



COUNTY OF DUTCHESS
BOARD OF HEALTH

Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, May 21, 2026

The regular monthly meeting of the Dutchess County Board of Health was held virtually on Microsoft Teams and at the Dutchess County Department of Health (DOH), 85 Civic Center Plaza – Suite 106, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601 on the above date.

PRESENT: Jeanean Aming, Psych. NP
Amy Cocina, MD
Alexander Cohen, MD
Laura Fil, MD
John Fallon, NP
Lisa Kaul, Legislative Rep. (Virtual)
David McNary, Vice President

ABSENT: Melissa Nelson-Perron, MD, President

DOH STAFF: Livia Santiago-Rosado, MD, MPH, FACEP, Commissioner
Anthony Ruggiero, MPA, Assistant Commissioner
Janie Fitzmaurice, LCSW, EI/Preschool
Jay Landolfi, EI/Preschool
Andrew Guajardo, Chief Medical Examiner
Xiomara Santiago, Conf. Admin. Assistant

CALL TO ORDER: David McNary called the meeting to order at 4:10 p.m.

DECLARATION OF A QUORUM – A quorum was declared.

MINUTES: The minutes for March 19, 2026, were approved with no corrections. The motion was made by David McNary, seconded by Dr. Alex Cohen and approved unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

Presentation by Jay Landolfi: Introduction/Overview of EI/Preschool Program

Program Goal – To improve the system of care for children and youth with special health care needs (CYSHCN) and their families. The CYSHCN program is a public health program that provides information and referral services for health and related areas of CYSHCN.

Eligibility - Birth to 21 years of age who have or are suspected of having a serious or chronic physical, developmental, behavioral or emotional condition and who also require health and related services off a type of amount beyond that required by children generally.

CYSHCN-SS - Assists families in paying medical bills for children with severe chronic illnesses and/or physical disabilities, between birth and 21 years of age, who live in New York State and meet county medical and financial eligibility criteria.

- Can purchase & submit for reimbursement from NYS
- Diagnosis & Evaluation program will reimburse specialty providers for the diagnosis and development of a treatment plan for eligible children.
- Treatment programs will reimburse specialty providers for the ongoing health and related services for children who are medically and financially eligible in their county of residence.

Dental Rehab Program

- Children with physically handicapping dental defects may be eligible CYSHCN-SS or Medicaid coverage of their treatment services if they are both financially and clinically eligible.

Community Accessibility & Inclusion (CAI)

- Funds are available through NYS's CYSHCN as a one-time award. Funding can be used for community-based projects that focus on one or both of the following: Enhancement of physical spaces to support CYSHCN and their families/creation of recreational or social support opportunities for CYSHCN.
- Dutchess County CYSHCN CAI funds will be providing accessible playgrounds and park equipment for our differently abled youth between ages birth to 21 years old across the county. A county-wide lottery will be conducted for all municipalities to apply for this equipment.
- Approved for another 2 years.

You can find Early Intervention on the Health Department's website. Janine Fitzmaurice, Coordinator of Children with Special Needs Services and Director of Preschool Special Education Programs, has spoken with Dana about partnering in some events (i.e.: Fitness and Field Day June 25th from 11 am – 2:00 pm at Bowdoin Park).

Introduction of Dr. Guajardo, Chief Medical Examiner: Dr. Guajardo shared a little about himself and his educational background. After his introduction, discussion ensued about the following:

- What services the Medical Examiner's Office provides and how it supports public health efforts.
- Toxicology turnaround times, which Dr. Guajardo noted are typically 2–3 weeks, with longer times for more complex cases.
- The use of expanded toxicology panels when specific substances are suspected, and the funding challenges associated with broader testing.
- The emergence of new synthetic opioids that standard panels do not detect, requiring specialized laboratory testing.
- The value of partnerships and information-sharing with hospitals, colleges, and other agencies to identify trends and intervene early.

County Health Rankings: David McNary distributed the latest County Health Rankings report, produced regularly by the University of Wisconsin. He explained that the opening pages compare Dutchess County to neighboring Ulster, Putnam, and Orange Counties, as well as to New York State and national benchmarks. He noted that while the rankings differ somewhat from the measures typically used by the Department, they offer a useful additional perspective on the county's overall health status.

David McNary commented that Dutchess County generally ranks well compared to other New York counties but noted a gradual decline in its position over the past decade. He explained that the factors affecting the rankings are spread across many health and wellness indicators, including measures related to length of life and premature death. He also referenced online metrics such as years of life lost before age 75 as part of how these outcomes are assessed.

Dr. Santiago explained that premature death is a major factor influencing the county's overall health outcomes, driven largely by chronic diseases and, more recently, overdose deaths. She noted that while most residents are doing well, certain groups—particularly those with lower socioeconomic status experience significantly poorer outcomes. She also highlighted ongoing concerns in the perinatal period, where Black women and infants face substantially higher risks.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT: Dr. Santiago reported on the following...

What is happening in perinatal period? Dr. Santiago discussed ongoing concerns in the perinatal period and noted efforts to better understand what is happening during this critical time. She is working to meet with the Mother–Baby team at Vassar Brothers and has already met with MISN (Maternal Infant Services Network), which provides insurance navigation, as well as the Healthy Families Program and the PICHC (Perinatal and infant Community Health Collaboratives) Program. These are state-funded initiatives intended to support lower-income communities. She described continued work to identify service gaps, strengthen partnerships, and support high-risk families through efforts such as Community Baby Showers and improving access to essential resources.

Health Fair: The Health Fair was held on May 2nd, with about 300 attendees in addition to the exhibitors. Dr. Nelson-Perron attended and represented the Board well. Feedback was very positive, and planning has already begun for next year, with a tentative date of April 10th, the weekend after Easter.

Dutchess Youth Kitchen: The first session of Phase Two of the Dutchess Youth Kitchen took place at Poughkeepsie Middle School, where students learned knife skills and food safety and made their own pickled vegetables. The program will continue for four Wednesdays, with next week's activity focused on making Chipotle bowls.

Tick Awareness Movie Night at Overlook Drive-In: Later that day, the Department hosted its annual Tick-Awareness Movie event at the drive-in, offering free admission, tick-removal kits, and educational games. The tic-tac-toe game created by staff was especially popular with children, and the event was well received.

Hiring and rebuilding PHECs: The department is in the process of rebuilding its Public Health Education Coordinator team following recent staff transitions and a retirement. Recruitment has been strong, and the team is preparing to resume full staffing to support growing community requests, particularly for the Mobile Health Unit, which has been active since mid-April. Staff are also being trained to operate the vehicle. Anthony Ruggiero noted that a new PHEC will begin on June 8th, a Senior PHEC will start later in June, and an additional PHEC is expected to join in June or July, bringing the team back to full strength.

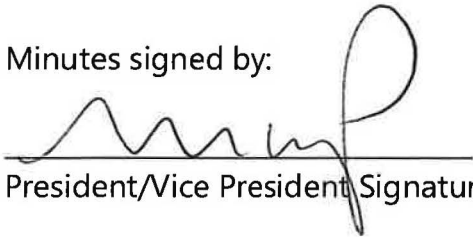
LEGISLATIVE REPORT: Dr. Santiago reported on behalf of Legislator Lisa Kaul and explained that a new local law now requires restaurants not to hand out disposable utensils, napkins, and condiment packets unless customers specifically request them. She noted that the Health Department’s role for now is focused on educating businesses about the requirement and the environmental and cost-saving benefits, rather than enforcement.

OLD BUSINESS: No report...

NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING: The next meeting will be on **Thursday, June 18, 2026, at 4:00 pm.**

A motion was made by David McNary to adjourn the meeting, seconded by John Fallon, and approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 pm.

Minutes signed by:



President/Vice President Signature



Jenean M. Williams-Green
Recording Secretary Signature

2026 EXECUTIVE POSITIONS FOR THE BOARD OF HEALTH

Dr. Melissa Nelson-Perron – President
David McNary – Vice President