

**Fairfield County Health Department**  
**2023-2026 Strategic Plan**

## Who We Are

The Fairfield County Health Department provides public health services to the residents and visitors of Fairfield County. The Board of Health oversees the administration of statutorily required services within the Fairfield County General Health District (the townships and villages) and the City of Lancaster (122,237 total population). The department also provides health promotion, TB Control, and WIC services to residents in the remainder of the county, including Pickerington, Reynoldsburg, Columbus, and Canal Winchester. The total county population estimate for 2022 is 162,898.

The five members of the Board of Health employ the Health Commissioner and Medical Director as well as a staff of 38 full and part-time environmental health specialists, nurses, dietitians, health educators, planners, epidemiologists, administrative staff, and others who carry out the provision of public health services with our county.

## Our Vision

Our vision is of a Fairfield County where residents live in healthy and safe communities and where they are empowered to make informed decisions that allow them to achieve their optimal health.

## Our Mission

The mission of the Fairfield County Health Department is to promote healthy lifestyles, prevent disease, and protect the environment to ensure all residents have access to the information, opportunities, and resources, to enable them to achieve their fullest health potential.

## Our Values

Our values guide the way our staff approach their work, make decisions, and interact with each other and the community.

### **The Fairfield County Health Department seeks to be:**

**Credible** — Trusted to act honestly and ethically.

Through a commitment to excellence, we are a trusted source of expert knowledge and quality service. We act honestly and ethically, delivering on our commitments.

**Innovative** — Continuously improving.

We continually seek novel approaches – in our thinking, our research and our service delivery. Building a culture of creativity together, we explore new possibilities and pursue innovative solutions to complex operational and public health challenges.

**Responsive** — Taking timely action.

We anticipate and meet the needs of our clients and partners, acting in a timely and decisive fashion. We are proactive, anticipating change and taking relevant actions that make a difference and achieve positive results. We demonstrate a passion for engaging, understanding and responding to those we serve, and asking how we can do even better.

**Collaborative** — We are stronger together.

Our best work and results come from applying our collective experience and knowledge together with our partners. We develop and leverage partnerships that respond to shared challenges and goals. In each relationship, we seek the best from each other, and engage a broad network to share the best of FCHD.

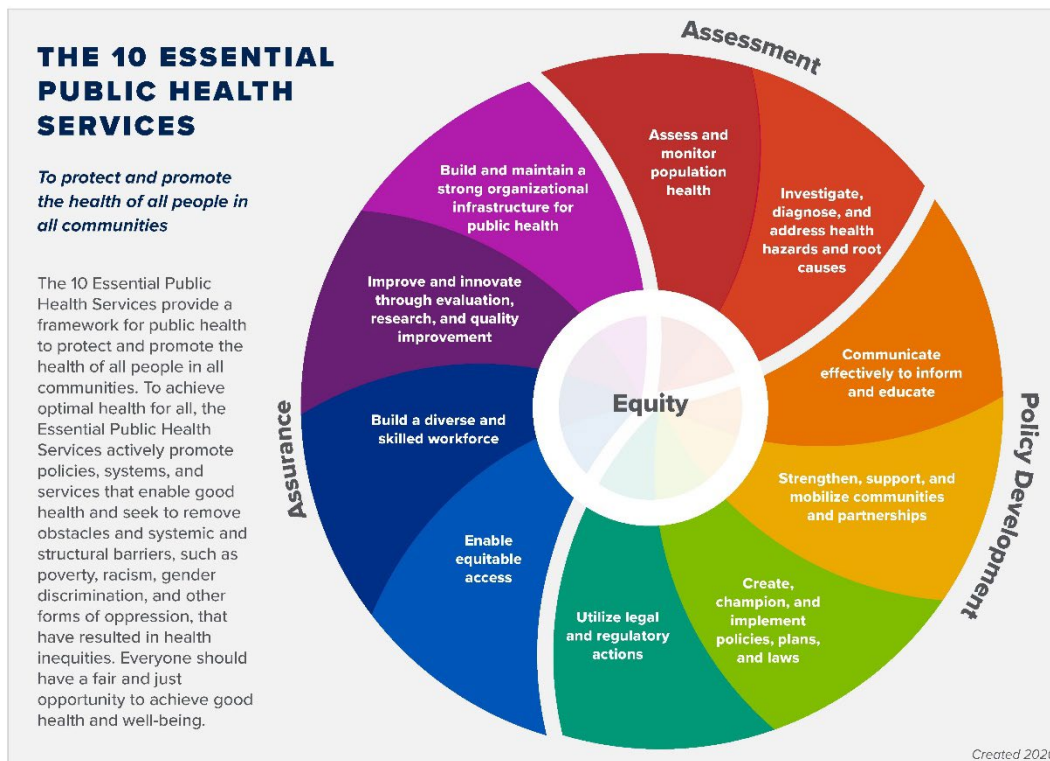
**Respectful** — Valuing others.

We welcome and respect a broad range of ideas and perspectives. We build trust through our commitment to open communications, valuing everyone’s unique background and contributions, and celebrating and sharing successes. We achieve greater impact by leveraging the diversity of our staff, clients, and partners.

## What We Do

### Goals of FCHD:

1. Improve population health.
2. Protect against health emergencies and mitigate the impacts.
3. Achieve equitable outcomes –ensure that all people have an equal opportunity to be healthy and well.



To achieve these aims, FCHD performs these **10 Essential Public Health Services**:

1. Assess and monitor population health status, factors that influence health, and community needs and assets.
2. Investigate, diagnose, and address health problems and hazards affecting the population.
3. Communicate effectively to inform and educate people about health, factors that influence it, and how to improve it.
4. Strengthen, support, and mobilize communities and partnerships to improve health.
5. Create, champion, and implement policies, plans, and laws that impact health.
6. Utilize legal and regulatory actions designed to improve and protect the public’s health.
7. Assure an effective system that enables equitable access to the individual services and care needed to be healthy.

8. Build and support a diverse and skilled public health workforce.
9. Improve and innovate public health functions through ongoing evaluation, research, and continuous quality improvement.
10. Build and maintain a strong organizational infrastructure for public health.

## Our Strategic Planning Process

Every 3 years FCHD undertakes a strategic planning process to update our goals and objectives to reflect the current state of public health in our communities and to assure that the organization is operating with a short- and long-term vision to guide its action to achieve future success.

The strategic priorities identified are informed by the results of data collected through the [2022 Fairfield County Community Health Assessment](#), the public health system priorities identified in the [2023 Community Health Improvement Plan](#), and an analysis of current and future Strengths, Opportunities, Weaknesses, and Threats identified by our staff and leadership.

## Our Strategic Priorities

### 1. Building Public Health Infrastructure and Resiliency for the Future

Meeting our current and future public health needs, and fulfilling our shared vision for a healthier Fairfield County, will require building a strong local public health agency:

#### **1.1 Building a well-trained, competent, and professional public health workforce:**

- Putting in place policies, structures, and leadership to promote the recruitment and retention of skilled workforce.
- Developing expertise and modernizing skills through enhanced staff training, professional development, and engagement with local, state, and national partners.
- Support learning, individual and team development, and building leadership capacity by embedding a culture of learning to enhance individual, team and organizational performance.

#### **1.2 Developing a sustainable funding model:**

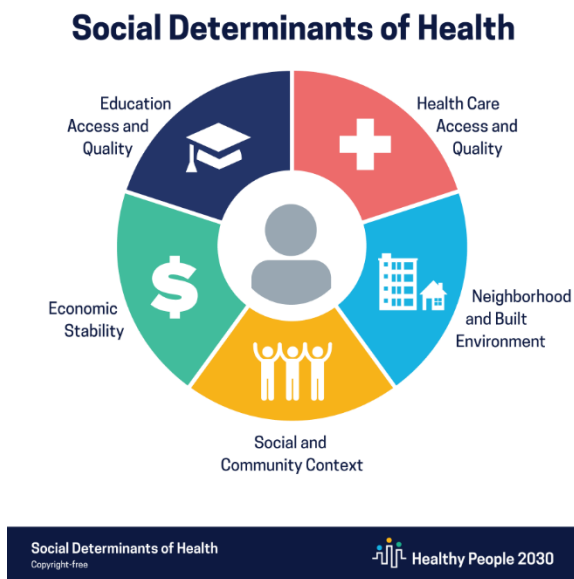
- Developing a diversified and sustainable funding model to meet current public health needs and to expand our capacity to respond quickly to emergencies, and to learn from our experiences to develop realistic budgets that support short- and long-term agency needs.
- Bringing new funding into the county through the acquisition and maintenance of grants from federal, state, and other funders is required to address important public health priorities beyond the reach of current local funding sources.

#### **1.3 Developing strong relationships with the public and with community partners:**

- Maintain relationships with our partners to enhance capacity to address community needs and to rapidly respond and share resources during public health emergencies.
- Developing strong relationships with our local government partners, including the townships, villages, cities, and county commissioners, to help assure their continued support.
- Managing agency funds and building public trust through the efficient use of resources to maximize the impact of those funds on improving the health of our community.

2. Expand our capacity to promote mental health and address substance use prevention.
  - Monitor, Analyze, and Communicate Trends to track suicide rates, and unintentional overdose related injuries and deaths, to use this data to inform prevention strategies.
  - Provide Public Health Leadership, working with mental health agencies, prevention and cessation providers, and others, to drive innovation and collaboration to reduce the impact of poor mental health and substance use in our community.
  - Identify evidence-based programs and funding to enhance our ability to reduce depression, suicide, youth and adult alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use, and drug overdose deaths among our residents.
  - Increase understanding/awareness of, and referrals to, community resources for mental health and substance use.
  - Raise Public Awareness and Reduce Stigma by addressing misinformation, endorsing non-stigmatizing language, promoting awareness of stigma’s impact, and advancing understanding that addiction is a chronic disease.
  
3. Address the Social Determinants of Health that impact public health status, life expectancy, and quality of life by viewing policy decisions through a Health in All Policies lens.

Social determinants of health (SDOH) are the nonmedical factors that influence health outcomes. They are the conditions in which people are born, grow, work, live, and age, and the wider set of forces and systems shaping the conditions of daily life. The 5 domains of SDOH are Economic Stability, Education Access and Quality, Health Care Access and Quality, Neighborhood and Built Environment, and Social and Community Context.



- Promote a “Health in All Policies” approach that incorporates health considerations into decision making across sectors and policy areas.
- Engage FCHD staff in the processes and systems that impact Economic Stability, Education Access and Quality, Health Care Access and Quality, the Built Environment, and other drivers of a person’s health, well -being, and quality of life.
- Support safe housing, improved transportation access and safety, and safe communities.
- Participate in initiatives to improve education and enhance job opportunities.

- Promote healthy nutrition access and physical activity opportunities.

### How We Will Measure Success

Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives will be tracked through FCHD’s Clear Impact dashboards. Annual updates will be provided, and the dashboards will be publicly accessible. A strategic plan update will be scheduled every 3 years; however, annual updates will be provided if priorities, and community needs, change.