

Board of Health: An Overview

ROLES OF THE BOARD OF HEALTH

The roles of the County Council sitting as the Board of Health are to: 1) Call attention to public health issues that arise in Prince George's County; 2) Coordinate with stakeholders in the public health field, which includes the Health Officer, human services agencies, hospitals, and non-profit organizations to address public health issues that arise in Prince George's County; 3) Develop solutions to public health issues that may manifest in the form of legislation or policies promulgated by the County Council; and 4) Conduct oversight of health care delivery in Prince George's County.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY OF THE BOARD OF HEALTH

The County Council of Prince George's County has the enabling authority to act as the local Board of Health pursuant to Section 3-201(b) of the Health-General Article of the Maryland Annotated Code which states "In a code county or charter county, the governing body is ex officio the board of health for the county, unless the governing body establishes a board of health."

The governing body did establish the County Council as the local Board of Health pursuant to Section 12-101 of the Prince George's County Code, which states:

"(a) The Council shall be the County Board of Health.

(b) The Council, sitting as the Board of Health, shall have all the powers and duties granted to a local Board of Health under State law.

(CB-24-1971)

Editor's Note: CR-96-1978 directed the Health Officer to neither close nor substantially reduce the level of service at any health facility without the prior written approval of the Board of Health or unless clearly indicated in the annual budget.

CR-87-1982 established a fee of \$20.00 for the issuance of a well permit. CR-58-1983 increased the well permit fee to \$40.00 effective July 1, 1983. CR-97-1992 increased the well permit fee to \$80.00 effective October 1, 1992."

The scope of authority of the Board of Health resides in Section 3-202(a) and (d) of the Health-General Article of the Maryland Annotated Code which states:

“(a) Scope of authority. --

(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2) of this subsection, each county board of health shall exercise the duties imposed by law on a board of health.

(2) The county board of health shall exercise those duties in each municipality or special taxing district in the county unless the municipality or district has a charter provision or ordinance that:

(i) Covers the same subject matter;

(ii) Is at least as restrictive as the provision that the county board is required to enforce; and

(iii) Includes provisions for enforcement.

(b) Duties. -- In addition to the other duties provided by law, each county board of health shall:

(1) Meet in May and October of each year and at any other time the board considers necessary;

(2) Coordinate its activities with the Department; and

(3) Report to the Department on the sanitary conditions of the county whenever the board considers it important and necessary to do so.

(c) Fees and charges. --

(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2) of this subsection, each county board of health may set any fee or charge in connection with its rules and regulations.

(2) A fee or charge for a service that is provided wholly or partly with State or federal funds that the Department administers is subject to approval and modification by the Secretary.

(d) Nuisances; disease. -- In addition to the other powers provided by law and subject to the provisions of this article, each county board of health may adopt and enforce rules and regulations on any nuisance or cause of disease in the county.”

HISTORY OF THE BOARD OF HEALTH

While the County Board of Health was created in 1971, re-emphasis on Council's Board of Health function was initiated in 2011 under the tenure of Council Chair Ingrid M. Turner. From 2011-2018, the Board of Health convened an average of 6 times per Council legislative year, including Town Halls, covering a wide range of public health issues such as:

1. Federally Qualified Health Centers
2. The State Health Improvement Plan
3. Certificate of Need for the Local Hospitals
4. The Prince George's County Primary Healthcare Strategic Plan
5. The Prince George's County Health Improvement Plan
6. The University of Maryland School of Public Health Study of Prince George's County
7. The Affordable Care Act, its rollout, and the County's role
8. Prince George's County Health Enterprise Zones
9. Updates on the Status of the University of Maryland Capital Region Health
10. Updates on the Status of the University of Maryland Laurel Regional Hospital
11. Annual reviews of the County Health Rankings
12. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Food Deserts: A Public Health Approach to Nutritional Challenges in Our Community
13. Ebola Readiness
14. "Biggest Winner" Obesity Risk Reduction Initiative
15. P.M. Pediatric Launch
16. Quality of Life Index
17. Behavioral Health (Part 1) – State of the Opioid Crisis: A County Perspective
18. Behavioral Health (Part 2) – Impact of Mental Illness in Our Legal System
19. Findings and Recommendations from the 2009 RAND Report – "Assessing Health and Healthcare in Prince George's County"

20. Telepharmacy/Medication Management Program for Seniors
21. Healthcare Sector Workforce Development
22. The Medical Pavilion at National Harbor
23. The Maryland Global Budgeting Revenue (GBR) Model
24. The Chesapeake Regional Information System for Our Patients (CRISP)
25. Health and Human Services Needs Assessment – Scope of Work Status