

ESSEX COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

MARCH 2026

DIRECTOR - LINDA BEERS, MPH



Department Highlights –

The Essex County Health Department, Office for the Aging, and Adult Protective Services (a program of the Department of Social Services) hosted an Open House for the Essex County Board of Supervisors on February 9, 2026. With seven new Town Supervisors joining the Board, this was a great time to highlight the programs and services of our 132 Water Street location. Supervisors convened in small groups and rotated through the various areas of the building, meeting staff, enjoying healthy snacks, and learning about not only the mandated activities of each operational unit, but the myriad ways in which our staff go above and beyond to deliver exceptional programming and care for the residents of Essex County.

The health department provided an Orientation Packet at the Open House, which we are also handing out today for those who were unable to join us in-person.

NYSACHO's Enumeration Survey

The survey is conducted annually to monitor changes in local health department staffing over time.

Our Department by years of service (year ending 2025): **43 Staff**

2 staff	with <1 year service
15 staff	with 1-4 years of service
11 staff	with 5-9 years of service
15 staff	with 10+ years of service



At a Glance



Foreword



Linda L. Beers, MPH
Director of Public Health

"The impact we dream of drives every effort we make. If we stay true to our values and tenacious in our resolve, the future is ours for the taking."

ECHD Program Data – FEBRUARY (unless otherwise noted)

Community Health Assessment (CHA) and Improvement Planning (CHIP)

- CHA/ARHN/Data Meetings – 0
- CHA/CHIP Partner Meetings – 1
- CHA Training/Webinars – 0
- NYSACHO CHA/CHIP Workgroup – 1

CHA/CHIP Progress Updates & Special Reports – A joint press release of the health department and hospital partners was issued in early February, announcing the availability of the *Community Health Assessment 2025 and Community Health Improvement Plan 2026-2030*.

The department has also begun an effort to present the CHA findings to the multiple stakeholder groups, coalitions, and committees of our partner organizations, as well as those that we host.

ESSEX COUNTY, NY

Community Health Assessment, 2025
Community Health Improvement Plan, 2026-2030



Essex County Health Partners

Essex County Health Department
University of Vermont Health – Elizabethtown Community Hospital
Adirondack Health

REPORT DATE:
DECEMBER 2025

We are eager to share these findings with you all – our Board of Health – at the next Human Services Committee meeting in April. In the mean time, the report can be viewed on our website at <https://health.essexcountyny.gov/community-health-assessment/>

Communicable Disease

Communicable Disease Surveillance/Epidemiological Investigations

Respiratory Illness investigations (Flu, COVID, RSV, TB) - **118**

GI Illness (Water/Foodborne) Illness Investigations - **2**

STI/Hepatitis & HIV Investigations – **1**

Arthropod-borne (Mosquitos and Ticks) Disease Investigations – **6**

Food Safety/Outbreak Investigations – **0**

Other investigations – **0**

Immunization Program

2026 AAP Immunization Schedule

The AAP schedule was endorsed by 12 health professional societies and differs from the most recent CDC immunization schedule. The Department's policy and standing orders were recently brought up-to-date to follow the NYSDOH Commissioner's recommendation to New York State providers to continue their prior immunization practices relying on evidence-based resources including the American Academy of Pediatrics' AAP Recommended Child and Adolescent Immunization Schedule.

Standing Orders, as available from the reputable Immunize.org and as approved by Medical Director, Dr. Michael J. Celotti, are following the AAP recommendations. Additional improvements to work-flow include a revision to the Department's Immunization Record to improve identification of payer & correct vaccine stock to use - private, VFC or VFA (for clerical & nursing staff) to ensure fiscal responsibility of the Department's immunization program.

Clinics in the community - **0**

Individuals immunized – **6**

Healthcare provider, school nurse, day care provider or other public health detailing activities: In-person and phone/e-mail immunization support for school nurses. Manual immunization record entry for students, as needed.

*Highlights, campaigns, activities:

- VFC Quarterly Meeting
- Perinatal Hepatitis B Prevention Program meeting
- Heart Health Fair in Ticonderoga – provided immunization information for adults
- Perinatal Hepatitis B Birth Dose training
- Infection Control webinar (Part 1 of 6)

Screening Services

HCV Screenings - **0**

HIV Screenings – **0**

HCV and HIV screenings and information offered at North Country Community College Health Fair.

TB Screening - **1**

STI Screening Services – referrals and/or services rendered – **1**

Rabies Prevention Program



Gearing up for the 2026 Rabies Season, this month, Supervisors are asked to note the attached letter and packet regarding how our Department may interact with you and your towns.

Our clinics start at the end of March and are strategically placed throughout Essex County with the goal of ensuring accessibility to residents while being frugal with Department resources.

Your packet includes the clinic schedule for the year 2026 along with a 1-page summary on the Rabies Program and prevention we hope you find informative.

We worked with a county-attorney and IT Department to process some forms through our website to ease work-flow for us & residents!

Rabies Vaccine Clinics – **0**

Pets Vaccinated – **0**

Rabies investigations - **11**

Specimens submitted for testing – **4 (all negative)**

People approved for rabies post exposure prophylaxis – **0**

Emergency Preparedness & Response

Real World Events, Drills & Exercises – **1** (Public Information Officer/Joint Information Center Tabletop Drill – Clinton County)

Training/Continuing Education – **2**

Volunteer Coordination – **1** (Train the Trainer opportunity sent to all MRC Volunteers for Get Healthy North Country Plan Updates/Revisions – **2** (Started revising the Emergency Communications Plan and the Public Health Preparedness & Response Plan)

Meetings/Coalitions/Community Engagement– **1** (Capital District PHEP Coordinators Monthly Meeting;

*Highlights, campaigns, activities – Drafted an Exercise Plan to drill our Vaccine Emergency Storage & Handling Policy and Procedure.

Chronic Disease

January 1, 2026 – February 27, 2026 Reporting Period

Public Health Detailing – **0**

Coalition/Collaboration Interactions/Meetings & Highlights

Coalitions Coordinated by ECHD

- Well Fed Essex County Collaborative; - **2**
- Tobacco Use Reduction Network (TURN) of Essex County – **2**

Get Healthy North Country/Heart Network – **3**

Caregiving Working Group of the North Country/Mercy Care – **1**

Long-Term Care Committee - **1**

Other Nutrition and Chronic Disease Related meetings – **1**

Trainings and Webinars - **6**

Campaigns & Awareness – **5**

- #getfitessexcounty
 - January – Bands and Boots
 - February – The Pulse Power-Up
- February
 - American Heart Month
 - Women’s Heart Month
 - February 6th Wear Red Day



Events - **2**

- UVM Health Network/Elizabethtown Community Hospital Heart Health Fair – 30 community members in attendance
- Food Justice Summit – Annual one day event at the Wild Center in Tupper Lake providing regional nutrition insecurity workshops and networking opportunities. This year’s event had nearly 200 partners in attendance from over 50 NYS counties, including farmers, Regional Food Bank representatives, health providers, and community based organizations.

Community Opioid Overdose Prevention Program (COOP)

Narcan Kits Distributed – 45 (January) and 92 (February)

Groups Trained - 0

SUDOR Submissions/ODs – 0 Non-Fatal; 0 Fatal

2026 ODs Non-Fatal/Fatal* – 4 Non-Fatal/2 Fatal

Community Care Kiosks – Three (3) Community Care Kiosk Locations remain in place in Port Henry, Elizabethtown and Lewis.

A location was recently determined for Lake Placid and efforts are underway to secure stock & place that unit.

Total items dispensed since January 1, 2026:

Tubby Tester	4
Personal Hygiene kits	8
Sunblock	0
Emergency plan	0
First Aid Kits	44
Forehead thermometer	19
CAP packs	18
Narcan kits	38
Fentanyl test kit	0
Xylazine test kit	0
Nail kits	43
Shoe deodorizer	21
Duterra bags	2
Gun locks	33
Tick remover kits	0
Gloves	12
Resistance bands	8
Deet wipes	0

Environmental Health

Air, Water and Food Health & Safety

Air Safety/Quality/Excessive Heat Alerts - 0

Public Water Notices

Boil Water Orders – 1 (Moriah 2/17, lifted 2/20)

Blue-Green Algae Notices – 0

Climate and Health

Activities – 52 community members were offered sunscreen and skin cancer education, emphasizing the importance of sun protection in the winter, through two health fairs coordinated by UVM Health Network/Elizabethtown Community Hospital.



Family Health

Baby Steps to Bright Futures

Babies born & families offered the Program – **11 (5 pending)**

Families enrolled in the program – **0**

DSS Collaboration Families - **1**

Families that sent a packet as unable to reach or declined the program - **5**

Referrals out to programs and services – **3**



Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program

Lead Cases open (elevated lead levels in pregnant women or children) & ensure appropriate follow-up care:

Active Children - **17**

Pending confirmatory testing - **6**

Released with confirmatory testing stating capillary testing was falsely elevated – **0**

Released due to not following up on venous confirmatory testing - **2**

Car Seat Program

*In collaboration with a county attorney the program is moving to adopt the use of a HIPAA-compliant Car-Seat Check-Form. This form streamlines paper information collection and allows for online documentation for reporting collecting important data.

*The program's policy was brought up-to-date to include revisions to the grant that expanded recipient eligibility.

*One additional staff that conducts home visits is seeking Care Passenger Safety Technician Certification this spring.

Car seat check clinics – **0**

Car seats checked - **2**

Car seats issued as new & installed – **2**

School Nurse Stetho-Scoop Monthly Meeting –

Presented Flu, RSV, and COVID disease activity in the state and discussed with nurses what they are seeing in schools. Covered upcoming Pre K/K roundup (more information below), offering vaccination counseling to parents. Input vaccine records on the spot to NYSIIS to help with school tracking.

School Health Outreach

The Health Department offered to attend Pre-K/Kindergarten round-ups this fall to connect with families.

The highlights of offers to include:

*School-Required Immunizations Q & A/Child look-up

*Ages & Stages information & program information on Early Intervention, Preschool & Children & Youth with Special Healthcare Needs

*Tick-Safety for children & families

*Car Seat Checks

A number of schools have accepted these and our staff are excited to get out there & connect with families!

Sexual/Reproductive/Relationship Health Program

Schools/Camps/Groups – **1 (January); 2 (February)**

CAP Pack Distribution – **79 (January); 83 (February)**

Children's Services

Early Intervention

Referral received in to the program - **8**

Children found eligible & enrolled (have a plan) - **21**

Children awaiting evaluation - **10**

Speech Therapy - **7** receiving; **10** waiting

Occupational Therapy - **5** receiving; **3** waiting

Physical Therapy - **3** receiving; **3** waiting

Special Instructional Services - **7** receiving; **1** waiting

Preschool Program

Children in process of evaluation, referrals - **18**

Children enrolled - **76**

Children waiting for services

Counseling - **1**

Occupational Therapy - **7**

Physical Therapy - **2**

Speech Therapy - **13**

Special Education/Itinerant Teacher - **8**

Children Attending Center Based Classrooms

In County - **19** Out of County - **4**

Children and Youth with Special Healthcare Needs (CYSHN)

Children enrolled – 40

The New York State Department of Health (Department) Bureau of Early Intervention announced that payment of the 4% rate increase retroactive to April 1, 2025, for eligible EI services payable from municipal escrow, will be made on March 18, 2026. The 4% rate modifier is applied to core in-person EI services that are provided to children who reside in rural and underserved areas of New York State that meet certain criteria. The following core services are eligible for the 4% rate modifier: screenings, multidisciplinary evaluations (MDEs), bilingual add-ons, and speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and special instruction services authorized as Basic Home and Community visits. Telehealth services are not eligible for the modifier. In Essex County, it will be applied to services provided in Ticonderoga, Wilmington, Port Henry and Ausable Forks. Providers are still waiting for their 5% rate increase retroactive to October 2024, which would be applied to all services.

WIC

Target Enrollment – 600

Enrolled - 484

Women enrolled - 90

Infants (0-1) enrolled - 93

Children (1-5) enrolled - 301

High Risk Families - 38

Nutrition Education sessions – 170

In person - 37

Remote - 133

Referrals made to other programs/services - 105

Breastfeeding Initiation Rate – 83%

This month Essex County WIC, in partnership with ADK Action, obtained over 500 lbs. of fresh, local produce and eggs from Juniper Hill Farm to distribute to our WIC families. This included butternut squash, sweet potatoes, carrots, beets, cabbage, potatoes, and onions. (Pic #1: WIC Nutritionist, Emily French, helps a WIC mom from Schroon Lake take veggies to be delivered to 9 WIC families in Schroon Lake.)

WIC staff attended the annual Food Justice Summit at the Wild Center in Tupper Lake on February 26th to gain insight and build connections with other regional organizations and individuals vested in community efforts for supporting equity and health through nutrition. (Pic #2: WIC Acct Clerk, Stephanie DeZalia; WIC Coordinator/Nutritionist, Cecile MacFarlane RDN, CDN; and WIC Nutritionist, Emily French at the Food Justice Summit.)



Home Health Care

January 22, 2026 – February 22, 2026 Reporting Period

Referrals accepted - 25

Patients receiving services - 69

Nursing Services - 46

Physical Therapy - 38

Occupational Therapy - 12

Speech Therapy - 2

Highlights – **Per Medicare Care Compare: Updated January 14 2026:**

- Patients rate the overall care from our home health agency at 96%, which is better than our competition, National average and NY average of 82%.
- This past reporting period our patients who were re-admitted to the hospital after discharge from home health was 3.7%, which was better than the national average, and our competition at 5.2%.
- This past reporting period our patients who would recommend the home health agency to friends and family was 91%, which is better than our competition, NY State and the national average of 74%.



Essex County Committee Form Miscellaneous Resolution Request

Department:

Committee:

Date:

Submitted By:

Nature of and Reason for Request:

the members of the Professional Advisory Committee / Public Health Advisory Committee have provided exceptional guidance and support to the Essex County Health Department over many years, including during the unprecedented challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic; and Whereas, the Committee has diligently reviewed policies, evaluated agency programs, and maintained vital liaisons with other healthcare providers to ensure the effective delivery of public health services; and Whereas, the Committee's contributions have consistently reflected and advanced the Essex County Health Department's mission: to prevent disease, promote health, and protect life, and its vision: to foster healthy people in healthy communities through assessing public health needs, educating the community, mobilizing partnerships, and ensuring access to health services; and Whereas, the exemplary commitment and professionalism of the Committee have greatly enhanced the Department's ability to respond to community health challenges; Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved that the Essex County Health Department formally expresses its deep appreciation to the members of the Professional Advisory Committee / Public Health Advisory Committee for their years of service, leadership, and dedication to improving public health. Special Recognition Is Extended To: Julie Trombley, RN, MSN, Vice President, Chief Nursing Officer, and Chair of the Professional Advisory Committee / Public Health Advisory Committee Derick Dottey, Past Town Supervisor of North Elba Megan Murphy, Director, Adirondack ROOTS

ATTACH TEXT OF ANY SPECIAL PROVISIONS TO BE INCLUDED WITHIN THE FINAL RESOLUTION
Additional language can be submitted as an email attachment, or physically attached to this request.

Budget Impact:

A. Will Resolution impact current budget and/or future budgets: Yes No

Explain:

B. Is appropriation from contingent account required? Yes No

If "Yes" amount: Transferred to What Account #:

C. If a Budget transfer is required, please complete the following:

From Account #: which has a current balance of:

To Account #: which has a current balance of:

Transfer amount:

D. Were funds originally budgeted for this item or purpose? Yes No

If "Yes" amount: Account #:

E. Funds or Costs to be paid from: Account #:

Current Account Balance: Balance after Expenditure:

F. Is there any State and/or Federal reimbursement? Yes No

If "Yes" amount: Program:

CERTIFICATION BY SIGNATURE THAT THE INFORMATION ABOVE IS ACCURATE AND COMPLETE.

Name:

Title:

Date:

Signature:



Essex County Committee Form Miscellaneous Resolution Request

Department:

Committee:

Date:

Submitted By:

Nature of and Reason for Request:

The Essex County Health dept.requests approval of a new slate of members to the Essex County Professional Advisory Council, effective June 2026. This council serves both the Certified Home Health Agency (CHHA) Professional Advisory Committee and the Public Health Advisory Committee (PHAC) as required under Articles 28 and 36 of the Public Health Law. The purpose of these committees is to advise the agency on professional issues, participate in the evaluation of agency programs, and assist the agency in maintaining liaison with other health care providers. The proposed members are: Julie Anderson, PA (Primary Care Physician Assistant), Angie Allan (DSS Commissioner), Rick Preston (North Elba Town Supervisor), Ashleigh Macey (Lake Placid School Nurse), and Anna Reynolds (Director, Office of Community Resources). The Essex County Public Health Department will notify appointees and take all necessary actions to effectuate their appointments.

*ATTACH TEXT OF ANY SPECIAL PROVISIONS TO BE INCLUDED WITHIN THE FINAL RESOLUTION
Additional language can be submitted as an email attachment, or physically attached to this request.*

Budget Impact:

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Explain:

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If "Yes" amount: Program:

CERTIFICATION BY SIGNATURE THAT THE INFORMATION ABOVE IS ACCURATE AND COMPLETE.

Name:

Signature:

Title:

Date:



Essex County Committee Form Miscellaneous Resolution Request

Department:

Committee:

Date:

Submitted By:

Nature of and Reason for Request:

Noncollectable- Bad Debt Percentage is a key metric in healthcare revenue cycle management that measures the percentage of patient accounts that are deemed uncollected and written off as bad debt. The industry standard benchmark for Bad Debt Percentage is typically around 3% of net patient revenue. This means that for every \$100 in net patient revenue, a healthcare organization should aim to write off no more than \$3 as bad debt.
The Essex County Certified Home Health Agency (CHHA) has not written off bad debt since 12/31/2019 during that time we have taken in \$6236839.35 in revenue . We were unable to collect \$197,785.60. Which averages out to 3.17%.
COVID-19 negatively affected home health healthcare billing by creating a "devastating" combination of non-reimbursable services, increased operational costs, and decreased referral volumes. Agencies faced significant financial pressure due to a lack of reimbursement for telehealth visits, even as these virtual services became essential for maintaining continuity of care. Additionally, frequent changes in billing codes, daily updates to government policies, and the shift to remote work for billing staff led to increased claim denials and a rise in time-consuming appeals.

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If "Yes" amount: Program:

CERTIFICATION BY SIGNATURE THAT THE INFORMATION ABOVE IS ACCURATE AND COMPLETE.

Name:

Signature:

Title:

Date:



Essex County Committee Form Miscellaneous Resolution Request

Department:

Committee:

Date:

Submitted By:

Nature of and Reason for Request:

RESOLUTION ADOPTING AND APPROVING the QUARTERLY REPORTS FOR THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT including the REPORT OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH DIRECTOR AND REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF PATIENT SERVICES PLUS THE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES OF THE CERTIFIED HOME HEALTH AGENCY ALL OF WHICH WERE APPROVED BY THE PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PHAC)/ PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PAC) AND THE MEDICAL DIRECTOR, ON MARCH 3,2026.

ATTACH TEXT OF ANY SPECIAL PROVISIONS TO BE INCLUDED WITHIN THE FINAL RESOLUTION
Additional language can be submitted as an email attachment, or physically attached to this request.

Budget Impact:

A. Will Resolution impact current budget and/or future budgets: Yes No
Explain:

B. Is appropriation from contingent account required? Yes No
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If "Yes" amount: Account #:

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Current Account Balance: Balance after Expenditure:

F. Is there any State and/or Federal reimbursement? Yes No
If "Yes" amount: Program:

CERTIFICATION BY SIGNATURE THAT THE INFORMATION ABOVE IS ACCURATE AND COMPLETE.

Name:

Signature:

Title:

Date:



Essex County Committee Form Miscellaneous Resolution Request

Department:

Committee:

Date:

Submitted By:

Nature of and Reason for Request:

RESOLUTION ADOPTING AND APPROVING the QUARTERLY REPORTS FOR THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT including the REPORT OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH DIRECTOR AND REPORT OF THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR/DIRECTOR OF HEALTH PLANNING & PROMOTION PLUS THE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES OF PUBLIC HEALTH ALL OF WHICH WERE APPROVED BY THE PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PHAC)/ PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PAC) AND THE MEDICAL DIRECTOR, ON MARCH 3,2026.

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Budget Impact:

A. Will Resolution impact current budget and/or future budgets: Yes No
Explain:

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Name:

Title:

Date:

Signature: 



**Essex County Committee Form
Miscellaneous Resolution Request**

Department-WIC

Committee: Human Service

Date: 2/24/26

Submitted By: Linda Beers

Signature: _____

Linda J Beers

Nature Of Request: To move unspent mini-grant funds from FFY2025 to FFY2026.

Reason for Request: To be able to utilize unspent mini grant(funds from 2025)

Revenue (increase) Excellus Funds a4082-427050 \$3865.60

Appropriation (increase) Excellus Funds a4082-547001 \$3865.60

Budget Impact:

A. Will Resolution impact current budget and/or future budgets: **Yes** x No

B. Is appropriation from contingent account required? Yes **No**

If "Yes" amount: _____ Transferred to What Account#: _____

C. If a Budget transfer is required, please complete the following:

From Account #: _____ which has a current balance of: _____

To Account #: _____ which has a current balance of: _____

Transfer amount: _____

D. Were funds originally budgeted for this item or purpose? Yes **No**

If "Yes" amount: _____ Account #: _____

E. Funds or Costs to be paid from: Account#: _____

Current Account Balance: _____ Balance after Expenditure: _____

F. Is there any State and/or Federal reimbursement? Yes No

If "Yes" amount: _____ Program: _____

(To be completed by the County Manager when required)