

## Local Health Office Annual Report 2022

Twelve Local Health Offices around the state are your community connection with the Vermont Department of Health. Your district office is at the address and phone number above and serves Caledonia, Southern Essex, and Orange counties. We provide essential services and resources to towns in order to protect and promote the health and well-being of people in Vermont. For example, in the past year and beyond, St. Johnsbury Local Health Office:

**Protected communities from COVID-19:** Since the pandemic began three years ago our doors have remained open, and we've been able to serve communities thanks to individuals, families, schools, businesses, first responders, and countless others that worked with us to meet the needs of local towns. We provided vaccine, testing, and information, along with other key public health services.

**Worked to prevent and control the spread of disease:** In collaboration with community partners, since COVID-19 response efforts began, we hosted over 70 COVID-19 vaccination clinics and provided over 5,800 COVID-19 doses. Since August 2021, all local health offices have also documented and helped manage 8,125 COVID-19-related situations, including 1,271 COVID-19 outbreaks.

**Ensured local preparedness for future emergencies:** We worked with partners like schools, hospitals, and emergency personnel to ensure effective pandemic response and support preparedness to distribute medicine, supplies, and information during public health emergencies. This year, we responded to the emergence of human monkeypox virus by sharing information and providing vaccine to community members. As of November 15, 2022, 7 hMPXV vaccine doses have been administered.

**Stayed attentive to people and communities most underserved:** We provided services and resources to people who are more likely to experience adverse health outcomes due to health inequities. For example, we provided vaccine at schools without access, shelters, meal, and food distribution sites, farms, and more.

**Collaborated with Town Health Officers around environmental health:** To help Vermonters better understand the relationship between their environment and their health, we collaborated with towns and other local partners. Find information about environmental health including lead, cyanobacteria (blue-green algae), food safety, drinking water, climate change, healthy homes, healthy schools, and more at [www.healthvermont.gov/environment](http://www.healthvermont.gov/environment).

**Provided WIC services and resources to families and children:** Provided WIC nutrition education and support to 1,061 individuals between July 1, 2021 and June 31, 2022, while enabling them to save on groceries so they can have more to spend on other things their family needs. WIC also empowers families with breastfeeding/chestfeeding support and provides referrals to other health and nutrition services. Learn more at [www.healthvermont.gov/wic](http://www.healthvermont.gov/wic).

**Supported student health and youth empowerment:** According to the Vermont Youth Risk Behavior Survey, only 55% percent of students in Caledonia County, 59% in Essex County, and 54% in Orange County agree or strongly agree that they "believe they matter to people in their community." Regionally, efforts like mentoring and after-school enrichment programs help to ensure youth feel valued and included.

**Promoted health in all policies:** Health is not just individual behaviors and access to care, it's also housing, transportation, food access, education, natural resources, and other social determinants of health. We worked with towns, schools, worksites, healthcare providers, and other community organizations to establish plans, policies, and programming that improve health and wellness. To achieve health, we must continue to work together to improve opportunities for health across all sectors and periods of our lives.