

*"Promoting and providing public health through education, services and enforcement of ordinances."*

# Health First Indiana

2024-2025 Plan



**Blackford County Health Department**  
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# Health First Indiana Quick Facts

- The Health First Indiana (HFI) is an initiative created by Senate Enrolled Act 4, which passed in 2023.
- HFI provides funding on an opt-in basis so counties can expand existing services.
- Investment in prevention leads to healthier communities.
- HFI brings together local elected officials, public health, clinical health and community partners.
- Additional funding will be beneficial for rural communities with fewer healthcare services.

Source: <https://www.in.gov/healthfirstindiana/quick-facts>

# Core Public Health Services and 60/40 Funding

## HEALTH FIRST INDIANA (HFI)

### Core Public Health Services

More information at [healthfirstindiana.com](http://healthfirstindiana.com)



### At least 60% of HFI funding must be spent on these core services

 Infectious disease prevention and control	 Vital records	 Tobacco and Vaping Prevention and Cessation
 Student health	 Fatality review (child, suicide, overdose)	 Maternal and child health
 Testing/counseling for HIV, HCV, STI	 TB prevention and case management	 Emergency preparedness
 Referrals to clinical care	 Chronic disease prevention and reduction	 Childhood lead screenings and case management
	 Trauma and injury prevention and education	 Child and adult immunizations

### No more than 40% of funding may be spent on these core services

 Food protection	 Pest/vector control and abatement	 Public/semipublic pool inspection and testing
 Residential onsite sewage system permitting and inspections	 Orders for decontamination of property used to illegally manufacture controlled substances	
 Sanitary inspection and surveys of public buildings	 Sanitary operation of tattoo parlors and body piercing facilities	 Sanitary operation of facilities where eyelash extensions are performed

# Core Services Breakdown

## Environmental

- Food Protection
  - Food Establishment Inspections & Licensing
  - Festival Food Truck Inspections & Licensing
  - Investigate Complaints
- Pest/Vector Control
- Septic Inspections
- Tattoo/Piercing Parlor Inspections & Licensing

## Health Education

- Trauma & Injury Prevention
  - Fatality Review
  - HIV/HCV Screening
  - Naloxone
  - Tobacco Cessation
- Community Outreach

## Preparedness

- Emergency Response Plan
  - County Preparedness
  - Strategic National Stockpile Liaison
- Offsite Clinic Setup
- Mobile Unit Maintenance
- MOU Contract Manager

# Core Services Breakdown

## Public Health Nursing

- Immunizations
  - VFC Coordinator
  - Adult & Child Immunizations
- Infectious Disease Case Management
  - Investigate Reportable Conditions In Blackford County
  - TB Testing
- Lead Testing
  - Elevated Blood Lead Level Case Management
  - Capillary Lead Screening
- Clinical Care Referrals
  - Maternal & Child Health
  - HIV/HCV/STI Treatment
  - Behavioral Health

## Vital Records

- Birth Certificates
- Death Certificates
- Genealogy

## Other Services (not *core services* but essential for LHD to be operational)

- Grant Management
- Office Maintenance
- Insurance Enrollment Verification
- Vaxcare Liaison

# Environmental

## Performance Status: Fully Functional

The Environmental division provides the community with food establishment inspections and licensing, investigates complaints, pest/vector control and referrals, septic inspections and permits and tattoo/piercing parlor inspections and permits, public pool inspections.

### Partners:

IDOH, IOSHA, Local Soil Scientists, Septic Installers, Indiana Vector Control Association, Hoosier Microbiology Laboratory, Purdue Extension

### Goals:

Continue to provide core services.  
Maintain up-to-date knowledge by attending conferences as needed.

# Health Education

## Performance Status: Fully Functional

The Health Education division provides community outreach, screenings, trauma and injury prevention, tobacco cessation referrals, and may serve as a school liaison assessing school needs and student health.

### Partners:

Blackford Community Schools, Blackford County Tobacco Coordinator, Open Door Clinic, Madison County STD Clinic, Purdue Extension, Healthy Community Alliance

### Goals:

Continue to provide core services.

Maintain up-to-date knowledge by attending conferences as needed.

Continue to assess community needs and update services when needed.



# Preparedness

## Performance Status: Fully Functional

The Preparedness division provides the community with procedures for natural or man-made disasters. This division is vital in the event medications need dispensed on a mass scale. MOUs are maintained at many local buildings for offsite clinic setup.

### Partners:

IDOH, Blackford County EMA, District 6 Healthcare Coalition, County Police & Fire Departments, Blackford County Coroner

### Goals:

Continue to provide core services.

Maintain up-to-date knowledge by attending conferences as needed.

# Public Health Nursing

## Performance Status: Fully Functional

The Public Health Nursing division provides the community with immunizations for children and adults, which includes all Indiana DOE required school immunizations, seasonal immunizations, TB testing, offsite clinics. Investigation and case management for all reportable conditions in Blackford County. Capillary lead screening is available for children and case management for elevated blood lead levels.

### Partners:

CDC, IDOH, Blackford County Schools, Indiana Immunization Coalition, District 6 Epidemiologist, IDOH Laboratory, Vaxcare

### Goals:

Continue to provide core services.

Maintain up-to-date knowledge by attending conferences as needed.

Continue to assess community needs and update services when needed.

# Vital Records

## Performance Status: Fully Functional

The Vital Records division maintains birth and death records for events that occur inside Blackford County. Birth and death records go back to 1882, before that they were not required by Indiana to be reported.

### Partners:

IDOH, Auditor, Coroner, Funeral Directors

### Goals:

Continue to provide core services.

Maintain up-to-date knowledge by attending conferences as needed.

## Other Services

# Performance Status: Fully Functional

Essential functions of daily operation include grant management, office maintenance, insurance enrollment verification and billing knowledge.

### Partners:

IDOH, Auditor, Janitor, MHS, Vaxcare

### Goals:

Continue to provide essential services.

Maintain up-to-date knowledge by attending conferences as needed.

# Health Officer Role

- The Blackford County Health Officer oversees all Health Department divisions and operations.
- Monitors community health needs and ensures public health services are provided.
- Attends public health and medical conferences as needed.
- Attends quarterly Board of Health meetings.
- Serves as public health spokesperson and approves media releases for issues concerning public health.
- Serves as an emergency responder assisting in public health emergencies, including being on call 24/7.
- Reviews Health Department policies and procedures annually and as needed.
- Holds regular staff meetings to review Health Department operations, share information and implement new policies as needed.

# Governor's Public Health Commission Report 2022

As required by the Governor's Executive Order 21-21, this report was produced by the Public Health Commission. There were six focus areas for research, including infrastructure, workforce, emergency preparedness, public health funding, data integration and child health. This extensive 106-page report has several key points regarding LHDs.

Among Indiana's 94 LHDs, 70% are considered small, based on population served. These 65 LHDs have an average of five full-time employees and fewer than 10 total employees. Some have as little as zero full-time employees or as many as 11 part-time employees. Specifically for Blackford County Health Department (BCHD), in 2015 there were only two full-time employees and eight part-time employees. Much has changed in public health in the last decade, including the COVID-19 pandemic. In relation to that, currently in 2024 BCHD has five full-time positions and two part-time positions.

NOTABLE PUBLIC HEALTH ACHEIVEMENTS
VACCINATION
CAR SEAT SAFETY
INFECTIOUS DISEASE CONTROL
FAMILY PLANNING
FLOURIDATION OF DRINKING WATER
TOBACCO HEALTH WARNINGS

Source: Commission On Public Health. 2022. Governor's Public Health Commission Report and Appendices, (pp. 15, 22-30, 51-60).

# Governor's Public Health Commission Report 2022

According to this report, LHDs often struggle to maximize federal, state and other grant opportunities for the following reasons

- Grant periods are often not aligned with county budget cycle or approval timeline
- Time limited grants where long-term sustainability is not assured can be problematic
- Cash in hand requirements slow down grant implementation.
- Grant expenditure requirements may be very specific and fail to align with actual public health needs
- Reporting requirements can be administratively burdensome
- New grant awards often lead to funding supplantation

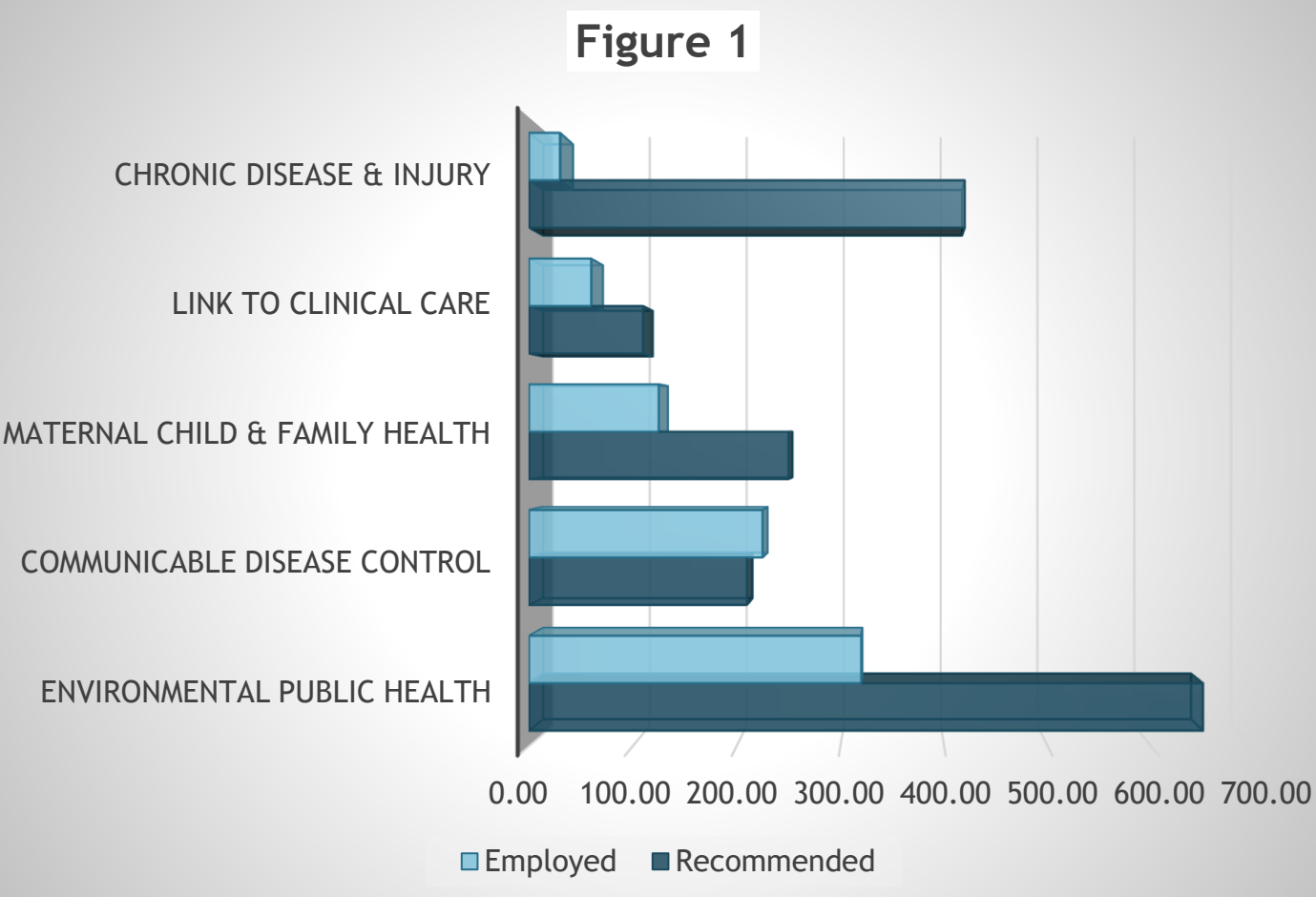
Some recommendations in regards to the six focus areas included

- Increase public health funding for LHDs
- Offer more training in public health finance for county auditors, commissioners and councilors
- Enhance recruitment and retention of staff
- Enhance data analytics tools for LHDs
- Improve regional coordination efforts and LHD, IDOH and EMS readiness
- Implementation of school wellness policies
- Increase awareness of public health initiatives, opportunities and requirements

Source: Commission On Public Health. 2022. Governor's Public Health Commission Report and Appendices, (pp.15, 22-30, 51-60).

# Indiana LHD Workforce Assessment 2022

According to the Indiana Local Health Department Workforce Assessment done in 2022, there is a gap between current full-time staffing and recommended full-time staffing. The Public Health National Center for Innovation used a new tool, the Workforce Calculator. Results are statewide, with the exclusion of Marion County (Figure 1). There is also a lack in training/continuity/succession plans, which means when an employee leaves a position, the institutional knowledge of that role is lost as well. It was reported that 54.8% of LHD's with 10 or less employees struggle to meet community needs with their employees attend in-person trainings offered by the state or other groups. This may mean one or two days of being short-staffed or, in some circumstances, LHD's reported closing while staff were attending in-person events. Participants suggested that these issues could be remedied by more virtual options or local options requiring less travel to Indianapolis.



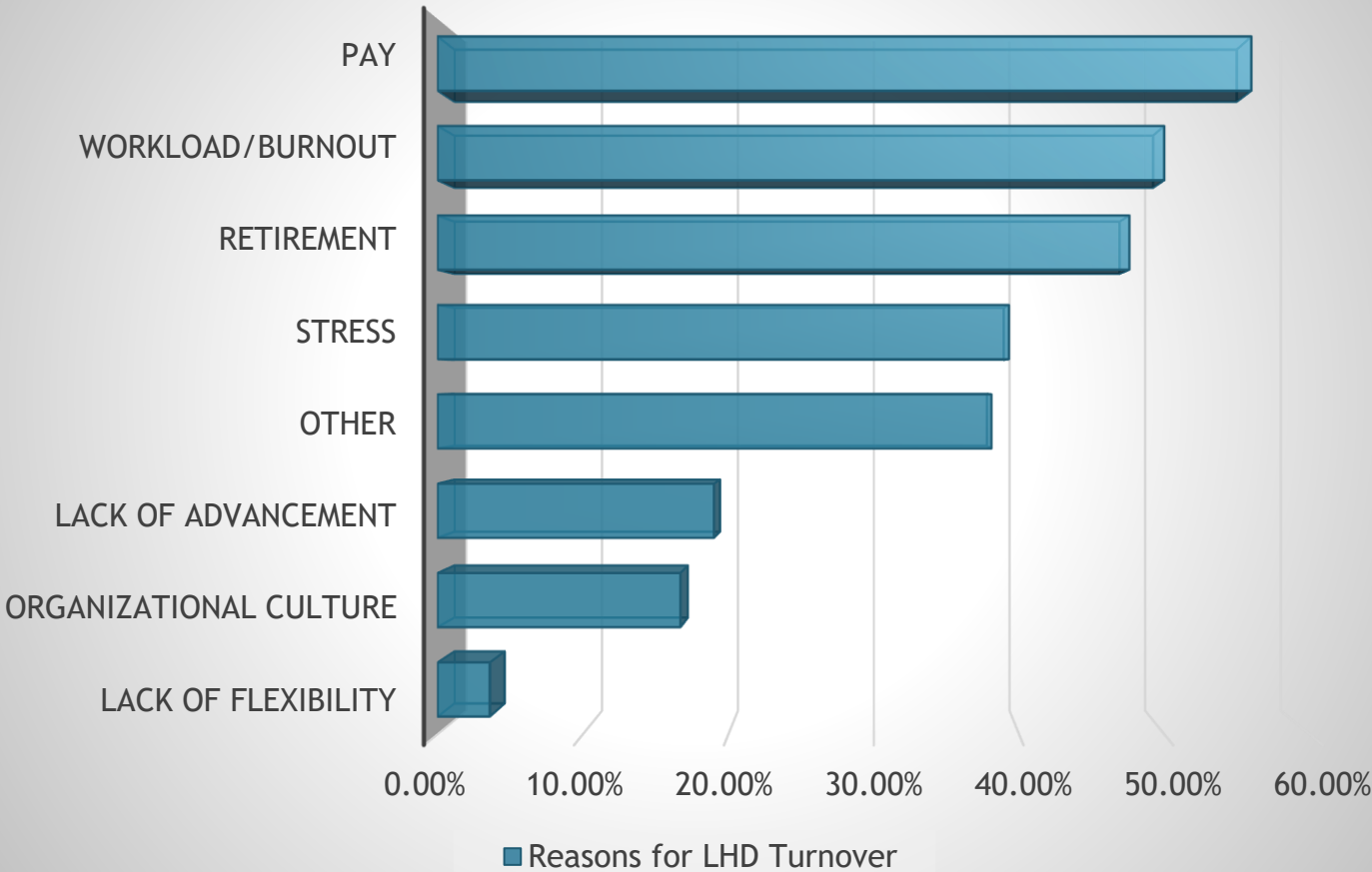
Source: IU Richard Fairbanks School of Public Health. 2022. Indiana Local Health Department Workforce Assessment, (pp. 70-73).



# Indiana LHD Workforce Assessment 2022

Statewide, Nursing and Environmental Health positions were commonly reported as the hardest to fill. Interviewees indicated primary issues being training requirements, pay and positions being part-time only. LHDs typically do not have control over benefits and salary decisions as these are controlled by local county officials. Of the 92 LHDs that completed the survey, the top three reasons for staff turnover were pay, workload/burnout and retirement (Figure 2). This excluded reasons related to COVID19. County salary restrictions hinder the recruitment and retention of skilled public health employees. Arbitrary salary limits based on historic salaries of other employees is hindering the ability to recruit experienced and trained public health employees. County leaders should create new guidance for the salaries of skilled public health workers, given the growing competitive market.

Figure 2



Source: IU Richard Fairbanks School of Public Health. 2022. Indiana Local Health Department Workforce Assessment, (pp. 76-77).

# 2024-2025 Blackford County HFI Opt-In

The Governor’s Public Health Commission Report and the Indiana LHD Workforce Assessment were undoubtedly the building blocks for the Health First Indiana initiative.

## Blackford County

**OPTED IN FOR 2024: \$169,848.67**

<b>2023:</b>	<b>\$46,851.75</b> (Legacy amount from Local Health Maintenance fund/Trust)
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<b>2024:</b>	<b>\$169,848.67</b>	<u><a href="#">2024 Blackford County Budget</a></u>
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County Match:	Average of county tax levy-related funds distributed to the LHD in the preceding three years (2021, 2022, 2023).
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<b>2025 (Opt In):</b>	Minimum: <b>\$327,252.00</b>	Maximum: <b>\$436,336.00</b>
County Match:	Minimum: <b>\$59,046.00</b>	Maximum: <b>\$78,728.00</b>

- OR -

<b>2025 (Opt Out):</b>	<b>\$46,851.75</b> (Legacy amount from Local Health Maintenance fund/Trust)
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Source: <https://www.in.gov/healthfirstindiana/your-community-info>

# 2018-2020 Blackford County Scorecard



## Indiana County Health Scorecard County At-A-Glance

The dashboard below displays county-level data for all topics. Choose a county

County	Topic	Indiana Rate	County Rate
<b>Blackford</b>			
	Adult Obesity	35%	<b>37%</b>
	Children < 3 Years Old Completing Recommended Vaccine Series	57.7%	<b>58.6%</b>
	Infant Mortality Rate	6.8	<b>10.8</b>
	Life Expectancy	76.5	<b>75.0</b>
	Smoking Rate	21.0%	<b>28.4%</b>
	Suicide Rate	17.2	<b>15.1</b>
	Years of Potential Life Lost Due to Injury (Age-Adjusted)	2527.14	<b>2210.9</b>

Source: <https://www.in.gov/healthfirstindiana/county-health-scorecard>

# Measuring Success

The Indiana Department of Health (IDOH) has regional support teams for Local Health Departments (LHDs). Indiana is divided into three regions and Blackford County is in the Central Region. IDOH Regional Local Health Services staff assist LHDs with planning, implementation, communication, etc. LHDs are required to report biannually on the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). KPIs are measurements that IDOH established for statewide consistency with public health services. LHDs have been given flexibility to assess local community needs and expand public health services, as necessary. We should see improvement in health outcomes and county scorecard data in years to come with all the increased public health awareness and collaboration.

*“An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.”*

-Benjamin Franklin

# 2024-2025 Objectives and Goals

- 1) Maintain core public health services for Blackford County.
- 2) Maintain current public health positions, hire additional staff when appropriate, as need grows and as budget allows.
- 3) Maintain existing community partners and expand outreach efforts as needed.
- 4) Collaborate with other agencies and community partners to supplement healthcare services in relation to the closure of IU Health Blackford Hospital on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023.
- 5) Increase education efforts on topics such as chronic disease, mental health, nutrition, fall prevention, harm reduction and CPR/first aid.
- 6) Provide additional AEDs to local public spaces.
- 7) Reduce ER visits with prevention efforts and education.