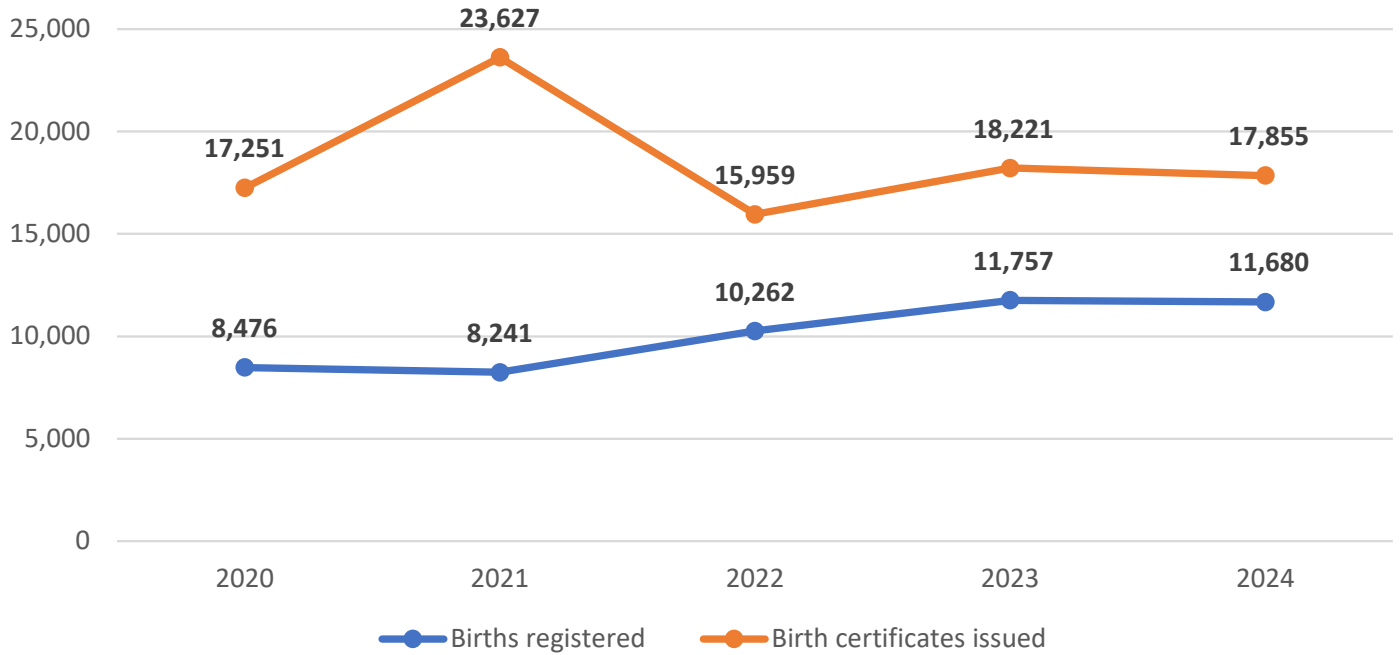
Top Challenge

- Initiating the expansion of customer service functions while maintaining high-quality service and meeting continued transactional growth.

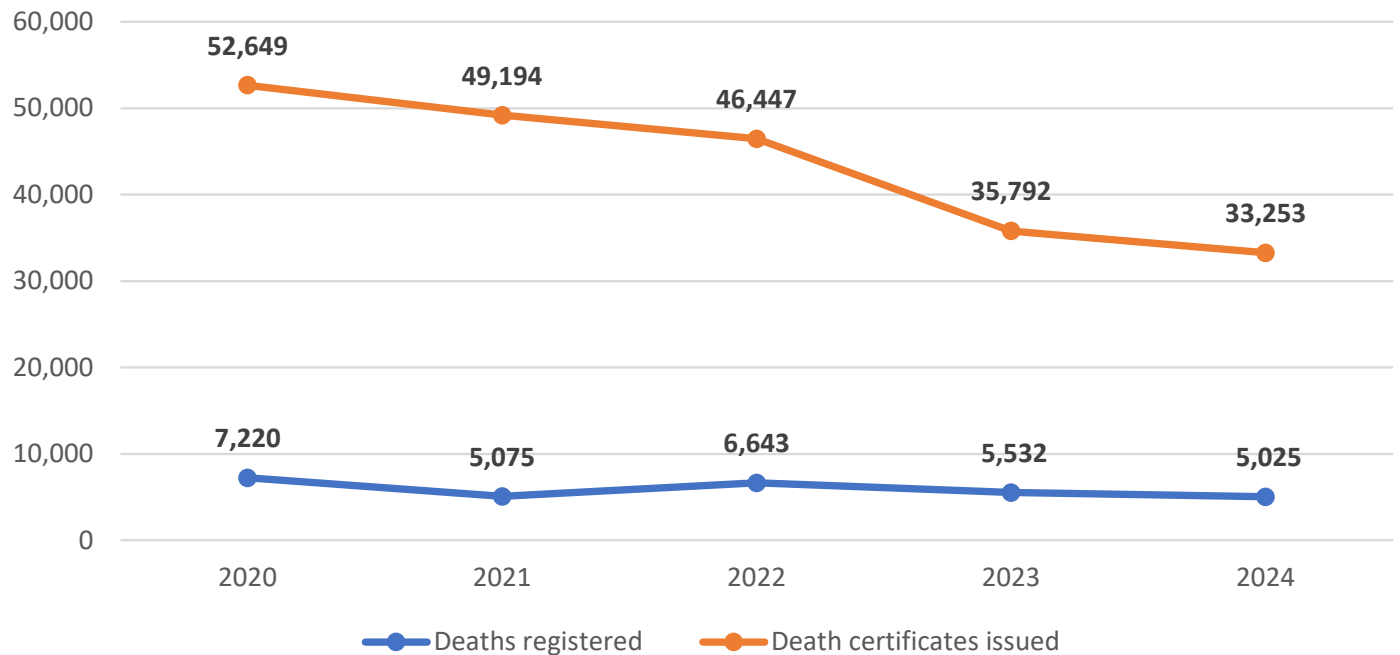


The Vital Records office is located on the 1st floor of the Zeidler Municipal Building (ZMB)

Milwaukee Births and Birth Certificates



Milwaukee Deaths and Death Certificates



FAMILY AND COMMUNITY HEALTH (FCH)

Grants

Birth Outcomes Made Better (BOMB) Doula Program			
Grant Name	Funding Source	Dates of Grant Period	Amount Over Grant Period
Healthy Families Wisconsin Sub Contract- Meta House	American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and State & Local Recovery Funds (SLRF)	10/2/2023 - 9/30/2025	\$1,150,000
UW - Healthy Wisconsin Families - Integrated Doula Care Grant	American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and State & Local Recovery Funds (SLRF)	10/1/2023 - 9/30/2025	\$24,500

Community Healthcare Access Program (CHAP)			
Grant name	Funding source	Dates of grant period	Amount over grant period
Medical Assistance Outreach - Forward Health	State of WI-DHS-Division of Health Care Access and Accountability Federal Pass through	1/1/2024 - 12/31/2024	\$333,158
City Match (Required)	O&M	1/1/2024 - 12/31/2024	\$333,158

Direct Assistance for Dads (DAD) Project and Empowering Families of Milwaukee (EFM)			
Grant Name	Funding Source	Dates of Grant Period	Amount Over Grant Period
Family Foundations in Home Visitation (FFHV)	State of WI-Department of Children and Families	10/1/2024 - 9/30/2025	\$1,534,205
City Match-Home Visiting (Required)	O&M	10/1/2024 - 9/30/2025	\$1,656,170

Newborn Screenings for Hearing Loss and Congenital Disorders

Grant Name	Funding Source	Dates of Grant Period	Amount Over Grant Period
FCH Program Support (Newborn Screening)	WI Department of Health Services (DHS) - Consolidated Contract	1/1/2024 - 12/31/2024	\$111,050
Congenital Disorders Grant		7/1/2023 - 7/1/2024	\$142,026

Strong Baby and Safe Sleep Programs

Grant Name	Funding Source	Dates of Grant Period	Amount Over Grant Period
MCH Title V (Strong Baby)	WI Department of Health Services (DHS) - Consolidated Contract	1/1/2024 - 12/31/2024	\$431,551
City Match - Required (Strong Baby)	O&M	1/1/2024 - 12/31/2024	\$323,663
Safe Sleep (Cribs for Kids)	O&M (Special Fund)	1/1/2024 - 12/31/2024	\$75,000

Women Infants and Children Nutrition (WIC)

Grant Name	Funding Source	Dates of Grant Period	Amount Over Grant Period
WIC - Operations	WI Department of Health Services (DHS) - Consolidated Contract	1/1/2024 - 12/31/2024	\$1,996,545
WIC-Farmer's Market Nutrition Program (FMNP)		1/1/2024 - 12/31/2024	\$11,457
WIC-Breastfeeding Peer Counselor (BFPC)		1/1/2024 - 12/31/2024	\$162,600

Accomplishments

BOMB Doula Program

- Hired a second program coordinator to support expansion and client demand.
- Received the *Healthy Wisconsin Families grant* to begin building an integrated care model with partner hospitals for doula coordination.
- Awarded the *Maternal Innovation Grant* to design a DAD Doula program focused on increasing father engagement during pregnancy, birth, and beyond.

Community Health Access Program (CHAP)

- Nearly reached full staffing capacity by onboarding new and returning team members.
- Implemented full-time interpreter services to better support bilingual clients and improve service delivery.
- Assisted with nearly 4,000 technical assistance and troubleshooting cases, providing essential support to community members navigating healthcare systems.

DAD Project and EFM

- Presented at two state conferences and one national conference, sharing program insights and best practices.
- Increased the number of Certified Lactation Consultants (CLCs) on staff to better support breastfeeding families.
- Reduced the EFM program waitlist and shortened the wait time for families to begin services.

Newborn Screenings for Hearing loss and Congenital Disorders

- Established a partnership with a local audiology therapy coordinator to streamline family outreach and follow-up care.
- Conducted more than 20 outreach and educational sessions throughout the year.
- Provided flexible screening services to families experiencing barriers, including those requiring re-screening or confirmatory testing.

Strong Baby and Safe Sleep Programs

- Developed a resource padlet webpage featuring accessible information on children's developmental health, allowing for easy sharing among community members and service providers.
- Provided comprehensive training on the ASQ Developmental Screening tool to all newly hired MHD home visiting staff involved in screenings.
- Revised the safe sleep curriculum to include a harm reduction approach to care.

Women, Infant, and Children Nutrition (WIC)

- Maintained a steady caseload with an estimated range of 9,300 - 9,500 monthly program participants.
- Successfully implemented a new State WIC Office online education program, with approximately 1,000 lessons completed per month.
- Provided breastfeeding peer support through the *Breastfeeding Peer Grant* to assist parents needing additional guidance.

Challenges

BOMB Doula Program

- Recruiting and retaining qualified staff during a period of program growth.
- Managing the high demand for doula services across the city.
- Social determinants of health, including housing and income instability, contributed to higher rates of infant loss in 2024 than in previous years.

Community Health Access Program (CHAP)

- Balancing staff training needs with timely response to increasing client requests.
- BadgerCare+ eligibility changes require constant program updates and client education.
- Transitioning to a new Electronic Health Record system created both workflow improvements and adjustment challenges.

DAD Project and EFM

- Continued vacancy in the Community Health Administrative Specialist role.
- Low attendance at group connection events, limiting family engagement opportunities.
- Persistent barriers in accessing safe, stable, and sustainable housing for enrolled families.

Newborn Screenings for Hearing loss and Congenital Disorders

- Closure of birthing units across the Southeast region made it harder for families to access services and for staff to retrieve medical records or collaborate with hospital personnel.
- High turnover at partner organizations required ongoing relationship-building and system training for new staff.
- Data sharing limitations restricted opportunities to expand services with new partner agencies.

Strong Baby and Safe Sleep Programs

- Challenges with managing the high volume of outreach requests, as it is difficult for teams to coordinate and attend all requested events.
- Difficulties expanding training beyond MHD. While outreach efforts have been successful, training external agencies in the specific use of the ASQ tool remains a challenge.
- The implementation of online resources has faced technological and budgetary constraints, limiting full deployment.

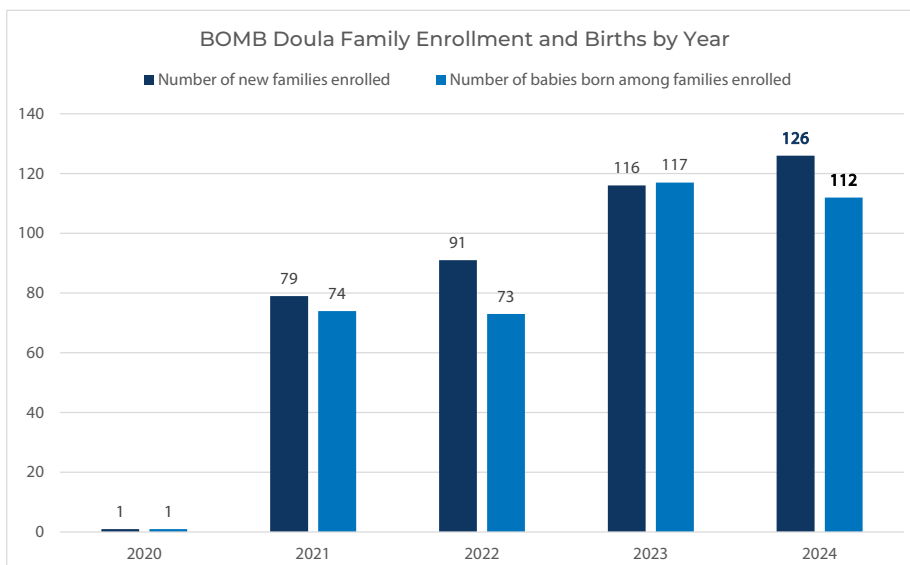
Women, Infant, and Children Nutrition (WIC)

- Ongoing staffing shortages and delayed hiring of permanent MHD staff due to limited position postings in 2023.
- Transition from COVID-19 waivers to ARPA waivers required a shift to hybrid service delivery, which was unfamiliar to both staff and participants.
- Decreased interest among Registered Dietitians in pursuing roles within WIC.

Birth Outcomes Made Better (BOMB) Doula Program



The Birth Outcomes Made Better (BOMB) Doula Program supports birthing families in Milwaukee by providing free, non-clinical services to promote healthy pregnancies, births, and postpartum experiences. Our Doulas offer emotional, physical, and informational support to Milwaukee residents who are at or before 30 weeks pregnant, through delivery, and up to 12 weeks postpartum. The program focuses on populations most at risk for poor birth outcomes and infant mortality. Established in response to the City of Milwaukee declaring racism a public health crisis in 2019, BOMB aims to improve health equity in maternal and infant health.



* Didn't enroll families until 12/2020 due to delays caused by COVID-19 pandemic.

Website

milwaukee.gov/BOMB

2024 Data Highlights

126 new families
enrolled in the program

112 babies
born among
enrolled families

Quotes from clients

"It was amazing to have someone answer my questions and get feedback from. She made me feel more comfortable even with this being my first child."

"I had tons of support, free of judgement. I was respected and listened to"

"I enjoyed the education and overall support. I was nervous about having a VBAC, but my doula made me feel reassured when we walked through the process together."

"I learned about the developmental stages and the health issues that can come with pregnancy. My doula was confident and took care of all my needs."

Community Healthcare Access Program (CHAP)

The Community Healthcare Access Program (CHAP) helps clients navigate and access healthcare coverage that fits their needs and budget, including Marketplace plans, BadgerCare+ (Medicaid), Family Planning Only Services, SeniorCare, and Express Enrollment.

CHAP also refers clients to other services such as dental care, WIC, energy assistance, and sliding-fee clinics. Our staff provide guidance throughout the application process and assist in resolving common barriers to enrollment.

Website

milwaukee.gov/CHAP



NEED AFFORDABLE HEALTH INSURANCE?

GET HELP NAVIGATING YOUR OPTIONS

Connect with the Community Healthcare Access Program (CHAP) for guidance. Our counselors are ready to help you find coverage that fits your needs and budget.

OPEN ENROLLMENT IS HERE - DON'T MISS OUT!

CITY OF MILWAUKEE HEALTH DEPARTMENT

414-286-8620
milwaukee.gov/CHAP

MCTS Campaign - Fall 2024

2024 CHAP Data Highlights

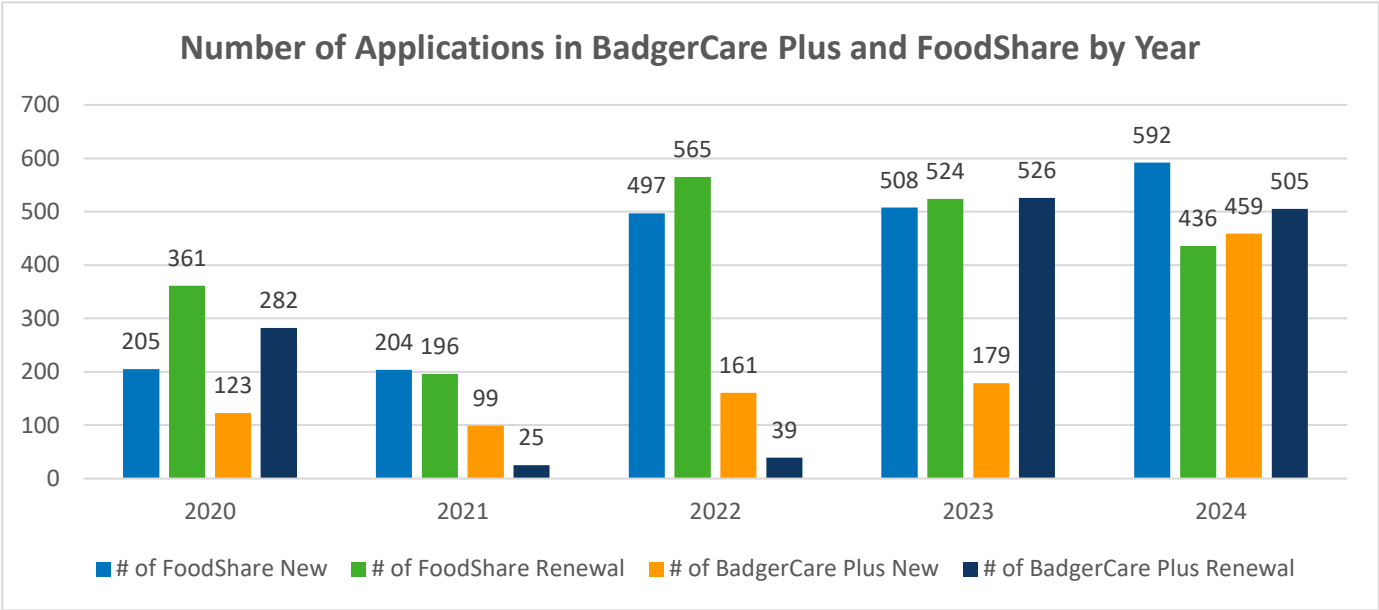
459
new BadgerCare+ applications

505
BadgerCare+ renewals

592
new Foodshare applications

436
Foodshare renewals

3,929
technical assists

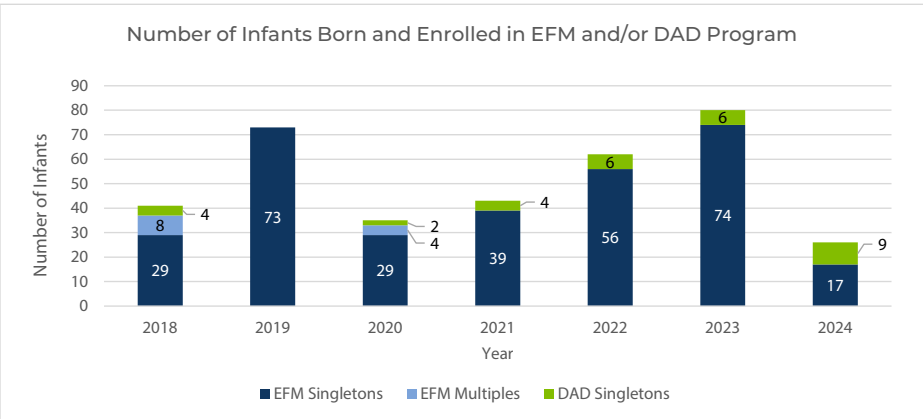
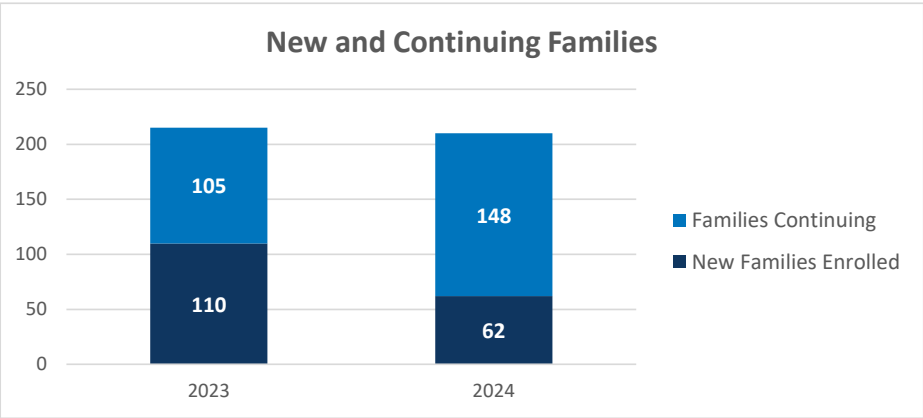


* 2020-2022 CHAP was significantly impacted with the automatic benefit renewals nationwide. June 2023 saw a significant increase due BadgerCare+ unwinding.

Direct Assistance for Dads (DAD) Project and Empowering Families of Milwaukee (EFM)

Direct Assistance for Dads (DAD) Project and Empowering Families of Milwaukee (EFM) are evidence-based home visiting programs that provide support to Milwaukee families. Services begin in pregnancy and continue for at least two years post-birth.

Using a team model of public health nurses and social workers, EFM supports birthing parents by focusing on physical and psychosocial health needs. The DAD Project’s Fatherhood Involvement Specialists (FIS) team connect with dads to strengthen parenting skills and enhance parent-child relationships. Services follow the Parents as Teachers (PAT) model and include a mental health consultant to support family well-being.



**Chart is representative of clients enrolled prenatally; number of prenatal enrollments decreased significantly in 2024 due to the waitlist.*

Websites

- milwaukee.gov/DAD
- milwaukee.gov/EFM

2024 Data Highlights

- 26 total babies**
born through
DAD/EFM programs
- 98% of families**
report an increase in
confidence to their
parenting skills
- 88% of families**
report an increase in
understanding of their
child’s development
- 90% of families**
report an increase in their
ability to take care of the health
needs of their family since
enrollment in the program



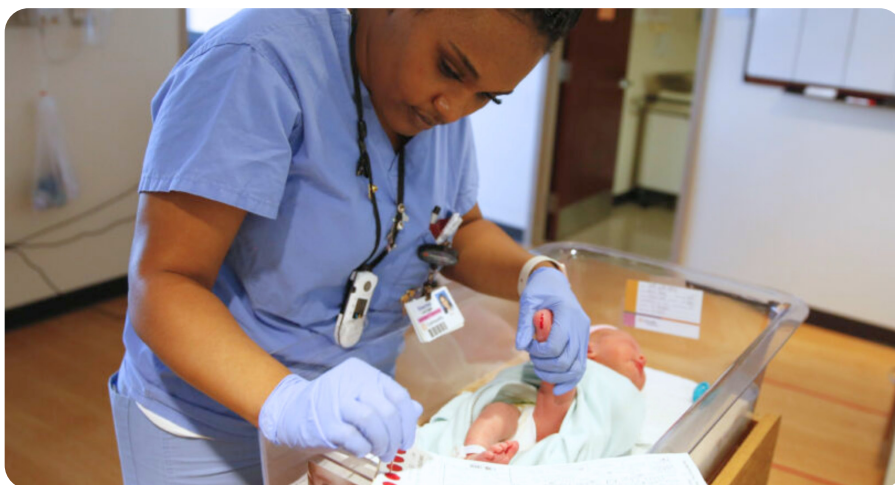
Newborn Screenings for Hearing Loss and Congenital Disorders

Newborn Hearing Screening

The Newborn Hearing Program aims to identify hearing impairments early to ensure timely intervention. The Public Health Nurse Coordinator (PHNC) supports Southeast Wisconsin, managing follow-up for infants who were born at home, missed hospital screenings, or failed initial tests. If hearing loss is confirmed, the PHNC facilitates referrals to early intervention services.

Congenital Disorder Screening

The Congenital Screening program uses newborn blood samples to screen for 48 genetic, metabolic, and endocrine disorders. The PHNC conducts retests for samples that were abnormal or collected improperly, and performs confirmatory blood draws when needed. The PHNC also provides case management for newborns diagnosed with conditions like sickle cell disorder, hypothyroidism, and cystic fibrosis, ensuring families are connected to specialty care and understand the diagnosis.



Website

milwaukee.gov/NBHS
milwaukee.gov/NBCS

2024 Data Highlights

743

client referrals
received

280 babies

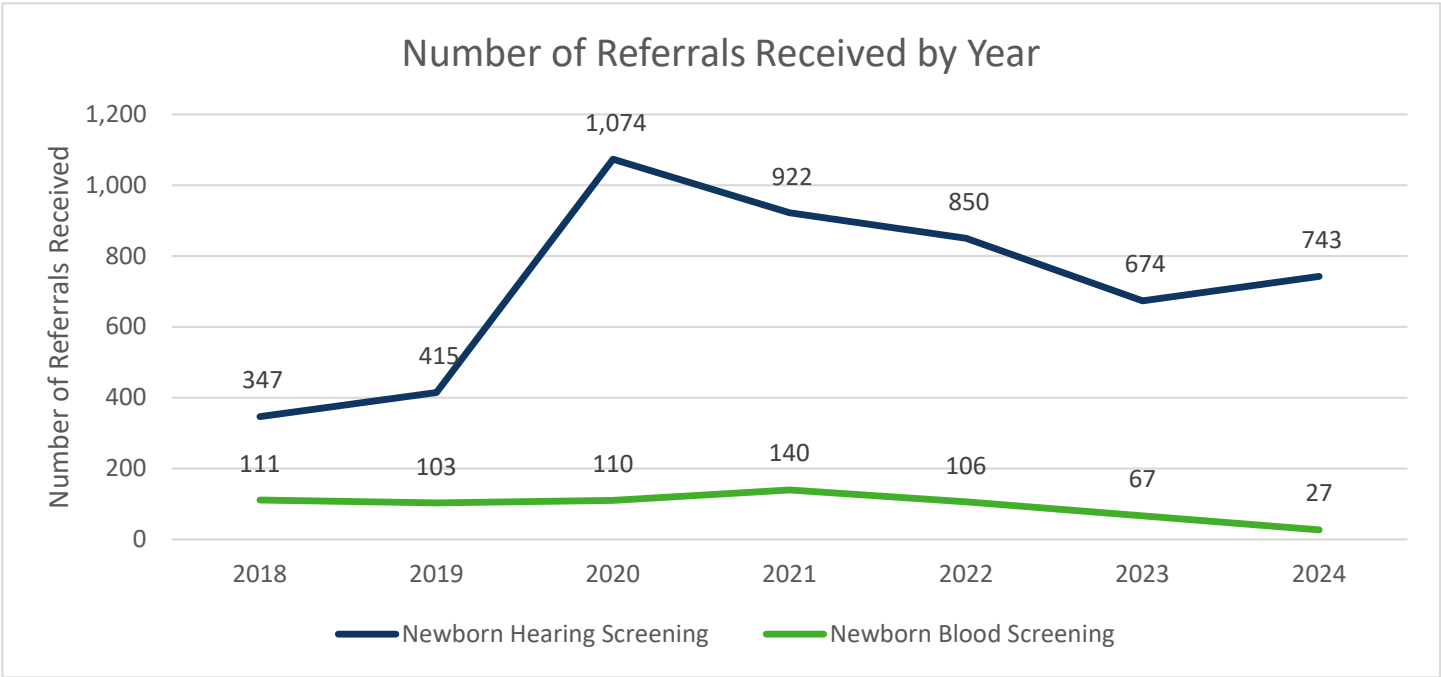
managed by RONS
(monthly average)

37 newborns

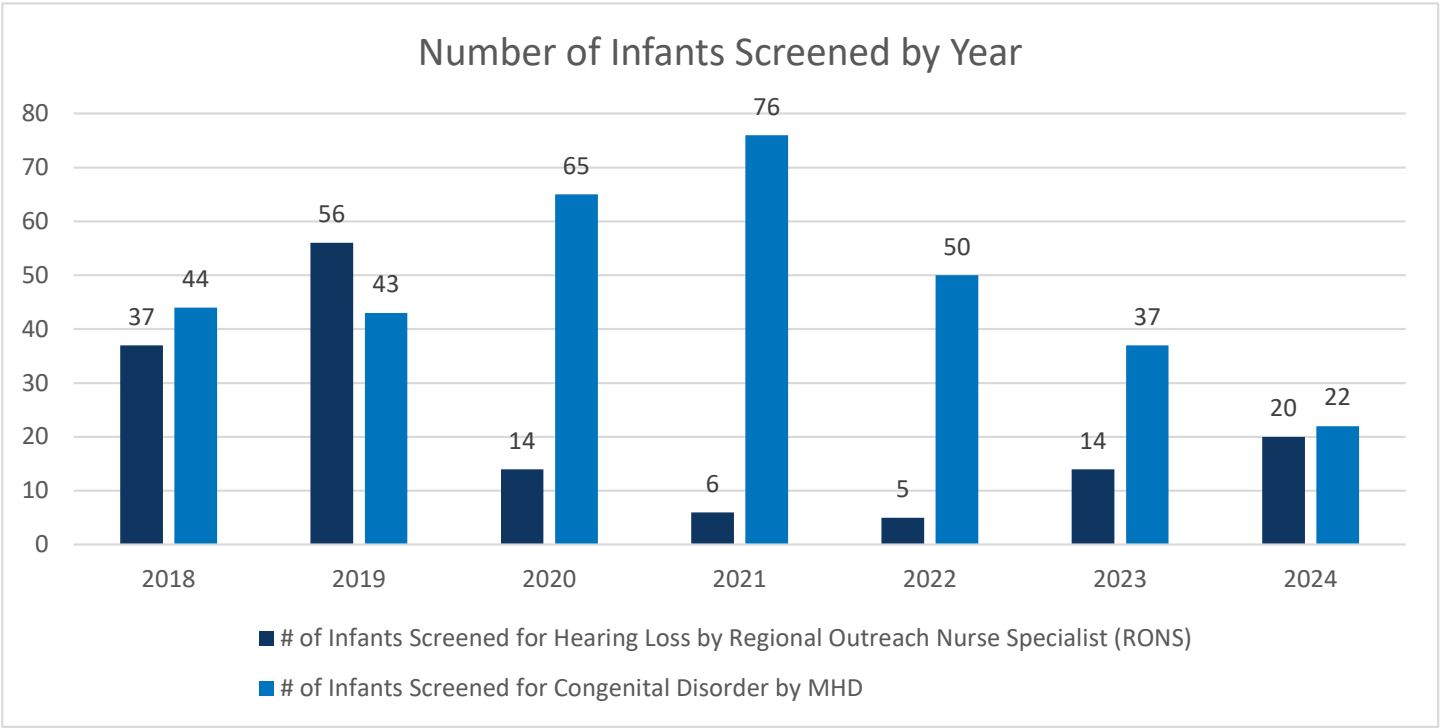
identified with hearing
loss and referred to
early intervention

3 babies

with sickle cell seen
in MHD clinic by
4 months of age



** In 2024, the referrals for newborn blood screening decreased due to the state lab case-managing the results. We only received referrals when the state lab couldn't get a hold of the patients.*



Safe Sleep and Strong Baby Programs

Cribs for Kids (Safe Sleep)

The City of Milwaukee Health Department became an official Cribs for Kids program site in 2009. The program provides families in need of a crib education on how to create a safe sleeping environment for their babies along with a free Graco Pack 'n Play (PNP) portable crib. Families are also provided with crib sheets and a sleep sack, and are taught how to properly secure the sheets to reduce sleeping hazards. The program conducts classes twice a week.

The Cribs for Kids program provides trainings and presentations for various agencies on infant mortality and safe sleep practices. As a result, these agencies can provide safe sleep education to the families they serve.

In the summer of 2024 the Cribs for Kids program switched to the Safe Sleep Milwaukee program, which focuses trainings on a harm-reduction model for those in need of a Pack 'n Play.

Websites

milwaukee.gov/CribsForKids

milwaukee.gov/StrongBaby

2024 Data Highlights

493 clients

served by the
Safe Sleep program

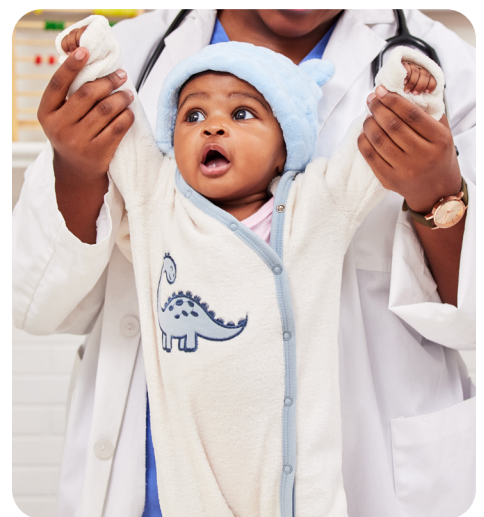
208 cribs

distributed through
classes and home visiting

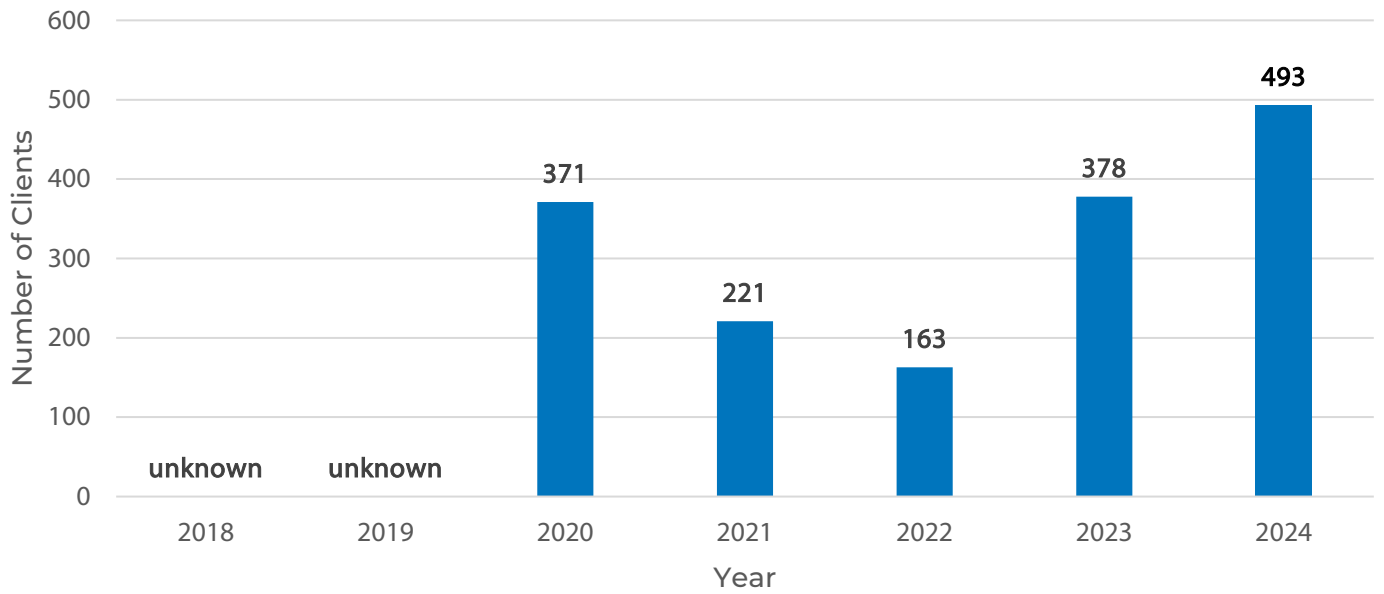
Strong Baby Title V

The Strong Baby Title V program provides training, education, and informed practice on three focus areas — Developmental Screening, Healthy Equity, and Safe Sleep.

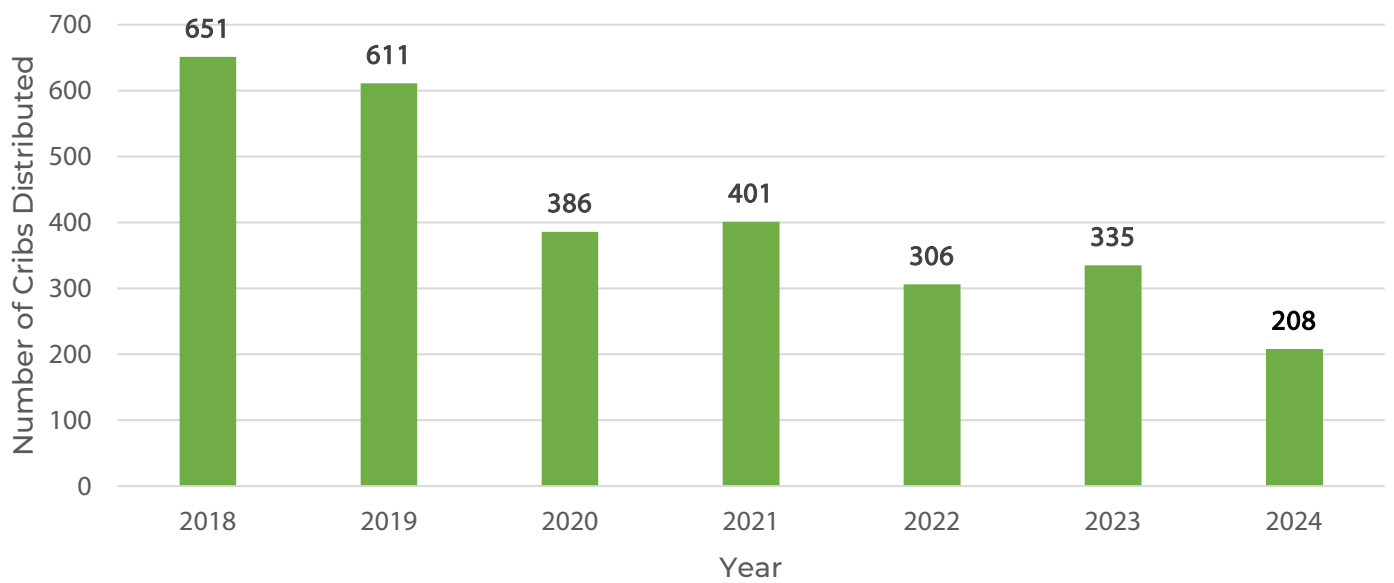
The program targets relevant entities to build their awareness and practice in these areas. This includes providing outreach and educational events and collaborating with healthcare providers, childcare providers, schools, and community organizations that impact Milwaukee children and families.



Number of Clients Served by Cribs for Kids Program



Number of Cribs Distributed Through Classes and Home Visiting



Women, Infants, and Children Nutrition (WIC)

The Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program promotes and maintains the health and well-being of nutritionally at-risk pregnant, breastfeeding, and postpartum people, infants, and children up to five years old.

In addition to prescribing specifically tailored monthly food packages to participants, an added seasonal benefit is the Farmer's Market Nutrition Program (FMNP), which provides vouchers per eligible participant to spend at local farmer's markets. Additionally, the MHD WIC Program seeks to coordinate services within the health department and community that parallel other public health priorities such as assessing for lead screening needs and referrals, offering safe sleep options as well as perinatal and child mental health resources and referrals.

MHD WIC operates at three sites, serving thousands of participants monthly, with approximately half attending the Northwest Health Center.

Website

milwaukee.gov/WIC

2024 Data Highlights

15,639 clients

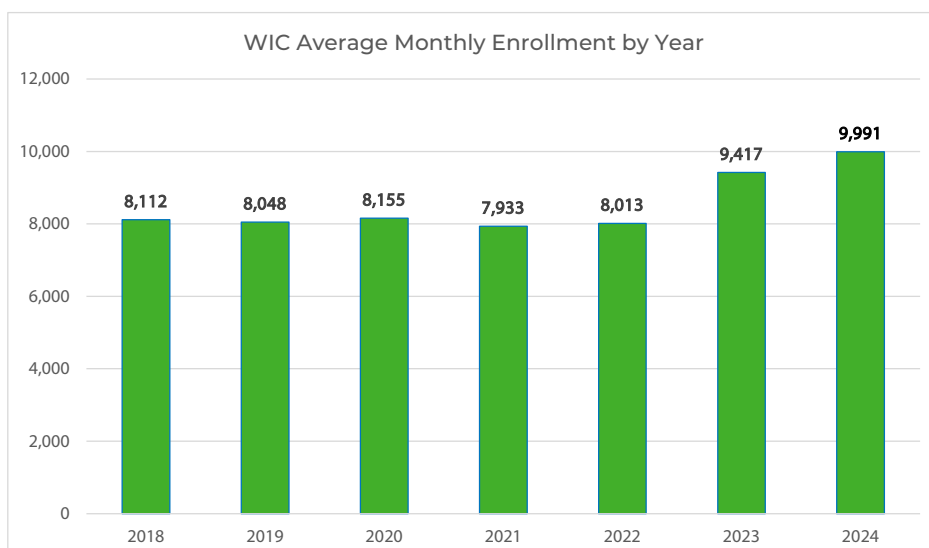
served through the
WIC program

52% of babies

breastfed through
3 months of age

35% of babies

breastfed through
6 months of age



[Visit our blog](https://milwaukee.gov/blog)

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Grants

Consumer Environmental Health (CEH)
No CEH grants for 2024

Emergency Preparedness and Environmental Health (EPEH)			
Grant Name	Funding Source	Dates of Grant Period	Amount Over Grant Period
DNR Beaches grant	Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR)	3/1/2024 - 10/01/2024	\$35,000
Public Health Emergency Preparedness Cooperative Agreement BP1	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)	7/1/2024 - 6/30/2025	\$348,009
Cities Readiness Initiative BP1		7/1/2024 - 6/30/2025	\$248,637
Public Health Emergency Preparedness Cooperative Agreement BP5		7/1/2023 - 6/30/2024	\$331,934
Cities Readiness Initiative BP5		7/1/2023 - 6/30/2024	\$249,015

Home Environmental Health (HEH)			
Grant Name	Funding Source	Dates of Grant Period	Amount Over Grant Period
ARPA grant	US Treasury	3/3/2021 - 12/31/2026	\$23,666,040
HUD grant	Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)	12/1/2023 - 11/30/2027	\$5,700,000
DHS consolidated grant	WI Department of Health Services (DHS)	1/1/2025 - 12/31/2025	\$253,643
CDBG grant	Community Development Block Grant program (CDBG)	1/1/2025 - 12/31/2025	\$1,990,000

Accomplishments

Consumer Environmental Health (CEH)

- Played a central role in supporting the 2024 Republican National Convention (RNC), working with local businesses and government agencies to ensure food safety and defense. The team's efforts were recognized by partners as among the most organized and effective, contributing to a successful event.
- Staff achieved numerous professional milestones, with five inspectors earning Certified Food Protection Manager credentials, six achieving Registered Sanitarian status, and two completing master's degrees.
- Maintained a strong presence in food safety education by presenting at conferences and community events.

Emergency Preparedness Environmental Health (EPEH)

- Increased staffing by hiring two new EPEH Coordinators through grant-funded positions
- Enhanced data tracking by updating existing platforms to improve incident reporting and epidemiological monitoring
- Formalized "swim-lane" protocols with state and City agencies to address complex environmental hazards such as vapor intrusion at brownfield sites.

Home Environmental Health (HEH)

- Strengthened enforcement through multi-agency collaboration, increasing reinspection fees and citations upheld in favor of MHD.
- Expanded contractor capacity, finalizing agreements with seven new lead abatement contractors through the RFP process.
- Improved transparency with a redesigned website, public-facing dashboards, and searchable resource databases.

Challenges

Consumer Environmental Health (CEH)

- Onboarding multiple new inspectors (about 1/3 of the team) while preparing for the RNC was resource-intensive.
- With staff at varying career stages, CEH has begun succession planning in anticipation of retirements.
- A rise in temporary events and associated food vendors created increasing demands. Managing licensing and safety compliance required extensive coordination. A new coordinator role will be added to support this growing workload.

Emergency Preparedness Environmental Health (EPEH)

- Adjusting to newly established requirements for publishing formal policies, procedures, and inter-agency agreements.
- Transitioning out of temporary staffing structures and managing the loss of COVID-19-related funding.
- Balancing routine responsibilities with the extensive coordination and planning required for the 2024 RNC.

Home Environmental Health (HEH)

- Identifying new and diverse funding sources remains a top priority. HEH continues to advocate with nonprofits, healthcare systems, and philanthropies for broader lead abatement funding.
- Advancing proactive enforcement models, including transitioning from reactive court-based enforcement to prevention-focused strategies. The team also supports escalated enforcement efforts in collaboration with HUD, DATCP, and DOJ.
- Aligning education and inspection efforts with other MHD programs and City departments to create more proactive initiatives, including lower-level blood lead interventions and programs like TRIP (Targeted Rental Inspection Program).

Consumer Environmental Health (CEH)

The Consumer Environmental Health (CEH) Program promotes public safety and consumer rights through the regulation of food service establishments, tattoo and body art facilities, and commercial weighing and measuring devices.

The Food Inspection Program conducts routine inspections of over 3,000 food service establishments, nearly 400 mobile vendors, and more than 600 temporary event vendors each year within the City of Milwaukee. In addition to inspections, CEH specialists offer food safety and sanitation training to managers, investigate complaints and foodborne illness outbreaks, review construction and remodeling plans, conduct pre-opening inspections, and develop food safety policies.

To reduce the risk of bloodborne diseases such as Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, and HIV, inspectors ensure that tattooing, permanent makeup, and body piercing services (about 80 permanent and 90 temporary facilities) adhere to strict sanitary protocols.

The Weights and Measures Program helps protect consumers by verifying the accuracy of more than 1,800 commercial weighing and measuring devices, including scales and scanners, used in retail transactions throughout the city.



Website

milwaukee.gov/CEH

2024 Data Highlights

10,638

total food inspections completed

1,469

mobile food vendor inspections completed

354

tattoo and body art inspections completed

1,114

weight and measuring device inspections completed

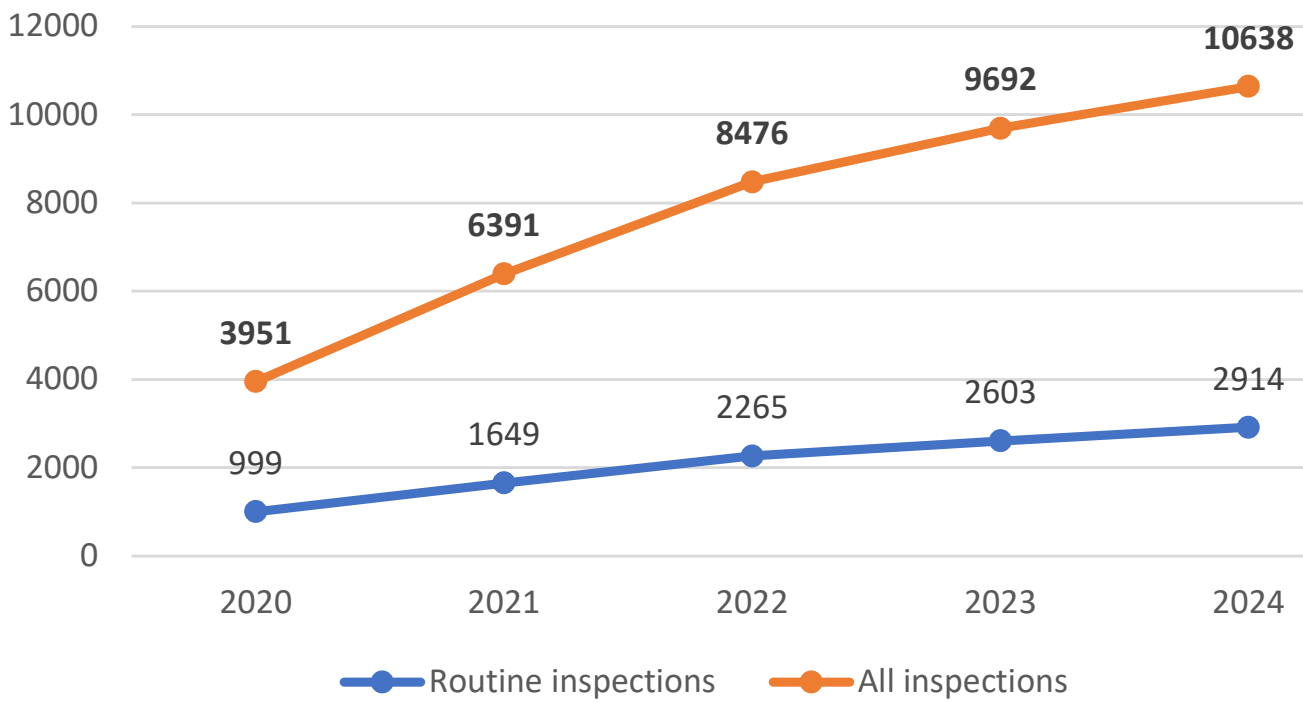
136

outreach trainings conducted

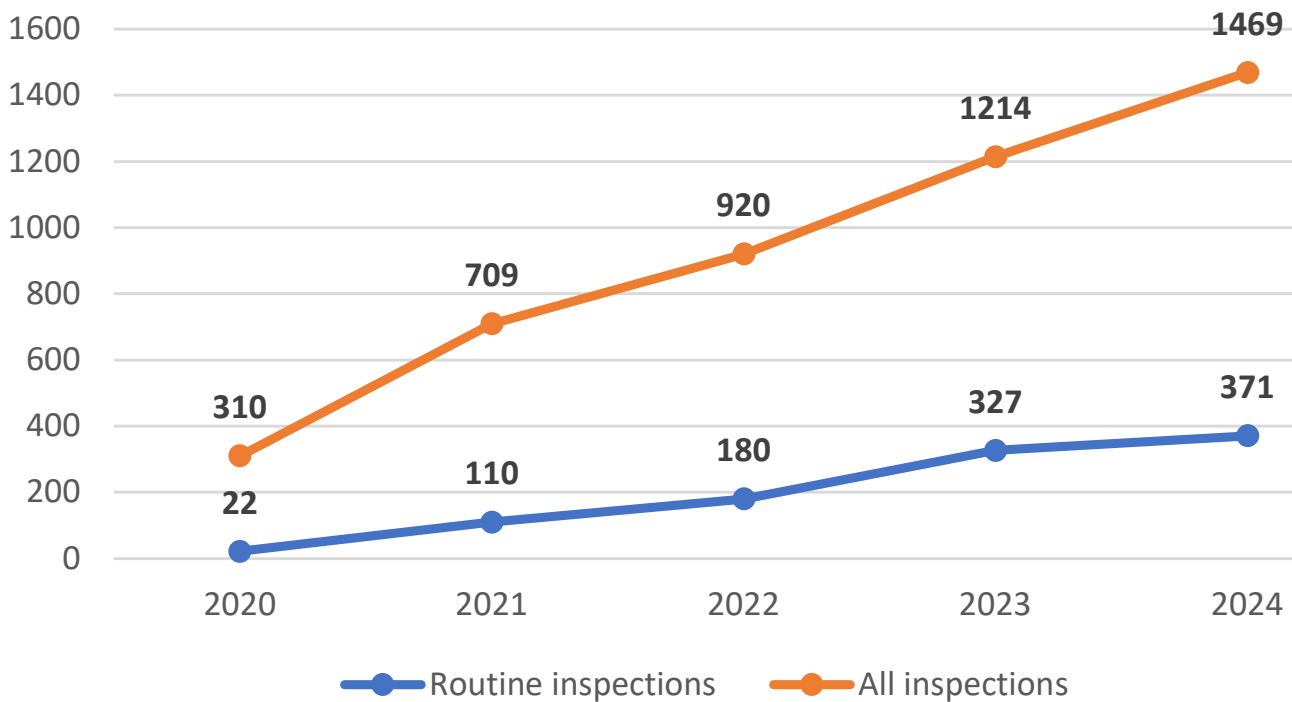
99%

Quality Assessment (QA) average rating

2024 Total Food Inspections



2024 Total Mobile Food Inspections



Emergency Preparedness Environmental Health (EPEH)

In 2024, EPEH staff played a central role in preparing for the Republican National Convention, contributing to U.S. Secret Service subcommittees, helping develop the Interagency Consequence Management Plan, and coordinating with local, state, and federal partners. Internally, the team led department-wide trainings on mass dispensing protocols to ensure readiness.

Beyond the RNC, emergency preparedness efforts included responses to extreme cold events, where staff supported shelter operations and coordinated life-saving services for residents without power. Following an emergency lockdown at the Zeidler Municipal Building, new response protocols were developed, emphasizing after-action reporting. The team also supported the annual Back-to-School Health Fair, offering vital resources to families across Milwaukee.

EPEH staff investigated major public health incidents such as a Legionnaires’ disease outbreak, mass rabies exposures, and a localized Hepatitis A outbreak requiring vaccination and outreach. They oversaw HVAC improvements at local shelters to reduce airborne pathogen risks and collaborated with partners to enhance beach safety through better surveillance and alerts. Additionally, new protocols were created with state and local agencies to address health risks on urban brownfields before redevelopment.

Website

milwaukee.gov/EPEH

2024 Data Highlights

117

rabies exposure investigations

265

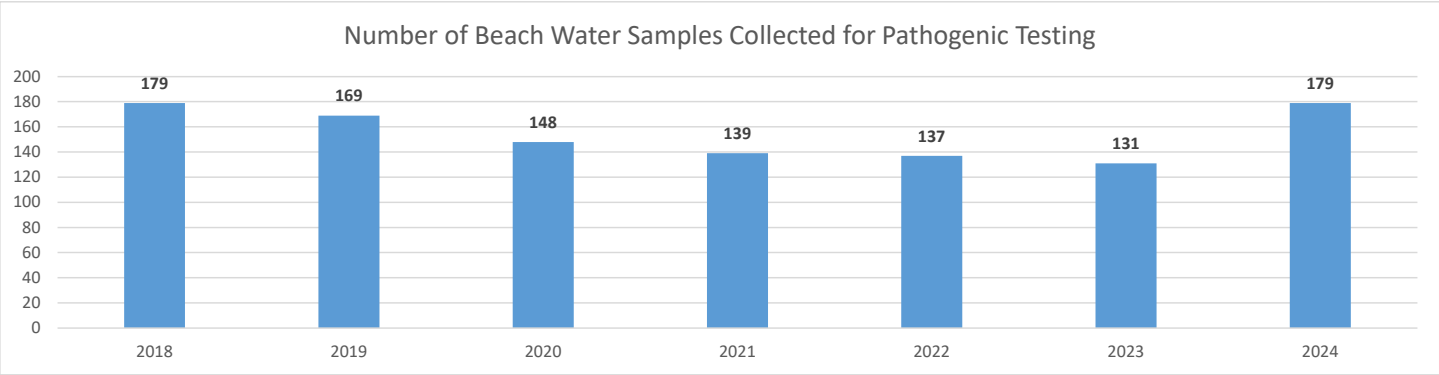
phone consultations with concerned citizens about environmental hazards

179

beach water samples collected for testing

7

large-scale public health urgent responses



Home Environmental Health (HEH)

Innovative lead abatement funding

In 2024, the Home Environmental Health (HEH) program secured new emergency funding for lead abatement to support the most complex cases, particularly those not eligible under existing programs. This last-resort funding fills critical gaps in service and helps address ongoing lead hazards in vulnerable households. HEH successfully transitioned American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds from SDC to a new competitive RFP process for contractor selection. Additionally, a separate HUD RFP increased contractor capacity, and both funding streams supported a new MHD staff position to oversee renovation inspections, develop scopes of work, and estimate project costs.

Electronic Record Implementation and Optimization

HEH continued optimizing its electronic data management systems in 2024, following the full transition from paper to digital records in 2023. Enhancements included the launch of a new Lead Inspection Risk Assessment (LIRA) template to streamline report generation and the integration of Power BI dashboards into Accela for improved reporting and transparency. ARPA-funded field tablets were deployed for easier inspection documentation, permitting, and order management.

Escalated enforcement

To increase private-sector participation in lead abatement efforts, HEH hired two housing compliance officers to implement pragmatic enforcement strategies. These officers focus on securing monetary contributions from property owners and addressing cases involving landlords with histories of lead poisoning violations. Referrals for egregious violations were made to external agencies, including the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP), and the Department of Justice (DOJ).

Clinical

In 2024, HEH nursing staff lowered the threshold for clinical intervention from 10 micrograms per deciliter of blood lead to any detectable level. Parents and caregivers of affected children are now offered voluntary education and outreach. A social worker was also added to the team to provide more comprehensive care planning and connect families with available resources for complex cases.

Website

milwaukee.gov/HEH

2024 Data Highlights

344

lead inspections
completed

315

lead abatement
permits issued

153 new cases

referred for nurse
case management

8,766

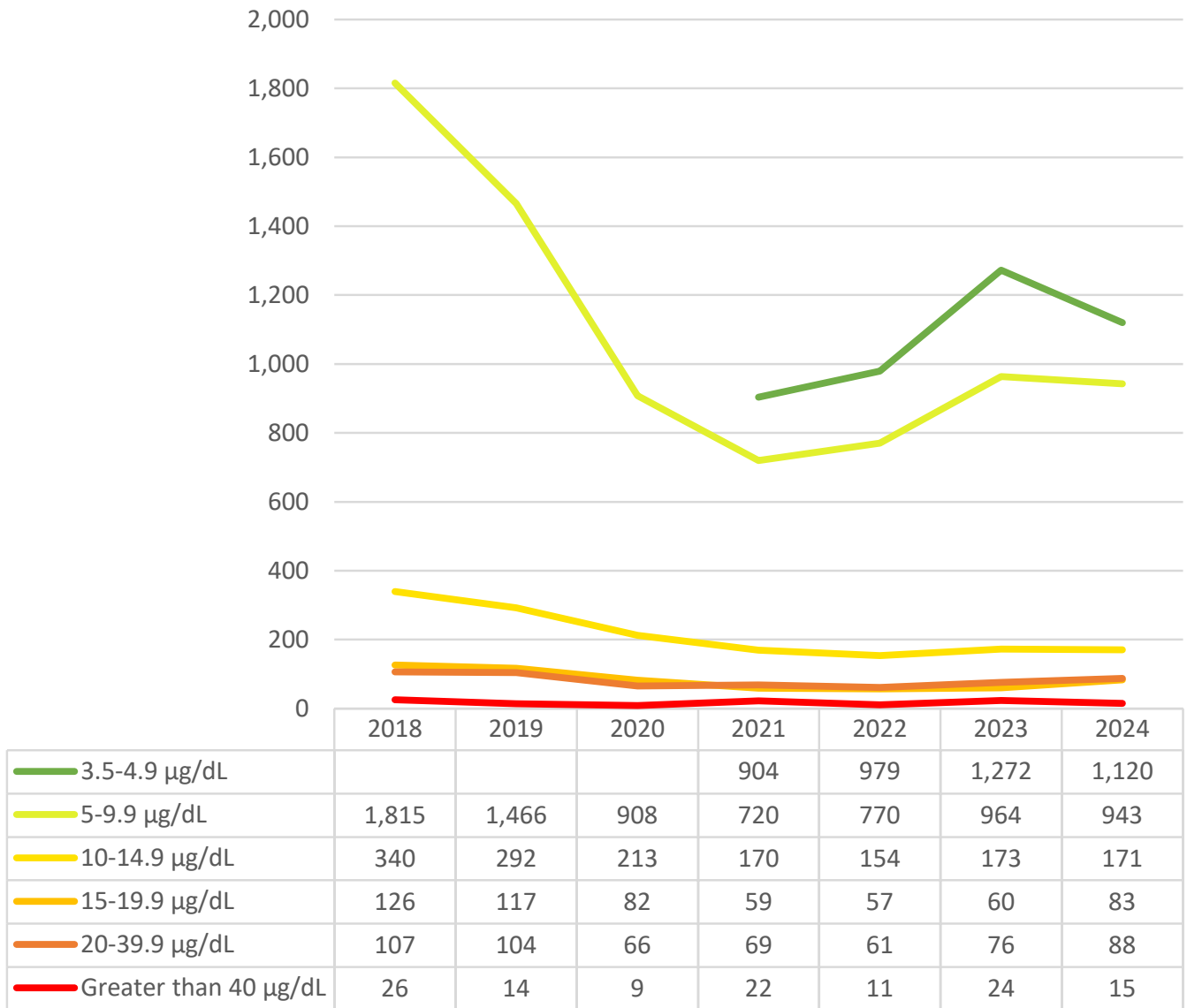
nurse case management
outreach interventions

29,609

total reported
blood lead tests



Blood Lead Testing of Children Under 72 Months of Age



* In late 2021, the CDC lowered their BLRV from 5 µg/dL to 3.5 µg/dL.

CLINICAL SERVICES

Grants

Communicable Disease Program (CD)			
Grant Name	Funding Source	Dates of Grant Period	Amount Over Grant Period
Communicable Disease Prevention	WI Department of Health Services (DHS)	7/1/2023 - 6/30/2024	\$28,900
Immunization Action Plan	WI Department of Health Services (DHS)	1/1/2024 - 12/31/2024	\$231,410
Mpox Crisis Response	WI Department of Health Services (DHS)	2/1/2023 - 1/31/2025	\$90,000

Milwaukee Breast and Cervical Cancer Awareness Program (MBCCAP)			
Grant Name	Funding Source	Dates of Grant Period	Amount Over Grant Period
Wisconsin Well Woman Program (WWWP)	WI Department of Health Services (DHS)	7/1/2024 - 6/30/2025	\$490,000

Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH)			
Grant Name	Funding Source	Dates of Grant Period	Amount Over Grant Period
Womens Health Family Planning	WI Department of Health Services (DHS)	1/1/2024 - 12/31/2024	\$241,792
HIV Prevention and Partner Services	WI Department of Health Services (DHS)	1/1/2024 - 12/31/2024	\$51,244
STD PCHD (Strengthening STD Prevention and Control for Health Departments)	WI Department of Health Services (DHS)	1/1/2024 - 12/31/2024	\$237,362

Accomplishments

Communicable Disease (CD)

- Responded to a significant increase in pertussis cases, completing follow-up on 88 confirmed cases.
- Collaborated with the Immunization Program to rapidly respond to a case of Hepatitis A in a food handler, launching vaccination clinics for potentially exposed individuals.
- Successfully case managed and treated 20 active tuberculosis (TB) cases.

Milwaukee Breast and Cervical Cancer Awareness Program (MBCCAP)

- Exceeded programmatic deliverables for 2024.
- Hosted two public health interns to support workforce development and program capacity.
- Coordinated the removal of the on-site mammography unit, a necessary step in shifting services to community provider partnerships.

Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH)

- Expanded services to include Hepatitis C screening and Doxycycline Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (DoxyPEP), providing clients with additional tools for preventing the spread of infection and making informed decisions about their health.
- Stabilized Disease Intervention Specialist (DIS) staffing and completed new hire training, allowing the team to link 92% of individuals newly diagnosed with HIV to care within one month.
- Increased client access by improving visit efficiency and expanding staff capacity, including the hiring of a new Public Health Nurse and a Nurse Practitioner.

Challenges

Communicable Disease (CD)

- Continued misinformation about vaccine safety and efficacy presented a barrier to immunization efforts. The team remains focused on providing evidence-based information and promoting vaccination benefits throughout the community.

Milwaukee Breast and Cervical Cancer Awareness Program (MBCCAP)

- Staffing shortages impacted service continuity and program capacity.
- A reduction in funding limited operational flexibility.
- Ongoing billing issues with external healthcare systems created reimbursement and coordination challenges.

Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH)

- Limited staff capacity restricted participation in community outreach events, though the team continued to prioritize high-impact opportunities.
- Ongoing Public Health Nurse vacancies challenged the program's ability to meet increasing client demand.

Communicable Disease (CD)

The Communicable Disease (CD) Program investigates reports of communicable diseases in the City of Milwaukee. Surveillance, reporting, and control of reportable communicable diseases are core public health functions mandated by Wisconsin State Statute and Administrative Code.

The program responds to a wide range of illnesses, including vaccine-preventable diseases (e.g., mumps, pertussis), vector-borne diseases (e.g., Zika, Lyme disease), and gastrointestinal infections (e.g., shigella, salmonella). CD staff conduct disease investigations and outbreak responses, perform contact tracing, monitor local trends, provide education, and distribute prophylactic medications when appropriate.

Website

milwaukee.gov/CDPC

2024 Data Highlights

1,503

case follow-ups
by CD program

10,602

immunizations
provided



Tuberculosis Prevention

The Tuberculosis Prevention and Care Clinic (TPCC) uses evidence-based practices to ensure timely identification, evaluation, and treatment of individuals affected by TB.

Each case of TB presents a potential outbreak, and the program is designed to prevent transmission by identifying individuals with TB disease and those who have been exposed. TB continues to disproportionately affect people of color, foreign-born individuals (including resettled refugees), individuals of low socioeconomic status, and other marginalized populations.



Immunization Program

Immunizations remain one of the most effective tools for preventing disease and protecting community health. MHD's Immunization Program works to maintain high childhood vaccination rates while reducing disparities among racial and ethnic groups.

In 2024, the program hosted 58 community-based clinics offering COVID-19 and influenza vaccines, as well as routine childhood and adult immunizations. Services were provided at weekly walk-in clinics and through partnerships with local organizations. The program also held educational symposiums for schools, childcare centers, and healthcare providers to support compliance with Wisconsin immunization laws.

MAKE TIME FOR YOUR HEALTH

Make a plan to get your flu shot.
Talk to your healthcare provider to learn more.

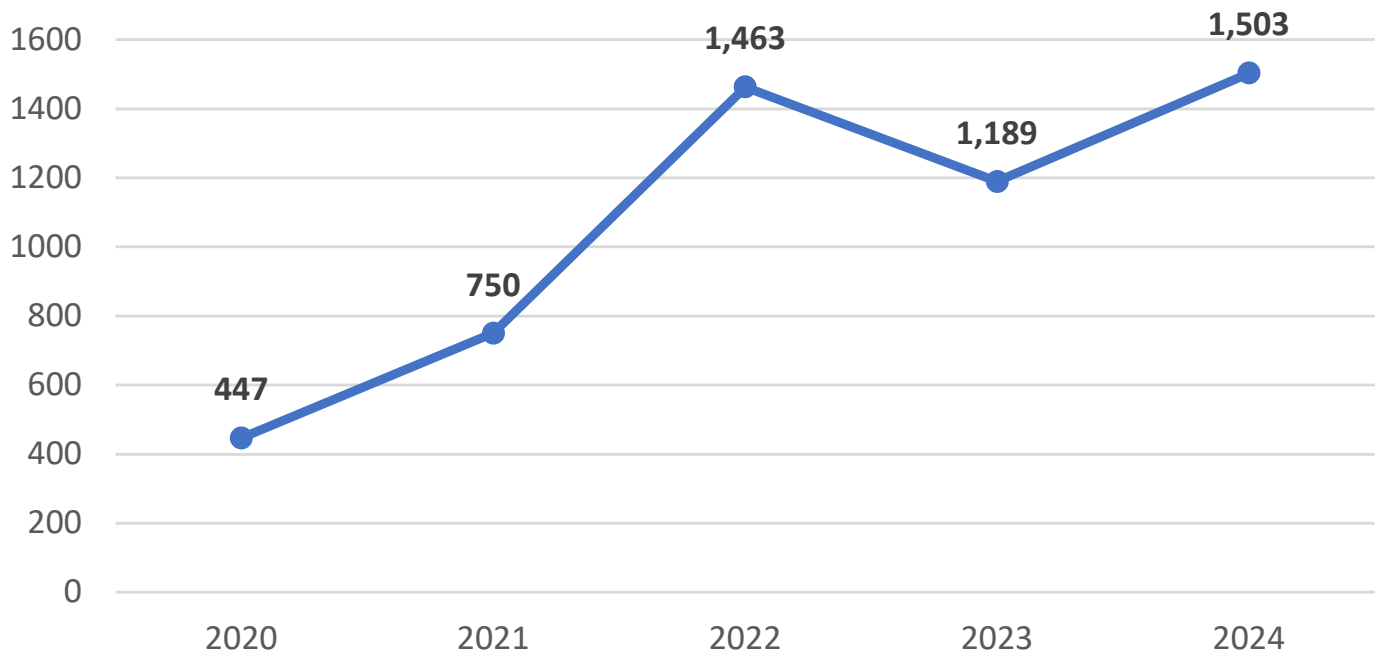
More resources at
milwaukee.gov/Flu

 CITY OF MILWAUKEE
HEALTH DEPARTMENT



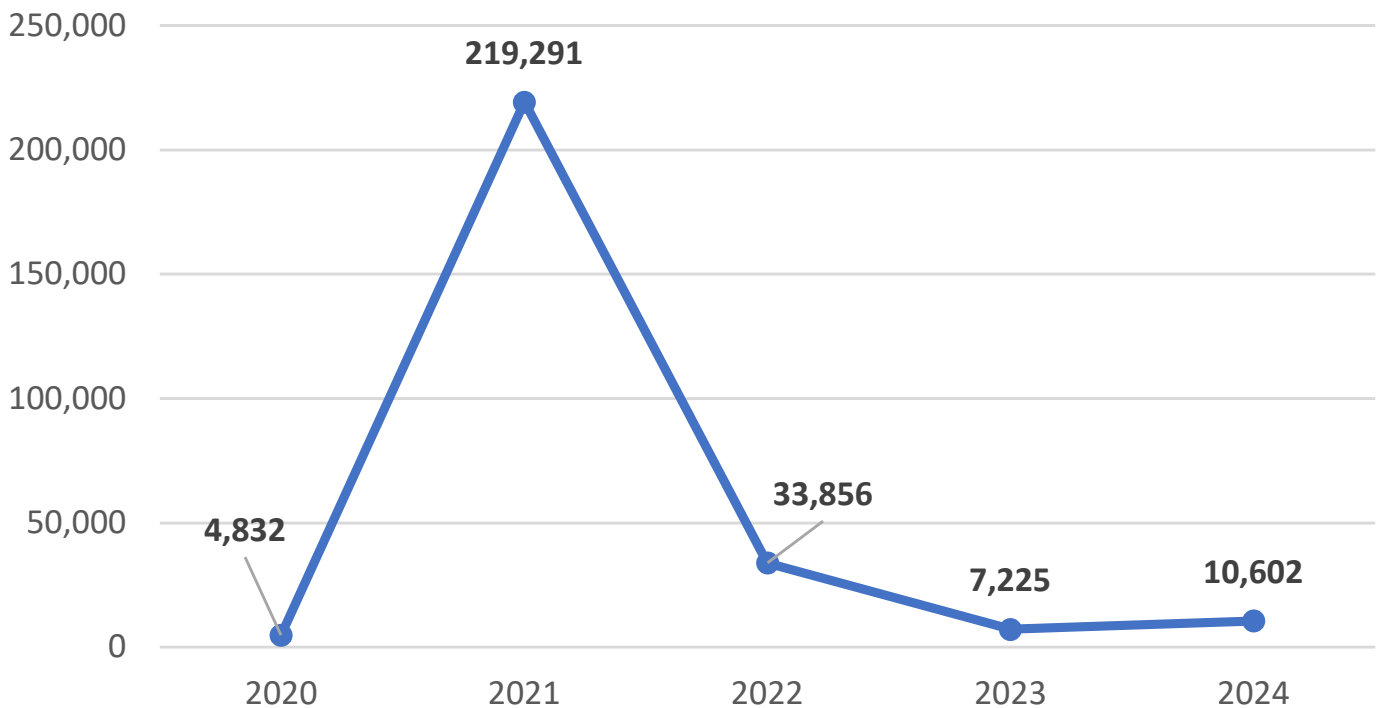
*MCTS Immunization campaign - Winter 2024

Number of Reportable CD Cases Followed-up by CD Program



** These numbers do not include COVID-19, influenza associated hospitalizations, tuberculosis, or sexually transmitted infections. Not all CDs reported require a follow-up.*

Number of Immunizations Provided



** These numbers now include COVID-19 immunizations, a change from 2022.*

Milwaukee Breast and Cervical Cancer Awareness Program (MBCCAP)

The Milwaukee Breast and Cervical Cancer Awareness Program (MBCCAP) serves as a care coordination partner for the Wisconsin Department of Health Services' Wisconsin Well Woman Program (WWWP). MBCCAP enrolls eligible individuals into the WWWP, which covers the cost of breast and cervical cancer screenings, diagnostic services, and case management. The program also helps navigate individuals to participating provider sites for care and support throughout the screening and treatment process.

Program Eligibility:

- Open to low-income Wisconsin residents
- Open to women, transgender women (who have taken or are taking hormones), and transgender men (who have not undergone a bilateral mastectomy and/or have not undergone a total hysterectomy)
- Ages 45-64 (some exceptions for ages 35-39)
- No health insurance (or have health insurance that does not cover screenings and/or follow-ups, or are not able to pay the deductible or co-payment)

Website

milwaukee.gov/MBCCAP

2024 Data Highlights

1,539

breast cancer
screenings

88

cervical cancer
screenings





**HEALTHY MOMS
HEALTHY DAUGHTERS**

Fight breast and cervical cancer with
regularly scheduled mammograms
and Pap smears

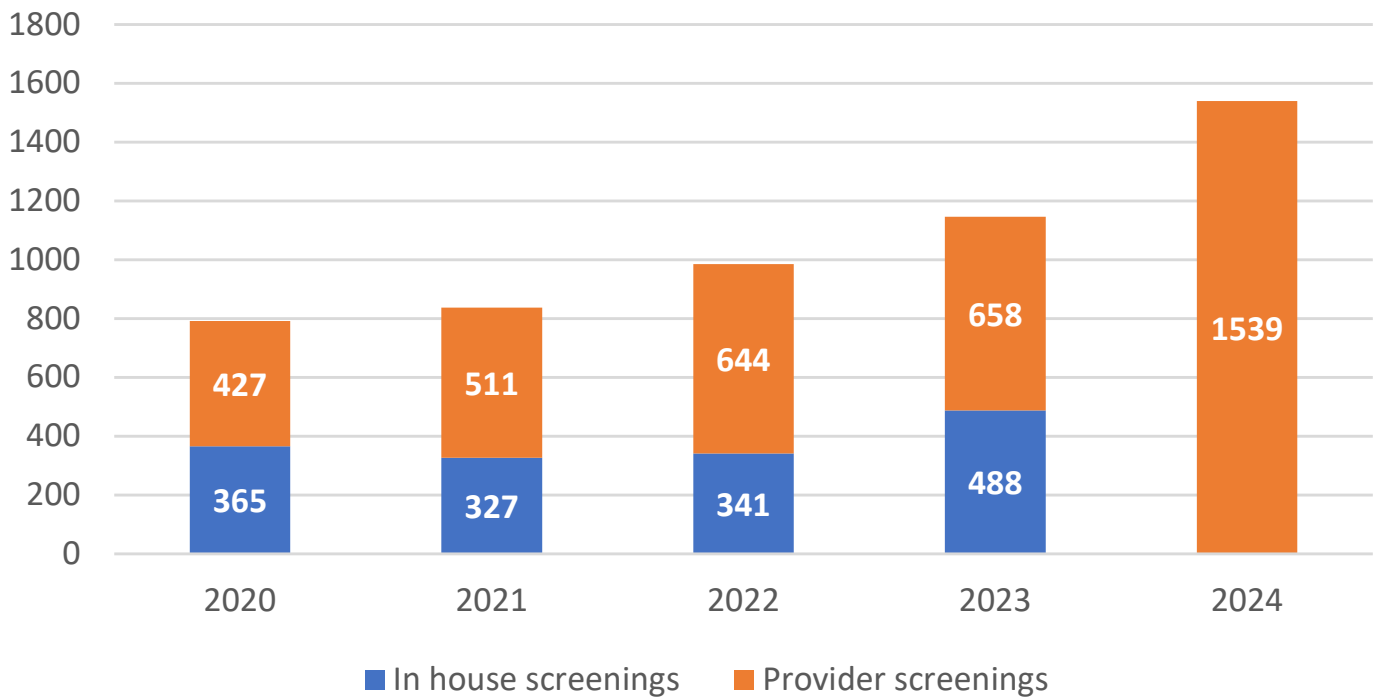


**FREE SERVICES WITH THE
WELL WOMAN PROGRAM!**

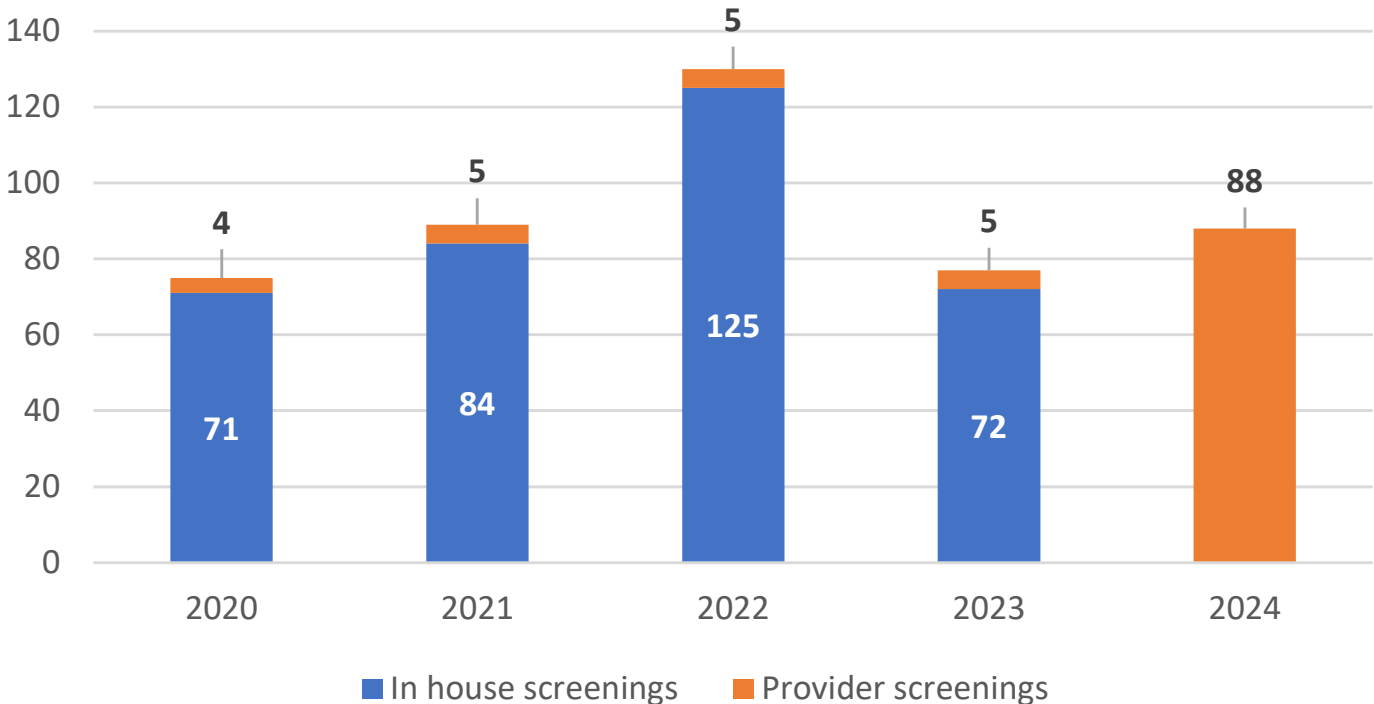
ELIGIBILITY:
Women ages 35 - 64
Low income
No insurance / underinsured

* MCTS MBCCAP Campaign - Spring 2024

Breast Cancer Screenings



Cervical Cancer Screenings



* MBCCAP switched to a coordination-only role in early 2024

Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH)

The Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) Program, located at the Keenan Health Center, provides comprehensive sexual health services through a multidisciplinary team that includes a nurse practitioner, public health nurses, support staff, and Disease Intervention Specialists (DIS). The team works to prevent and control the spread of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and to support patients in managing their reproductive health.

The Keenan Health Center offers walk-in services to patients 12 years and older at no cost, including STI testing and treatment, emergency contraception, birth control, pregnancy testing, and more. Patients receive education on healthy relationships, risk reduction strategies, and decision-making related to sexual health.

The DIS team conducts contact tracing and case follow-up for individuals diagnosed or suspected of having reportable STIs such as gonorrhea, chlamydia, syphilis, and HIV. The team is responsible for syphilis follow-up across the Southeastern Region of Wisconsin and HIV case follow-up within Milwaukee County. DIS staff notify partners, provide STI education, and link clients to appropriate testing and treatment services.

Together, the SRH clinical and DIS teams deliver critical services to reduce STI incidence and educate both patients and providers on best practices in sexual health care and prevention throughout Milwaukee.

Website

milwaukee.gov/SRH

2024 Data Highlights

9,216

clinic visits

4,318

people tested for STIs

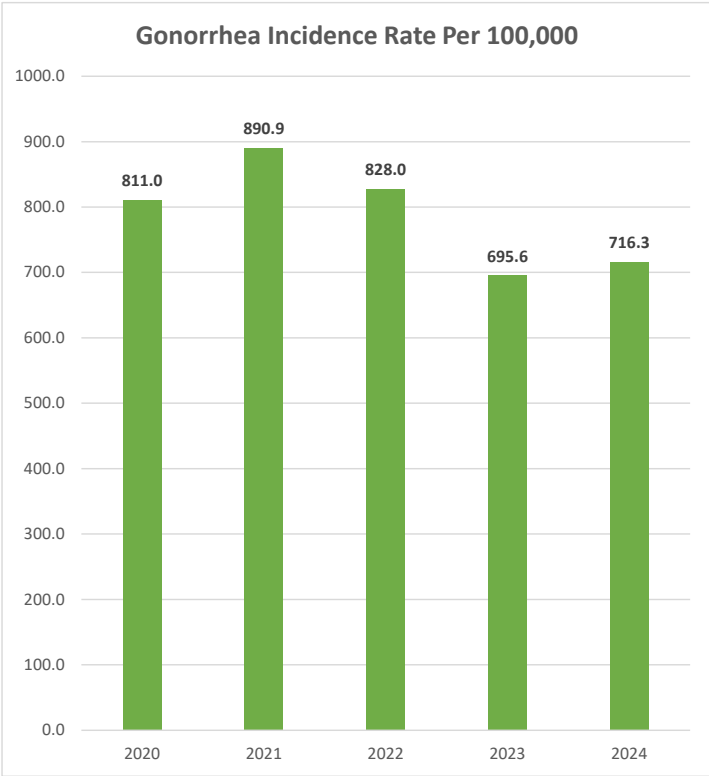
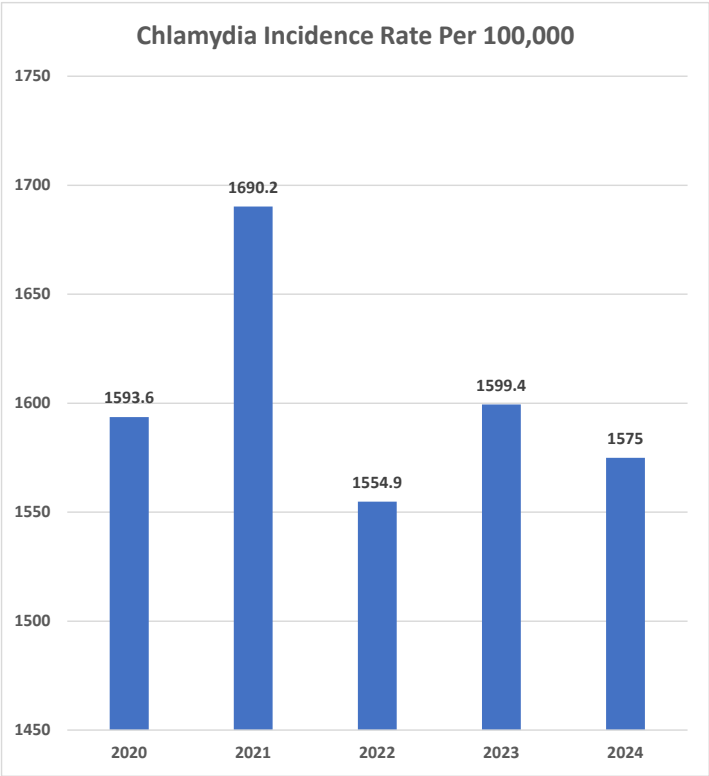
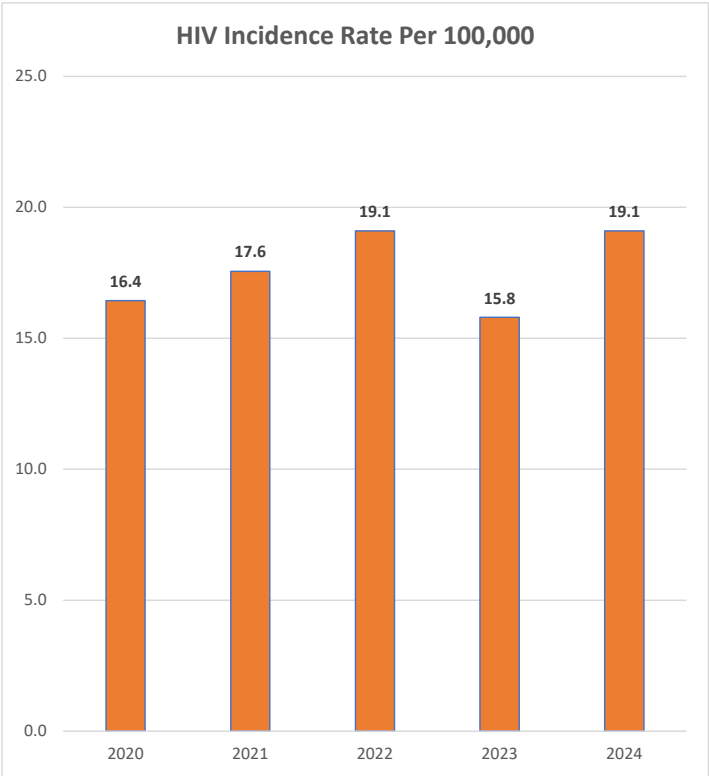
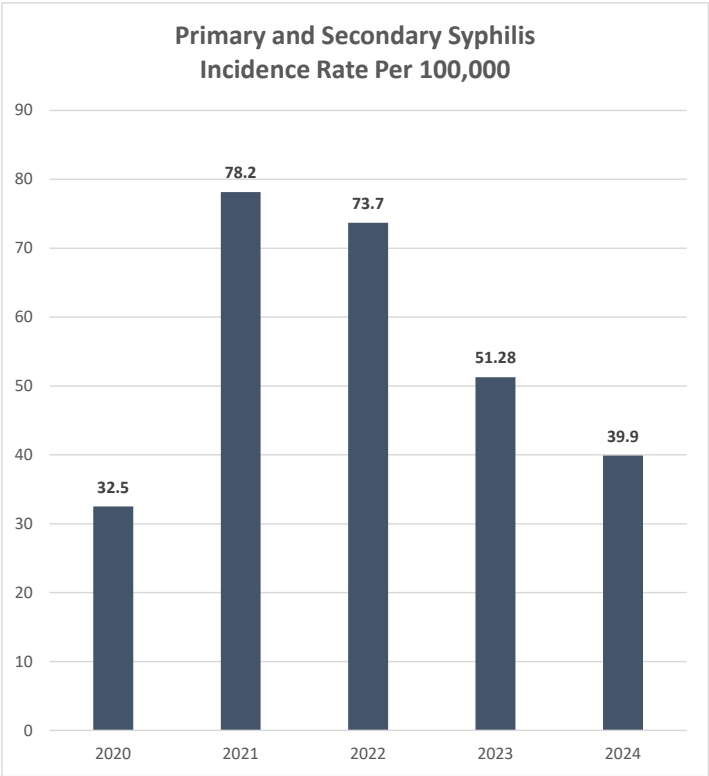
144,988

condoms distributed

858

people provided with emergency contraception





CLINICAL SERVICES

Health Department Laboratory (MHDL)

The City of Milwaukee Health Department Laboratory (MHDL) plays a central role in protecting Milwaukee's health by detecting environmental hazards, tracking infectious diseases, and supporting emergency preparedness.

Lead Testing and Community Health

MHDL supports the Wisconsin Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program by testing samples for the presence of lead in water, buildings, and other environments. This work is essential to identifying and removing lead hazards in children's lives.

Sexual Health and Disease Prevention

The laboratory operates a satellite site at the Keenan Sexual Health Clinic, providing rapid STI testing and generating critical data to support STI control efforts in Milwaukee and across Wisconsin. MHDL also collaborates with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to monitor antibiotic resistance.

Public Health Surveillance

In partnership with the Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene and the Wisconsin Department of Health Services, MHDL conducts wastewater surveillance to detect early signs of disease outbreaks. The lab currently monitors flu, COVID-19, and RSV, with real-time data made available to the public (view this data at milwaukee.gov/wastewater).

Emergency and Bioterrorism Response

As part of the CDC's Laboratory Response Network, MHDL offers real-time identification of biothreats, supporting first responders in managing disease outbreaks and bioterrorism risks.

Training Future Scientists

MHDL collaborates with local clinics and academic institutions to provide training opportunities for the next generation of public health scientists.

Website

milwaukee.gov/MHDLab

2024 Data Highlights

8,814

syphilis tests performed

17,434

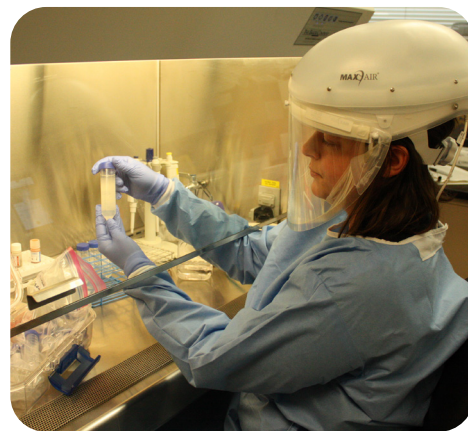
gonorrhea tests performed

950

mycoplasma tests performed

10,546

lead tests performed
(dust, paint, soil)



Grants

Grant Name	Funding Source	Dates of Grant Period	Amount Over Grant Period
ELC COVID Enhancing Detection	Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)	1/1/2023 - 7/31/2026	\$4,177,955
Phylodynamics		9/30/2022 - 9/29/2023	\$388,870
ELC Advanced Molecular Detection		8/1/2021 - 7/31/2024	\$1,338,256
Strengthening HAI and AR Program Capacity		8/1/2022 - 7/1/2024	\$302,812
Strengthening the US Response to Resistant Gonorrhea		8/1/2023 - 7/31/2024	\$462,916
Public Health Emergency Preparedness		7/1/2023 - 6/30/2024	\$195,000

Accomplishments

- Successfully hosted the Annual Conference for the Association of Public Health Laboratories. We also Hosted the National Biowatch Program during the Republican National Convention.
- Significantly expanded the lab's testing capabilities by adding Flu and RSV to the MHD Wastewater Dashboard as well as providing new Hepatitis C testing at Keenan Sexual Health Clinic.
- The lab is now fully staffed, significantly enhancing our ability to serve the community!

Challenges

- Downtown access was limited during events like the Republican National Convention. This challenge required adjustments to technology and work activities to ensure team productivity in remote settings.
- Now that we are fully staffed, we face the challenge of integrating new employees and building a cohesive team. This involves comprehensive onboarding and deliberate team-building efforts to create an inclusive and connected environment.
- Planning and coordinating several ongoing lab construction projects was challenging. These projects are essential for upgrading our facilities but can disrupt daily work.

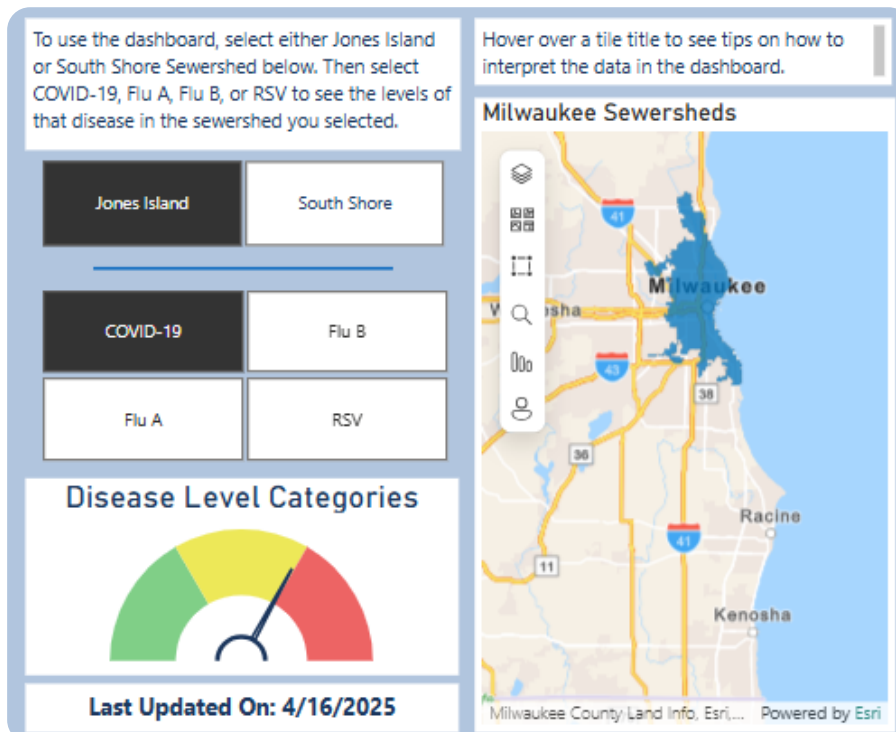
Wastewater dashboard updates

In addition to COVID 19, the dashboard can now track case trends of influenza (flu) and Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV).

Preventing the spread of COVID-19 and other respiratory illnesses remains a priority for MHD. The wastewater dashboard is a disease surveillance tool used to direct public health and safety messaging around community levels of respiratory illness. While wastewater surveillance has been used around the globe for decades, public health rapidly adopted it during the pandemic as a form of predictive surveillance to supplement case rates. Working closely with the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District (MMSD), MHD can track case levels of COVID-19, Flu, and RSV by leveraging data gathered from the Jones Island and South Shore sewersheds.

Why we are using wastewater surveillance?

- Respiratory illness viruses can be found in wastewater days before sick people display symptoms (if they display signs at all).
- Wastewater data makes it possible to see changes in respiratory illness cases before they happen.
- Knowing when cases are changing can give health agencies, clinics, and community members an early warning to prepare for rises in respiratory illness levels and reduce their overall impact.



**The Stoplight Warning System allows viewers to easily see when respiratory illness levels are low, moderate, or high, and quickly connect those with tangible protective measures they can take.*

How wastewater surveillance works



When people get sick, they shed viral genetic material in their waste. When people flush, the wastewater is collected at a local treatment facility.



MMSD collects wastewater samples from the Jones Island and South Shore sewersheds twice a week and sends them to the health department lab for testing.



The lab tests the samples to determine the amount of respiratory illness present in the community.

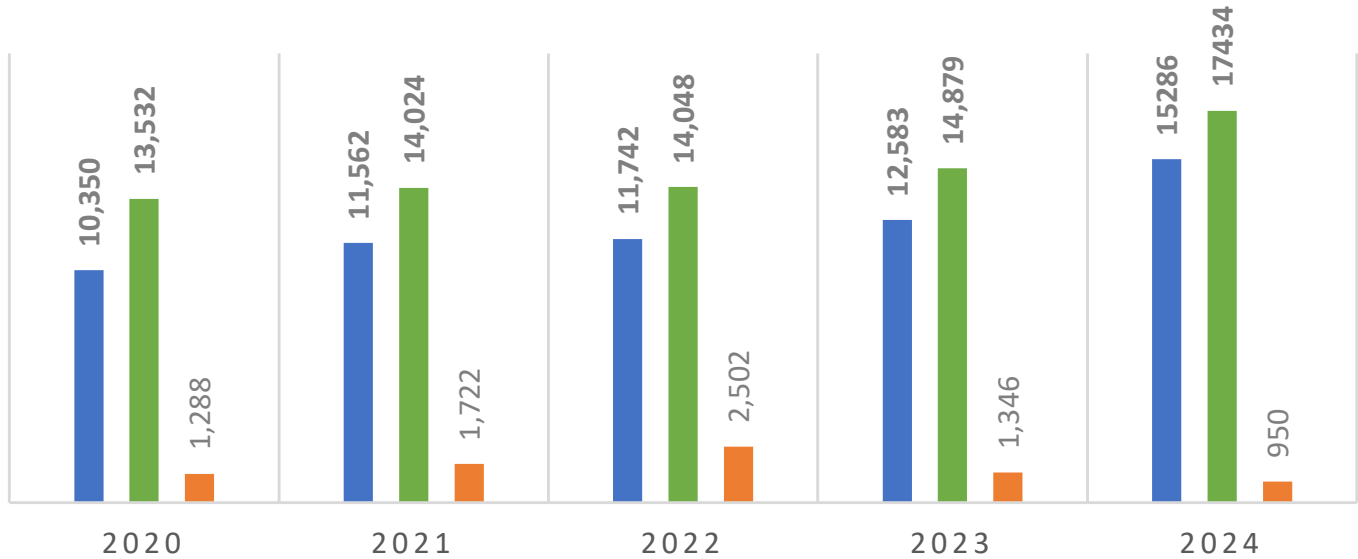


The data is recorded in the wastewater dashboard to monitor how disease levels are changing over time.

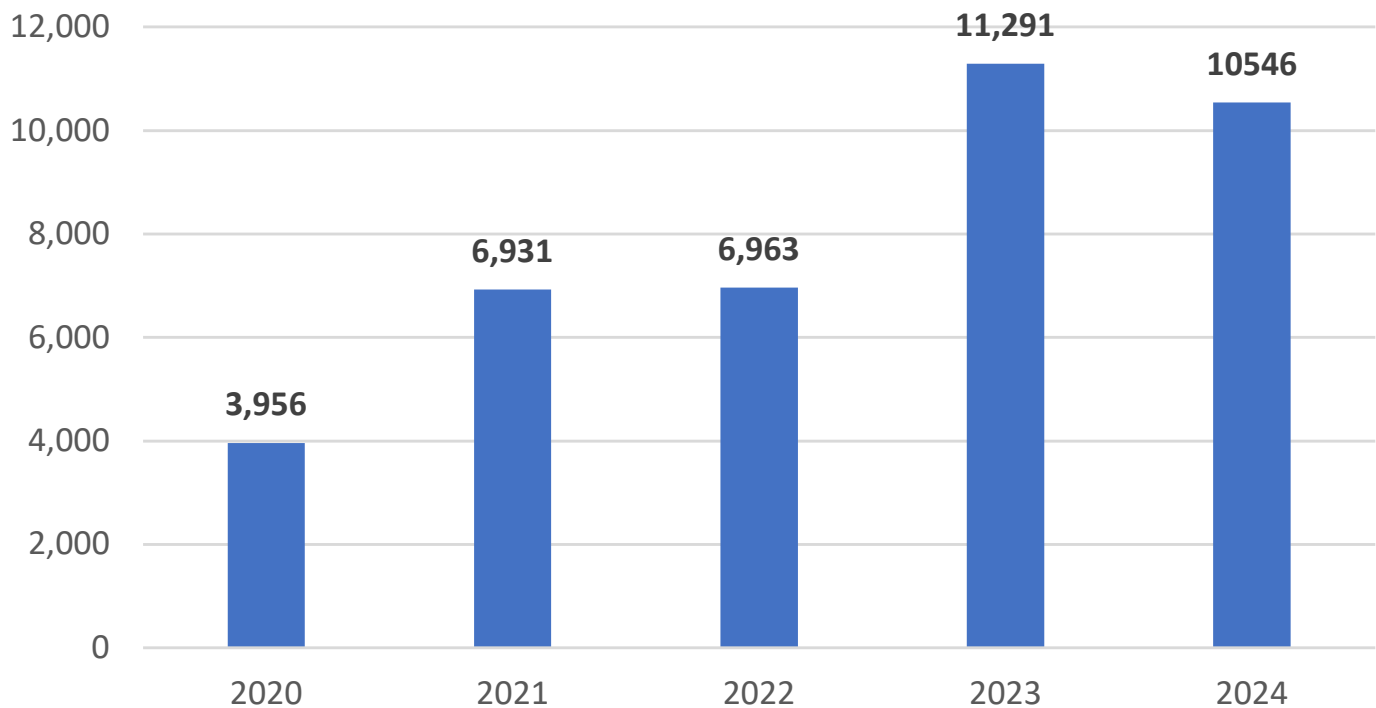
Visit the dashboard online at milwaukee.gov/Wastewater

Tests Performed: Sexually Transmitted Illnesses

■ Chlamydia ■ Gonorrhea ■ Mycoplasma



Lead Tests Performed: Water, Dust, Soil



POLICY, INNOVATION, AND EQUITY (PIE)

The Policy, Innovation, and Equity (PIE) Division leads the Milwaukee Health Department’s efforts to align internal systems, community partnerships, and citywide planning with health equity and innovation in public health practice. PIE provides policy analysis, data and research support, strategic planning, workforce development, and marketing and communications services across all MHD programs.

In 2024, the division continued to drive citywide health initiatives, including development and implementation of the Community Health Assessment (CHA), the Community Health Improvement Plan (MKE Elevate), MHD’s Strategic Plan, Annual Report, Workforce Development Plan, and the Performance Management and Quality Improvement Plan. These efforts are essential to maintaining national public health accreditation and ensuring the department remains responsive to Milwaukee’s evolving health needs.

PIE also supports the department’s work in emerging and cross-cutting areas such as community resilience, food systems, housing, lead prevention, maternal and child health, and mental health. The division collaborates with city departments, elected officials, and community organizations to promote policy, systems, and environmental changes that address root causes of health inequities. In addition, PIE manages internal and external communications, including digital outreach, public campaigns, and media relations.

2024 Data Highlights

160

open records requests

2,502

narcan kits distributed

5,845

fentanyl test strips distributed

950,000

MHD website visits

828,000

social media Impressions

Grants

Grant Name	Funding Source	Dates of Grant Period	Amount Over Grant Period
Preventive Health Grant	WI Department of Health Services (DHS)	10/1/2023 - 9/ 30/2024	\$57,000
SNAP-Ed Grant		12/1/2023 - 11/ 1/2024	\$20,000
Strengthening U.S. Public Health Infrastructure, Workforce, & Data Systems	Centers for Disease Control (CDC)	5/26/2021 - 5/31/2026	\$9,778,908
CDC Disparities Grant		11/29/2022 -11/30/2027	\$6,639,489

PIE Responsibilities

Data and Evaluation

- Provide monitoring and surveillance of public health issues through the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data
 - Assess and monitor population health by analyzing data and communicating findings so that data can be used for action & decision making
 - Build dashboards, make maps, write code and visualize data to help educate the community
 - Oversee the implementation and utilization of the Electronic Health Record (EHR)
 - Develop the 3-Year Community Health Assessment (CHA)
 - Develop the department's Annual Report
 - Develop and manage departmental key performance indicators and performance management
-

Health Strategy

- Utilize data to drive policy & programmatic decisions that improve health outcomes
 - Develop and implement methods to track progress on MHDs and the community's health goals and objectives as articulated in the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) and Strategic Plan
 - Identify and collaborate with community partners to improve efficiency and effectiveness of public health efforts
 - Create and maintain strategic partners with academic institutions to foster workforce development and public health research
 - Provide tools and resources to help elected officials, community residents, and other stakeholders understand the health challenges faced by Milwaukee residents, including education around the social determinants of health and the creation of data dashboards
 - Monitor and analyze policy initiatives and research at the city, state, and federal level and provide policy recommendations
 - Staff, coordinate, and/or lead public health initiatives (Substance Misuse, Mental Health, Food Insecurity, Maternal & Child Health, COVID-19 Response)
-

Marketing and Communications

- Oversee internal and external communications strategies
- Maintain MHD website and social media platforms
- Relay timely and pertinent public health information in the form of press releases, social media, reports, briefs, etc.



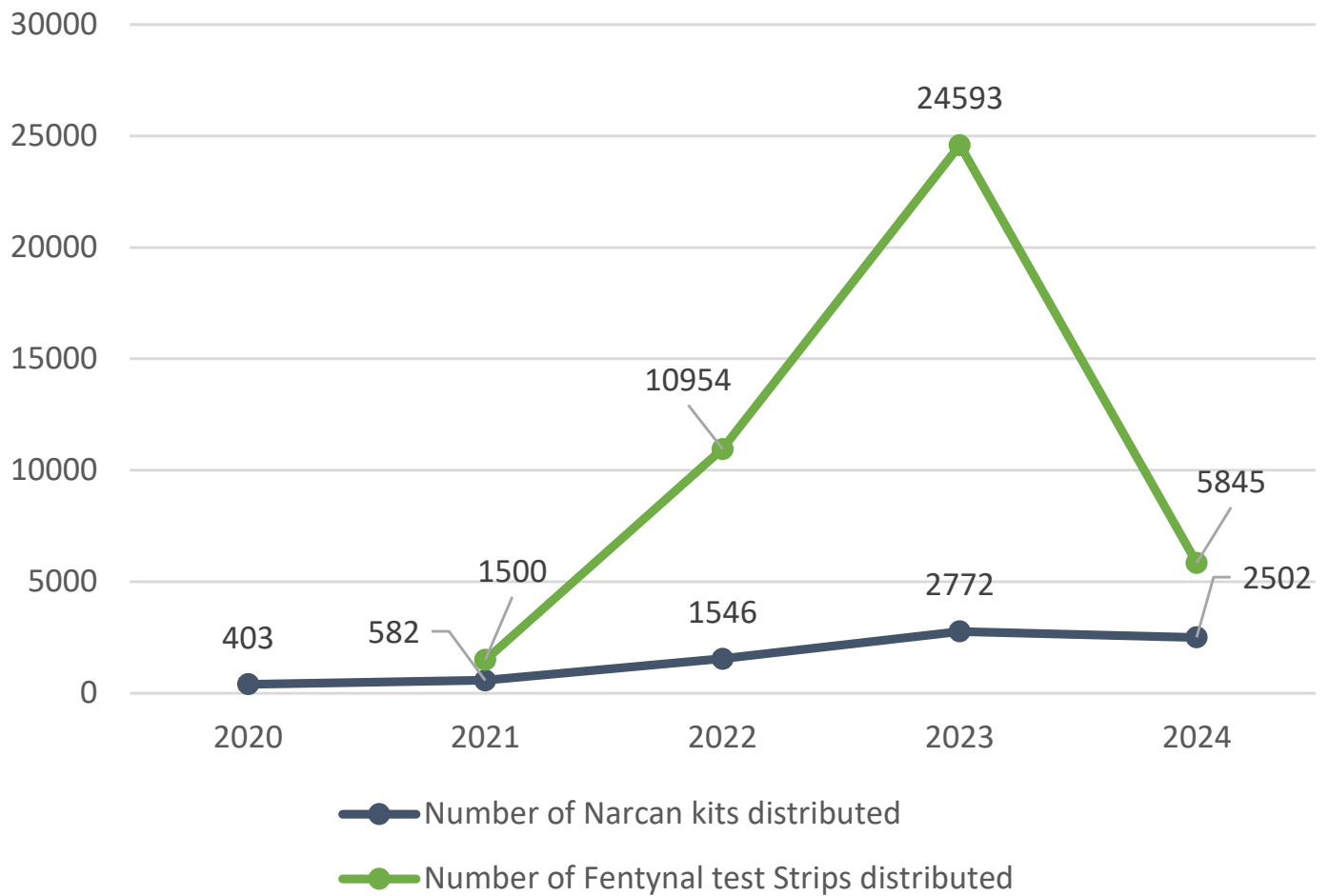
Accomplishments

- Led the Public Health Surveillance Workgroup for the Republican National Convention, developing a Surveillance Concept of Operations Plan in partnership with local, county, and state stakeholders. The team monitored surveillance activity citywide and provided daily Situation Reports to the Command Center during the event.
- Successfully collaborated with strategists, data team leads, action teams, and community partners to refine MKE Elevate strategies and develop clear, equity-focused SMARTIE (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound, Inclusive, and Equitable) goals as part of the Community Health Improvement Plan.
- Introduced MHD's inaugural Racial Equity Report to the Board of Health in October 2024, aligning with broader efforts to advance equity in public health practice.
- Advanced departmental performance management by working with divisions to establish Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) aligned with program goals and community outcomes. These metrics support data-informed decision-making and enhance transparency and accountability.
- As part of our Racial Equity Initiative, MHD continues to provide monthly caring Conversations for staff, ensuring safe and confidential discussion-based sessions on advancing health equity.

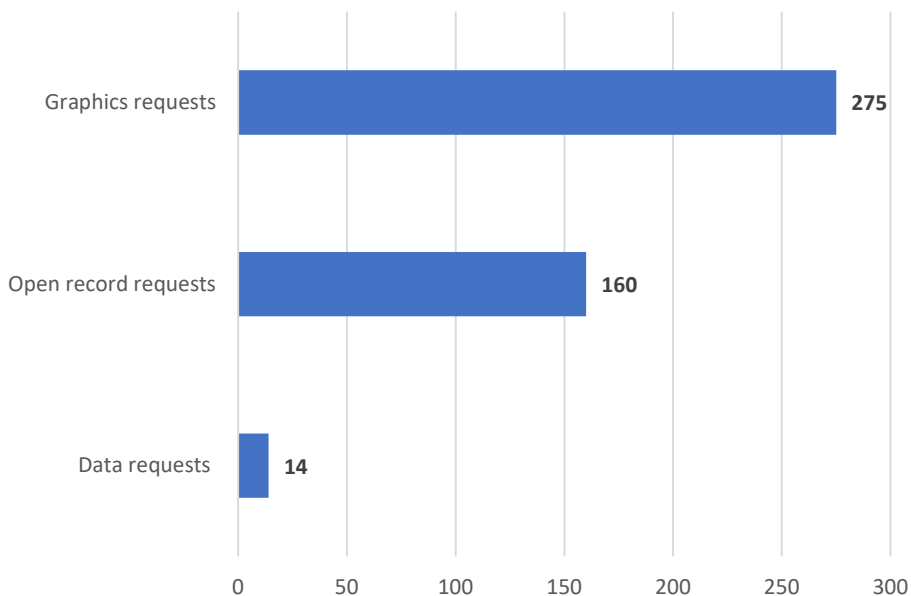
Challenges

- Obtaining timely access to key datasets has been an ongoing challenge due to the complexity of Data Use Agreements (DUAs) and varied approval processes. The team continues to work closely with internal stakeholders and external partners to streamline DUA procedures and clarify data ownership and governance.
- In 2024 the team had to pull data from several different internal and external sources, making reporting time consuming. Inconsistency in data fields or the way it was collected proved to be challenging when providing progress reports to deputies and program managers.

Substance Misuse Initiatives



Request Volume 2024



The current number of data requests appears low due to underreporting in our previous tracking system. We are actively revamping our internal tracking process to more accurately reflect both internal and external data request volumes, and better capture the scope of work being performed in this role.

Workforce Development



WorkPHORCE
Public Health Occupational
Readiness Centered in Equity



**PUBLIC HEALTH TRAINING
CENTER NETWORK**

In 2023, MHD launched the WorkPHORCE program (Public Health Occupational Readiness Centered in Equity), marking a significant step toward developing a comprehensive workforce development plan. This initiative includes both internal and external strategies to build a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive public health workforce.

Goals and priorities



Core Competency Integration

MHD partnered with the Public Health Foundation to align our goals with the Public Health Core Competencies. We also became one of the first health departments in the nation to integrate the Public Health Training Center's Racial Justice Competencies into workforce development efforts.



Education and Advancement

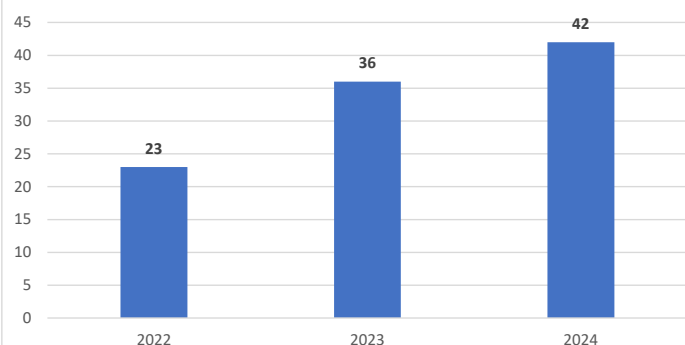
Our new Education Engagement and Placement program provides inclusive learning opportunities for individuals from all backgrounds. Designed for both academic and non-academic learners, this will enhance overall skills and help build structure for career advancement.



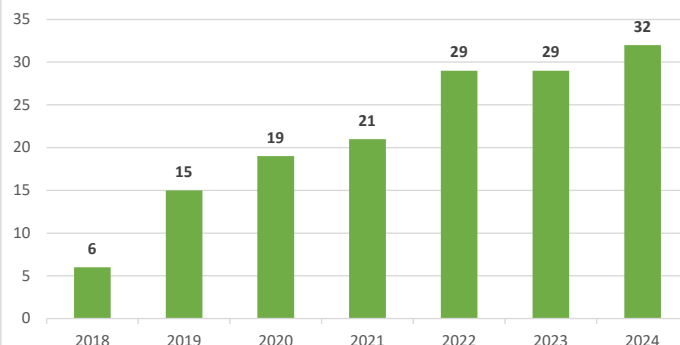
Anti-racist Preceptor Training

In response to identified gaps in anti-racist mentorship, MHD's specialized preceptor training includes activities and resources to address topics like unconscious bias, micro/macroaggressions, and power dynamics - providing participants with more equitable learning environments.

Number of student and fellow placements at MHD



Number of active Academic Affiliation Agreements



Fetal Infant Mortality Review (FIMR)

Fetal Infant Mortality Review (FIMR) is a multidisciplinary case review of all infant deaths and stillbirths occurring in the city of Milwaukee. The Case Review Team (CRT) consists of a diverse group of professionals (medical, public health, social service professionals) and community members. The team reviews the life and death circumstances of mothers and their babies to identify Factors contributing directly or indirectly to the death and opportunities to improve medical and community service systems for pregnant women, infants and families with young children.

The goals of FIMR are to:

- Examine factors associated with stillbirths and infant deaths through case reviews.
- Identify specific areas of action and make recommendations for action.
- Assist in planning interventions and policies to address and improve service systems and community resources.
- Assist and participate in community implementation of interventions and policies.
- Assess the progress of interventions

Website

milwaukee.gov/FIMR

2024 Data Highlights

57

infant deaths

23% decrease from 2023

7.25

infant mortality rate
per 1,000 births

20% decrease from 2023

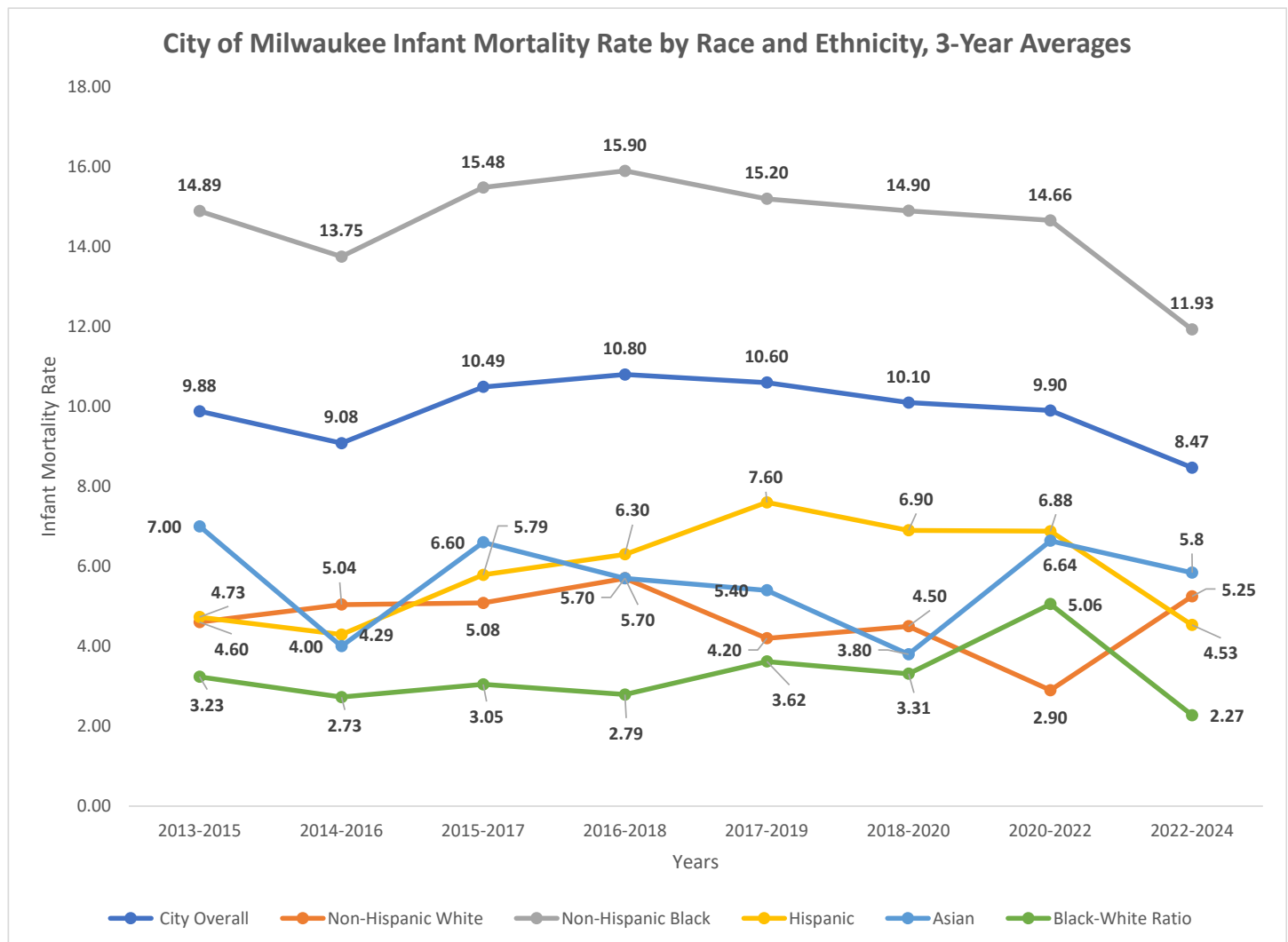


Accomplishments

- Maintained the frequency of case review meetings
- Engaging new partners within the review process to increase efficiency and quality
- Completed planning and launched a new FIMR action team

Challenges

- Staff capacity remains limited, which limits the number of cases that can be reviewed
- Limited and delayed access to data for use in briefs and reports
- Challenges in managing / organizing FIMR case data and tracking recommendations



Acknowledgements

This report was developed by the Policy, Innovation, and Equity (PIE) branch of the City of Milwaukee Health Department with major contributions from staff across all branches and divisions.

MHD Leadership Team:

Michael Totoraitis, PhD - Commissioner of Health

Aaron Szopinski - Budget and Administration Manager

Lindsey O'Connor, MBA, PHR - Human Resource Officer

Erica Wright, MSW - Deputy Commissioner of Family and Community Health

Tyler Weber, MPH - Deputy Commissioner of Environmental Health

Dominique Hyatt-Oates, MSN, RN, PHN - Deputy Commissioner of Policy, Innovation, and Equity

Jefflyn Brown, MSN-Ed, RN - Deputy Commissioner of Clinical Services

Data and Evaluation Team:

Ali Tahler-Reed - Health Data and Evaluation Director

Ryan Honeck - Data and Evaluation Coordinator

Mallory Krumrei, MPH - Epidemiologist

Dianne Williams, M.Ed, MS - Data and Evaluation Coordinator

Songlor Xiong - Data and Evaluation Coordinator

Kong Xiong, MPH - Data and Evaluation Coordinator

Sivani Manchu, MPH - Senior Epidemiologist

Cait McCrory, MPH - Epidemiologist

Marc Mejaki - Lead Program Information Specialist

Marketing and Communications Team:

Caroline Reinwald - Public Information Officer, Marketing and Communications Lead

Christopher Trejo - Graphic Designer

PUBLIC HEALTH UNITES US

