

COUNTY OF



ALLEGHENY

Sara Innamorato
County Executive

**Allegheny County Board of Health
July 15, 2026 @ 12:30 p.m.
Gold Room, Court House
Minutes**

Present:

Joylette Portlock, PhD, Chair
Elizabeth Cuevas, MD Vice Chair
Dr. Margaret Larkins-Pettigrew, MD, Med, MPPM
Ms. Laura Dagley, BSN, RN
Khlood Salman, DrPH, RN
Michael Yonas, DrPH, MPH
Graham Snyder, MD MS
Iulia Vann, MD MPH, Secretary
Dara Mendez, PhD, MPH

Absent: Ms. Lisa Scales, JD

1. Call to Order

Dr. Joylette Portlock called the meeting to order at 12:41 p.m. and announced an Executive Session was held prior to the meeting to discuss personnel and legal matters.

2. Approval of Minutes

Dr. Joylette Portlock called for a vote to approve the minutes of the May 13, 2026, meeting.

Action: Dr. Graham Snyder motioned to approve the minutes from the May 13, 2026, meeting and Dr. Margaret Larkins-Pettigrew seconded the motion. **The motion was unanimously approved.**

3. Public Comments on Agenda Items:

Ms. Kim Joyce stated there were 34 written comments submitted, seven (7) comments with regard to air quality that were comprised of data centers compressions stations, spent time monitoring and the Metalico permit, two (2) around funding gender affirming and HIV care in the county, twenty-five (25) Paid Parental Leave in addition to the 1356 comments.



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Public Speakers – In Person

- a. Benjamin Chiszar – Paid Leave; Public Health
- b. Aarushi Pant- Air quality in Neville Island airshed
- c. Dr. Scott Tyson – Paid Parental Leave
- d. Nino Testa – Requesting funds for HIV and Trans-affirming care
- e. Lisa Graves Marcucci – Fenceline Monitoring
- f. Lindsay Dasinski – Fracking
- g. Michael Barish – Data Centers and Health Risks

Public Speakers- Via Zoom

- e. Mark Dixon – US Steel’s Hot Strip Mill Permit.

Dr. Joylette Portlock provided a summary of the public comment and code changing process.

4. Committee Updates

Fracking Committee: Ms. Laura Dagley stated the air quality analysis received has been reviewed and recommendations will be submitted to the committee at the September meeting.

Policies and Procedures: Dr. Graham Snyder stated there are no updates from the Policies and Procedures committee.

Ideation Committee: Dr. Michael Yonas stated there are no updates from the Ideation Committee, but public comments are being monitored closely.

5. Director’s Report

Dr. Vann began her report providing Cyclosporiasis Outbreak Information:

- Continuous Outbreak Investigation and information is constantly updated
- CDC Website not up to date
- Michigan cases total 3700
- Eleven (11) cases have been identified in Allegheny County – no linkage between the cases and no clear linkage to a particular exposure
- On-set illness began mid-June to early July
- Cases include international and domestic travel
- Transmitted through fresh produce- lettuce, leafy greens, cilantro, basil, onions
- Thoroughly wash fresh produce & vegetables should be cooked to destroy the parasite
- In contact with state partners to collect exposure data and confirm all information is up to date.

Dr. Vann provided information about the Legal Authority of the Board of Health (1951 PA Act 315 Section 10- Powers and Duties of County Health Departments) as it relates to Paid Parental Leave adding this regulation will promote and preserve the public health of Allegheny County.

Dr. Vann then shared information on Health Families in Allegheny County:

- 6.4 Infant deaths per 1,000 live births
- Nearly 5 times higher infant mortality among Black infants than White infants
- 10% of births are preterm
- 15% of Black infants are born low birthweight
- Only 42% of new parents reported taking paid leave after childbirth
- Severe maternal morbidity increased from 188 to 330 per 10,000 deliveries (2016 to 2023) Black mothers experienced more than 2 times the rate compared with White mothers
- State or national data - 61% of mothers were still breastfeeding past 8 weeks
- Variety of tools to address disparities through:
 - Policy or regulatory interventions
 - Programmatic and direct client services

Dr. Vann moved her presentation to **Key Themes on Paid Parental Leave from Public Comments** received May 13 – June 2026 and conveyed her sincere appreciation to all those who provided comments and suggestions:

- 1) Strong Support for Paid Parental Leave as a Public Health Policy
- 2) Funding model is the Central Point of Disagreement
- 3) Significant Concerns for Small Business & Nonprofits
- 4) Workforce Recruitment, Retention & Competitiveness
- 5) Existing Leave is Inadequate
- 6) Equity & Fairness Concerns on Both Sides
- 7) Personal Stories Highlight Real Impacts
- 8) Calls for Refinement, Not Rejection

Dr. Vann then provided an update on the Community Health Assessment Survey (CHA) stating approximately 1400 responses have been received and the goal is 5000 adding the survey will be open until the end of the year.

Dr. Portlock thanked Dr. Vann for her presentation and asked about an age requirement for the Community Health Assessment (CHA)

Dr. Vann stated the age requirements are 18 and older.

Opioid Overdose Presentation: Dr. James Weeden, Deputy Director of Health Promotion Disease Prevention provided an Opioid Overdose Presentation which focused on Overdose Death Trends, Drug Supply Trends and Overdose and Drug Response Plan.

QUESTIONS:

Dr. Joylette Portlock thanked Dr. Weeden for the presentation and asked about misinformation about reductions, especially in the black population over a specific age group.

Dr. Weeden replied that the number has decreased, however there continues to be a large disparity.

Dr. Michael Yonas asked if any new partnerships launched in 2024 resulted in the significant drop.

Dr. Weeden replied that changes in drug supply along with community outreach could be the result of the decrease.

Dr. Khlood Salman asked about the reliability of the data sources for the drugs and data from high schools.

Dr. Weeden replied that data sources have not changed and for high school information HAT survey healthy Teams assessment is used but no data is available from schools on overdose tests.

Dr. Margaret Larkins-Pettigrew asked about the long-term referral plan.

Dr. Weeden replied that Medication for Addiction Treatment & Electronic Referrals Program (MATTERS) would be used to facilitate rapid referrals for individuals with Opioid use disorder, adding the continued goal is to provide education and resources for overdose prevention.

Dr. Elizabeth Cuevas asked about tracking people currently engaged in therapy for opioid disorder in terms of either medication or other recovery supports, such as Medetomidine.

Dr. Weeden stated there are unique problems with Medetomidine due its path life adding it's difficult to test for since it leaves the system very quickly which makes it hard to identify who is going through withdrawal.

Dr. Graham Snyder commented on the broad mix of locations for Naloxone distribution, including the media campaign and youth outreach and asked Dr. Weeden if he agrees with the current mix of community-based distribution methods and are resources being allocated where they can have the most impact.

Dr. Weeden responded that he is satisfied with the work being done but the goal is to always have a larger presence and make a larger impact.

Dr. Michael Yonas commented on the importance of having connections and maintaining relations along with adapting to new strategies given the limited resources with federal funding cuts.

Dr. Elizabeth Cuevas commented that anything that can be done to bring community providers together is beneficial for the community at large.

Prevention Point Pittsburgh: Mr. Aaron Arnold, MPH, Executive Director of Prevention Point Pittsburgh shared information about the organization along with the past and current services provided to people who use drugs in Western Pennsylvania including an update on Syringe Services Program (SSP). In addition, Mr. Arnold provided information about the Medication for Opioid Disorder (MOUD) and STI Testing Program.

QUESTIONS:

Dr. Michael Yonas thanked Mr. Arnold for his presentation and asked about the current stimulant Kratom and its impact on youth.

Mr. Arnold stated the use of Kratom is a huge concern because it is an unregulated substance, much like purely synthetic Opioid 7-OH which is sold in retail locations and requires no ID or age restriction, however his program caters to more of an adult population rather than youth.

Dr. Elizabeth Cuevas commented that Prevention Point is a trusted resource, adding those people in need of treatment can receive it immediately.

Dr. Joylette Portlock asked about program referral data coming for the first time or returning.

Mr. Arnold responded that it's a mix of individuals.

Dr. Joylette Portlock thanked Mr. Arnold for his presentation and announced a short break would follow before New Business would be heard.

Meeting Reconvened

6. New Business

Mr. Otis Pitts, Deputy Director, Allegheny County Health Department Bureau of Environment Health requested a Vote for Final Approval for Advisory Committee Renewals for Food Advisory Committee Members.

ACTION: Dr. Graham Snyder motioned to approve, and Dr. Dara Mendez seconded the Motion. Motion passed

Mr. Otis Pitts, Deputy Director, Allegheny County Health Department Bureau of Environmental Health requested a Vote for Final Approval for Advisory Committee Renewals for Plumbing Advisory Committee Members.

ACTION: Dr. Graham Snyder motioned to approve, and Dr. Michael Yonas seconded the Motion. Motion passed.

Mr. Otis Pitts, Deputy Director, Allegheny County Health Department Bureau of Environmental Health requested a Vote for Final Approval following a 30-day Public Comment Period for Article VI Housing and Community Environment Revision.

ACTION: Dr. Michael Yonas motioned to approve, and Dr. Dara Mendez seconded the Motion. Motion passed.

Mr. Otis Pitts, Deputy Director, Allegheny County Health Department Bureau of Environmental Health requested a Vote for Final Approval following a 30-day Public Comment Period for Article XV Plumbing Code Revision.

ACTION: Dr. Elizabeth Cuevas motioned to approve, and Dr. Michael Yonas seconded the Motion. Motion passed.

Ms. Joy Smallwood, Environmental Health Administrator with Water Pollution Control and Solid Waste Program and Michael Hills, President of the Pittsburgh Safe Boating Council for Environmental Health Fund Request in the amount of \$35,000

ACTION: Dr. Graham Snyder motioned to approve the environmental health fund request with an amendment to include a report stating what happened to the boats along with the channels for disposal and the best estimate about the positive environmental and health impacts or removal of the boats. Dr. Khlood Salman seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Mr. Ian Anderson, MPH, REHS/RS Environmental Health Administration II presented a Modification Request for Final Vote Approval to the Clean Air Fund Request for Swissvale Electric Garage Trucks.

ACTION: Dr. Margaret Larkins-Pettigrew motioned to table this request until additional information is provided at the next Board of Health Meeting. Motion was passed to table the request. Dr. Cuevas seconded the motion.

Mr. Jason Maranche of the Air Quality Planning Program (Bureau of Environmental Protection) requested a 30-day Public Comment Period for Modifications to Article XXI- Air Pollution Control Revisions State Implementation Plan (SIP) Revisions 107-Nomenclature.

ACTION: Dr. Elizabeth Cuevas motioned to approve the request. Dr. Michael Yonas seconded the motion. Motion was granted.

Mr. Jason Maranche of the Air Quality Planning Program (Bureau of Environmental Protection) requested a 30-day Public Comment Period for Modifications to Article XXI- State Implementation Plan (SIP) Revision 98a Update of Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) and Reasonable Available Control Technology.

ACTION: Dr. Elizabeth Cuevas motioned to approve the request. Dr. Margaret Larkins-Pettigrew seconded the motion. Motion was granted.

7. **Adjournment**

Dr. Joylette Portlock entertained a motion to adjourn.

ACTION: Ms. Laura Dagley motioned to approve, and Michael Yonas seconded the motion. The board approved the motion unanimously.

The next Board of Health Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 16, 2026 @ 5:30 pm in the Gold Room of the County Court House.