



New Hampshire Health Officers Association



**Summer
2024
Newsletter**

Our Mission is to promote high standards of professionalism among municipal and regional health officers through programs of education, technical assistance, legislative representation, and collaboration with public health colleagues.

Our Vision is to build, sustain, and empower a local public health workforce.

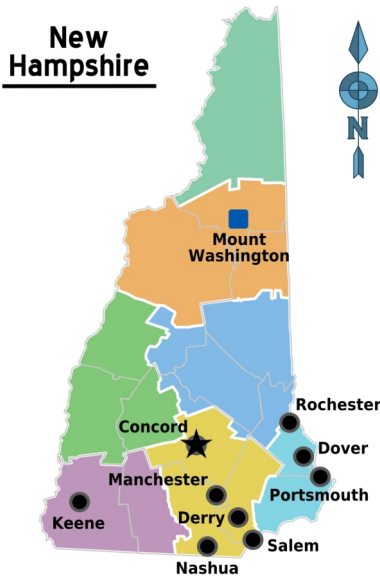
A Victory for Health Officers

Local Control Prevails! HB 1479 Indefinitely Postponed

In a stunning victory **for** local control and local government, the House defeated **HB 1479**, the anti-lobbying bill that would have criminalized YOUR speech, on a 211-129 vote. That defeat would not have been possible without YOUR advocacy.

What's more impressive is that a majority of the House determined that a tabling motion was not enough. The dispositional motion – Indefinitely Postpone – made it crystal clear that local control matters.

In NHMA's records of legislative testimony stretching back to the early 1980s, there is no bill that we have a record of that generated more outcry from local officials than this bill. We have not had any other bill in recent memory where so many local officials from across the state volunteered to come hand out information to legislators walking into the House chamber as **HB 1479**. Thank you for your advocacy.



WHAT HEALTH OFFICERS DO TO ENSURE PUBLIC HEALTH SAFETY!!!!

- Control disease carrying pests such as ticks and mosquitos
- Enforce minimum standards for multiunit dwellings
- Promote smoke-free indoor air
- Ensure drinking water is safe
- Eliminate health hazards such as trash accumulation
- Protect our youth

What are Regional Public Health Networks?

Thirteen independent regional public health networks (RPHNs) are funded by DHHS to identify regional public health priorities and help coordinate public health efforts.

Each RPHN is made up of leaders from multiple public health initiatives and services, as well as others involved in public health, including health departments, health care providers, social service agencies, schools, fire, police, emergency medical services, media and advocacy groups, behavioral health, and leaders in the business, government, and faith communities. Every RPHN has a Public Health Advisory Council (PHAC) that develops a regional Community Health Improvement Plan, which outlines health goals and objectives for the region. The PHAC then helps coordinate groups working to meet those goals.

To learn more about your Regional Public Health Network, visit the website found here: <https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/programs-services/population-health/regional-public-health-networks>

President's Message



Welcome to the new New Hampshire Health Officers Association Newsletter. Many health officers have asked the Health Officers Association board at conferences and other health officer meetings to provide additional information on what is happening in their association, what have the board of directors and the subcommittees been doing. This information is provided at the workshops and in the ListServ, but some people would like to see a more frequent update, possibly going into more detail than has been done in the past. We hope that this newsletter will provide this information in a format that is useful to our members. We look forward to hearing from our members with what you like and possibly don't like so we will be able to improve this publication.

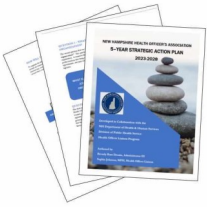
**Wayne R. Whitford
President
New Hampshire Health Officers Association**

Questions? Contact:
eventsyour-waynh22@gmail.com

Quote of the Day

Of all the forms of inequality, injustice in health is the most shocking and inhumane.

~ Martin Luther King, Jr.



NHHOA 5-Year Strategic Action Plan



*****UPDATE*****

NH Division of Public Health Services

2023 proved to be an exciting year for the New Hampshire Health Officers Association (NHHOA) in the development of the new *5-Year Strategic Action Plan (2023-2028)*. More than 45 members participated in the development of the plan voicing opinions on what was important to them as a member.

With an overarching goal to ‘build, sustain, and empower a local public health workforce the new 5-Year Strategic Action Plan has six objectives that involve building a strong foundation of leadership, creating open lines of communication, building a robust membership, improving the ability to collect data, and to ensure Health Officers are represented in local and statewide policy development.

To implement this Strategic Action Plan, the NHHOA needs volunteers like you to assist with leadership, advocacy, professional development, membership, communication/marketing and data collection. If you are interested in learning more, contact Wayne Whitford, President at wrwhitford@aol.com or 603-763-4940. This work cannot get done without the support of volunteers like you!

The NH DPHS Health Officer Liaison Program is very excited to welcome our newest part-time staff member, Joanne Cotton! Joanne comes to us as the Deputy Health Officer from Fremont and brings years of experience in Intelligence in the U.S. Army Reserve as well as her Master’s Degree in Public Health. Contact Joanne at: Joanne.E.Cotton@dhhs.nh.gov or 603-271-0431.

In addition to our exciting staffing update, the program is also introducing a new format for the Health Officer Manual Chapters. This change provides documents that are easier to navigate, simpler to read, and more engaging to review. You can find our first versions of the format here: [Mold and Moisture](#) and [Role of the Local Health Officer](#).

DID YOU KNOW....

If you are a NHHOA member you can receive free legal advice through NH Municipal Association?

NO KIDDING!!!



Finally, as a reminder, the new section of the lead statute, RSA 130-A, A:5-d, Sale and Rental of Property, will go into effect July 1, 2024. All pre-1978 properties being converted into rental housing as well as newly licensed child care facilities will be required to have a lead safe certificate prior to occupancy.

The **NEW** Health Officer 101 Training Portal has arrived!

As you are aware, RSA 128 requires that all local health officers take a required training course that provides an overview of your authority and duties under State law. Health officers are required to take this course upon their initial appointment and every 3 years after that (every new or renewed appointment). The course is entitled “*Introduction to the Duties and Responsibilities of the Local Health Officers*”, and is currently provided by NH DPHS on its virtual platform only (no in-person offerings).

We are very excited to announce the launch of a newly updated version of the required course. This course features updated information in an interactive and newly designed format.

For those of you who HAVE taken the course within the past 3 years

There is no further action from you at the moment.

For CITY health officers:

You are not required to take this course, although you may if you would like the training opportunity.

A few important things to note when using the Cornerstone Learning Management Platform:

1. When you log into the site, your Username is the email address you entered in the registration process
2. This course works best when taken on a computer as opposed to a tablet or phone (google chrome is the preferred browser).
3. This training is “on-demand”, meaning that you can save your work and return to the course at a later time.
4. At the conclusion of the training, you will be able to download a copy of your certificate of completion.
5. If you need technical support, please let me know.
6. The modules of this course open in separate pages. Check your popup blocker if the course content isn’t loading for you.

For more information and to receive the link for access to free E Learning modules on the NH DPHS Cornerstone Platform, please contact the NHDPHS Health Officer Liaison Unit at health_officer@dhhs.nh.gov or 603-271-3468.

NHHOA COMMITTEE UPDATES

Professional Development Committee

The Professional Development Committee is looking forward to seeing you all at the Health Officer Association Conference on June 5th. It is a wonderful opportunity to see many of you in person, learn from various subject matter experts on topics relevant to our work, and network with vendors and our peers. If you have any other feedback or comments from the conference, please direct them to our Administrator, Nancy Kilbride at eventsyourwaynh22@gmail.com. Finally, our committee is looking for more members. If you are interested in supporting the professional development and training opportunities of our local health officers, please reach out to eventsyourwaynh22@gmail.com. We would like to have more local health officers on this committee to ensure our educational programming is relevant to your work and supports your needs.

The Communication and Marketing Subcommittee - Working to Improve Communication

The Communication and Marketing Subcommittee, chaired by Liam Ehrenzweig, has been busy working on ways to improve communication between the membership and the board of directors. This small, but mighty subcommittee has developed a new [Mission and Vision Statement](#), freshened up the content on the www.NHHealthOfficers.org website and making it easier to navigate, and developed this inaugural *NH Health Officers Association Newsletter*. This subcommittee wants your ideas and energy. If you are interested in becoming a part of this group, email Liam at inspector@enfield.nh.us.

The NHHOA Data Committee

The NHHOA Data Committee has been working with the DPHS Health Officer Liaison Unit and Caitlin McMonagle, UNH Masters Student, on a Health Officer Case Tracker data capturing tool. Caitlin worked to develop a data tracking tool utilizing google forms to capture health officer case data entry, an associated database, and a dashboard to visualize an array of data "at-a-glance." There were several health officers who volunteered to beta test the data tracker and provide feedback on the system. Version 1 on the data tracker is now complete and the NHHOA will be able to share the data tracking tool to any health officer who wishes to have their own municipal data tracker tool. More information on how to request your own copy of the data tracking tool will be available in the coming weeks. Stay tuned!

Legislative Committee Update

One of the activities of the NHHOA is to track legislative activity that impacts our field. A number of bills are introduced each year that deal with Health Officer issues. Over the years this has included our enforcement authority as well as changes to the laws and rules on septic systems, food regulation and so on. The NHHOA has formed a committee to track and inform our membership about these types of bills.

This year we tracked several bills that were of interest:

House Bill 531 was amended to allow communities to conduct background checks of Health Officers.

Senate Bill 63 amended RSA 147:1 to change the language regarding the adoption of Health Ordinances.

HB 1479 attempted to prohibit local officials from any form of advocacy and was defeated.

NHHOA is always looking for assistance with our committees and, if interested, please feel free to contact us.

Membership with NHHOA

Become part of the vast network of local Health Officers and Health Officials. The Association's primary mission is to assist local health officials in meeting their responsibilities to the public through programs on environmental and public health issues, technical assistance and resource development. Our organization supports health officers in cooperation with the NH Department of Health & Human Services via training, outreach, and a comprehensive manual on how to handle health issues such as housing, nuisances, and inspections. The association prepares and submits to the legislature an annual report of Health Officers readiness to respond to potential health threats. Annual membership is only \$45.00!



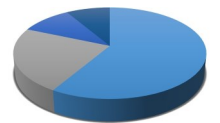
nhhealthofficers.org/membership

NEW

**NHHOA DATA
COLLECTION TOOL**

NEW

NEW



"The NH Health Officer Association in partnership with the NH DPHS Health Officer Liaison Program has had the exciting opportunity to work with a UNH Masters of Public Health Student to develop a data collection tool health officers can utilize to track their workloads and monitor their inspections/complaints. In addition, it has the capacity to produce simple graphs and statistics you can share with municipal leadership about your workloads. While we are still in the piloting phase, every health officer in the State is able to receive a free version of this tool to use in your work. MPH student Caitlin McMonagle will be demoing the use of this tool at the Health Officer Association Conference on June 5th. Please contact Ren Beaudoin beaudoinr@nashuanh.gov or Sophia Johnson healthofficer@dhhs.nh.gov for more information.

