

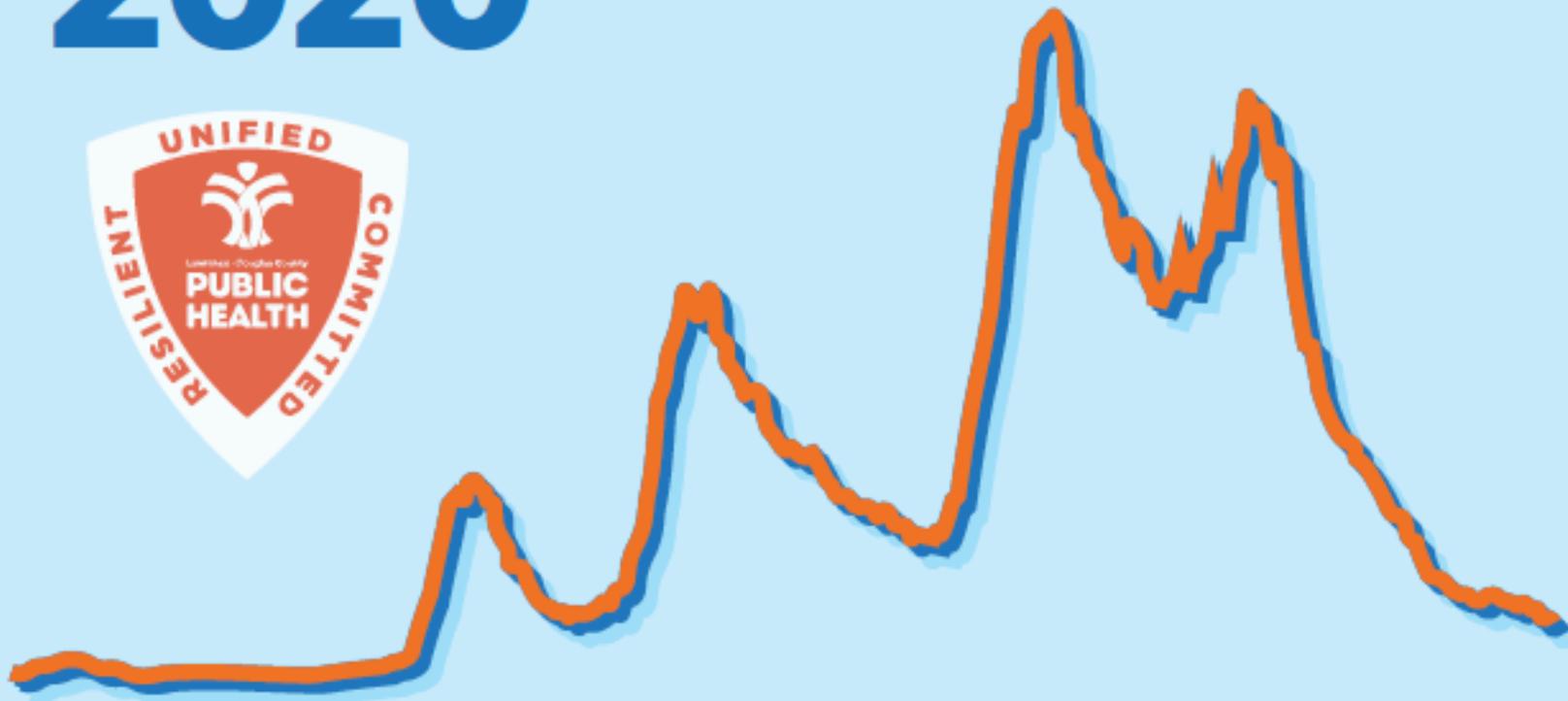


Lawrence · Douglas County

PUBLIC HEALTH

Advancing Health for All

Annual Report 2020



2020 COVID-19 epidemiological curve



Director's message

COVID-19 and the Necessity of Our Public Health Roots



Director Dan Partridge

The long-time reader of our Annual Report would be justified to expect the topic of my message to focus on the new role of public health. However, 2020 and the COVID-19 pandemic has taken this county, community, and organization back to our public health roots.

Relying on epidemiology to understand disease spread and controlling disease through isolation, quarantine and public health orders are some of the oldest tools in the public health toolkit.

In this report you will find stories about how we used old tools in new ways. Notable examples of putting a modern spin to traditional public health include:

- Standing up a Unified Command leadership team to support our Health

Officer. Unified Command has created a network of organizations and organized the resources they control to create a structure for decision-making and action.

- Using social media to promote the “Smart and Safe” message.
- Providing a web-based COVID dashboard to provide timely data and information to the public.
- Holding virtual meetings with the public to answer questions and listen to concerns.

Our modern world expects our work to be transparent, inclusive, and responsive to changing conditions.

While we did not always meet those expectations to everyone's satisfaction, I am honored to report

to you that staff far surpassed my expectation of public health service.

The data clearly shows that their work, along with the work of Unified Command partners and every “Smart and Safe” community member, saved more than 100 lives here in Douglas County.

Our efforts continue in 2021, but the work of 2020 illustrates the importance of a public health presence on the principle of being Unified, Committed and Resilient.

All of us are primed to build on these principles moving forward in recovering from COVID and advancing health for all in our community.

Unified

Unified Command Leadership Team Supports Health Officer, Fosters Collaboration

Douglas County's response spurred a powerful collaboration under the Unified Command structure jointly led by Lawrence-Douglas County Public Health, Douglas County, the City of Lawrence and LMH Health, with support from Douglas County Emergency Management working under a common set of objectives.

The structure later expanded to include leadership from the University of Kansas, The Chamber of Lawrence and Lawrence Public Schools to assist with a coordinated response at various stages of the pandemic, which included:

- Support for the Health Officers to institute public health orders backed by science and data to mitigate spread of the virus.
- An avenue to support educational institutions to safely reopen and provide mitigation practices.
- A forum for dialogue with the business community.

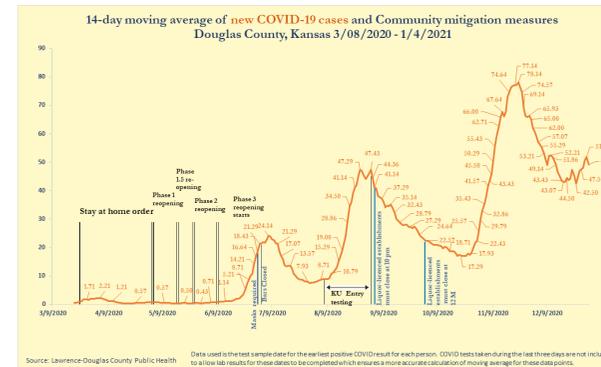


A Unified Command briefing conducted via Zoom to practice social distancing.

- Coordinated plans to request and allocate CARES Act funds.
- Collaborative work with partners and social service agencies to assist members of vulnerable populations in the community.



Health Officers, Disease Investigators form backbone of public health response



Local Health Officer Dr. Thomas Marcellino and Deputy Health Officer Dr. Jennifer Schrimsher worked to issue health orders including a stay-home order, limits on public gatherings and a mask mandate to help limit the spread of the virus and control potential outbreaks.



Dr. Thomas Marcellino



Dr. Jennifer Schrimsher

- The initial health orders helped avoid a surge in the early months of the pandemic. Subsequent health orders took effect during future surges in June and November before they were relaxed
- Epidemiology and disease investigators worked diligently to identify close contacts of positive cases to identify those who should quarantine to help control further spread of COVID-19.
- Tracking data trends among positive cases.

SMART & Safe | REOPENING DOUGLAS COUNTY

Douglas County is following the below guidelines starting November 20.
More information: douglascountyks.org/coronavirus

Face coverings are required in indoor public spaces.

All establishments* serving food and drink must close their premises by 10 p.m., including patios and outdoor seating areas.

*Carryout, curbside, drive-through and off-premise delivery of food (but not alcoholic beverages) is allowed after 10 p.m.

For all entertainment venues, recreational facilities, and restaurants, bars and other businesses serving food and/or drink indoors, there is an indoor capacity limit of 100 people or 50 percent of the lowest occupancy load.**

**This includes public, private and membership-only businesses.

All other businesses can open if they follow safety guidelines, including maintaining social distancing and following cleaning guidelines.

Individuals should avoid gatherings with more than 10 people.

November 2020 health order - since relaxed



The New York Times
Published June 14, 2020 Updated June 18, 2020
By Julie Bosman and Mitch Smith

In Douglas County, Kan., home to 122,000 people, only 82 cases of the coronavirus have been identified, an exceedingly low number for a place of its size.

The county, which includes the college town of Lawrence, kept in place restrictions on businesses even after statewide mandates were dropped. Residents have continued to wear masks and stay far apart, said Dan Partridge, the director of the local public health agency.

"The worry I have is that fatigue will set in and compliance will slip," Mr. Partridge said.

Virtual public forums on pandemic response, equity engage community



Social distancing protocols for safety were designed to help limit spread of the disease. But limits on gatherings also made it more difficult to have public meetings in person. To comply and still provide information to the public, Unified Command leaders and LDCPH staff and partners held several virtual town hall forums to answer questions during the pandemic. Support from the Equity Impact Advisors helped leaders communicate with those facing potential barriers in the community.



PANEL DISCUSSION
COVID-19 TESTING, VACCINES & EQUITY
 TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 6PM

Kathy Colson, RN, Interim Clinic Manager
 at Lawrence-Douglas County Public Health

Dr. Jennifer Schrimsher, MD, MPH
 Infectious Diseases at LMH Health

Ruaa Hassaballa, MPH, COVID Testing Equity Project Manager
 at Lawrence-Douglas County Public Health

Tiffany Lewis, RN, BSN
 Chief Operations Officer at Heartland Community Health Center

Brian Bradfield, Associate Vice President - Ancillary Services
 at LMH Health

Committed

Social media campaigns urged residents to practice “Smart & Safe” habits and “Mask Up”

Social media campaigns at different stages of the pandemic urged Douglas County residents to protect themselves, their families and the community from the virus. Lawrence-Douglas County Public Health is grateful to community leaders who helped carry these encouraging messages.



Kansas Basketball Coach Bill Self



SMART & Safe | REOPENING DOUGLAS COUNTY

Phase One safety recommendations for families with children
 Guidelines applicable through at least May 17. More information: douglascountysks.org/coronavirus

<p>Staying home is recommended when possible.</p> <p>Keep your circle of contacts small.</p>	<p>No gatherings with more than 10 people.</p> <p>Maintain six feet of social distance.</p>	<p>Masks/cloth face coverings are recommended in public. Do not use masks with children younger than two.</p>
<p>OPEN</p> <p>Licensed childcare facilities</p> <p>Parks and public spaces</p>	<p>CLOSED</p> <p>Community camps and summer programs</p> <p>Community recreation centers and activities (including Parks & Recreation facilities and programs)</p>	<p>DISCOURAGED</p> <p>Play dates and sleepovers</p> <p>Use of playground equipment and picnic tables</p>



Clinic staff adjusts to provide support for COVID testing and community advice

Clinic staff operated a COVID testing site at the Lawrence Douglas County Fire Medical Training Center on Haskell Avenue for several months to help serve populations with potential barriers to health care. Staff also conducted tests at the Community Health Facility, as well as LMH Health stood up a drive-through testing center early in the pandemic for community members. The RADxUp grant as part of a partnership with the University of Kansas Medical Center also allowed for community asymptomatic mass testing events and surveillance testing in schools and businesses.



Free COVID-19 testing in Douglas County

Walmart parking lot
3300 Iowa St. Lawrence
 Mondays-Fridays
 7:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Visit [GoGetTested.com](https://www.gettested.com) for a complete list of testing sites near you

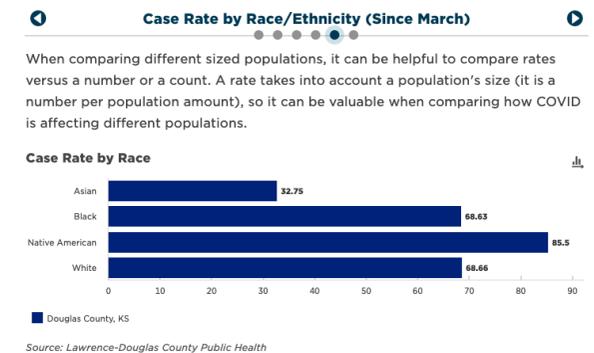
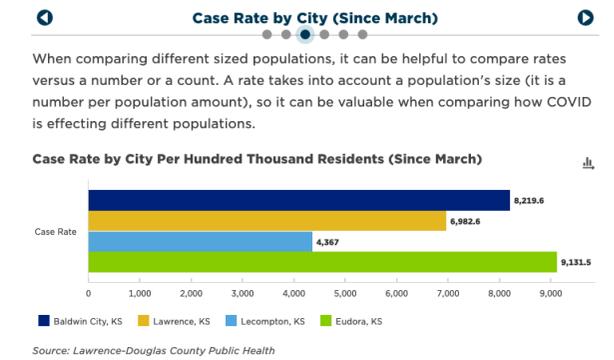
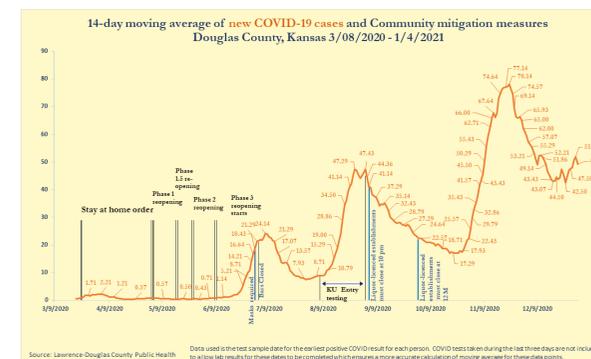


Testing saves lives
 Testing can be easy & quick

No appointments necessary
 Get tested without symptoms

New epidemiological dashboard keeps community informed on COVID presence

Lawrence-Douglas County Public Health Informatics and Communications staff worked to prepare a dashboard of COVID-19 data as a means to keep the community informed on new case levels and rates by populations. Using the data also allowed Unified Command leaders to make informed policy and resource decisions for addressing COVID in the community.



Resilient

Health Board declares racism a Public Health Crisis

The Lawrence-Douglas County Board of Health in July 2020 declared racism a public health crisis and directed Lawrence-Douglas County Public Health to work with the steering committee for the Community Health Plan to add a fifth issue

“Racism is a public health issue because health disparities are preventable. Unfair treatment of racial and ethnic minorities leads to restricted opportunities and associated stress that negatively affect health outcomes.

The public health charge is to support collaborative action that changes policies, programs and practices to reverse systemic racism and its effects on health and wellbeing.”

Lawrence-Douglas County Board of Health



area in the plan focused on Health Equity.

“A bright light has been shone on longstanding unequal treatment by the recent injustices resulting in the murders of Black people, and their disproportionate deaths in this time of COVID-19,” the Board said in its statement approved during its regular meeting in July. “We are all called to end racism and its harm to public health and wellbeing, and we publicly claim that as this community’s public health responsibility.”

Board members noted findings in the 2018 Douglas County Health Equity Report and other identified health disparities by race in the community.

WIC Staff adjusts to virtual services to help clients in need during pandemic

During April in the middle of the COVID-19 global pandemic with many businesses shut down under the statewide stay-home order, which created financial uncertainty for many due to unemployment, Douglas County WIC clients used their eWIC card to spend a total of \$106,614 on food among 12 Douglas County grocery stores.

That was more than \$40,000 higher than what clients spent in the previous three months, and WIC Supervisor Christine Ebert said the jump in spending illustrated the importance of providing support to families.

“It’s exciting that we’re able to help families put food on their table during this uncertain

time, and it comes with an added bonus of keeping that money in our local community and economy,” Ebert said, adding the increase was likely a combination of clients redeeming their full amount of monthly benefits during the pandemic, an increase in cost of groceries and new clients applying for WIC.



**WIC IS HERE FOR YOU
DURING THE
COVID-19 OUTBREAK**

Healthy Families staff offer COVID-19 toolkits, resources to connect clients

Like many Lawrence-Douglas County Public Health programs, Healthy Families Douglas County staff have adapted and banded together through COVID-19 to continue helping families and clients.

“We remain committed to supporting families in our community whose stressful lives were made even more stressful by COVID-19,” Support Services Supervisor Jenn Preston said.

Healthy Families has provided enrolled families with COVID-19 toolkits, as a result of the KDHE allowing maternal child health programs to reallocate monies for MCH families. The toolkits include cloth and reusable face masks donated by United Way of Douglas County, Centro Hispano and Plymouth Congregational Church. They also included hand sanitizer, diapers and wipes, age-appropriate interactive outdoor toys, first aid kits, ice packs, puzzles and books,



blankets, a sensory ball, bubbles, sunscreen, water toys and an umbrella stroller.

In addition to distributing the toolkits, Healthy Families staff have adjusted in many ways during the COVID-19 pandemic, including by switching to virtual meetings with clients, helping them navigate changing resources for diapers, food, rent and utilities.

They also worked in partnership with Centro Hispano to secure \$25,000 of new monies to families of mixed status who were not eligible for safety net financial resources of unemployment and/or federal stimulus, which made them at an even higher risk for loss of housing and food insecurity.



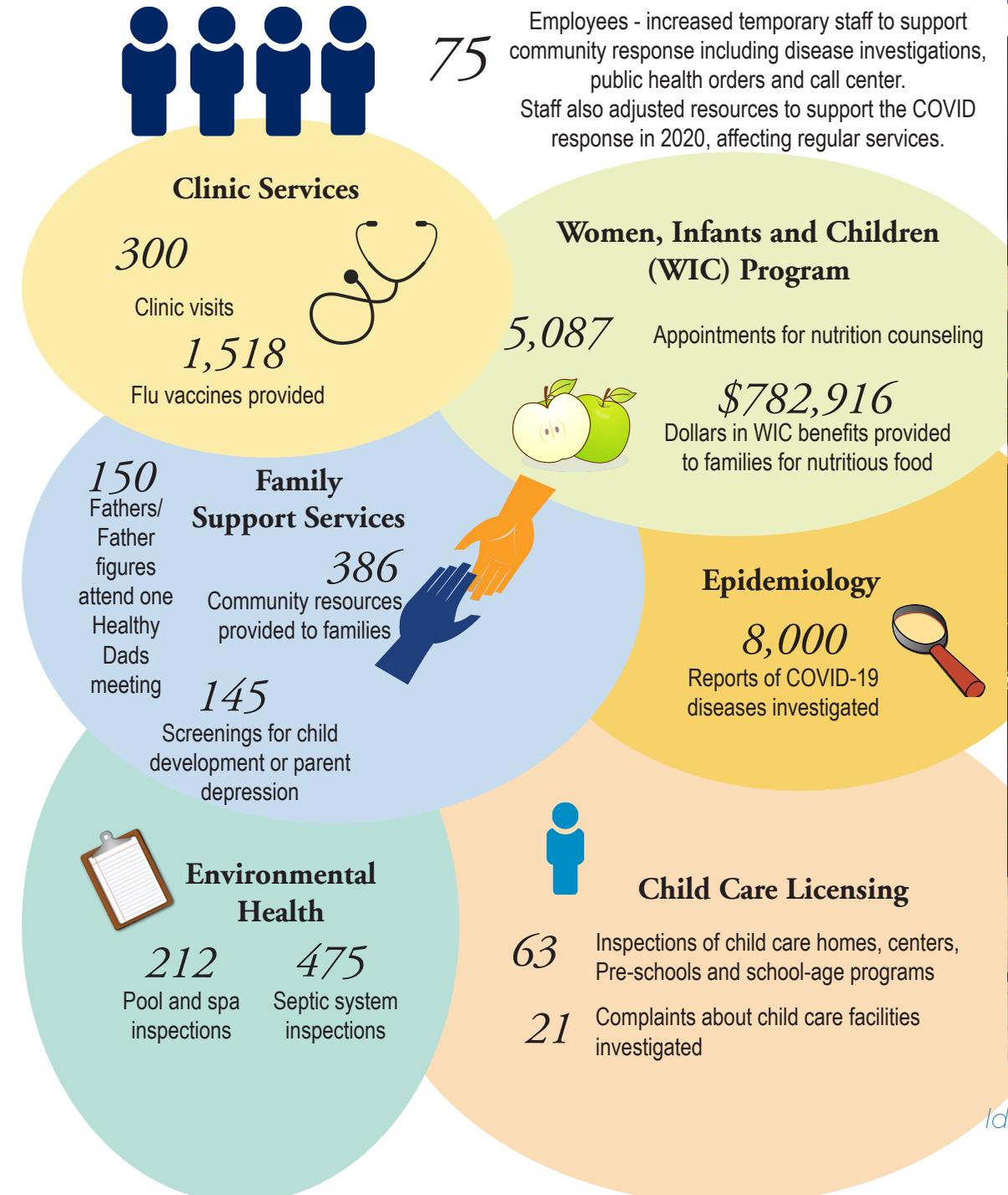
Vaccinations begin with healthcare workers in late 2020, planning for mass vaccinations rollout



As COVID-19 vaccines were approved in late 2020, Lawrence-Douglas County Public Health staff and community partners, including LMH Health and Heartland Community Health Center, began with phase 1 vaccinations under the state's plan that included healthcare workers, public health workers and emergency medical service responders. Unified Command's Vaccination Planning Unit also laid groundwork through planning for mass vaccination sites to occur in 2021.



2020 by the numbers



FINANCIAL STATEMENT

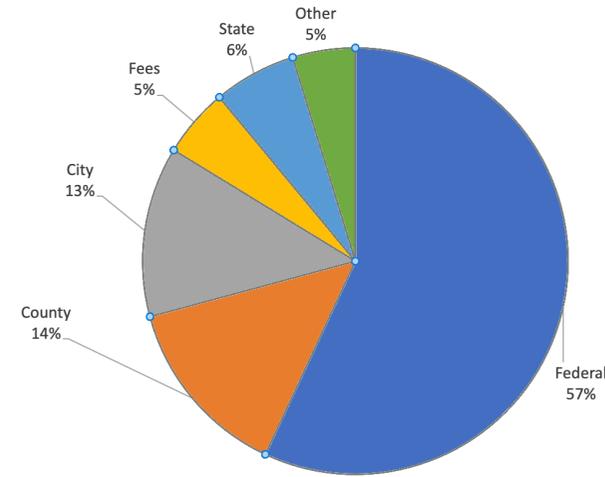
Unaudited statement of revenues and expenditures for Jan. 1-Dec. 31, 2020

OPERATING FUND

Beginning balance*	\$1,471,068
<i>*Adjusted from prior annual report to reflect audited financials</i>	
Revenue	
Federal	\$3,392,151
**County	\$825,356
City	\$769,000
Fees	\$311,929
Other	\$283,507
State	\$374,187
Total Revenue	\$5,956,130
Expenditures	
Salaries and wages	\$2,520,335
Payroll related expenses	\$651,572
Commodities	\$330,534
Contractual	\$2,025,680
Transfers to Other Funds	-
Total expenditures	\$5,528,121
Ending balance	\$1,899,077
Net revenue over expenditures	\$428,009
<i>**Does not include health insurance subsidy provided by County</i>	<i>\$296,908</i>

RESERVE FUND

Beginning balance	\$1,748,897
Revenue	
Interest	\$3,231
Total revenue	\$3,231
Reserve fund ending balance	\$1,752,128
Net revenue over expenditures	\$3,231



Graphic: Sources of revenue

CAPITAL EQUIPMENT FUND

Beginning balance	\$254,388
Revenue	
Transfer from operating fund	-
Interest Income	\$93
Expenditures	
Capital equipment	\$32,173
Reserve fund ending balance	\$222,308
Net revenue for all funds	\$399,160



Michael Williams Chair
 Shanda Hurla Vice Chair
 Verdell Taylor Treasurer
 Stephen Fawcett
 Sandy Praeger
 Diana Malott
 Erica Hill
 Hugh Carter

Board's message

The theme of this annual report — Public Health: Unified – Committed – Resilient — is appropriate for Lawrence-Douglas County Public Health's role in the community this past year during the COVID-19 pandemic.

We started the year in the middle of our January Health Board meeting learning the first person in our community was being evaluated as the potential first COVID-19 case in Kansas. Thankfully, in that case the result was negative, but it did jump-start planning and cooperation in the community that would prove to be invaluable about two months later when COVID-19 reached our community.

The pandemic presented immense challenges for our community and LDCPH, but the Health Board is extremely proud of how rallying around those three principles allowed our community to persevere in the face of the pandemic.

UNIFIED: In preparation for the first cases of COVID-19, the standing up of the Unified Command structure to include LDCPH, LMH Health, the City of Lawrence and Douglas County Government with support from Douglas County Emergency Management staff proved to be an invaluable tool for cooperation and communication. It allowed for the sharing of resources to help coordinate and meet the needs of the community. At later stages leadership additions

included the University of Kansas, Lawrence Public Schools and The Chamber of to help with the need for a multifaceted approach to response and recovery.

COMMITTED: Staff at LDCPH and collaborating organizations showed immense commitment to difficult tasks that included providing mass testing and ramping toward mass vaccinations, care for patients, coordinating of disease investigation including means of quarantine and isolation, public health orders to mitigate the spread of the virus and communicating this vision with the public to influence behavior, such as mask wearing and social distancing. Staying the course exhibited great commitment to public health in our community.

RESILIENT — Douglas County has done well overall for our size of community, but COVID-19 did inflict pain and great challenges on many families and individuals through taking of loved ones and health, social and economic consequences. As we seek to continue recovering in 2021, it will take this spirit of resilience and the work of public health to continue to pave this road.

The Health Board is extremely grateful for the work of LDCPH staff and all partners, and we stand with all of you as we continue to make progress and advance health for all in our community.

Michael Williams
 Lawrence-Douglas County Health Board Chair



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PUBLIC HEALTH

Advancing Health for All

