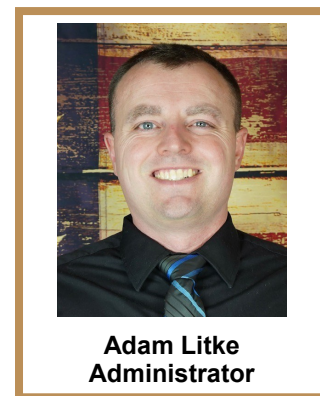


Geauga Public Health 2025 Annual Report

Dear Geauga County Residents,

As we conclude the 2025 calendar year, Geauga Public Health (GPH) remains steadfast in our mission to protect the health of our community through proactive service and responsible fiscal management. This year has been defined by the "maturation" of our newest programs—moving from transition to long-term stability. Below are the key highlights and accomplishments from the past year.



Progress of the Cross-Jurisdictional Agreement

The landmark partnership between the Geauga Board of Health and the Lake County General Health District (LCGHD) is now in its second full calendar year of operation. What began as a strategic shift in 2023 has evolved into a seamless model of regional cooperation.

- **Financial Impact:** We are proud to report that the projected annual savings have been realized and reinvested into enhancing local health infrastructure. Through the Cross Jurisdictional Agreement, Geauga Public Health has continued to save over \$300,000 compared to prior projected costs. These costs are achieved through shared management and do not impact the core services provided to the public.
- **Staff Stability:** We have maintained high retention rates among the dedicated staff serving Geauga County. By leveraging a larger, shared workforce, we have been able to provide specialized expertise in Nursing and Environmental Health that would have been difficult to sustain independently.
- **Local Oversight:** While staffing is shared, the Geauga County Board of Health continues to retain full local control over policy decisions, ensuring that Geauga values remain at the forefront of every decision made at Geauga Public Health.

Operation and Maintenance (O&M) Program: Full Implementation

In 2025, the State-mandated Operation and Maintenance Program reached full operational status. Our goal has always been to meet Ohio Department of Health requirements with the least possible burden on our homeowners.

- **Protecting Property Value:** By shifting away from the "For Sale of Property" (FSOP) model to a proactive maintenance schedule, we are helping residents extend the lives of their septic systems and avoid the "sticker shock" of failing systems during home inspections.

A Message from the Health Commissioner.....3	Emergency Preparedness 8-9
2025 Geauga County CHNA.....4	Vital Statistics 9
Environmental Health5	Financial Review 10
Community Health Services6-7	Statistic Snapshot..... 11

The Geauga Public Health is dedicated to improving public health services by monitoring, educating, and promoting community and environmental health services in Geauga County, Ohio.

A Message from the Administrator, continued

- **Compliance Success:** By maintaining this program locally, GPH has successfully kept the Environmental Health program under local jurisdiction, preventing a state-mandated takeover and ensuring residents interact with people who know Geauga County.

Fiscal Integrity and the House Bill 110 Program

Following the 2023–2024 internal audit and the unprecedented decision to repay local businesses for past service gaps, 2025 marked the first full year of our "Clean Slate" operation for the House Bill 110 (HB110) program.

- **Restored Trust:** All eligible businesses affected by the historical billing errors have been identified and reimbursed.
- **Enhanced Safeguards:** New digital tracking and auditing software implemented this year ensures that every dollar collected is tied directly to a service rendered. We have closed the door on past inefficiencies and opened a new chapter of total transparency.

Cost Savings and Your Tax Dollars

Being a "good steward" is more than a slogan; it is our operational mandate. Through our shared services with LCGHD and the streamlining of internal permits, GPH has successfully buffered our residents from the rising costs of healthcare and other costs seen elsewhere in the state. We continue to look for ways to do more with less, without compromising the quality of our services.

Looking Ahead to 2026

As we look toward the future, Geauga Public Health is committed to:

- **Expanding Community Outreach:** Increasing our presence at local events to provide preventive screenings and health education.
- **Technological Upgrades:** Further digitizing our records to allow residents to access more of our services and their records online.
- **Sustainable Health:** Continuing to monitor emerging public health trends to keep Geauga County a safe place to live, work, and raise a family.

We thank the Board of Health, our hard-working staff, and—most importantly—you, the residents, for your continued trust and support.

Sincerely,



Adam Litke, Administrator
Gauga Public Health

Message from the Health Commissioner

Building a Healthier Future Together

As we begin 2026, I want to take a moment to share the current state of public health in our community and look ahead at where we are going. Public health is often the invisible shield that protects us—ensuring our water is safe, our food is inspected, and our families are protected from disease. Today, that shield faces both familiar challenges and new, modern pressures.

The Current Landscape

Our community continues to show incredible resilience, but we are navigating several critical issues:

- **Communicable Disease Threats:** The Ohio Department of Health confirmed the state's first **measles outbreak of 2026**. While currently localized, it serves as a stark reminder of the importance of childhood vaccinations. Simultaneously, we are seeing "**Very High**" levels of **respiratory illness** (including Flu, RSV, and COVID-19) across Ohio, placing a significant strain on our local urgent cares and hospitals.
- **The Behavioral Health Crisis:** Mental health and addiction remain at the forefront of our work. While we have made strides in Narcan distribution, the complexity of synthetic drugs continues to impact families across all neighborhoods.
- **Chronic Disease & Affordability:** Issues like heart disease and diabetes remain leading causes of death in Ohio. Alarming, many of our residents are facing "health affordability" challenges, where the rising cost of basic needs, like nutritious food and housing, is directly impacting their physical well-being.

Our Future Direction (2026–2028)

Our department is not just reacting to crises; we are building a proactive roadmap for the next three years. Guided by the State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP), our future efforts will focus on:

- **Strengthening Community Conditions:** Research shows that only 20% of health is shaped by clinical care—the rest is determined by where we live, work, and play. GPH continues to work toward improving our community through protecting our groundwater and other natural resources.
- **Workforce & Infrastructure:** To serve you better, we are working towards modernizing our data systems to track disease outbreaks in real-time and investing in training a new generation of public health nurses and inspectors.

Public health is a partnership. We ask that you continue to look out for one another: stay up to date on your family's immunizations, check in on elderly neighbors during this peak respiratory season, and utilize the mental health resources available in our county.

Our mission is to ensure that every resident has the opportunity to achieve their full health potential. There is much work to be done, but I am confident that by working together, we can make our community a model of health and vitality for all of Ohio.

In health,



Ron H. Graham MPH - Health Commissioner



Ron H. Graham, MPH
Health Commissioner

2025 Geauga County Community Health Needs Assessment

The **2025 Geauga County CHNA** is a comprehensive evaluation designed to identify the most significant health challenges and opportunities within our community. This report serves as a roadmap for local planning, ensuring that resources are directed toward the areas of greatest need to improve health outcomes for all residents.

A Collaborative, Data-Driven Approach

The assessment was led by **Geauga Public Health** and **University Hospitals Geauga Medical Center**, in partnership with a dedicated Steering Committee. This committee represented a diverse cross-section of the county, including experts in:

- **Behavioral & Mental Health**
- **Education & Social Services**
- **Housing & Transportation**

Aging and Veteran Services

By combining quantitative data with qualitative community feedback, the Steering Committee validated local findings and prioritized the most actionable health concerns facing Geauga County today.

Why This Assessment Matters

Beyond providing a "snapshot" of county health, this report fulfills critical legal and accreditation requirements, including **Internal Revenue Code Section 501(r)** for nonprofit hospitals and **Ohio Revised Code** mandates. Most importantly, it creates a shared foundation for the upcoming **Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)**, sparking collaborative action across public and private sectors.

Participating Partners

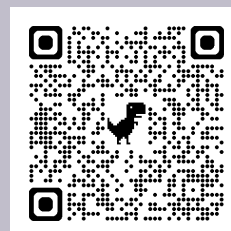
We extend our gratitude to the organizations that contributed their expertise to this process, including:

- Chagrin Falls Park Community Center
- Geauga County Boards (DD, Mental Health, Aging, Planning)
- United Way Services of Geauga County
- NAMI Geauga & Ravenwood Mental Health
- ...and many other vital local stakeholders.

Review the Full Report

We encourage all residents, stakeholders, and community leaders to review the findings to better understand the health landscape of our county. Your awareness is the first step toward a healthier Geauga.

To read the full report, please go to our website (www.gphohio.org) or scan the QR code below.



Environmental Health

Household Sewage Treatment System Operation and Maintenance Program

Our GPH staff continued to bring Geauga County into compliance with the State-mandated Household Sewage Treatment System Operation and Maintenance program (O&M Program) and continued enrolling residents throughout 2025. As the 2025 year ended, the Operation and Maintenance program rounded out its second year with approximately 25% of the County enrolled or in the process of being enrolled in the Program.

This program aims to ensure that all owners of residential septic systems maintain their systems to a minimum standard to prevent pollution and protect the public health of our community. The first phase began with sampling of all discharging residential systems which operate under a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit from the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Annual sampling is required by the Ohio EPA to ensure that these systems are sufficiently treating wastewater before it is discharged back into the environment via our community streams, road ditches, and storm sewers. Two thousand, seven hundred and fifty-four (2,754) systems were sampled in 2025 by Geauga Public Health to evaluate performance against the state standards.

In addition to sampling, verification of maintenance is conducted. The GPH team strives to provide the best services possible to the public while balancing overall costs that are incurred by the public.

Lot Evaluations Conducted	238
For Sale of Property Evaluations Performed	19
Sewage Permits Issued	210

Food Safety

Starting in 2024, Geauga Public Health began to award a Clean Inspection Award to food service operations and retail establishments that exemplify food safety through food safety knowledge and training, a clean inspection history, and operating according to state and local regulations. Recipients of the award received a window cling to let the public know the facility is run in a clean and food-safe manner.

Congratulations to the following facilities that received the Clean Inspection Award in 2025:

Bainbridge Senior Center
Berkshire Local Schools
Burton Health Care
Chardon Senior Center
Congin's Pizza (Chardon)
Middlefield Senior Center

St. Anselm School (Chesterland)
St. Helen School (Newbury)
Victoria's Bakery (Chesterland)
West Geauga Senior Center
Western Reserve Catering

Community Health Services

Community Immunization Services

The goal of public health is to prevent disease, promote health, and protect the health of the community. In Geauga County, one of the ways to achieve this goal is through a comprehensive immunization program for both children and adults.

The availability of safe and effective vaccines has significantly improved the health and well-being of our community, offering protection against many common infectious diseases. These vaccinations help prevent over 18 different diseases, reducing the risk of disease outbreaks in our community and contributing to overall public health. Vaccination remains one of the most powerful tools for disease prevention.

In 2025, there were 1,404 vaccines administered. Of those, 1,377 immunizations were administered to children (birth through 18 years) through the Vaccines for Children program and 27 immunizations were administered to adults through the Vaccines for Adults program.



Geauga Public Health teamed up with University Hospitals every month to hold mobile vaccine clinics for children out in the community. Through these collaborative efforts, Geauga County continues to prioritize the health of its residents by ensuring access to life saving vaccines and strengthening our community's protection against preventable diseases.

Child Fatality Review Board

The goal of the Child Fatality Review Board is to reduce the incidence of preventable infant and child deaths in Geauga County by reviewing all childhood fatalities, identifying causes and contributing factors, and recommending changes to local programs and policies to prevent future tragedies. A Public Health Nurse achieves this through cross-agency collaboration, reviewing and maintaining data, and creating community-based prevention strategies. In Geauga County, there were 7 childhood deaths that were reviewed from 2025.

Suicide and Overdose Fatality Review Board

The goal of the Suicide and Overdose Fatality Review Board is to reduce the incidence of preventable deaths by reviewing the circumstances surrounding each death to identify system gaps, trends, and opportunities for prevention and intervention in Geauga County. A Public Health Nurse works with various local agencies involved in mental health treatment, substance use disorder services, and suicide and overdose prevention efforts. The Public Health Nurse works with these various agencies to identify missed opportunities for intervention and system-level improvements, develop and recommend data-driven policies and legislation for local implementation, and maintains a comprehensive database of all suicide and overdose deaths in Geauga County. In 2025, there were a total of 17 suicide and overdose fatalities. Four (4) deaths were a result of overdoses, and 13 deaths were a result of suicides.

Communicable Disease Report

Reportable Condition	2025*	2024	2023
Anaplasmosis-Anaplasma phagocytophilum	0	0	1
Botulism-infant	1	0	0
C. auris	3	1	0
Campylobacteriosis	23	25	21
Chlamydia infection	71	91	86
COVID-19**	512	1,447	2,078
CPO	9	9	7
CPO-colonization screening	0	1	0
Cryptosporidiosis	6	9	1
Dengue	1	1	0
E.Coli, Shiga-Toxin Producing	6	7	0
Giardiasis	13	5	5
Gonococcal infection	11	26	19
Haemophilus influenzae (invasive disease)	2	2	2
Hepatitis A	0	1	0
Hepatitis B-chronic	8	5	5
Hepatitis C-acute	0	0	1
Hepatitis C-chronic	15	13	18
Influenza-ODH Lab Results	9	7	14
Influenza-associated hospitalization	158	64	34
Legionellosis	6	6	4
Listeriosis	1	2	0
Lyme Disease	33	13	7
Meningitis-aseptic/viral	0	1	2
Meningitis-bacterial (not N. Meningitidis)	1	0	0
Mpox	0	1	0
Mumps	1	0	1
Pertussis	8	4	85
Salmonellosis	16	20	11
Shigellosis	1	2	2
Streptococcal-Group A invasive	8	11	16
Streptococcal-Group B in newborn	1	0	1
Streptococcus pneumoniae - invasive antibiotic resistance unknown or non-resistant	3	7	2
Streptococcus pneumoniae - invasive antibiotic resistant/intermediate	2	1	1
Syphilis-unknown duration or late	1	3	0
Tuberculosis	0	1	0
Varicella	1	1	1
Vibriosis (not cholera)	0	1	0
Yersiniosis	0	1	2
TOTAL	931	1,789	2,427

*Note, reported numbers for 2025 are as of January 5, 2026, and are not yet final due to ongoing case investigations and pending labs.

**Effective 10/1/25, individual cases of COVID-19 are no longer reportable. Only COVID-19-associated hospitalizations are now reportable. Previously, cases were reported through medical providers, laboratory results, or via self-reported from home tests.

Emergency Preparedness



GPH Tests Mass Dispensing Capabilities

On March 26-27, 2025, Geauga Public Health (GPH) held a series of drills to test its capabilities to mass dispense antibiotics in case of a public health emergency. The drills conducted included notifying and deploying staff and volunteers to the designated Point of Dispensing (POD) location, notifying the facility contacts and activating the site, recording the time to set up the POD site, and conducting a throughput drill to test how quickly people could be processed through the site to complete their forms, be screened, receive their medication and medication education, and exit the POD.

All staff were notified and acknowledged their notification of the drill within 42 minutes of initiation (target = 4 hours). In total, 95.8% of staff deployed to the POD arrived within the target timeframe. The site setup was completed in 15m24s (target = within 60 minutes). A total of 250 individuals were processed through the POD in 31m31s, well in excess and advance of the targeted throughput of 200 individuals in the first 60 minutes. Strengths and areas for improvement were discussed in a participant debriefing session, and findings have been used to improve GPH's emergency plans.



GPH would like to thank the following partners for assisting with the drills with facilities as POD staff, and those who volunteered as observers and POD attendees, including **Kenston Schools, Geauga Board of Health, the Geauga County Medical Reserve Corps, Auburn Fire Department, Geauga County Department on Aging, Leadership Geauga, West Geauga Schools**, as well as regional partners, including the **Lake County General Health District, Lake County Medical Reserve Corps, Lorain County Public Health, Cuyahoga County Board of Health, Cleveland Department of Public Health, and Ashtabula County Health Department**.



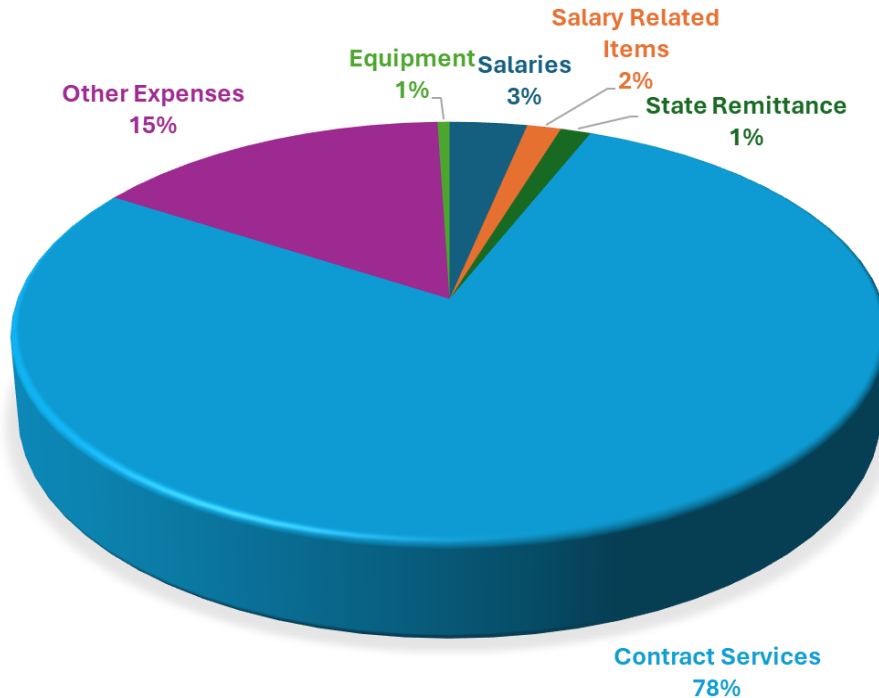
Vital Statistics

There have been many changes to Vital Statistics recently. A few highlights are below.

- The Ohio Department of Health Vital Statistics launched a new statewide program. The transition was phased in from July through December of 2025.
- Birth and death certificates took on a new look. The updated certificates now place the raised state seals in the lower left corner.
- With the launch of the new system, death certificates are now available for any deaths that occurred in the state of Ohio, not just for those who have passed in Geauga County.

Financial Review

2025 EXPENSES



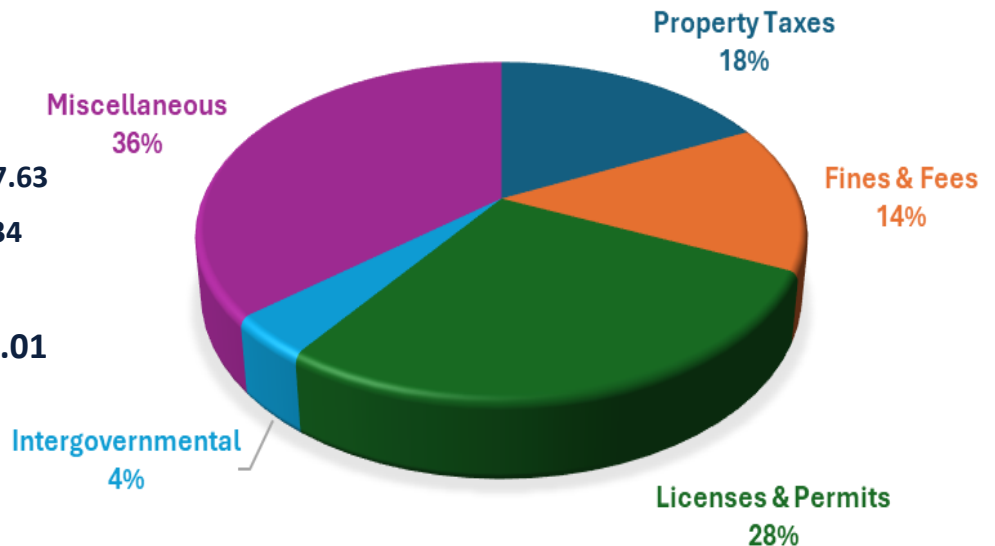
2025 Expenses

Salaries: \$115,336.33
 Salary Related Items: \$50,586.51
 State Remittance: \$45,441.00
 Contract Services: \$2,699,814.66
 Other Expenses: \$534,888.34
 Equipment: \$17,887.68
Total Expenses: \$3,463,954.52

2025 Revenues

Property Taxes: \$595,655.58
 Fines and Fees: \$478,580.13
 Licenses and Permits: \$946,347.63
 Intergovernmental: \$132,389.34
 Miscellaneous: \$1,220,450.33
Total Revenue: \$3,373,423.01

2025 REVENUE



Statistic Snapshot

Animal Exposure Reported



Bites: 84
Non-Bites: 17
Total: 101

Vital Statistics Issued



Birth Cert: 2,776
Death Cert: 5,086

Naloxone Kits Distributed



Community: 184
First Responders: 99
Total: 283

Sewage Permits Issued



210

Vaccines Administered



Adults: 27
Children: 1,377

Food Licenses Issued



606

Services Available at Geauga Public Health

Birth and Death Certificates

Population Health:

- Animal Bite Investigation
- Complex Medical Help Program
- Emergency Preparedness
- Immunizations and Clinics
- Project DAWN (Naloxone)
- Safe Communities

Environmental Health:

- Campground & RV Park Inspections
- Food Safety
- Nuisance Complaints
- Plumbing Permits & Inspections
- Private Water Wells
- Public Swimming Pools & Spa Inspections
- Septic System Inspections
- Tattoo & Body Piercing Inspections

A heartfelt thanks to our community for your support! From Geauga Public Health



BOARD OF HEALTH

Left to Right: Ashley Jones, Pharm D; Dr. Mark Hendrickson;
Lynn Roman; Christine Sutter; Melissa DeBoth



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Geauga Public Health

Geauga Public Health
12611 Ravenwood Drive, Suite 300
Room A301
Chardon, OH 44024
440-279-1900



Prevent. Promote. Protect.