



# Annual Report 2023



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

## Preble County Public Health

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## Mission, Vision, and Core Commitments

The mission of Preble County Public Health is to promote and improve the health and well-being of the people living and/or working in Preble County.

### Vision

Achieve the highest possible health and well-being for Preble County residents and workers.

### Core Values

Team members at Preble County Public Health commit to...

1. Responsibility to the public
2. Quality in all services
3. Teamwork with our community
4. Justice for all served
5. Stewardship of Resources



## Administration

### The Board of Health

The Board of Health is comprised of five members to represent the citizens of Preble County. Four of the Board members are appointed by the District Advisory Council (which is comprised of the leaders of all municipal corporations in the county including townships, villages, cities, and County Commissioners). The other Board member is appointed by the Mayor of the City of Eaton. By Ohio law, at least one Board member must be a licensed Physician. Board members are appointed for a term of five years.

**George E. Henry** serves as the President, represents the City of Eaton, and his term expires in March 2026.

**JoEllen Tapalman** serves as President Pro Tempore, represents the County, & her term expires in March 2025.

**Dr. Peter Sambol** serves as the Board Physician, represents the County, and his term expires in March 2024.

**Lori J. George** represents the County, and her term expires in March 2028.

**Ron Wesler** represents the County District Licensing Council (DLC), and his term expires in March 2027.

### The Health Commissioner

The Health Commissioner is Scott Wilford, and he has served in this role since October 2022. Scott directs the daily operations of the agency as it serves the public health needs of 40,999 people in Preble County. Scott is responsible for all policy development, financial decisions, staffing, workforce training, programming, grant management, and strategic leadership. He ensures that resources are utilized effectively and efficiently to maximize return-on-investment while working with his team to address current community health needs and anticipate future public health threats. One of his biggest priorities is ensuring that the agency provides exceptional customer service to the public.

## What's in this report?

Annual reports are usually filled with numbers that aren't all that useful without context. Instead, we want to highlight the most important things that happened in each of our primary programs during 2023. Our hope is that you see how relevant public health programs operate in Preble County.

## Vital Statistics

Birth Certificates can be issued through our office for anyone born in the state of Ohio. Our office issued **1,025 birth certificates** in 2023.

In 2023, Preble County had 13 home births.

Death Certificates can be issued for anyone who passes away in Preble County. In 2023, Preble County had 292 deaths and our office issued **1,238 death certificates**. In 2022, Preble County had 266 deaths. In 2023, the most common causes of death were: **heart related, cancer, accidents, cerebrovascular disease, and chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases**.

Both birth and death certificates can be purchased for \$22.00 each copy.

Our staff continues to work with the Ohio Department of Health to correct errors found on birth and death records. We also strive to help the public to the best of our ability with any issues regarding birth and death records.



## Community Health and Safety

Through generous donations from EvenFlo and the Ohio Buckles Buckeyes program, our certified car seat technicians were able to **install 50 free child safety seats for our low-income Preble County residents**. Participants received in-person education about the proper use of car seats and an in-car demonstration of how to correctly install the seat in a vehicle.



In 2000, Ohio House Bill 448 mandated Boards in all Ohio Counties to review the deaths of children under 18 years of age and formulate data-driven recommendations to prevent future child deaths. The Child Fatality Review Board reviewed four child death cases in 2023.

As part of the state of Ohio initiative to combat infant mortality, PCPH has partnered with Cribs for Kids® to ensure infants have a safe sleeping environment. Babies who sleep on couches, in bed with others, or on their stomachs are more likely to die suddenly from an unexpected cause. Preble County promotes the **ABCs** of infant safe sleep practices - place infants **A**lone, on their **B**ack, in a **C**rib. Eight Pack and Play Cribettes with safe sleep kits were distributed in 2023.

## Did You Know

PCPH employs 16 people to serve ~41,000 residents with essential public health services. Talk about doing a lot with a little! Our budget is one of the smallest in the county, but our preventative services save the healthcare system real money. Like to the tune of saving \$15 in healthcare costs for every \$1 spent on public health in Preble.

## Emergency Preparedness

In 2023, preparations for the 2024 solar eclipse were begun. This will be a state wide event and is being planned in coordination with local, regional, and state partners. The eclipse will take place in Preble County on April 8, 2024 at approximately 3:08 pm with totality lasting approximately 3 minutes.

The Health Department participated in a State coordinated exercise to prepare for distributing medication to the entire county if it ever became necessary.

The Preble County Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) has been actively involved in preparing for any type of future event. Our response efforts wouldn't be possible without these incredible volunteers. Please consider volunteering your time and talents to help your community. You can find more information on how to join and help the Preble County MRC by visiting [preblecountyhealth.org/emergency-preparedness](http://preblecountyhealth.org/emergency-preparedness).



## Environmental Health

The Environmental Health program works to protect the community from environmental hazards through the inspection of various programs, including food safety, private water and sewage systems, nuisances and rabies, public swimming pools, campgrounds, and beaches.

The Food Safety Program focuses on the health and safety of the public by inspecting just over 200 licensed facilities throughout the county. Temporary food service operations at festivals are individually inspected. We pride ourselves in fostering a positive relationship with these facilities through education about food safety and transparency of expectations.

The Environmental Health Sewage and Water Program includes the inspection of new and existing private water and private sewage systems, as well as the Operation & Maintenance (O&M) program. Through the O&M program, we inspect onsite septic systems on a 1-year, 5-year, or 10-year rotation based on the system's complexity. These inspections are performed to ensure the septic system is operating properly and does not pose a threat to public health.

The Environmental Health Nuisance Program responds to and investigates public health nuisances. A public health nuisance includes inadequate conditions of one's property that threatens, or may threaten, the health of an individual or community. Examples of public health nuisances include the accumulation of trash, rodent infestations, and dilapidated structures.

The Environmental Health Rabies Program responds to and investigates animal bites, whether it was animal to animal, or animal to human. Rabies is a viral disease that is easily transmitted through the bite of a rabid mammal and there is no known cure.

## Nursing and Clinical Services

PCPH Nursing Clinic offers childhood, teen, and adult vaccines. We bill most insurances and offer discounted pricing or vaccine assistance programs for those with no insurance. During 2023, our Registered Nurses administered over 1,300 child and adult immunizations, flu and COVID-19 vaccines. Our nurses serve as a resource to district school nurses and local practitioners for immunization education and vaccine schedule updates.

Through the provision of safe affordable immunizations, the public is protected from vaccine preventable diseases such as Chickenpox, Diphtheria, Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, Human Papillomavirus, Influenza, Measles, Meningococcal Meningitis, Mumps, Pertussis, Pneumonia, Polio, Rotavirus, Rubella, and Tetanus.



PCPH nurses serve 184 children and families through the Children with Medical Handicaps (CMH) program. Children from birth to 24 years of age with chronic medical conditions receive case management, care coordination, and home visits from our public health nurses.

Our nurses also offer TB testing, pregnancy testing, childhood lead case management, communicable disease investigation and education, resources, and referrals.

## Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

The WIC Program provides both nutritious foods and nutrition education to our participants. Our participants purchase healthy foods with their WIC Nutrition Card, include milk, cheese and yogurt, whole grains, fruits and vegetables, as well as protein foods such as eggs, beans, peanut butter and canned fish. Our two local vendors are Kroger and Walmart in Eaton. We distributed Farmers' Market Nutrition Program coupons again in 2023. Two hundred fifty (250) sets of coupons were given to our families. \$2500 of coupons was redeemed on locally grown produce.

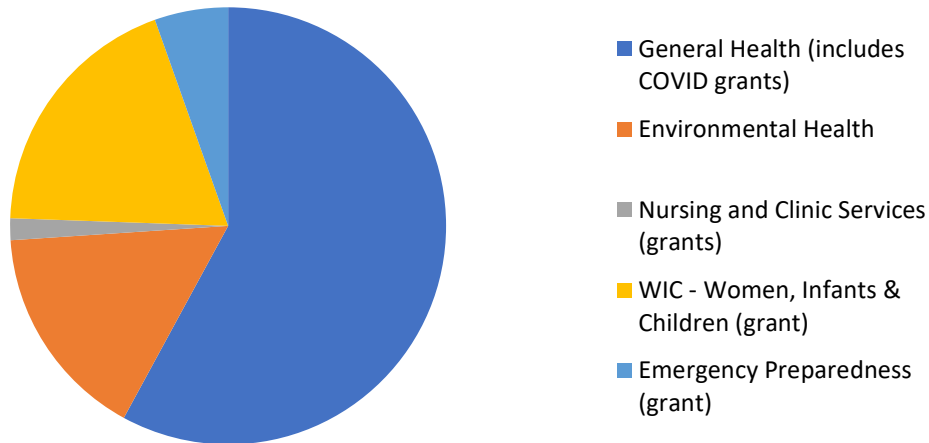


In 2023 our average caseload, or number of individuals receiving food benefits, was 662 per month. We served about 133 women, 141 infants, and 388 children each month. Everyone received nutrition education on a quarterly basis, which came to an average of 227 nutrition education contacts per month. Many of these education sessions are geared toward the participant's own desired health outcome, and are provided by two Registered Dietitian Nutritionists.

Breastfeeding support is a cornerstone of WIC services. We have a WIC mom breastfeeding peer helper, a lactation specialist, and an International Board-Certified Lactation Consultant on staff. We had a breastfeeding initiation rate of 77%, and we have an average of 33% of infants (newborn to 1 year) who are breastfeeding. We coordinate the Breast Friends of Preble County support group, and have breastfeeding help available through our peer helper phone line 24/7.

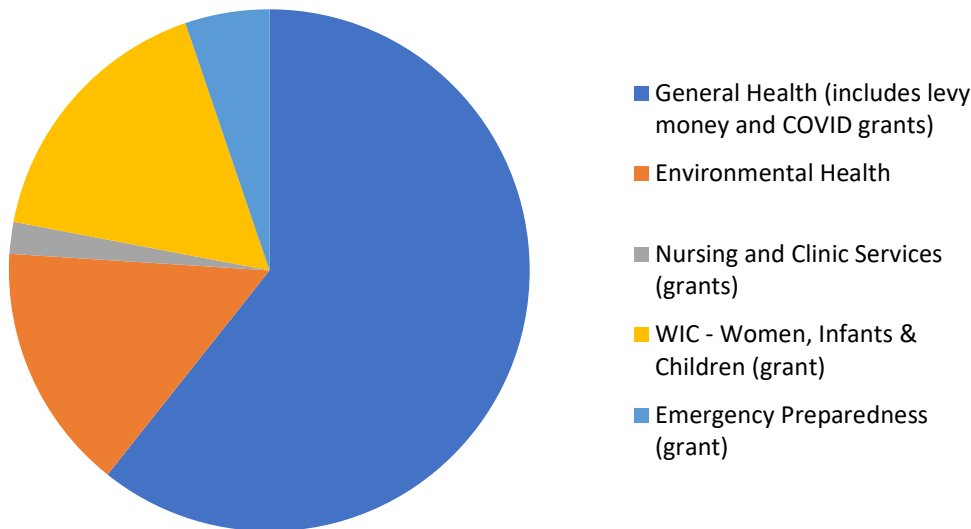
## Financial Picture

### 2023 PCPH Expenses



The general health fund covers a variety of essential operating functions, including unfunded mandates. Environmental Health includes the following funds: sewage, solid waste, water systems, swimming pools, food service, trailer parks, and Water Pollution Control Loan Fund (sewage grant).

### 2023 PCPH Revenue

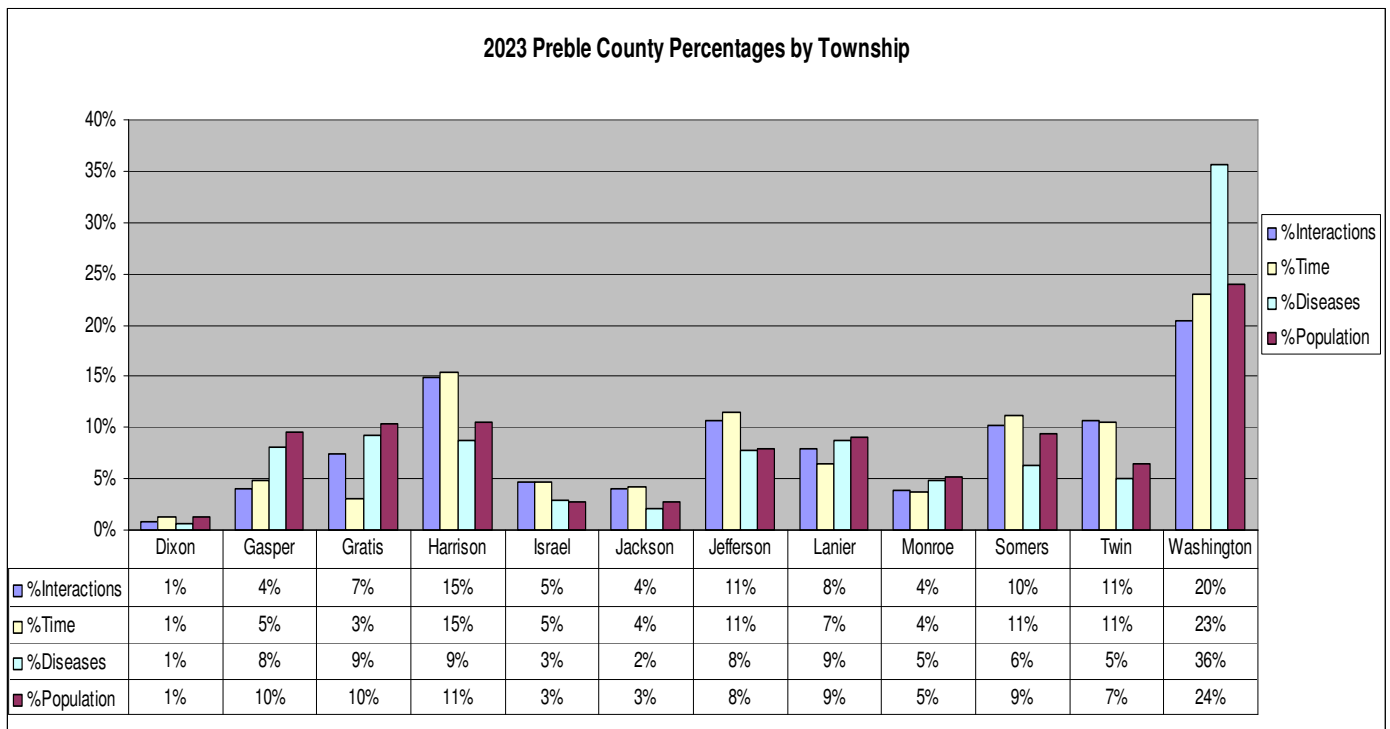


The general health fund revenue includes levy money, plumbing, vital statistics and COVID grants. Environmental Health includes the following funds: sewage, solid waste, water systems, swimming pools, food service and trailer parks.

Preble County Public Health continues to be fiscally responsible by saving and spending in a manner that serves the public health needs of the community.

## By Township

Preble County has approximately 24.0% of its population in Washington Township which includes the city of Eaton. The least populated township is Dixon with 1%. The rest of the population is relatively evenly distributed among the remaining townships. Corresponding to this distribution for 2023 was the distribution of various measures taken by the health department. The number of interactions and the time spent by the health department with township residents is approximately on track with population. Additionally, the number of communicable diseases reported also is approximately in line the population distribution, with a slightly higher rate in Washington Township. The graph below is an illustration of these measures.



Sources: U.S. Census, Ohio Disease Reporting System, Preble County Public Health TimeTracker system.