



NORFOLK DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

5 YEAR PLAN

2024 - 2029



Dear Friends and Neighbors,

The Norfolk Department of Public Health's 5-Year Plan is our shared roadmap for protecting the health and promoting the wellbeing for all people in Norfolk. Guided by the 10 Essential Public Health Services, this plan brings together our team and community partners to tackle the most urgent health challenges facing our city.

In Year 1, we built a solid foundation by uniting our staff and engaging deeply with local health providers, faith groups, nonprofits, and community organizations like yours. These partnerships are essential for lasting progress.

Now, in Year 2, we are focused on bold action. We're strengthening our infrastructure, improving systems, and focusing on programs that deliver real, measurable results—even as we navigate tight budgets. We're also reigniting key partnerships and mobilizing our Medical Reserve Corps, the dedicated volunteers who supported us through COVID-19, to accelerate our work.

Our role is evolving—from simply managing public health to leading a modern, community-centered approach—while continuing to provide the vital services you rely on every day.

This update shares our progress, lessons learned, and the clear path forward. The Norfolk Department of Public Health remains responsive, community-driven, and results-focused. Together, we are building a healthier Norfolk for all.

With gratitude and hope,

Susan Girois, MD, MPH
Director, Norfolk Department of Public Health

MISSION

OUR MISSION IS TO PROTECT
THE HEALTH AND PROMOTE
THE WELLBEING OF ALL
PEOPLE IN NORFOLK.



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Build and keep strong partnerships with communities facing public health challenges. These communities should lead and guide the work.

Promote fairness by addressing differences among groups based on race, ethnicity, nationality, age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, immigration status, language, disability, income, and neighborhoods.

Hold ourselves and our partners accountable to deliver fair and effective solutions to community priorities.

Use public and private resources wisely. Align what we have and seek new opportunities to support NDPH's key focus areas.

VISION

WE AIM TO BECOME A FLAGSHIP
LOCAL HEALTH DISTRICT, BOLD AND
CATALYTIC, LEVERAGING COMMUNITY
STRENGTHS AND REGIONAL SYNERGIES
TO MEASURABLY IMPROVE HEALTH
OUTCOMES FOR THE PEOPLE WE SERVE.

VALUES

SERVICE: We work with humility and purpose to protect and improve the health and well-being of everyone in Norfolk.

EQUITY: We work to ensure fair access to services and reduce differences in health outcomes.

MAKING DATA-DRIVEN DECISIONS: We create programs based on the best science, evaluate their results carefully, and share what we learn with Norfolk and the region.

TRUSTWORTHINESS: We hold ourselves accountable for delivering results and providing services to others with honesty and integrity.

IMPACT: We work closely with communities to positively affect changes in policies, systems, and environments that improve health for all Norfolk residents.



A close-up photograph of a young child with dark skin and curly hair, smiling broadly. Their face and hands are covered in vibrant, multi-colored paint (red, yellow, blue, green). The child's hands are held up, showing the paint on their fingers. The background is a soft, out-of-focus blue.

HOW WE'RE WORKING TO IMPROVE HEALTH IN NORFOLK (2024 – 2029)

Our 5-Year Plan is guided by the 10 Essential Public Health Services and focuses on three main ways to protect health and improve well-being for everyone in Norfolk. These steps help us deliver important services, work together with community partners, and make sure health is part of decisions across the city.

PROVIDING ESSENTIAL HEALTH SERVICES YOU CAN COUNT ON

Every day, the Norfolk Department of Public Health takes care of important jobs like preventing disease, giving vaccines, inspecting food safety, and preparing for emergencies. These services keep our community safe and healthy, and we are committed to doing them well, all the time.

WORKING TOGETHER TO PREVENT INJURY AND EARLY DEATH

We face many health challenges, but we can't solve them alone. We partner with local groups, organizations, and agencies that focus on issues like maternal and child health, substance use, violence prevention, mental health, and chronic illnesses. By sharing information and working together, we can create better solutions and make a bigger difference in keeping people safe and healthy.

MAKING HEALTH PART OF EVERY DECISION

Health isn't just about doctors and medicine. It's also shaped by where we live, learn, work, and play — things like housing, schools, transportation, and parks. We encourage city leaders and community partners to consider health when making decisions in all these areas. This helps tackle the root causes of health problems and builds a healthier Norfolk for everyone, now and in the future.

CORE PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

MANDATED SERVICES

By law, the Virginia Department of Health and the Norfolk Department of Public Health must provide certain important health services to our community. These rules come from state and federal laws, local agreements, and partnerships with other agencies.

In Norfolk, a local agreement outlines the core health services our department is responsible for.

Here are some of the important services we provide. Between 2024 and 2029, we're committed to keeping these services strong and improving them to better serve you and our whole community.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

Providing childhood immunizations

Sexually transmitted infection (STI) screening, diagnosis, treatment, and surveillance

Surveillance and investigation of reportable diseases

Tuberculosis (TB) control

FAMILY HEALTH

Family planning and reproductive health services

WIC: nutrition supplement program

Pre-school physicals

Child restraints in motor vehicles

Childhood lead education and case management

Community outreach and education

Opioid overdose antidote dispensing and counseling

Long Term Support Services (LTSS)

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Regulations for hotels, restaurants, tattoo parlors, barber and beauty facilities, marinas, sewage systems, summer camps, and campgrounds

Rabies protection

Animal control and welfare

Insect control

Rodent control

Swimming facilities

Smoking ordinances



PUBLIC HEALTH PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

Preparing for and responding to public health emergencies

Training staff and community partners

VITAL RECORDS

Maintaining birth and death records

Issuing certified copies of vital records

STRATEGIC INVESTMENTS 2024 – 2029

Our strategic investments from 2024 to 2029 focus on key actions that will help us achieve the biggest impact in Norfolk's health. While we will continue to maintain our essential services, these investments will be top priorities for NDPH leadership, requiring extra time and resources. We will measure our progress with clear goals and milestones to stay accountable. You can find more details about these investments in the 5-Year Plan booklet.

1
WORKPLACE
MENTAL HEALTH AND
WELLBEING

2
HEALTH EQUITY
WITHIN THE
COMMUNITY

3
ACCESS TO CHILD,
ADOLESCENT,
AND ADULT
IMMUNIZATIONS

4
SPECIALIZED STI
TESTING AND
TREATMENT

5
PREVENTION
OF INJURY AND
PREMATURE DEATH

6
INNOVATIVE
APPROACHES TO
HOUSING AND
ENVIRONMENTAL
SAFETY

7
PUBLIC HEALTH
EMERGENCY
PREPAREDNESS AND
RESPONSE

8
BUILDING
PUBLIC TRUST

9
OPPORTUNITIES
TO GENERATE
RESOURCES



LOOKING BACK AT YEAR 1

Year 1 brought important progress and learning for our team. We gave our staff extra training and wellness days to keep them strong and ready.

We filled many job openings, making our team more stable and less dependent on temporary workers. We built stronger partnerships with groups working on food access, senior care, preventing syphilis, maternal and child health, stopping violence, overdose response, faith groups, and mental health.

Our Community Health Workers brought health support directly to neighborhoods, and people welcomed this. Though funding stopped in March 2025, we plan to bring this back in Year 2 with new funding. We also improved services for Norfolk's Latino and Hispanic residents by providing more Spanish materials and training staff to help in Spanish.

Emergency preparedness is now part of our daily work. We hold meetings, practice drills, and work better with city partners. We use data and community conversation—including online forums—to guide our actions and work together.

We launched a new Norfolk Health Department website with helpful, up-to-date information for everyone to stay informed and healthy.

By working closely with regional partners and managing resources carefully, we saved money to invest wisely as we move forward.





Safe Passage Program - Gaining Leverage

Intentional Community Engagement



Clinic Nursing DIS

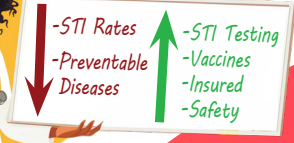


Enhancing WIC

- Additional staff
- New certifications
- Breast feeding classes
- WIC shopping tours
- Spanish interpreters
- Expanded partnerships: EVMS, CHKD, and Sentara
- Remote locations & RV



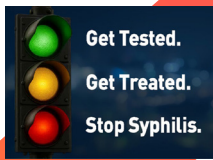
Improving Health Outcomes



City Council Presentation



Stop Syphilis Public Awareness Campaign



Mayor's Commission on Aging Summit

Final push Community Health Needs Assessment



NDPH Acquires Ryan White



Emergency Response Tabletop



Community Food Handling Class



Healthy Housing & Norfolk 2050 Planning



Radical Collaborations





Board of Health Visit

Community Health Needs Assessment Results Published



Community Health Workers Community Hubs Established



Annual City of Norfolk 5K



Fiscal SharePoint Site Launch



Title V Funding for Maternal-Child Health Services



Health Equity Report Evaluations Recommendations



Health Equity Exchange Radio Show Launched



Community Crisis Team Planning



Enhanced Website Tools and Resources



Employee Wellness Day 2025



Year Two Focused



2026

YEAR 2 FOCUS AREAS

In 2025, we expect less funding and some uncertainty. Because of this, we must use our resources very carefully. Our focus will be on services that truly protect the health of everyone in Norfolk.

For work outside our main duties, we will partner with local groups who lead those efforts, providing data and strategic support to help together. We will stay open and honest about what we are doing and make sure every service brings real, positive results to our community.

We need your help! Please stay involved and share your ideas as we work together to make Norfolk a healthier place for all.



YEAR 2

FOCUS



MAKING SURE CORE SERVICES ARE RELIABLE AND HIGH QUALITY

Our core services are the backbone of public health. We must do them well every time, with no excuses. By measuring how well we do and always looking for ways to improve, we stay accountable and effective.

In Year 2, we will:

- Focus on doing the most important services well and consistently.
- Measure service outcomes to ensure we're advancing public health goals.
- Encourage honest, creative internal and external conversations about how to improve delivery and impact.

PREPARING FOR PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCIES

Being ready for emergencies is a key job for public health. This means having clear plans, trained teams, and strong coordination with City leadership, especially to protect Norfolk's most vulnerable people.

In Year 2, we will:

- Build simple and fast systems to respond quickly and together.
- Hold regular training and practice drills for our staff and partners.
- Work closely with hospitals, emergency services, and community groups.
- Make sure our emergency plans meet the needs of those most at risk.



2

LEADING AS NORFOLK'S CHIEF HEALTH STRATEGIST

Public health is more than running programs. As Chief Health Strategist we won't just respond to health problems as they happen—we will work with data and community partners to set shared goals and bring resources together. This means thinking ahead, working with many groups, and focusing on fairness and lasting change.

In Year 2, we will:

- Join city-wide efforts to improve access to health insurance, housing, education, transportation, and other social determinants in ways that positively impact health.
- Support new ideas and work together to build a healthier, safer, and stronger Norfolk.





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