



CITY OF MILWAUKEE
HEALTH DEPARTMENT

2025

ANNUAL REPORT



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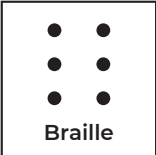


Table of Contents

Letter From the Commissioner	4
Letter From the Board of Health	5
How to Use the Annual Report	6
Department Overview	7
COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE	
Finance	9
Staffing	10
MHD Strategic Plan	11
Vital Records	12
Workforce Development	14
FAMILY AND COMMUNITY HEALTH (FCH)	15
Birth Outcomes Made Better (BOMB) Doula	19
Community Healthcare Access Program (CHAP)	20
Direct Assistance to Dads (DAD) Project and Empowering Families of Milwaukee (EFM)	22
Newborn Screenings for Hearing loss and Congenital Disorders	24
Safe Sleep and Strong Baby Programs	26
Women, Infants, and Children Nutrition (WIC)	28
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH	29
Consumer Environmental Health (CEH)	32
Emergency Preparedness Environmental Health (EPEH)	34
Home Environmental Health (HEH)	35
CLINICAL SERVICES	37
Communicable Disease (CD)	39
Milwaukee Breast and Cervical Cancer Awareness Program (MBCCAP)	42
Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH)	44
Milwaukee Health Department Laboratory (MHDL)	46
Scales Neighborhood Nursing	49
POLICY, INNOVATION, AND EQUITY (PIE)	50
Fetal Infant Mortality Review (FIMR)	53
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	55

Letter From the Commissioner of Health

Dear Milwaukeeans,

Public health is often most visible during moments of crisis, but its impact is felt every day in the work we do to protect and improve the health of our community. In 2025, the Milwaukee Health Department continued that work with urgency, dedication, and a deep commitment to the people of our city.

This year brought significant challenges. MHD played a central role in responding to lead hazards identified in Milwaukee Public Schools, working with partners to conduct inspections, organize screening clinics, and provide families with the information and support they needed. At the same time, MHD's teams continued to carry out the essential work of public health, preventing disease, promoting healthier environments, and responding to emergencies that affect our neighborhoods.

Alongside these efforts, MHD also made meaningful progress as an organization. The department achieved Pathways Acknowledged status from the Public Health Accreditation Board, a milestone that reflects MHD's continued advancement toward national public health accreditation. Across the department, staff strengthened data systems, improved coordination across programs, and expanded partnerships that help teams better serve Milwaukee residents.

Behind every inspection, clinic, dataset, and outreach effort is a team of dedicated public health professionals working to make our city healthier and safer. I am deeply grateful to MHD's staff, community partners, and Milwaukee's residents who place their trust in public health every day.

Thank you for your partnership and your continued support of public health. Together, we will continue working toward a Milwaukee where every person has the opportunity to live a healthy life.

In health and service,

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

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 another year of progress and commitment from the City of Milwaukee Health Department. Throughout 2025, the department continued to demonstrate leadership in protecting public health, responding to emerging challenges, and strengthening the systems that support the wellbeing of our community.

This year highlighted the critical role of local public health. MHD's response to lead hazards identified in Milwaukee Public Schools required rapid coordination, community engagement, and strong partnerships to protect children and support families. Simultaneously, the department continued to advance prevention efforts across the city, including communicable disease control, maternal and child health services, environmental health protections, and community health planning.

The Board also recognizes the department's ongoing efforts to strengthen its internal capacity and long-term impact. Achieving Public Health Accreditation Board Pathways Acknowledged status reflects the department's commitment to quality improvement and national public health standards. MHD's continued collaboration with community organizations and regional partners ensures that public health initiatives are grounded in the needs and experiences of Milwaukee residents.

We are grateful for the dedication of Commissioner Mike Totoraitis and the many public health professionals who serve our city each day. Their work, often behind the scenes, helps ensure that Milwaukee remains resilient, prepared, and focused on building healthier communities for all.

The Board of Health remains committed to supporting the mission of the Milwaukee Health Department and advancing policies that promote health, equity, and opportunity for every resident.

With appreciation,

Wujie Zhang, PhD - Board Chair
Tahira Malik - Vice Chair
Dr. Darlene Beck, AGPCNP-BC APNP
Caroline Gómez-Tom

Ian B. K. Martin, M.D., M.B.A., FACEP, FAAEM
Ericka Sinclair
Penelope Stewart
Irum Ziauddin, PA-C, DMSc

How to Use the Annual Report

The City of Milwaukee Health Department's (MHD) 2025 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 2025 Annual Report Data Supplement, which can be found at milwaukee.gov/AnnualReports.

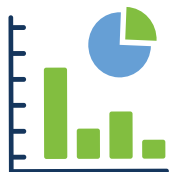
MHD's program information is organized under five primary branches: Commissioner's Office, Family and Community Health (FCH), Environmental Health, Clinical Services, and Policy, Innovation, and Equity (PIE). Each of these branches are broken down into several of their own sub-programs and special initiatives.

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 2025 operations data

Operations data, including 2025 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 MHD's milestones and moments of growth

MHD departments accomplished significant achievements while also navigating several challenges throughout 2025.

Department Overview

Keeping Milwaukee healthy since 1867!

For over 150 years, the City of Milwaukee Health Department (MHD) has committed to protecting and improving the health of everyone who lives, works, and plays in the city. MHD works 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 serves nearly 600,000 residents through direct services, evidence-based programs, community partnerships, and policy development. **While MHD's programs have evolved over time, its mission remains the same: to build safe, healthy, and equitable communities where everyone can thrive!**

MHD CENTERS ITS WORK AROUND FOUR 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: MHD believes in nurturing creativity and new ideas that challenge us to do our everyday work better.

Equity: MHD acknowledges historic and current injustices in Milwaukee and strives to create a community where everyone has an equal opportunity to be healthy.

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

Courage: MHD's 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 the community.

Quality: MHD continuously improves and adapts its processes to create sustainable and positive health outcomes.

Structure

MHD consists of five 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.

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
Workforce Development	Newborn Screening		MKE Health Department Lab (MHDL)	Fetal Infant Mortality Review (FIMR)
	Safe Sleep / Strong Baby		Scales Neighborhood Nursing	
	Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)			

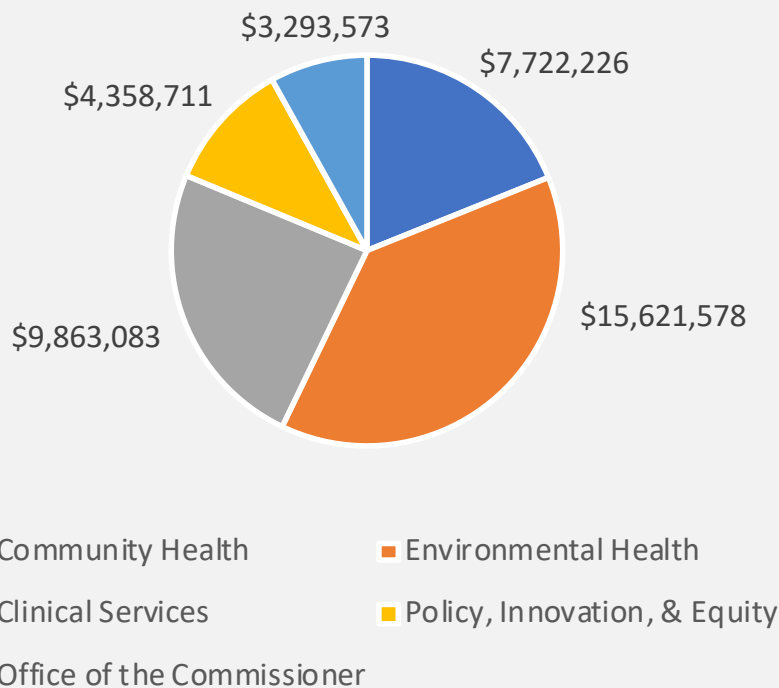
Finance

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					
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
O&M	\$16,884,600	\$12,291,820	\$18,244,554	\$18,437,326	\$19,011,368
Grant	\$33,725,720	\$31,222,619	\$24,130,331	\$22,393,012	\$21,197,519
Reimbursable	\$265	\$270	\$0	\$0	\$0
Capital	\$624,314	\$680,102	\$37,722	\$36,003	\$650,282
Total Expenses	\$51,234,899	\$44,194,812	\$42,412,607	\$40,866,341	\$40,859,171

* Financial data is preliminary and subject to change.

2025 Total Expenses



* Financial data is preliminary and subject to change.

Staffing

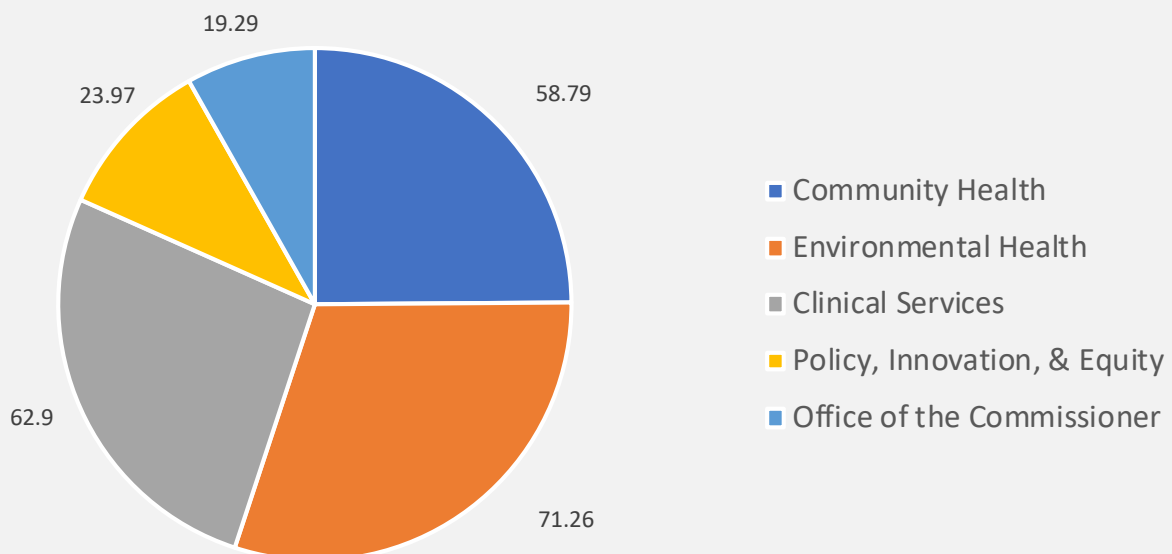
MHD has about 240 full-time staff. During the COVID-19 pandemic, MHD added staff in 2020 and significantly expanded temporary staffing in 2021 to respond to community needs.

MHD Personnel					
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
O&M FTE	162.12	190.8	141.14	142.53	158.41
Non-O&M FTE	441.85	109.2	92.99	88.77	77.79
Total FTE	603.97	300	234.13	231.3	236.20

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

* Table does not include temporary staff.

2025 Total FTE By Branch



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.

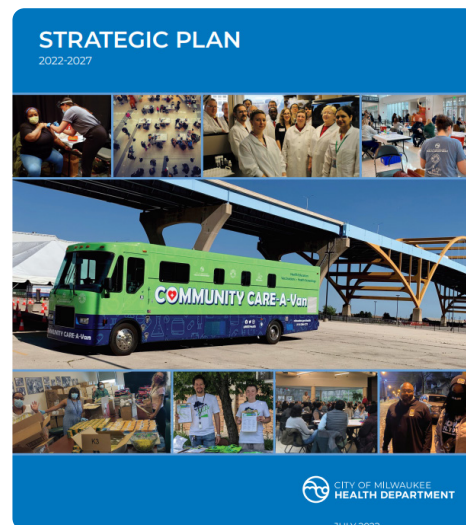
MHD's focus in the final two years is to complete the transition to a Public Health 3.0 model and further embed anti-racist practices and policies in all aspects of work. The Public Health 3.0 framework will evolve our relationship with our community, from one primarily of service-provider to strategist, policy-maker, advocate, and partner.

Accomplishments

- Key Performance Indicator (KPI) dashboards created and live on MHD's internal communications website (MHD Connect).
- Completed a market study across all 140 job titles.
- PH WINS completed and qualified for organizational-level data.

Challenges

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



[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

[\(Full breakdown in the Data Supplement\)](#)

Vital Records

MHD 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 Milwaukee residents, but also individuals across the state and beyond who require vital records for legal, personal, or administrative purposes.

In 2025, the Vital Records office processed over \$530,000 in total gross income, representing a 20% increase from 2024. With the State of Wisconsin recently discontinuing in-person services for vital records, MHD's availability for walk-in, phone, fax, and online requests has become an increasingly important resource for the community.

Vital Records plays 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.

Top Accomplishments

- Successfully met increased demand for birth and death certificates leading up to the Real ID deadline, with staff maintaining timely service and customer satisfaction.
- Attended public MHD community events to inform and educate residents of services, further expanding demand for birth and death certificates.

Top Challenge

- The Vital Records team strives to continue providing high quality service and customer satisfaction as requests for certificates continue to increase.

Website

milwaukee.gov/vital-records

2025 Data Highlights

\$534,173

total gross income, cash receipts, and billing

15,281

births registered

23,929

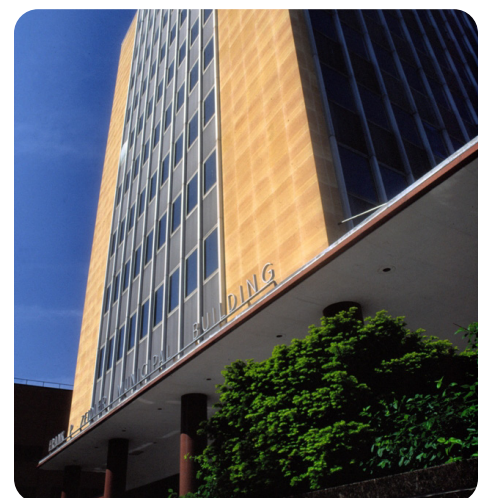
birth certificates issued

5,109

deaths registered

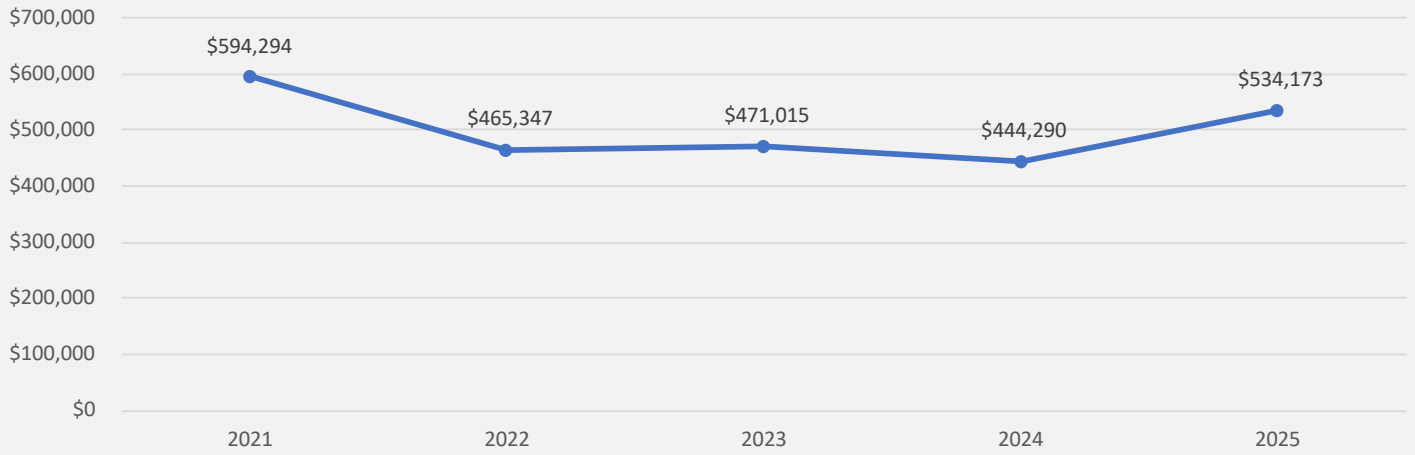
33,836

death certificates issued

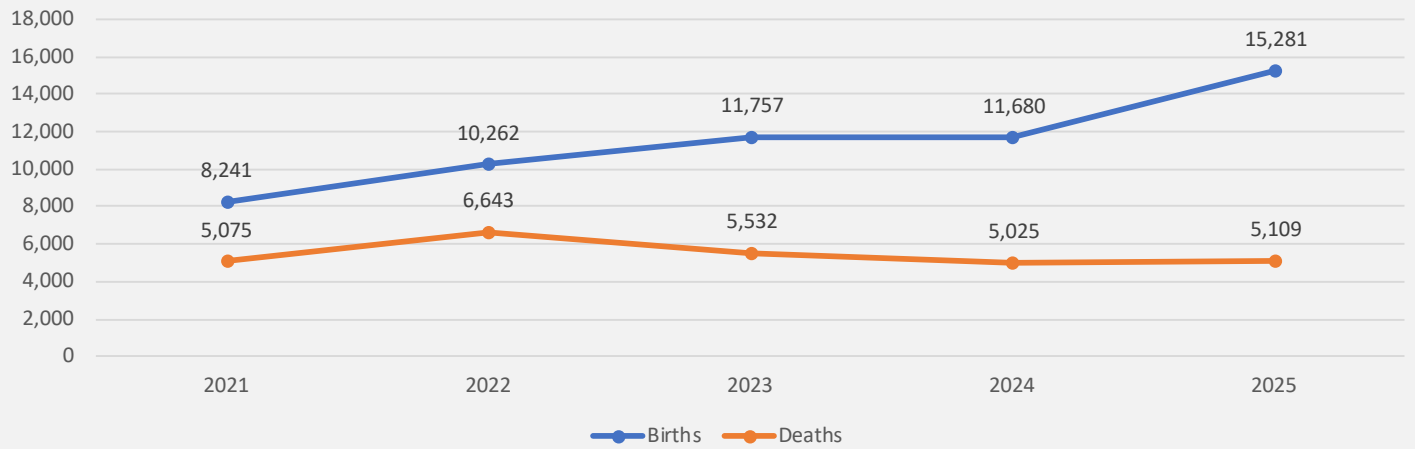


The Vital Records office is located on the 1st floor of the Zeidler Municipal Building (ZMB)

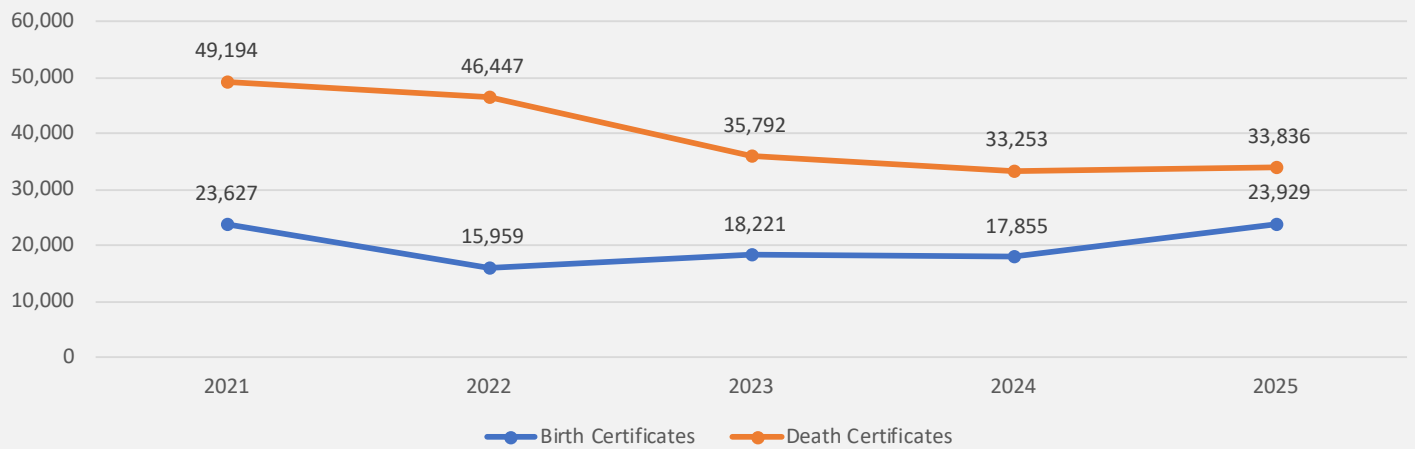
Total Gross Income, Cash Receipts, and Billing by year



Registered Births and Deaths by Year



Total Birth and Death Certificates Issued by Year



Workforce Development



MHD launched the Workforce Development program in 2023, 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. MHD 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

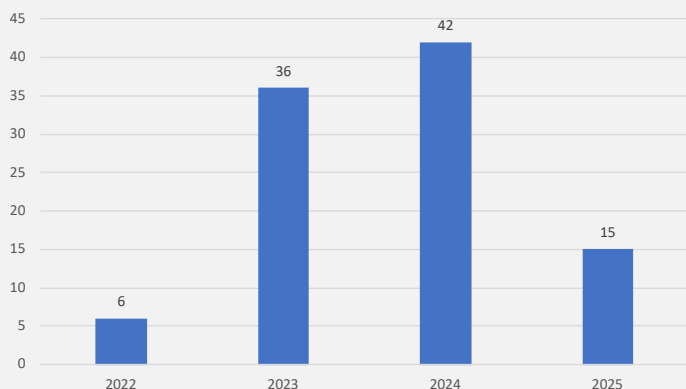
MHD's new Education Engagement and Placement program provides inclusive learning opportunities for individuals from all backgrounds. Designed for both academic and non-academic learners, this will enhance overall skills and help build structure for career advancement.



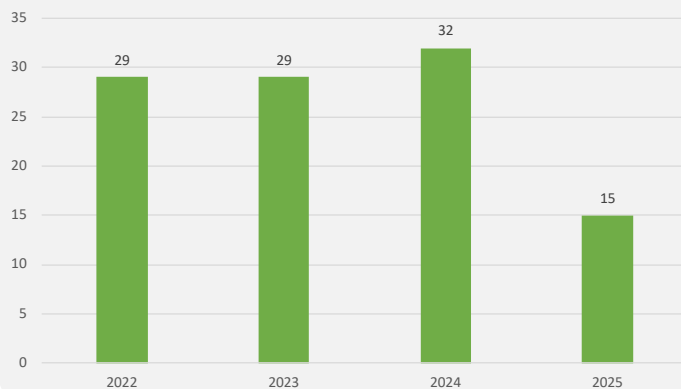
Anti-racist Preceptor Training

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



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
UW - Healthy Wisconsin Families	ARPA&SLFRF	10/2/2023 - 09/30/2025	\$1,150,000
Healthy Families Wisconsin Sub Contract - Meta House	American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and State & Local Recovery Funds (SLRF)	10/2/2023 - 9/30/2025	\$24,500
Maternal Health Innovation	Wisconsin Dept. of Health Services (DHS)	10/1/2025 - 9/30/2026	\$105,000

Community Healthcare Access Program (CHAP)			
Grant name	Funding source	Dates of grant period	Amount over grant period
DHS Forward Health Outreach Grant	State of WI-DHS-Division of Health Care Access and Accountability Federal Pass through	1/1/2026 - 6/30/2027	\$561,619
City Match (Required)	O&M	1/1/2026 - 6/30/2027	\$561,619

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	10/1/2025 - 9/30/2026	\$1,534,205
City Match - Home Visiting (Required)	O&M	10/1/2025 - 9/30/2026	\$1,681,954

Newborn Screenings for Hearing Loss and Congenital Disorders

Grant Name	Funding Source	Dates of Grant Period	Amount Over Grant Period
Newborn screening and Congenital Disorders Grant	WI Department of Health Services (DHS) - Consolidated Contract	7/1/2025 - 6/30/2026	\$284,052

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	1/1/2025 - 12/31/2025	\$423,385
City Match - Required (Strong Baby)	O&M	1/1/2025 - 12/31/2025	\$345,011
Safe Sleep (Cribs for Kids)	O&M (Special Fund)	1/1/2025 - 12/31/2025	\$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	1/1/2025 - 12/31/2025	\$1,996,545
WIC-Farmer's Market Nutrition Program (FMNP)		1/1/2025 - 12/31/2025	\$3,400
WIC-Breastfeeding Peer Counselor (BFPC)		1/1/2025 - 12/31/2025	\$166,920

Accomplishments

BOMB Doula Program

- Completed the Healthy Wisconsin Families: Investing in the Infrastructure of Maternal and Infant Health grant with our hospital partners at Ascension St. Joseph's and Aurora Sinai Hospital and case reviewed over 23 mutual clients.
- Partnered with Marquette School of Nursing on a Body Mapping project with birth workers, documenting how birth work impacts the workforce.
- Staff traveled to New Orleans to attend the Postpartum Support International Conference and learn more about postpartum support for families.

Community Health Access Program (CHAP)

- Maintained a fully-staffed team
- Launched new partnership with Planned Parenthood
- Reestablished services at Keenan Health Center

DAD Project and EFM

- Increased participation in Group Connections events, including the development of a peer-led network among participating clients.
- Increased the number of staff who are Certified Lactation Consultants (CLCs), expanding breastfeeding support services for families.
- Strengthened collaboration with community partners by participating in joint events (e.g., collaboration with Penfield Children's Center) and developing deeper partnerships with community-based organizations.

Newborn Screenings for Hearing loss and Congenital Disorders

- New hemoglobinopathy workflow to ensure that all newly diagnosed babies receive timely care.
- Strengthened partnerships with WSLH and DHS and increased ability to assist with follow up.
- New collaborative partnership with specialty hematology clinics to offer post-appointment health teaching home visits or phone calls.
- Continued collaboration with a local Audiology Clinic Therapy Coordinator to connect families to NBHS services and follow-up care.
- 7 Hearing screening events held throughout the year at a local midwives' Collective, providing screening availability for dozens of families.
- A system-wide database access overhaul occurred late-2025 to improve communications across the state-wide network of hearing screening staff.

Strong Baby and Safe Sleep Programs

- Online platform launched summer of 2025, which has serviced over 100 families.
- New partnership with Sinai OB clinic launched winter of 2025, training staff in our harm reduction model and connecting eligible patients with Pack 'n Plays.

Women, Infant, and Children Nutrition (WIC)

- Participant caseload each month ranged from 9,010 to 9,530 participants. This number reflects the amount of women, infants or children who received healthy foods and/or nutrition education per month.
- Staff retention increased, with a majority of staff completing more than one year of service.
- Participants and staff received education on updated food packages, which include a greater variety of foods in quantities that better match dietary guidelines available in 2025.

Challenges

BOMB Doula Program

- Program is in the process of configuring a contracted doula model and is regulating referral intakes during the transition.

Community Health Access Program (CHAP)

- Healthcare renewal is changing from annual to bi-annual for some clients.
- In-person client participation decreased during the reporting period.
- Brief uncertainty related to federal funding and programmatic changes during fall 2025.

DAD Project and EFM

- Programs are in the process of transitioning to a new electronic record system.
- Provider referrals were not always a strong fit or did not accurately describe the program.
- Ongoing lack of safe, stable, and sustainable housing for families, as well as limited housing resources.

Women, Infant, and Children Nutrition (WIC)

- Decreasing interest of Registered Dietitians to work in WIC-related programming.
- Brief uncertainty related to federal funding and programmatic changes during fall 2025.

Newborn Screenings for Hearing loss and Congenital Disorders

- Difficulties obtaining screening results from across state lines.
- Birthing unit closures in the State (including two in SE-WI) required families to access re-screening services elsewhere and created challenges in accessing follow-up screening results.
- Equipment failure at a birthing unit resulted in backlog of 30-40 babies. Many families did not pursue screenings elsewhere or did not return once equipment was fixed.
- Families continue to face many financial, geographic, structural, systemic, and personal barriers to accessing health care. These barriers include insurance-related issues, high out-of-pocket costs, health care facility closures, limited transportation options, caregiving responsibilities, difficulty taking time off work, housing insecurity, language barriers, fear and mistrust, postpartum-related issues, domestic violence, and substance use disorders.

Strong Baby and Safe Sleep Programs

- Providing services in all languages continues to be a challenge for the Safe Sleep program. As Milwaukee's refugee population grows, staff are encountering more situations where translation services are needed.
- Follow-up compliance is also a challenge because this is a voluntary program. Some clients do not respond to follow-up calls after receiving a Pack 'n Play. Maintaining contact with clients helps staff improve and adjust safe sleep education materials when needed.
- Staffing remains limited, as this program is managed by one staff member who teaches classes at two health centers and oversees the inventory of Pack 'n Plays and the online platform.

Birth Outcomes Made Better (BOMB) Doula Program



MHD's 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. MHD's 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, with a focus on populations that are at the highest risk for infant mortality and poor birth outcomes. 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.

Website

milwaukee.gov/BOMB

2025 Data Highlights

55 new families
enrolled in the program

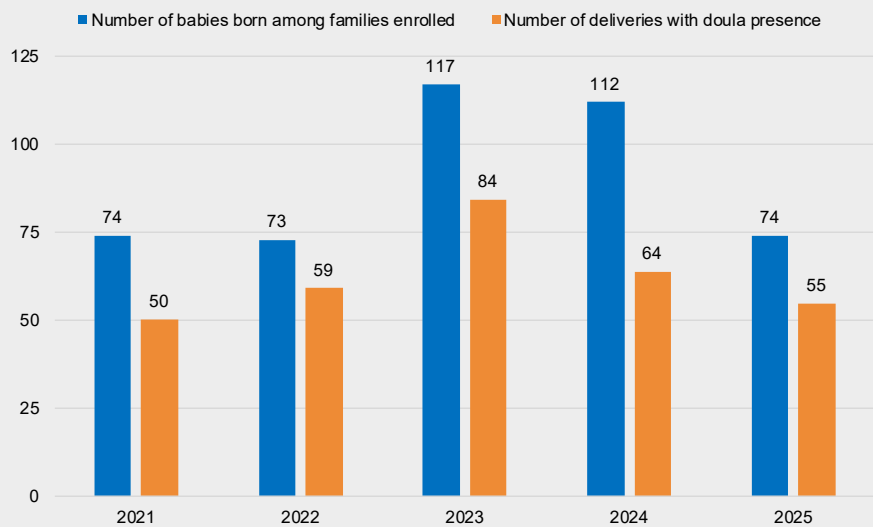
74 babies
born among
enrolled families

What is a Doula?



Doulas provide non-clinical, emotional, physical, and informational support for birthing people during pregnancy, labor, birth and postpartum. During labor they provide emotional support and physical hands on comfort measure to assist with pain management. During postpartum, doulas work with families to ensure they have physical and mental health support to have a healthy family.

BOMB Doula Births by Year



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.

Website

milwaukee.gov/CHAP

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

2025 CHAP Data Highlights

389

new BadgerCare+ applications

435

BadgerCare+ renewals

2,760

technical assists



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!

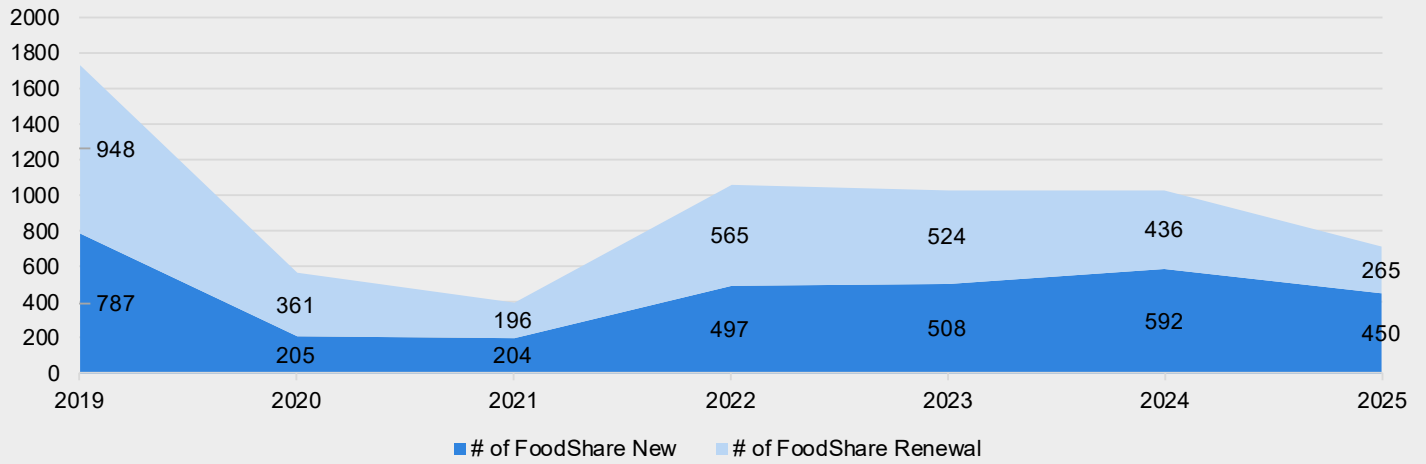
 CITY OF MILWAUKEE HEALTH DEPARTMENT

414-286-8620
milwaukee.gov/CHAP

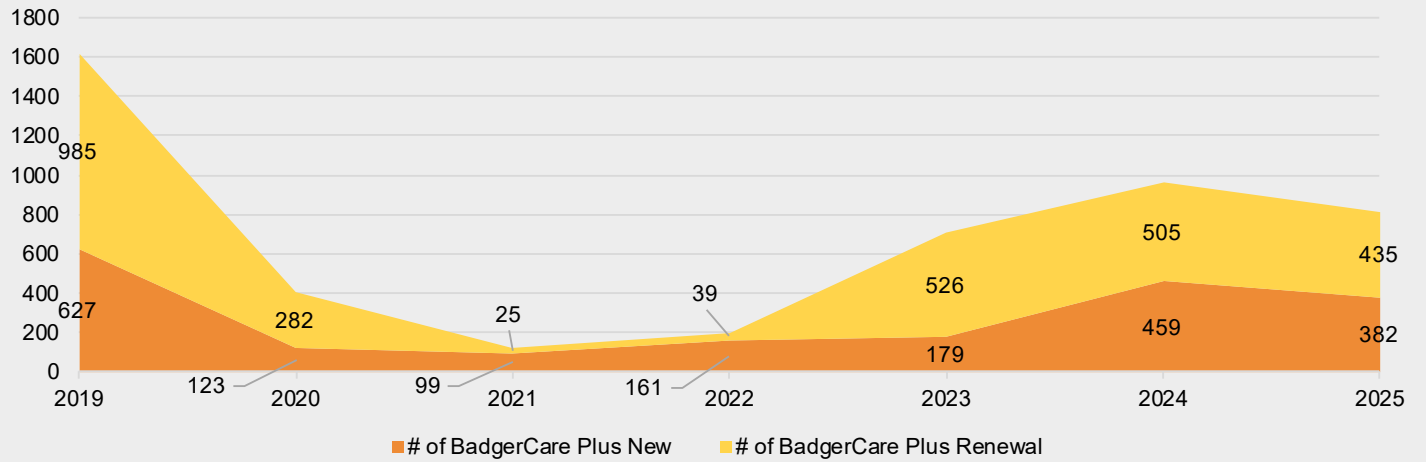
MCTS Campaign (Fall 2025).

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

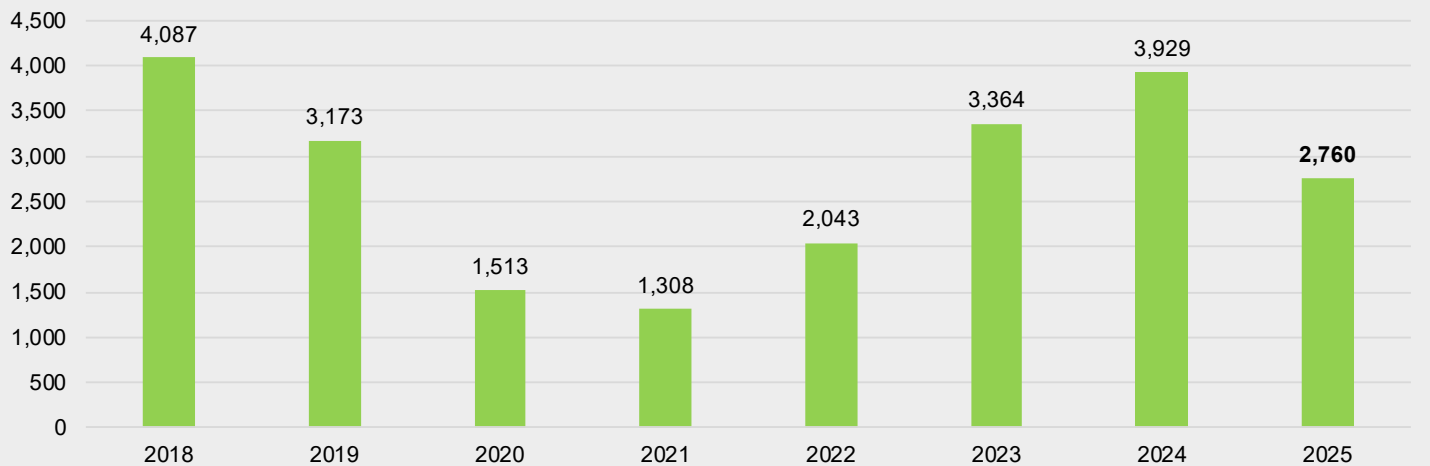
FoodShare Applications by Year



BadgerCare Plus Applications by Year



Number of Troubleshoots (i.e. Technical Assists) Done by Staff



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 health guidance and support for Milwaukee families and children. DAD/EFM provides services beginning in pregnancy and continue for at least two years after birth, functioning as a unified program with two distinct target populations.

DAD Project

DAD Project targets fathers and/or father figures who are expecting a child or parenting a child under the age of 3 years. Participants connect directly with a team of Fatherhood Involvement Specialists (FIS) to help strengthen father involvement, expand parenting skills, and enhance parent-child relationships.

EFM

EFM targets the birthing parent and strives to enroll caregivers as early as possible in pregnancy in an effort to have a positive impact on birth outcomes. Using a team model of public health nurses and social workers, EFM supports birthing parents by focusing on physical and psychosocial health needs.

Parents as Teachers (PAT)

DAD/EFM services follow the Parents as Teachers (PAT) model and include a mental health consultant to support family well-being. The program is grounded in guiding principles of providing strength-based, family-centered, culturally-respectful, linguistically-appropriate services that partner with families to work towards the goals and outcomes that are important to them.

Websites

milwaukee.gov/DAD

milwaukee.gov/EFM

2025 Data Highlights

67 total babies
born through
DAD/EFM programs

97% of families
report an increase in confidence
in their parenting skills

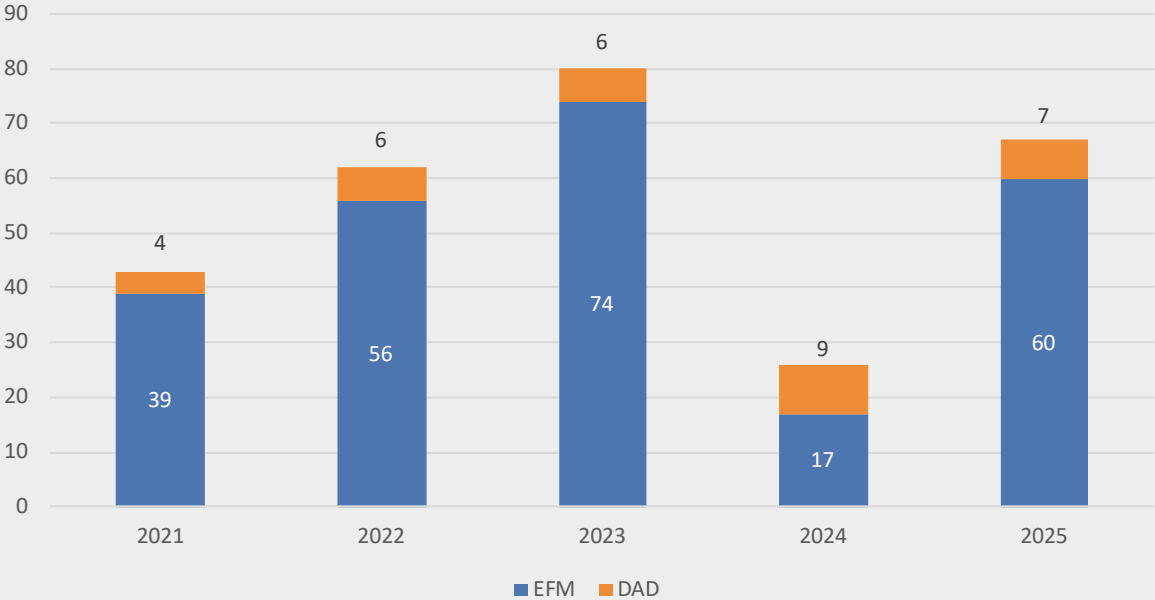
95% of families
report an increase in understanding
of their child's development

97% of families
report an increase in their ability
to take care of the health needs of
their family since being enrolled



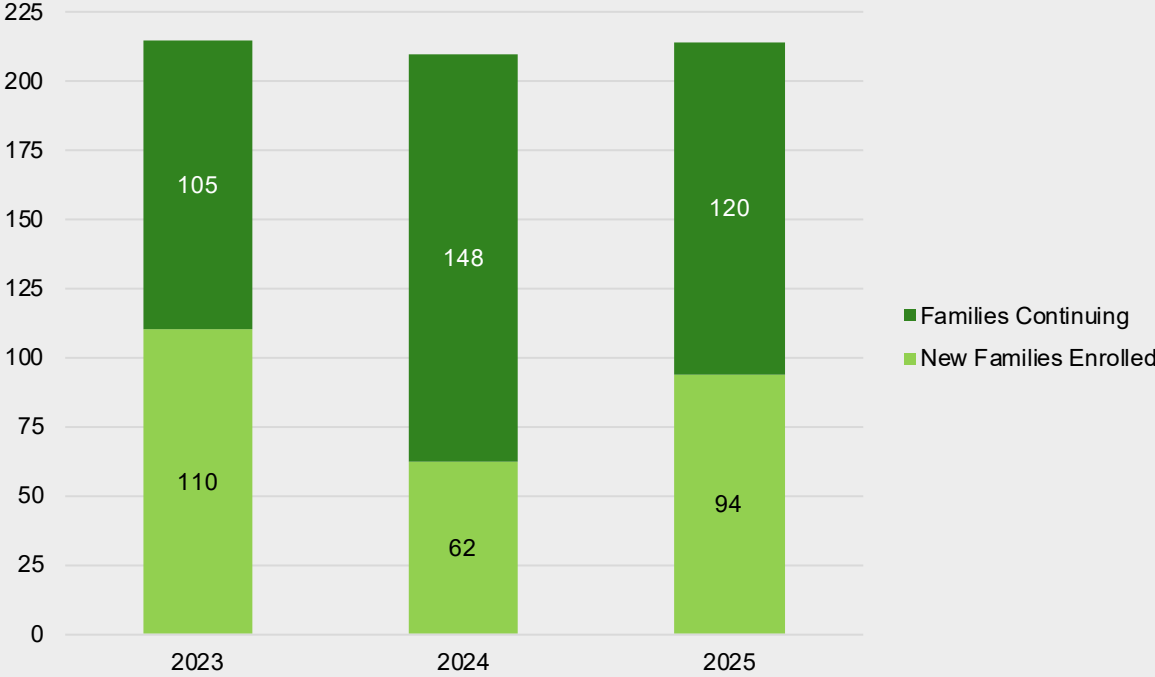
MHD client playing with his son.

Number of Infants Born and Enrolled in DAD/EFM Program



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

EFM/DAD New and Continuing Families



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 50 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.



Nurse performing a "Heel Prick" test on a newborn.

Website

milwaukee.gov/NBHS

milwaukee.gov/NBCS

2025 Data Highlights

824

client referrals received for hearing screenings

303 babies

managed by RONS* (monthly average)

71 babies

screened by RONS* for hearing loss

27

client referrals received for blood screenings

14 babies

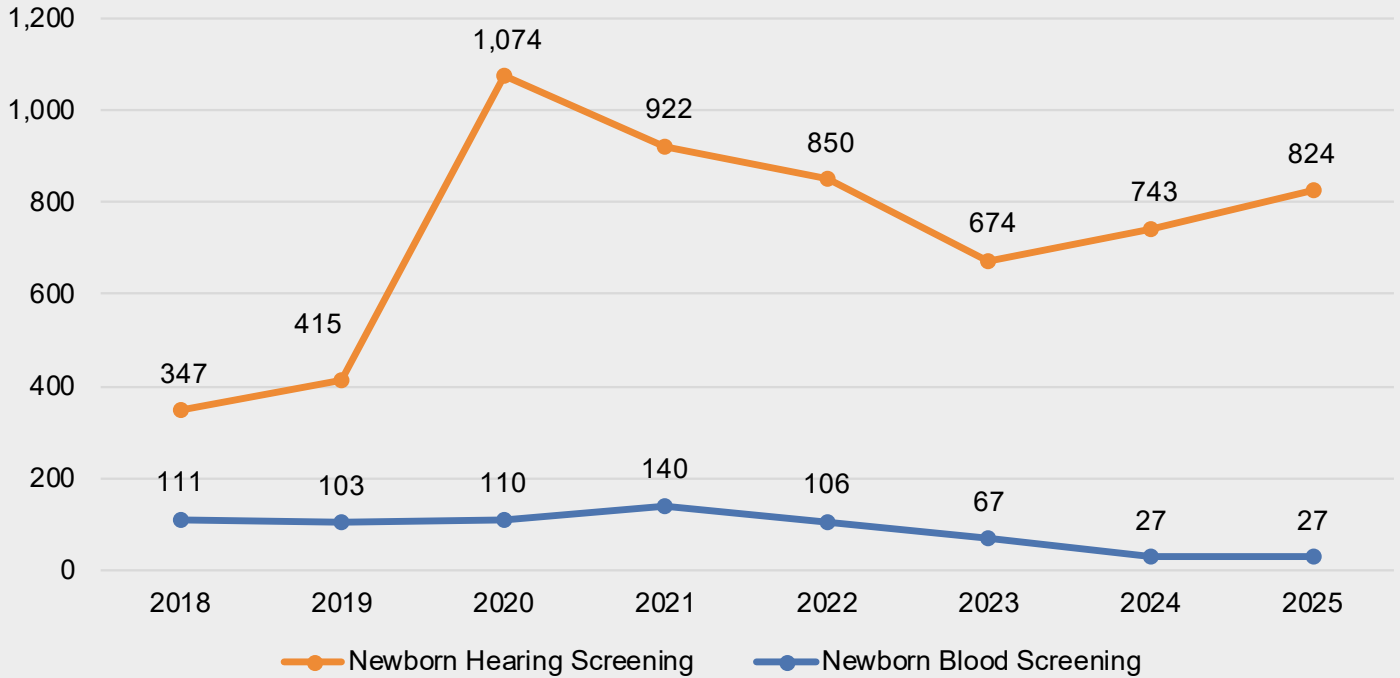
screened by MHD for congenital disorders

8

outreach events attended (conferences, health fairs)

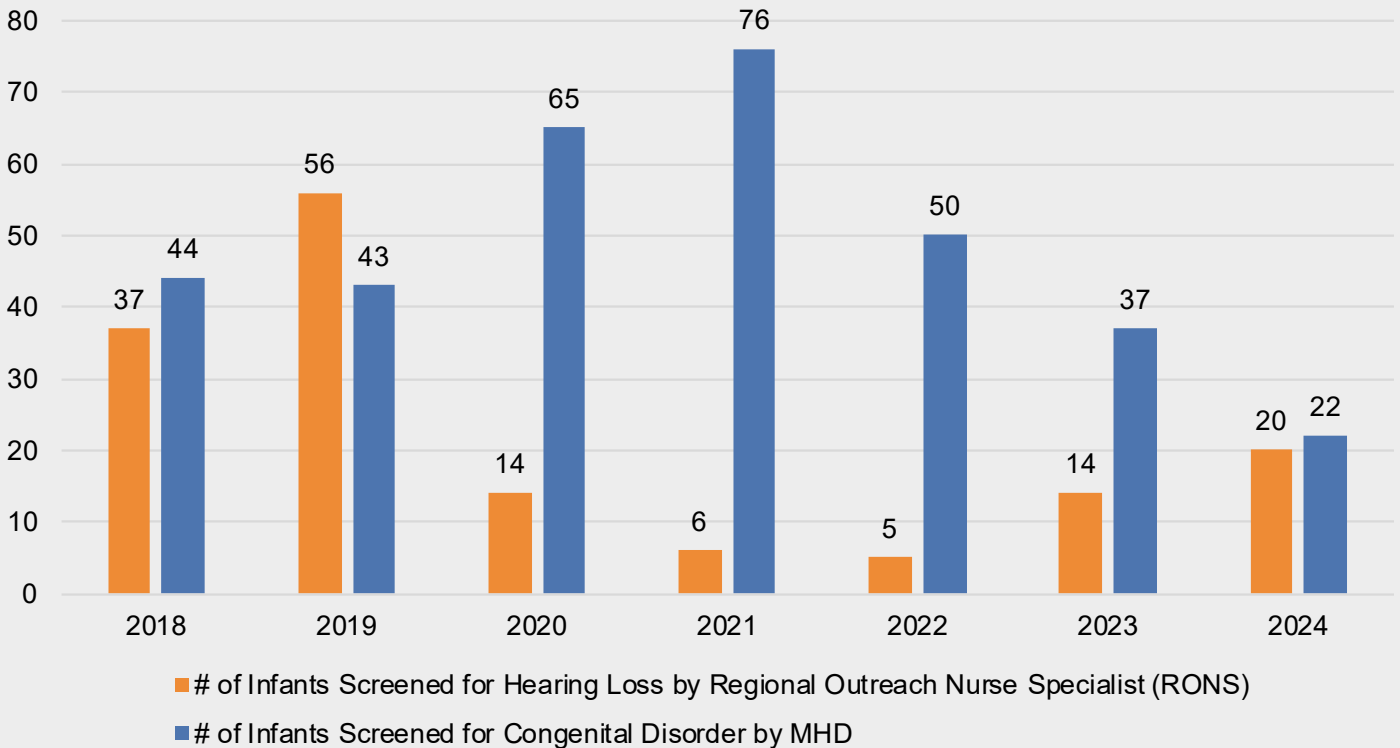
*RONS: Regional Outreach Nurse Specialist.

Number of Referrals Received by Year



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

Number of Infants Screened by Year



Safe Sleep and Strong Baby Programs

Safe Sleep

The Safe Sleep program provides education and trainings on creating a safe sleeping environment for Milwaukee families and babies. Participants who complete the trainings receive a free Graco Pack 'n Play (PNP) portable crib, sheets, a sleep sack, and instructions on how to properly secure the sheets to reduce sleep hazards. Classes for eligible Milwaukee residents are held at MHD's clinics three times per week. To offer more flexibility, the program also launched an online platform that allows clients to complete the self-guided training at their own pace.

Strong Baby Title V

The Strong Baby Title V program provides training, education, and informed practice on three focus areas: developmental screening, health equity, and infant mortality prevention. 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.

Websites

milwaukee.gov/CribsForKids

milwaukee.gov/StrongBaby

2025 Data Highlights

620 clients

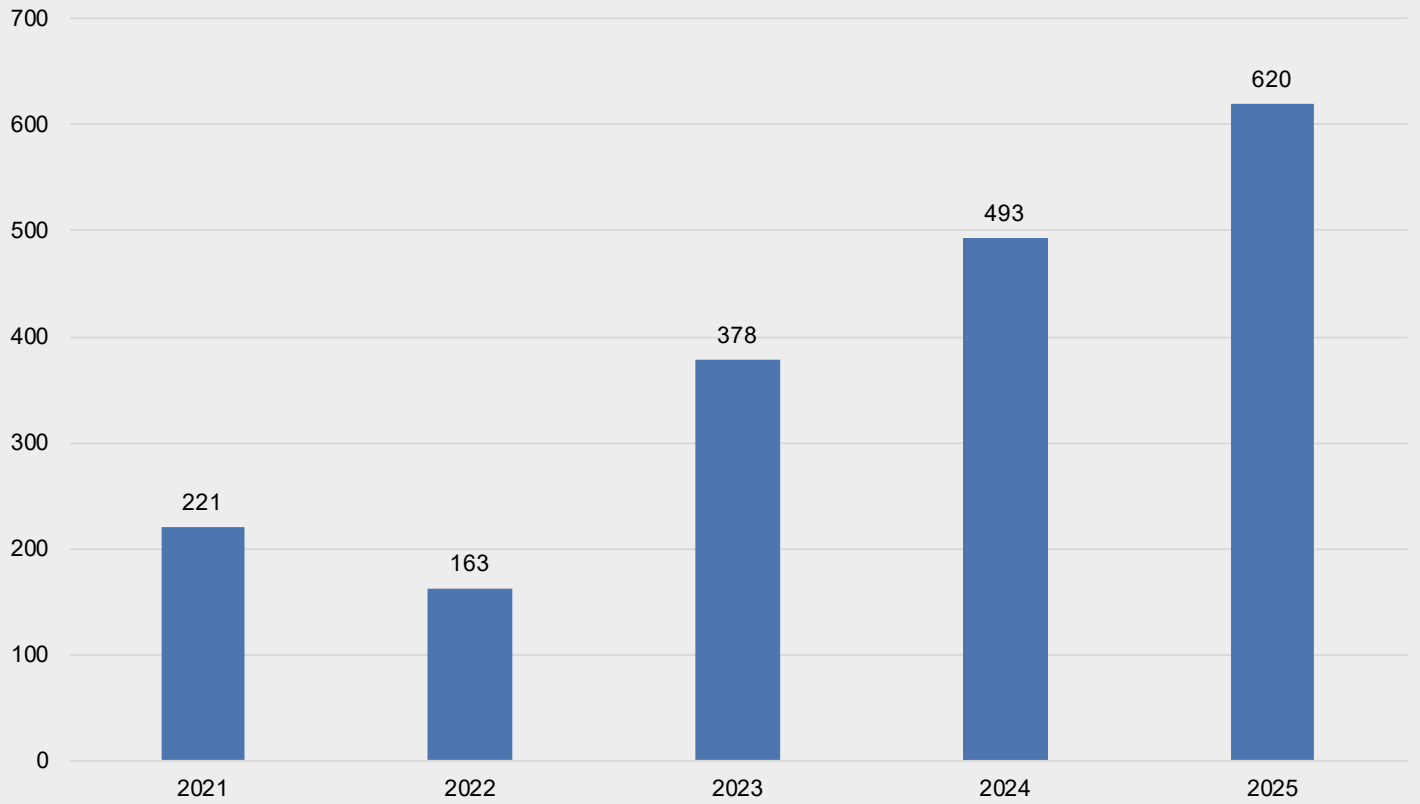
served by the
Safe Sleep program

127 cribs

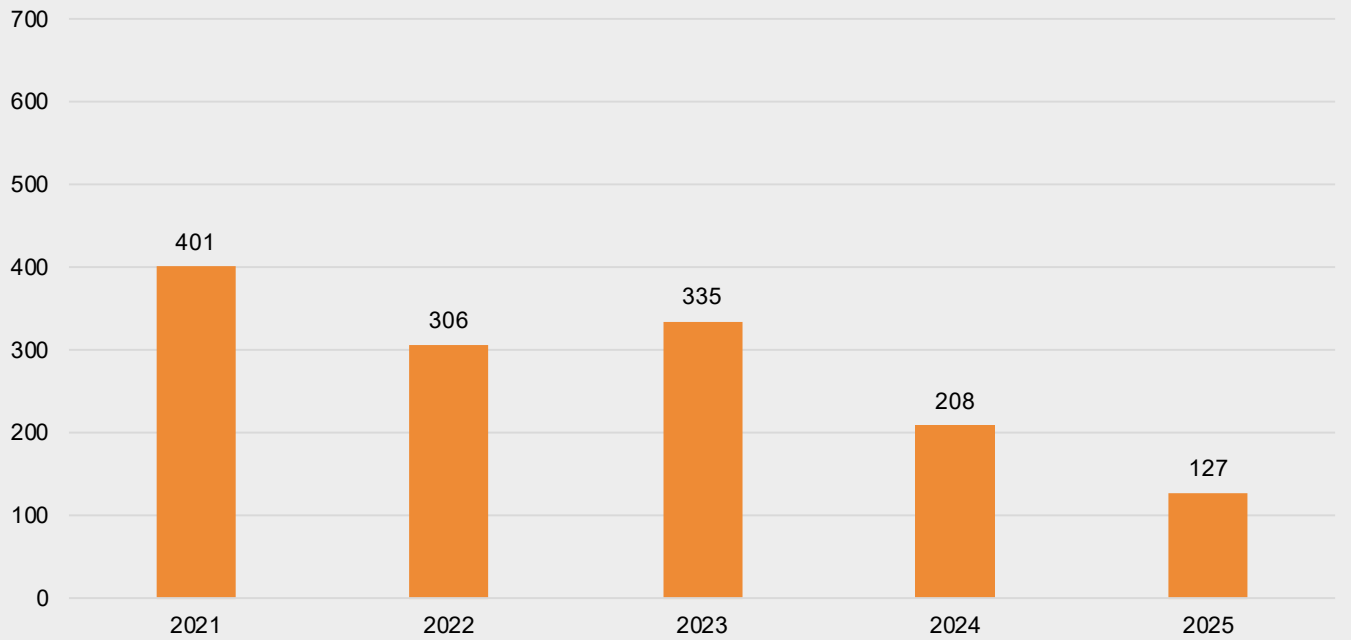
distributed through
classes and home visiting



Number of Clients Served by Cribs for Kids Program



Total 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. WIC's four main goals are to provide nutrition education, breastfeeding education and support, supplemental nutritious foods, and community referrals to its participants.

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. WIC also helps coordinate services within the health department that parallel other public health priorities, such as assessing for lead screening needs and referrals, offering safe sleep options, and providing referrals for perinatal and child mental health resources.

WIC maintains a monthly caseload of about 9,500 clients and operates at all three health department clinics, targeting urban areas in central, northwest, and southern Milwaukee. About 45% of clients attend the northwest clinic.

Website

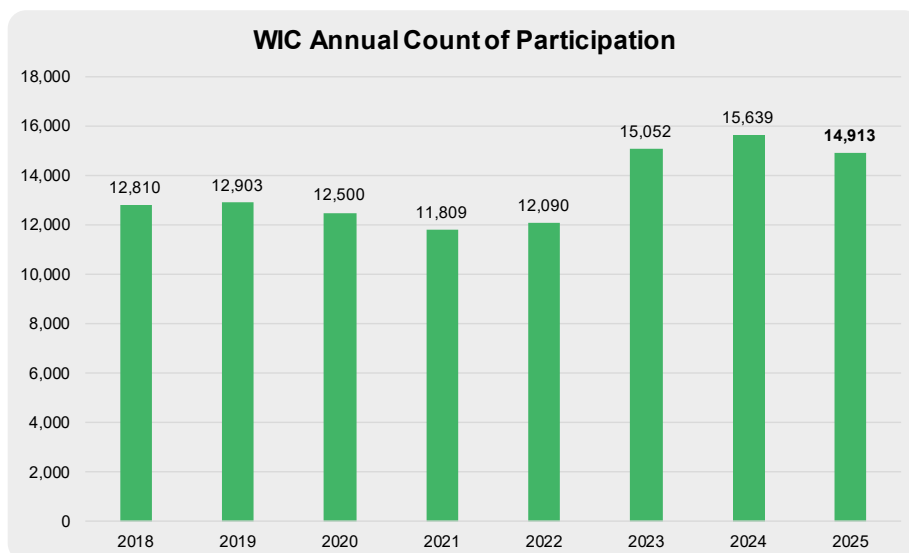
milwaukee.gov/WIC

2025 Data Highlights

14,913 clients
served through the WIC program

27% of infants
breastfed through 3 months of age

20% 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 2025

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)	4/1/2025 - 10/01/2025	\$24,913
Public Health Emergency Preparedness Cooperative Agreement BP2	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)	7/1/2025 - 6/30/2026	\$348,008
Cities Readiness Initiative BP2		7/1/2025 - 6/30/2026	\$248,637
Public Health Emergency Preparedness Cooperative Agreement BP1		7/1/2024 - 6/30/2025	\$348,008
Cities Readiness Initiative BP1		7/1/2024 - 6/30/2025	\$248,637

Home Environmental Health (HEH)

Grant Name	Funding Source	Dates of Grant Period	Amount Over Grant Period
American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Grant Funding	U.S. Treasury	3/21/2021 - 12/31/2026	\$23,666,040
HUD 1	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)	12/1/2023 - 11/30/2027	\$5,700,000
HUD 2		9/21/2025 - 12/31/2029	\$7,700,000
Consolidated Grant	Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS)	1/1/2025 - 12/31/2025	\$253,643
CDBG	Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program	1/1/2025 - 12/31/2025	\$1,990,000
CDC Grant	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)	9/15/2025 - 3/7/2027	\$394,000

Accomplishments

Consumer Environmental Health (CEH)

- CEH added an additional Coordinator to support festival inspections and operator outreach. This position strengthens food safety inspections and helps educate operators on safe food practices.
- Two CEH inspection programs, Weights and Measures and Tattoo and Body Art, transitioned to state inspection software, improving reporting and consistency. Staff trained on the system in late 2025, with full implementation completed in January 2026. Both programs also expanded cross-training to support long-term staffing needs. All inspectors are now trained to conduct temporary tattoo and body art inspections, and additional food inspectors are trained in Weights and Measures.
- Operator outreach was a key focus in 2025. Staff strengthened education during inspections and expanded outreach at the community level. A targeted training for festival operators showed a direct improvement in food safety compliance. In 2024, 59% of festival inspections documented at least one priority violation. In 2025, that number dropped to 44%. CEH will continue prioritizing education to support improved compliance.

Emergency Preparedness Environmental Health (EPEH)

- EPEH achieved its staffing goals, growing from two to seven staff. This expansion strengthened team readiness and resilience and positioned the program to take on new initiatives and expanded activities.
- EPEH strengthened its environmental health capacity by acquiring new air quality analytical equipment to enhance diagnostic and surveillance capabilities. The program also pursued funding to improve public messaging about swimming risks at Milwaukee's three city beaches.
- EPEH took on a leadership role in long-term recovery efforts following August's unprecedented flooding. Through sustained engagement and coordination, the team strengthened community partnerships and supported recovery efforts.

Home Environmental Health (HEH)

- HEH received increased federal funding for 2026, totaling more than \$7.6 million through HUD and CDC awards.
- The team implemented several quality improvements, including operational ownership verification, risk-based 30- and 60-day enforcement check-ins, post-court conference meetings, staff recognition efforts, process and SOP implementation for improved efficiency, standardized cross-departmental meetings, website updates, healthy home kits, and redesigned brochures to better serve clients.
- Improvements to LMS (Accela) integration enhanced reporting capabilities and supported the development of a health module for MHD records, providing greater administrative flexibility.

Challenges

Consumer Environmental Health (CEH)

- CEH experienced a year of transition. Several staff members with more than 25 years of experience retired, resulting in the loss of significant institutional knowledge. The addition of a new coordinator role created opportunities for internal promotion but also led to vacancies at multiple levels of the program. Maintaining inspection coverage, supporting staff, and onboarding new hires remained key priorities for CEH leadership. Remaining vacancies from these transitions were filled in 2026.
- Unlicensed food operations continue to grow due to factors such as limited awareness of licensing and food safety requirements, costs, and language barriers. Following up on complaints can be challenging, as many of these operations are temporary and often disappear before inspectors arrive. CEH is working to improve communication, educate the public about risks, and create clearer pathways for vendors to become licensed.
- As noted previously, new software has been introduced to the program. While it will improve reporting and consistency over time, implementation requires staff training and operational adjustments. CEH continues to work through this transition with the expectation of long-term benefits.

Home Environmental Health (HEH)

- HEH faces a need for increased contractor capacity. Current objectives include expanding recruitment efforts, strengthening employee retention strategies, and growing the pool of lead abatement contractors within restrictive city procurement processes.
- HEH continues to develop new enforcement models. The team is working to shift from a historically reactive court-based enforcement process, focused on citations and reinspection fees, toward property preservation plans and lead abatement actions managed through the court system. HEH will continue supporting escalated enforcement against the most serious offenders within systems such as HUD, DATCP, and DOJ.
- HEH also continues to work with other MHD programs and city agencies to better align education, inspections, and funding opportunities related to lead hazard mitigation. Future proactive efforts may include lower blood lead level interventions, a Targeted Rental Inspection Program (TRIP), a complaint-based referral system, and expanded education and outreach with external partners.

Consumer Environmental Health (CEH)

The dynamic staff of the Consumer Environmental Health program (CEH) cover three main areas: Food Safety, Tattoo and Body Art, and Weights and Measures.

Food Safety

The program inspects over 3,000 food establishments, 400 mobile vendors, and 600 temporary vendors each year. Staff provide training, investigate complaints and illness, review plans, conduct pre-licensing inspections, and support food safety policies. Despite staffing changes in 2025, the team maintained strong outreach and inspection efforts, including targeted festival vendor trainings, support for businesses impacted by August floods, and use of interpreter services when needed during food safety inspections.

Tattoo and Body Art

Inspectors work to reduce the risk of bloodborne diseases such as Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, or HIV by ensuring safe and sanitary tattoo and body art practices across about 80 facilities and 160 temporary operations. In 2025, the program investigated its first suspected mycobacterium cases linked to unlicensed artists, reinforcing the importance of oversight and safety measures.

Weights and Measures

This program protects consumers by monitoring weight and pricing accuracy of over 11,000 measuring devices across Milwaukee, such as gas pumps, scales, and scanners. In 2025, the program transitioned to state inspection software, onboarded new staff following retirements, and added new equipment to improve safety and efficiency.



CEH team performing inspections at Juneteenth festival (June 2025).

Website

milwaukee.gov/CEH

2025 Data Highlights

10,133

total food inspections completed

1,771

mobile food vendor inspections completed

344

tattoo and body art inspections completed

1,145

weight and measuring device inspections completed

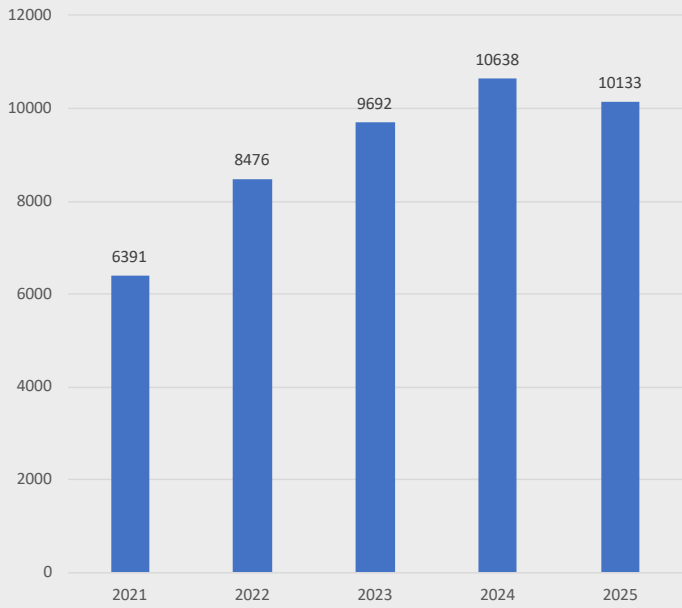
250

outreach trainings conducted

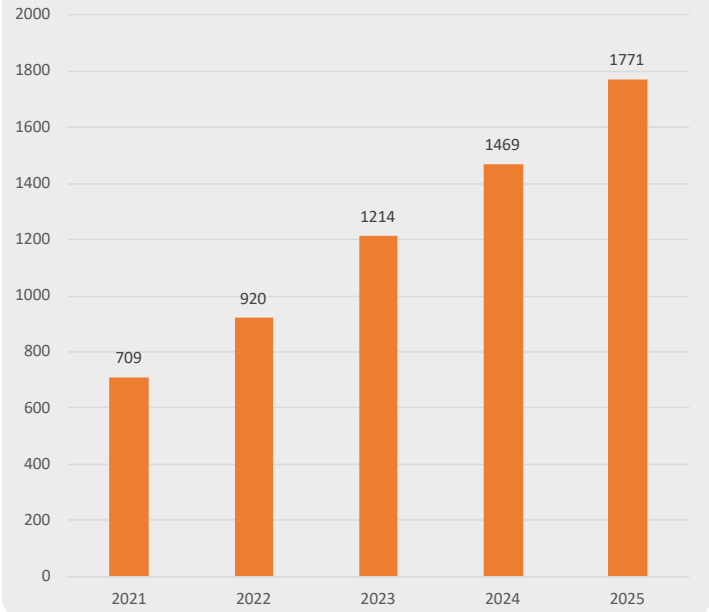
99%

Quality Assessment (QA) average rating

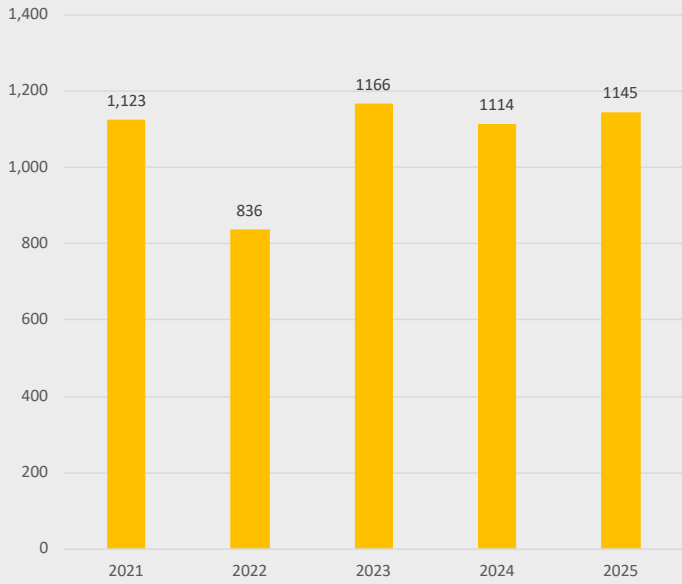
Total Number of Food Inspections by Year



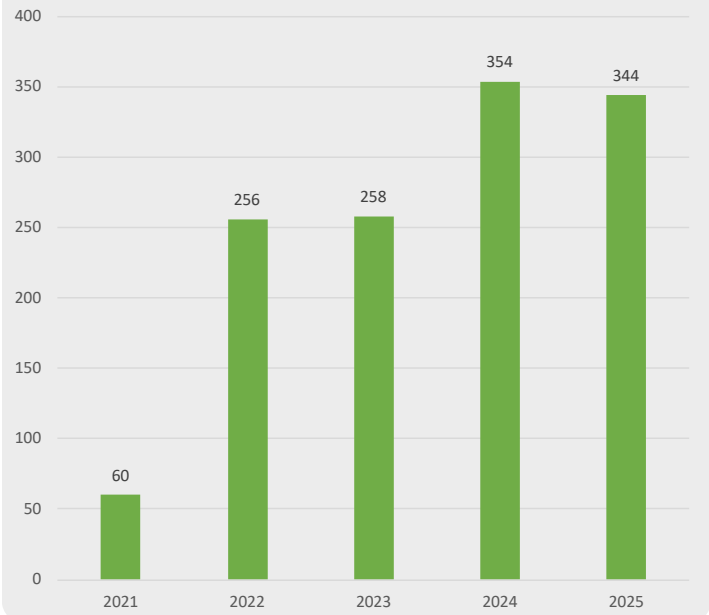
Total Number of Mobile Food Inspections by Year



Total Number of Weights and Measuring Device Inspections Completed by Year



Total Number of Tattoo and Body Art Inspections by Year

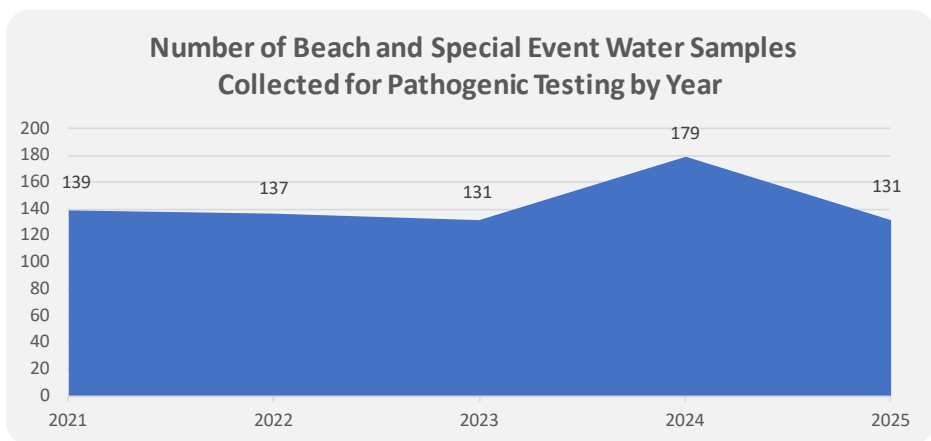


Emergency Preparedness Environmental Health (EPEH)

In 2025, EPEH staff played a central role in responding to the historic flooding that occurred August 9–10. The team conducted door-to-door damage assessments, coordinated drive-thru flood kit distribution for impacted residents, and represented the department at Multi-Agency Resource Centers (MARC)s and FEMA Disaster Recovery Centers (DRCs). As response efforts shifted toward recovery, EPEH stepped into a leadership role by co-leading a long-term recovery group to support ongoing community rebuilding efforts.

Beyond flood response efforts, EPEH supported coordinated responses to extreme cold events, with staff supporting shelter operations for vulnerable residents. The EPEH team also led emergency blood lead testing clinics for affected students and families following the discovery of hazardous levels of lead contamination in multiple Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) buildings.

EPEH expanded its focus on indoor air quality investigations and consultations, addressing concerns about mold, chemical spills, fugitive odors, and brownfield vapor intrusion. To support this work, EPEH invested in new analytical equipment, strengthening its capacity to identify environmental hazards and protect community health.



Website

milwaukee.gov/EPEH

2025 Data Highlights

3

large-scale public health urgent responses

11

emergency preparedness exercises conducted

8

AARs and Hotwashes published

124

Indoor Air Quality Consultations and Investigations

178

Carbon Monoxide exposure incidents investigated

80

rabies exposure investigations

Home Environmental Health (HEH)

Diversifying Lead Abatement Funding

The City of Milwaukee received an additional \$7.2 million HUD award for lead abatement, with Habitat for Humanity supporting rental and owner-occupied units and COLE providing community outreach to connect families to services. MHD secured a new \$394,000 CDC grant to support lead screening in Milwaukee Public Schools beginning in 2026, in partnership with COLE, MPS, CDC, and Novir to help address the MPS lead crisis and low screening rates. MHD will provide abatement and clinical follow-up for affected children and homes resulting from screening interventions.

MHD also contracted a consultant to guide fund development and philanthropic engagement to expand lead abatement capacity. Emergency funds were budgeted for high-cost cases and children with severe EBLs that did not qualify for traditional funding sources.

Expanding Enforcement and Abatement Activities

An RFP expanded the pool of qualified lead abatement contractors and supported crew growth among existing firms. The City also established quarterly contractor meetings to align strategies, address operational issues, and review regulatory changes. Closer collaboration with legal nonprofits, case management partners, and housing organizations expanded multi-agency referrals and public awareness. MHD now has closer coordination with the City Attorney's Office and new Housing Compliance Officers produced updated SOPs and enforcement policies to increase landlord contributions. Monthly CAO-MHD meetings now review cases for escalation.

Data System Optimizations

MHD strengthened internal systems by adding SMART metrics to Power BI and Accela, improving case timelines and unit output tracking. New Accela-generated appointment letters and Right of Entry orders support faster access to properties. Lead abatement permits remain fully accessible through Accela, allowing contractors to apply, pay, and view unit-specific permit information online. Better integration with Power BI in 2025 improved tracking, reporting, and public transparency through new dashboards. MHD implemented the OCHIN clinical record system in 2025 for case registration, scheduling, billing, and reporting. Public-facing materials were redesigned, including a simplified lead landing page and a rebranded Healthy Homes Kit based on client feedback. The kit now emphasizes cleaning supplies, hygiene, and behavior change, with a second kit for educational materials.

Website

milwaukee.gov/HEH

2025 Data Highlights

324

lead inspections completed

354

lead abatement permits issued

106 new cases

referred for nurse case management

7,912

nurse case management outreach interventions

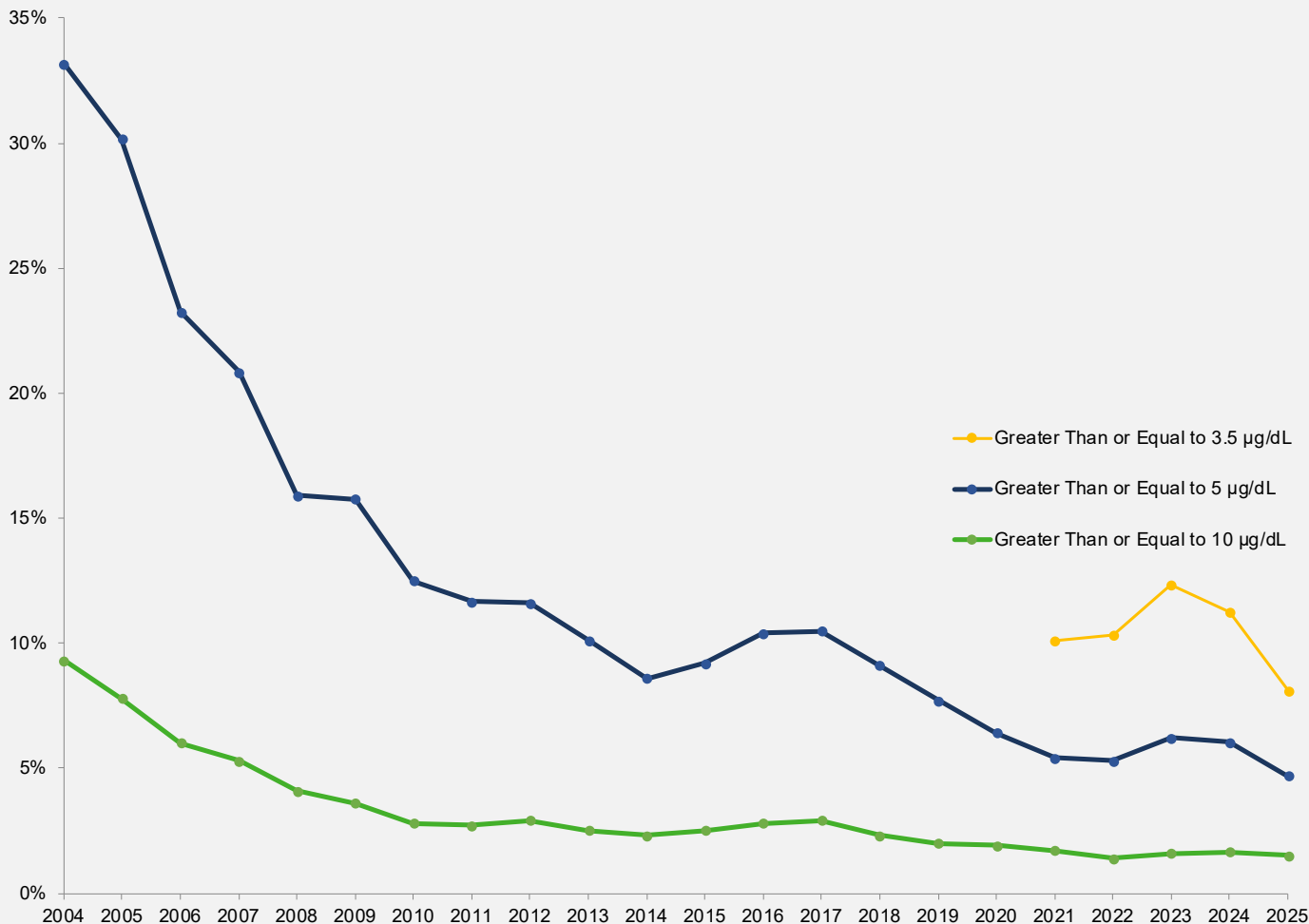
31,169

total reported blood lead tests



City of Milwaukee - Blood Lead Testing

Percentage of Poisoned Children Tested Under 72 Months - 2004 - 2025



Source: State of WI Dept. of Health Services HHL PSS Data - Retrieved February 2026
 Data is based on the highest single confirmed or reported blood lead test level for an individual child, and the number of unique children tested with a reported City of Milwaukee address.

* 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)	7/1/2024 - 6/30/2025	\$28,900
Immunization Action Plan		1/1/2025 - 12/31/2025	\$259,610

Milwaukee Breast and Cervical Cancer Awareness Program (MBCCAP)
No MBCCAP grants for 2025.

Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH)			
Grant Name	Funding Source	Dates of Grant Period	Amount Over Grant Period
WH/FP/RH 253.07(4)(A) PROFILE 159327	WI Department of Health Services (DHS)	1/1/2025-12/31/2025	\$167,519
FP DUAL PROTECTION SITE PROFILE 159316		1/1/2025-12/31/2025	\$14,068
WH/FP RH 253.07 (E) PROFILE 152003		1/1/2025-12/31/2025	\$30,015
HIV PREV PS & LINKAGES PROFILE 155957		1/1/2025-12/31/2025	\$44,395
STD PCHD BASE, INFERTILITY PREVENTION PROFILE 155027		2/1/2024-01/31/2025	\$273,332
STD PCHD BASE, INFERTILITY PREVENTION PROFILE 155027		2/1/2025-2/28/2025	\$22,780
STD PCHD BASE, INFERTILITY PREVENTION PROFILE 155027 (Still active)		3/1/2025-2/28/2026	\$211,527

Accomplishments

Communicable Disease (CD)

- The CD team partnered with the EPEH program to conduct internal and external measles tabletop exercises. These exercises strengthened cross-program coordination, clarified response roles, and enhanced readiness for potential measles cases or outbreaks.
- The immunization program, with support from programs across MHD, hosted four immunization clinics during Milwaukee Public School's exclusion week, administering over 700 vaccines to students. This collaborative effort improved school compliance, reduced barriers for families, and strengthened protection against vaccine-preventable diseases.
- The Immunization and Tuberculosis Prevention and Care programs successfully implemented a new electronic health record (EHR) system, improving documentation, data accuracy, reporting efficiency, and care coordination.

Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH)

- The SRH program successfully implemented OCHIN EHR System, upgrading to a modern electronic health record platform to improve care coordination and data accuracy.
- Expanded walk-in services and increased client accessibility by reducing appointment barriers and improving patient satisfaction.
- The SRH program enhanced disease intervention and strengthened STI prevention through partner notification, education, and linkage to care across Southeastern Wisconsin.

Challenges

Communicable Disease (CD)

- In 2025, the immunization program faced ongoing challenges related to widespread vaccine misinformation and increased public skepticism amplified through media and national discourse. This environment required expanded community outreach, proactive education, and stronger partnerships to address concerns, rebuild trust, and support informed vaccination decisions.
- Despite two staff retirements, the TBPC program maintained full service delivery throughout the year, ensuring uninterrupted patient care, case management, and public health response.

Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH)

- Staff burnout increased as heavier workloads and stress affected team morale and productivity.
- High staff turnover created significant disruptions to continuity of care and program operations.
- Staffing shortages led to a temporary clinic closure for two months in November and December.

Communicable Disease (CD)

The Communicable Disease (CD) Program continues to investigate and respond to reportable communicable diseases in Milwaukee, as mandated by Wisconsin State Statute and Administrative Code. Core activities include surveillance, case investigation, contact tracing, outbreak response, trend monitoring, education, and coordination of prophylaxis when indicated. Diseases requiring follow-up include vaccine-preventable illnesses (e.g., measles, mumps, and pertussis), vector-borne diseases (e.g., Zika and Lyme disease), and gastrointestinal infections (e.g., Shigella and Salmonella).

In 2025, the CD Program worked to strengthen measles preparedness efforts by creating and enhancing protocols, coordinating with healthcare providers and schools, expanding MMR vaccination outreach and clinic capacity, and updating outbreak response plans to ensure swift containment and protection of vulnerable populations.

Website

milwaukee.gov/CDPC

2025 Data Highlights

1,149

case follow-ups
by CD program

6,423

immunizations
provided



Tuberculosis Prevention

In 2025, the Tuberculosis Prevention and Care Clinic (TBPC) continued to implement evidence-based strategies to identify, evaluate, and treat individuals with tuberculosis (TB) infection and disease, while preventing further transmission in the community. Every TB case is treated as a potential outbreak, and the program maintains readiness to rapidly initiate case management, contact investigations, testing, and treatment for both active TB disease and latent TB infection.

TBPC prioritizes timely diagnosis, directly observed therapy, and culturally responsive care to support treatment. TB continues to disproportionately impact people of color, foreign-born individuals (including resettled refugees), those with low socioeconomic status, and other marginalized populations. The program remains committed to advancing health equity while protecting the health of the broader Milwaukee community.



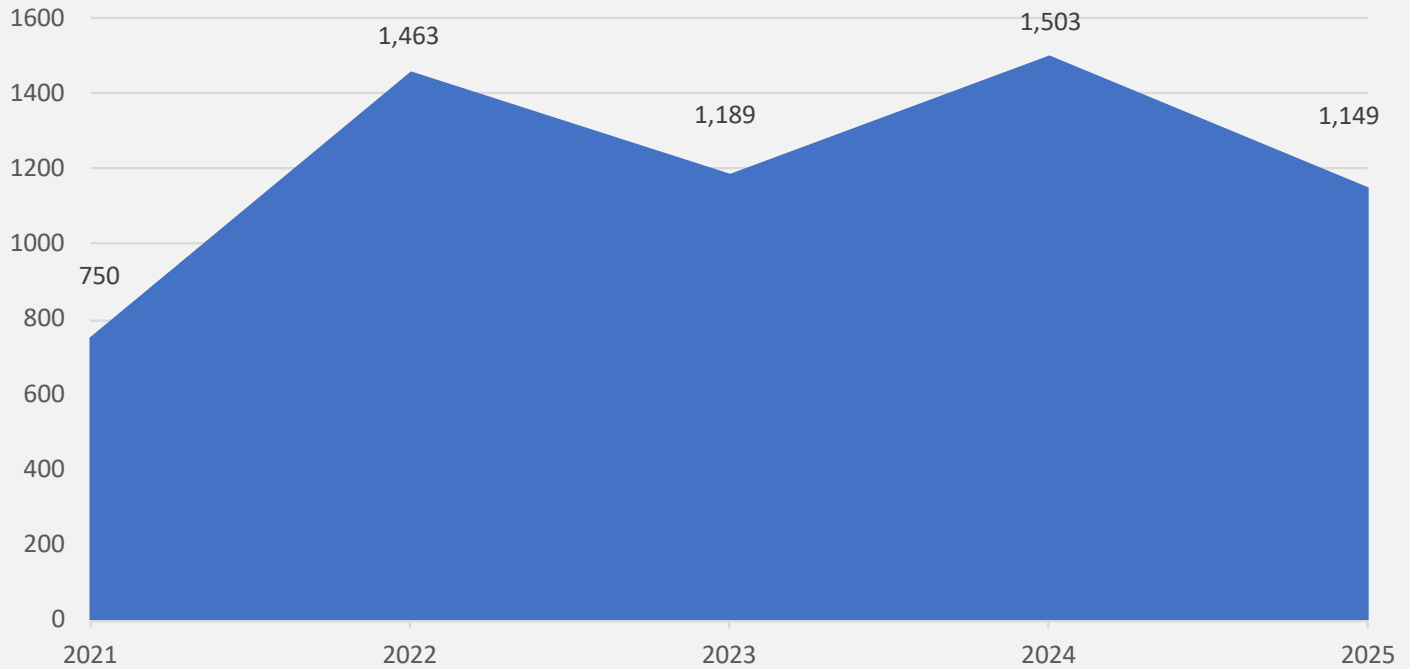
Immunization Program

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.

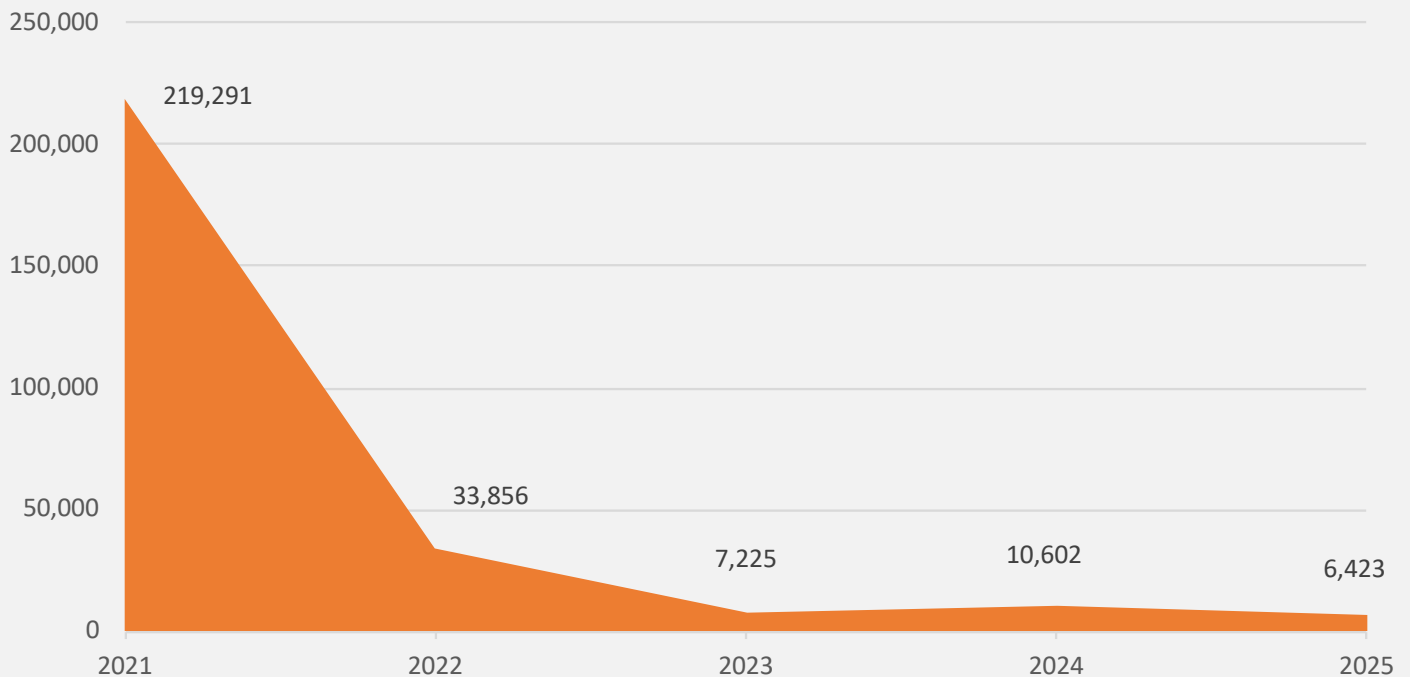


Number of Reportable CD Cases Followed-up by CD Program



* 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

2025 Data Highlights

860

breast and cervical
cancer screenings

268

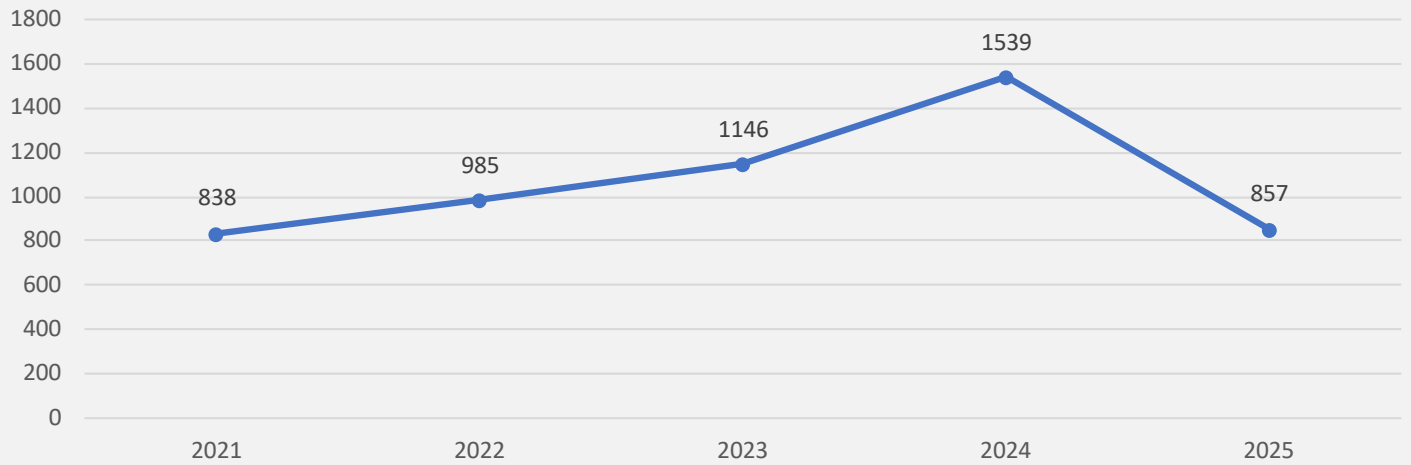
diagnostic services

3

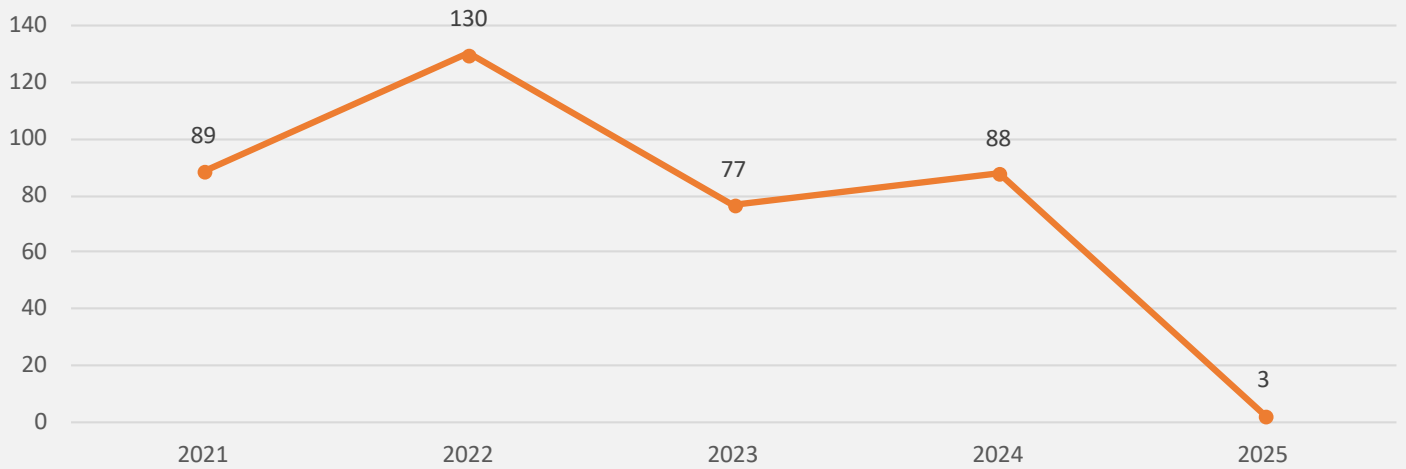
community events



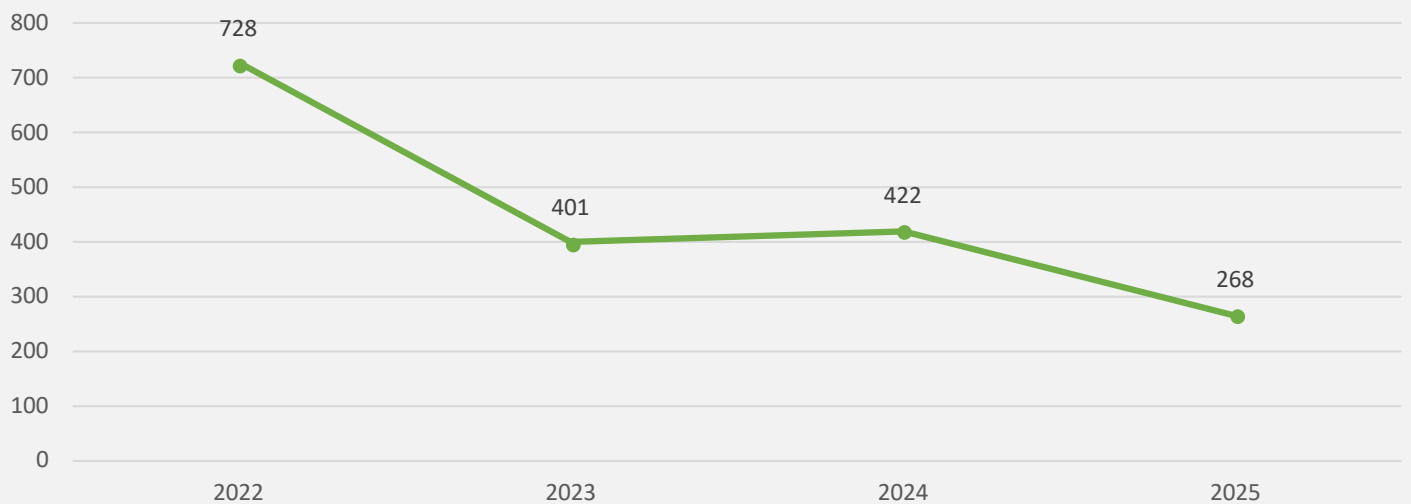
**Total Number of Breast Cancer Screenings by Year
(Internal and External Providers)**



**Total Number of Breast Cancer Screenings by Year
(Internal and External Providers)**



Number of Diagnostic Services Provided by Year



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 nurse practitioners, 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 their sexual health and well-being.

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

2025 Data Highlights

9,216

clinic visits

4,318

people tested for STIs

144,988

condoms distributed

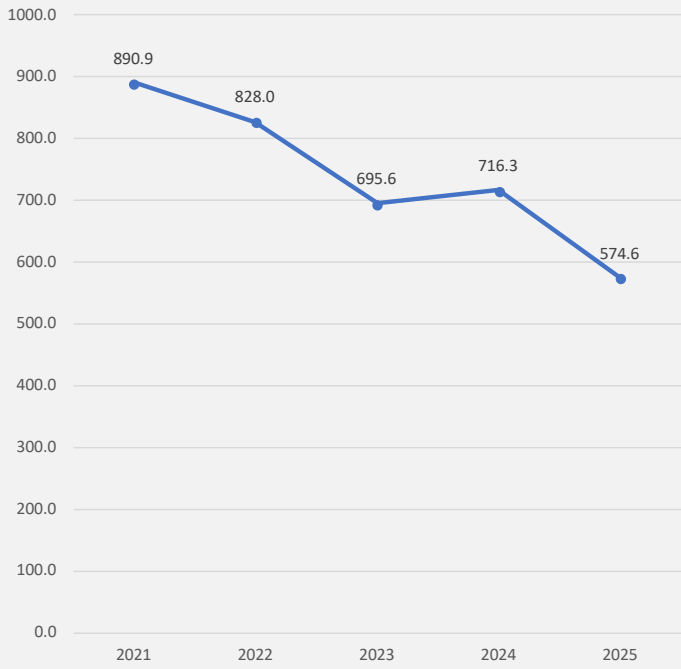
858

people provided with emergency contraception

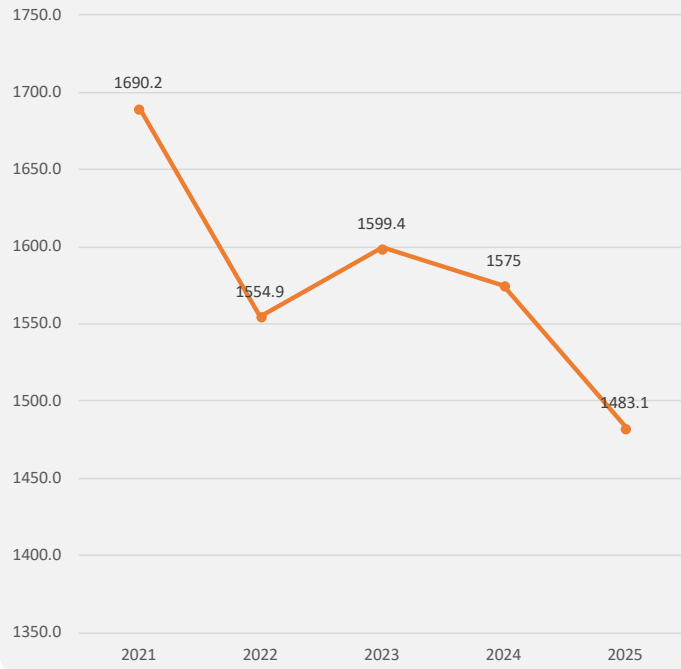


National Condom Week social media campaign (2025)

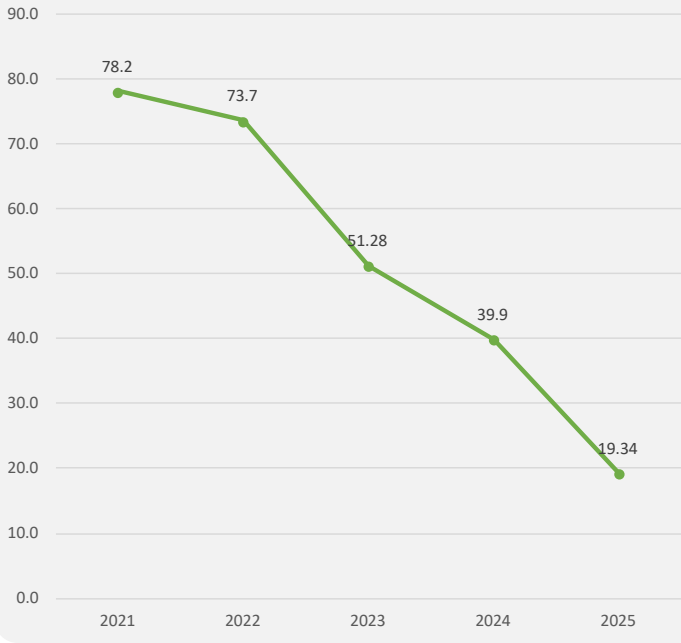
Gonorrhea incidence rate per 100,000



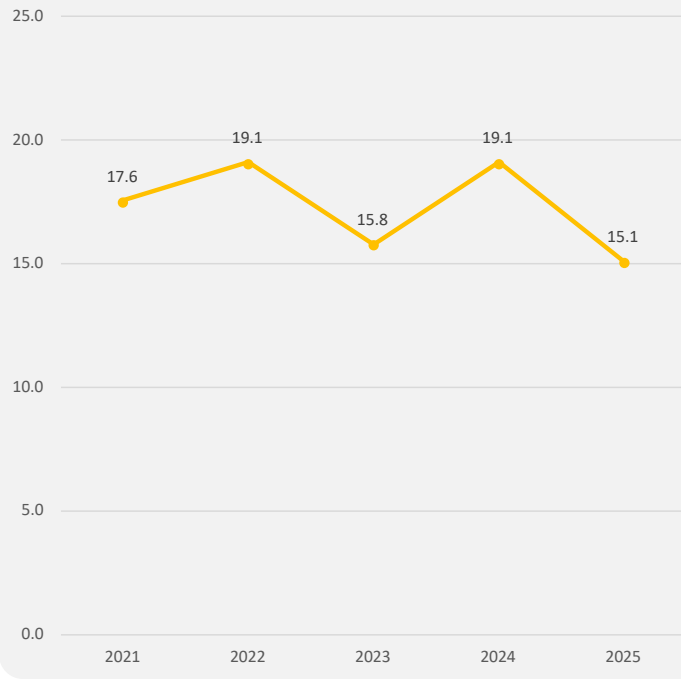
Chlamydia incidence rate per 100,000



Primary and Secondary syphilis incidence rate per 100,000



HIV incidence rate per 100,000



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 testing site within the Sexual Health (STI) Clinic at the Keenan Health Center, 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 Laboratory Response Network, MHDL offers real-time identification of bioterrorism agents and supports MHD by maintaining certifications needed to help first responders identify biological threats during an emergency.

Training Future Scientists

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

Website

milwaukee.gov/MHDLab

2025 Data Highlights

7,230

syphilis tests performed

13,040

chlamydia tests performed

13,492

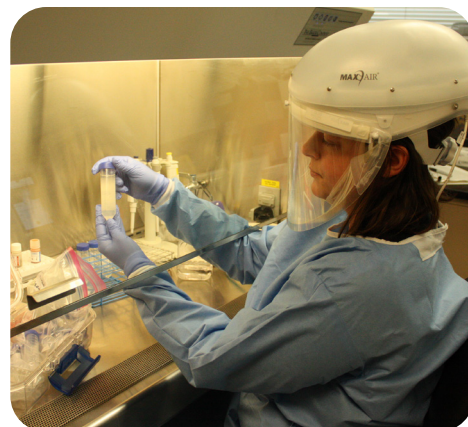
gonorrhea tests performed

540

mycoplasma tests performed

11,649

lead tests performed
(dust, paint, soil)



Grants

Grant Name	Funding Source	Dates of Grant Period	Amount Over Grant Period
ELC Advanced Molecular Detection	Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)	1/1/2023 - 7/31/2026	\$1,338,256
ELC COVID Enhancing Detection		1/1/2023 - 7/31/2026	\$4,177,955
COVID-19 Phylodynamics		9/30/2022 - 9/29/2025	\$388,870
CDC Advanced Research and Genomic Operations Support for Sexually Transmitted Diseases		8/1/2025 - 7/31/2026	\$462,916
Strengthening Healthcare and Public Health Response (SHARP)		8/1/2022 - 7/1/2025	\$302,812
Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP)		7/1/2023 - 6/30/2026	\$195,000

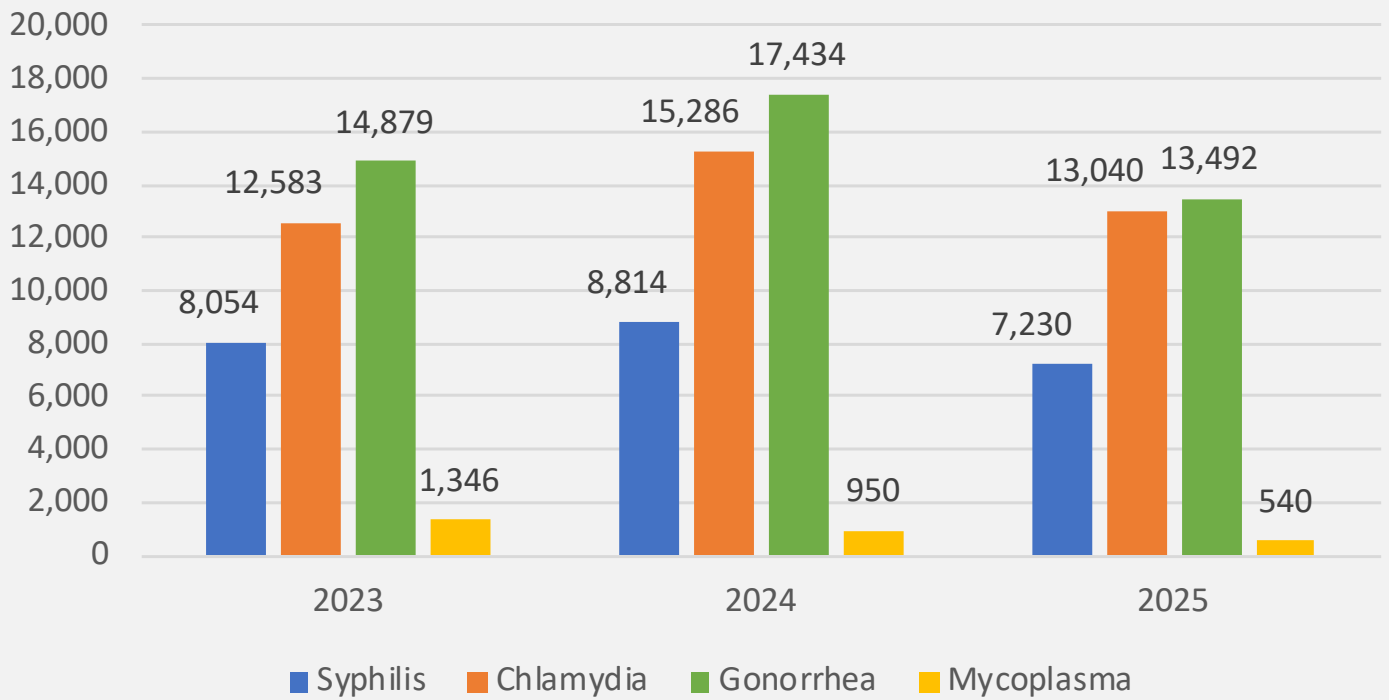
Accomplishments

- MHDL modernized record keeping by moving paper files to Microsoft SharePoint and building internal websites and dashboards. These changes make it easier for staff to share information, keep records organized, and work more efficiently across all lab units.
- The lab installed and validated a MALD-TOF analyzer that uses laser technology to quickly identify pathogens for the Medical Examiner’s Office and other partners. This upgrade dramatically decreased turnaround times by reducing 2-week-long identification processes to a test that can be run in hours, thereby improving public health responses and speeding up cause-of-death investigations.
- MHDL supported Milwaukee Public Schools by providing extensive lead testing and established a new MPS air surveillance program for tracking respiratory pathogens in Primary, Middle, and High Schools. Both of these programs support our efforts to reduce hazardous exposures to our children and keep Milwaukee’s families safer.

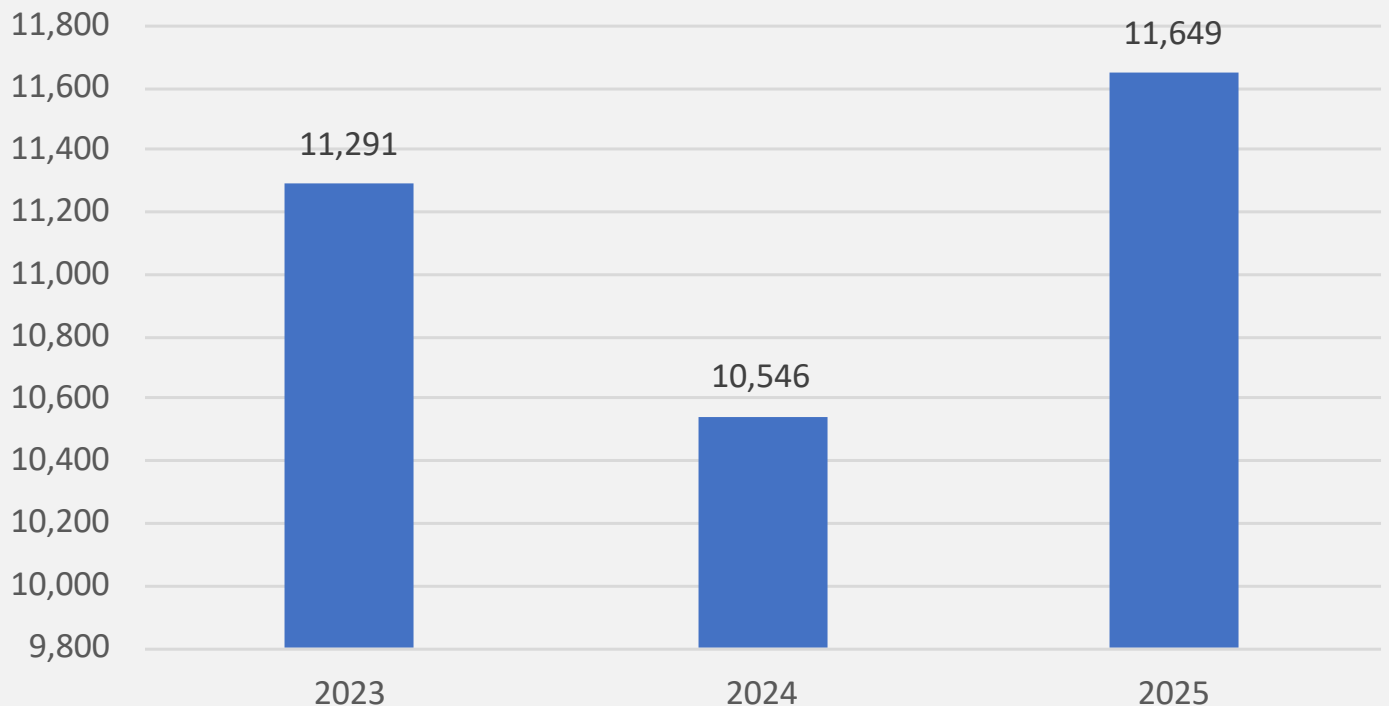
Challenges

- Transitioning to a cloud-based information system was a significant challenge. The MHDL team worked to configure software, design workflows, and integrate the platform with MHD’s new electronic health record system. This effort required close collaboration with healthcare providers at Keenan Health Center to resolve technical issues and streamline clinical testing operations.
- MHDL spent a lot of time managing grant budgets during uncertain times. While challenging, this gave the lab an opportunity to review how we manage grants, plan for the future, and improve communication within the City of Milwaukee.
- The lab struggled with HVAC issues related to our Biosafety Level 3 Laboratory. With lots of help from DPW, MHDL repaired and certified the MHD Biosafety Level 3 Lab. This upgrade allows us to safely test unknown samples and identify bioterrorism agents for first responders and law enforcement. It’s a big step forward for emergency preparedness and public safety.

Tests Performed: Sexually Transmitted Diseases



Lead Tests Performed: Dust wipes, Paint, Soil



CLINICAL SERVICES

Scales Neighborhood Nursing (SNN)

The Scales Neighborhood Nursing Program is MHD's newest department, established in early 2025. Inspired by the work of public health trailblazer Jesse Sleet Scales, the program builds on her legacy by advancing health equity through community-based care. It focuses on bringing essential health services directly to Milwaukee neighborhoods, reducing barriers to access and strengthening connections between residents and public health resources.

Recent Updates and Accomplishments

The program continues to gain momentum as it expands. The team is increasing its visibility within the community by strengthening partnerships, clarifying roles and responsibilities, and identifying resources that best meet the needs of Milwaukee residents.

Team members regularly attend community events to distribute harm reduction supplies, hygiene kits, wound care kits, period products, contraception, cold weather supplies, and vaccines. They also conduct outreach in nontraditional settings such as parks and homeless encampments, meeting individuals where they are to support their health needs. Through these efforts, the team has connected individuals to medical care providers, substance use support services, and essential resources, while also providing education and critical supplies.

As the program continues to grow, it is positioned to expand its impact and reach more residents across Milwaukee. With a strong foundation and clear direction, the program will play an important role in advancing community health.



NEW BLOG POST!

HONORING JESSIE SLEET SCALES

A Public Health Trailblazer and the Inspiration for MHD's Neighborhood Nursing Program

 CITY OF MILWAUKEE HEALTH DEPARTMENT milwaukee.gov/blog

[Read our blog to learn more!](#)

POLICY, INNOVATION, AND EQUITY (PIE)

The Policy, Innovation, and Equity (PIE) Division leads MHD'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. The coordinated departmental efforts of PIE are essential to ensuring that MHD remains accountable, innovative, and aligned with Milwaukee's evolving health needs.

PIE is comprised of three core teams:

Data and Evaluation

The Data and Evaluation team supports both internal and external data needs, including management of the department's electronic health record (EHR) system, performance management through the KPI dashboard, grant reporting, and evaluation activities. The team leads and supports statutorily required planning efforts such as the Community Health Assessment (CHA), the Annual Report, and Fetal and Infant Mortality Review (FIMR). Their work aids the department in everyday decision-making such as public health emergency response to upstream approaches of service delivery and initiatives.

Health Strategy

The Health Strategy team oversees accreditation, quality improvement (QI), strategic planning, and implementation of the Community Health Improvement Plan (MKE Elevate). Their subject matter expertise spans maternal and child health, mental health and community resilience, substance use disorder and harm reduction, housing stability, and food security. Through this work, Health Strategy supports the translation of data and community voice into long-term systems change, equity priorities, and long-term systems change.

Marketing and Communications

The Marketing and Communications team manages internal and external communications to strengthen public trust and transparency. The team oversees media relations, press releases, newsletter and blog content, website management, social media strategy, and graphic design. They also support major department reports to ensure clear, accessible, and consistent messaging. Through digital communications, public-facing campaigns, and emergency notifications, the team helps translate complex public health information into accessible and actionable messages for Milwaukee residents.

2025 Data Highlights

193

open records requests

5,969

narcain kits
distributed

6,142

fentanyl test strips
distributed

218,782

MHD website
visits

1,614

new social media
followers



Grants

Grant Name	Funding Source	Dates of Grant Period	Amount Over Grant Period
Preventative Health Grant	WI Department of Health Services (DHS)	10/1/2025 - 09/30/2026	\$57,967
Strengthening U.S. Public Health Infrastructure, Workforce, and Data Systems: A1	Centers for Disease Control (CDC)	11/29/2022 - 11/30/2027	\$7,686,593
Strengthening U.S. Public Health Infrastructure, Workforce, and Data Systems: A2		11/29/2022 - 11/30/2026	\$2,905,992
CDC Disparities Grant		5/26/2021 - 5/31/2026	\$6,639,489

Accomplishments

PIE (at large)

- Responded to public health emergencies, including the MPS Lead Crisis, flood response, and severe weather events.
- Published the Community Health Assessment (CHA), transitioning from a five-year to a three-year cycle to align with hospital CHNAs and regional partners for coordinated planning.
- Coordinated public health campaigns, including the Emergency Food Drive, the Fall Childhood Immunizations Clinic, and the Keenan STI Clinic closure.

Data and Evaluation

- Established the MHD Performance Management Plan, providing directors and managers with a framework to track performance and program outcomes.
- Implemented a department-wide KPI dashboard to track program goals, objectives, and data supporting performance management.
- Supported department-wide OCHIN Epic EHR go-live and stabilization, providing project management and ongoing data support.

Health Strategy

- Achieved Public Health Accreditation Board Pathways Acknowledged status (Track 1, demonstrating progress toward foundational public health capabilities and national public health accreditation).
- Led the Emergency Food Drive campaign in partnership with Feeding America Eastern Wisconsin and Nourish MKE; raised \$92,000+ and collected 9,000 lbs of food.
- Facilitated six Quality Improvement (QI) projects across all service branches with storyboards documenting the improvement displayed at MHD locations and online.

Marketing and Communications

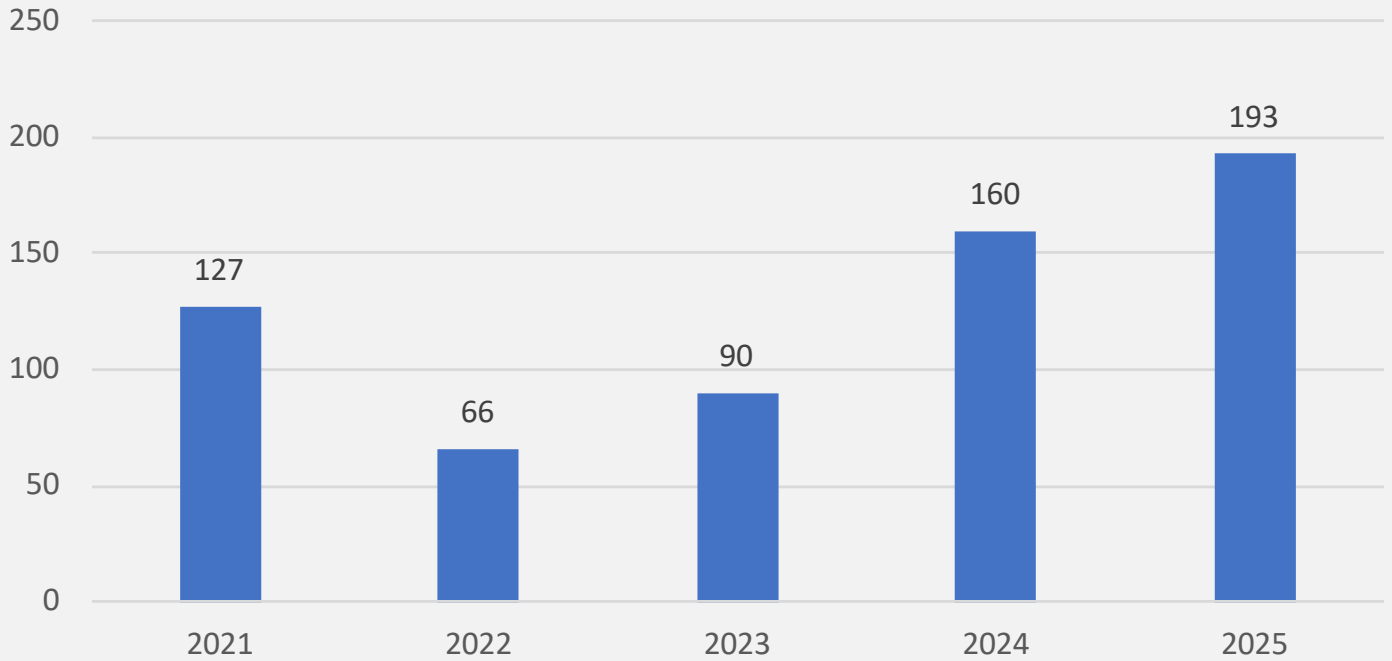
- Facilitated tours of the MHD Laboratory to the public during Doors Open Milwaukee, with over 85 community participants; filling each tour to capacity.
- Expanded media presence locally and internationally through TV news, radio, newspapers, and The Beat blog.
- Strengthened communications infrastructure by expanding the team with two Communications Coordinators.

Challenges

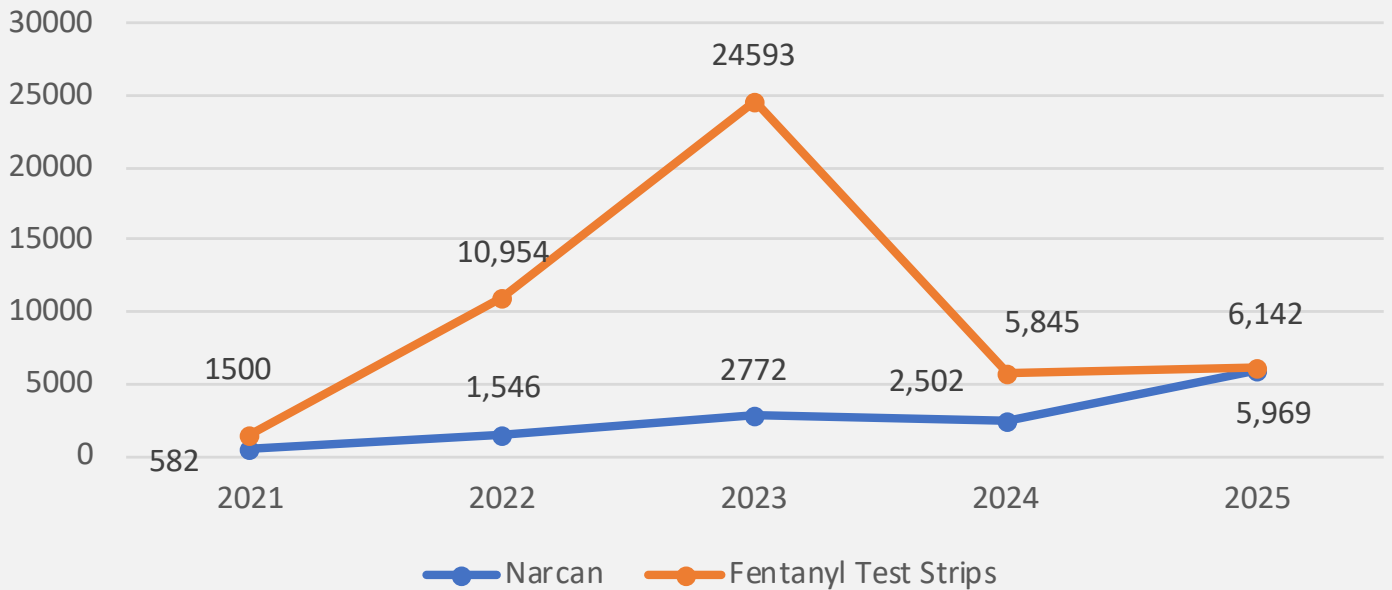
PIE (at large)

- Navigated uncertainty in federal funding and staffing capacity, including shifting federal priorities, the threat of a government shutdown, and CDC personnel shifts.
- Adjusted to the new electronic health record system, requiring staff to learn and establish new processes for accessing and generating program data.
- Strengthened cross-program collaboration with PIE functions to ensure programs leverage data, strategy, and communications resources while building clearer collaboration and request processes.

Number of Open Records Requests by Year



Number of Narcan and Fentanyl Test Strip Kits Distributed by Year



Fetal Infant Mortality Review (FIMR)

The Fetal Infant Mortality Review (FIMR) is a multidisciplinary case review of all infant deaths and stillbirths that occur in Milwaukee County, with the intention of identifying areas for improvement and creating prevention-oriented recommendations.

The top priorities of FIMR are to:

- Examine factors associated with stillbirths and infant deaths through case reviews.
- Identify specific areas of action and make recommendations
- 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

2025 Data Highlights

6
review meetings held

69
partners actively engaged

FIMR is comprised of two teams:

Case Review

The Case Review team examines pregnancy history and the circumstances surrounding maternal and infant deaths to identify factors that contributed, directly or indirectly, to each loss and to inform recommendations for prevention.

Community Action

The Community Action team reviews Case Review recommendations and evaluates their feasibility, potential impact, and priority health areas to guide the development of actionable plans. Both teams include a diverse roster of members, including medical professionals, public health representatives, social service providers, and academic partners.



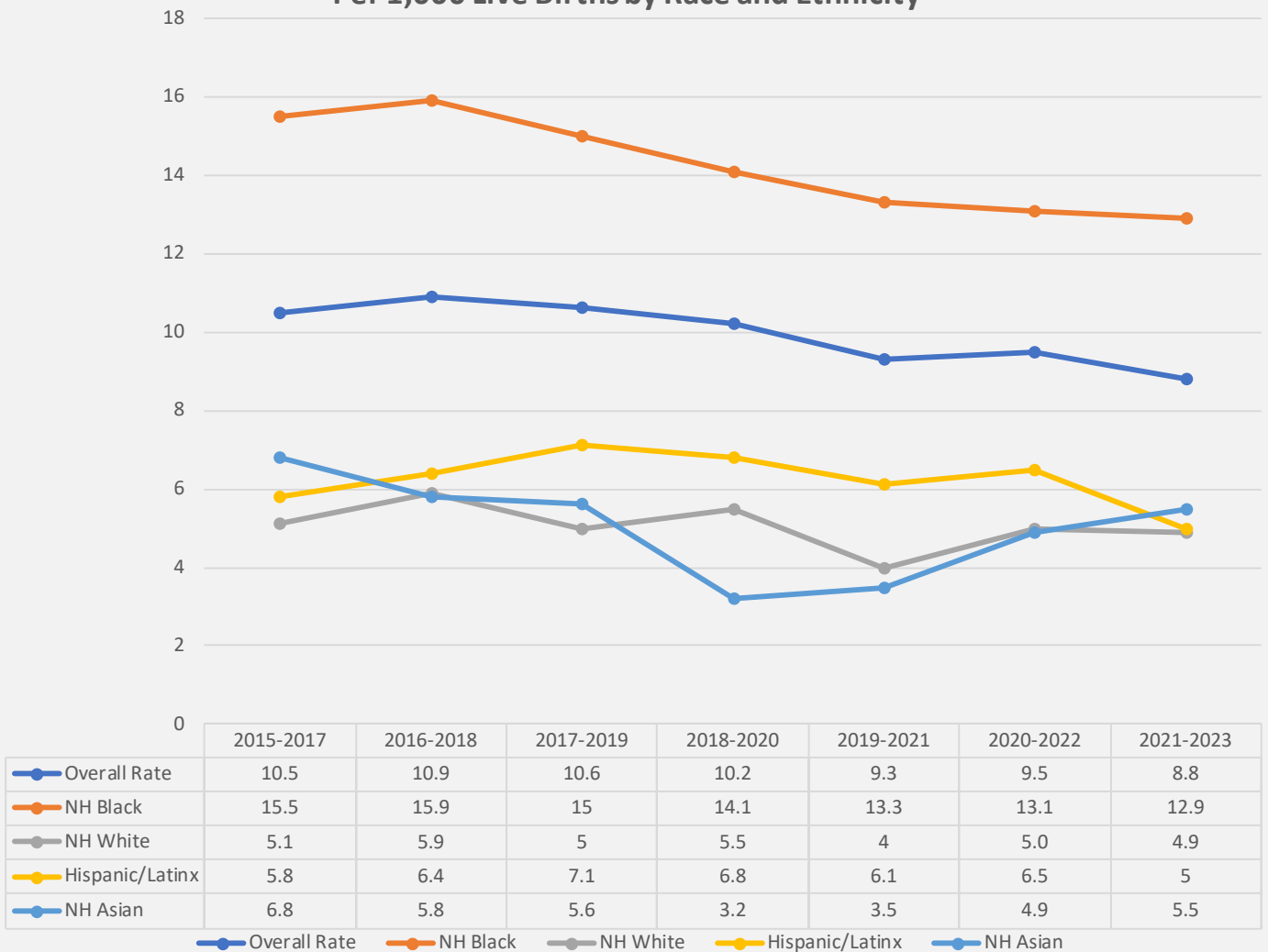
Accomplishments

- Discussed strategies to better support internal FIMR team workflows.
- Hosted six Community Action Team meetings.
- Maintained a frequency of six Case Review Team meetings per year.

Challenges

- Limited staff capacity to review cases; backlog remains from 2023.
- Recruiting new staff and maintaining consistent participation among Community Action Team members.
- Challenges managing and organizing FIMR case data and tracking recommendations.

City of Milwaukee 3-year rolling Infant Mortality Rate Per 1,000 Live Births by Race and Ethnicity



* Data shows 3-year average infant mortality rates through 2023, the most up-to-date reconciled data available at time of publication.

* NH = Non Hispanic

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.

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