

2021 Annual Report



KNOX COUNTY
TENNESSEE

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

MESSAGE TO KNOX COUNTY

As we reflect on 2021, one thing is clear: a global pandemic has put a spotlight on just how important public health is to a successful community.

KCHD team members changed processes, updated procedures, and shifted resources throughout the year as community services continued through innovation, excellence, and integrity. Thousands of vaccinations provided an incredible amount of protection against dangerous variants of COVID-19. Partnerships continued to grow with access to care established as a core priority.

Many think of KCHD as a place to receive vaccinations, birth certificates, or where people can receive low-cost health services. That's all true, but it's not the full picture. Much of the work is done outside the walls of the KCHD buildings. That's because health is most influenced by what happens well before a doctor's visit. Health is impacted by where people live, learn, work, and play. KCHD team members are out in neighborhoods, on coalitions, and working together every day with partners to ensure there is safe food to eat and clean air to breathe in Knox County. Key focuses include monitoring for emerging public health threats, stopping disease outbreaks, implementing evidence-based prevention programs, and educating the community on a variety of topics from sexual violence to harm reduction to chronic disease.

This Annual Report explains more about the work that is done every day to make Knox County a place where every person has the opportunity to be healthy.

After all, a healthy community is a thriving community.

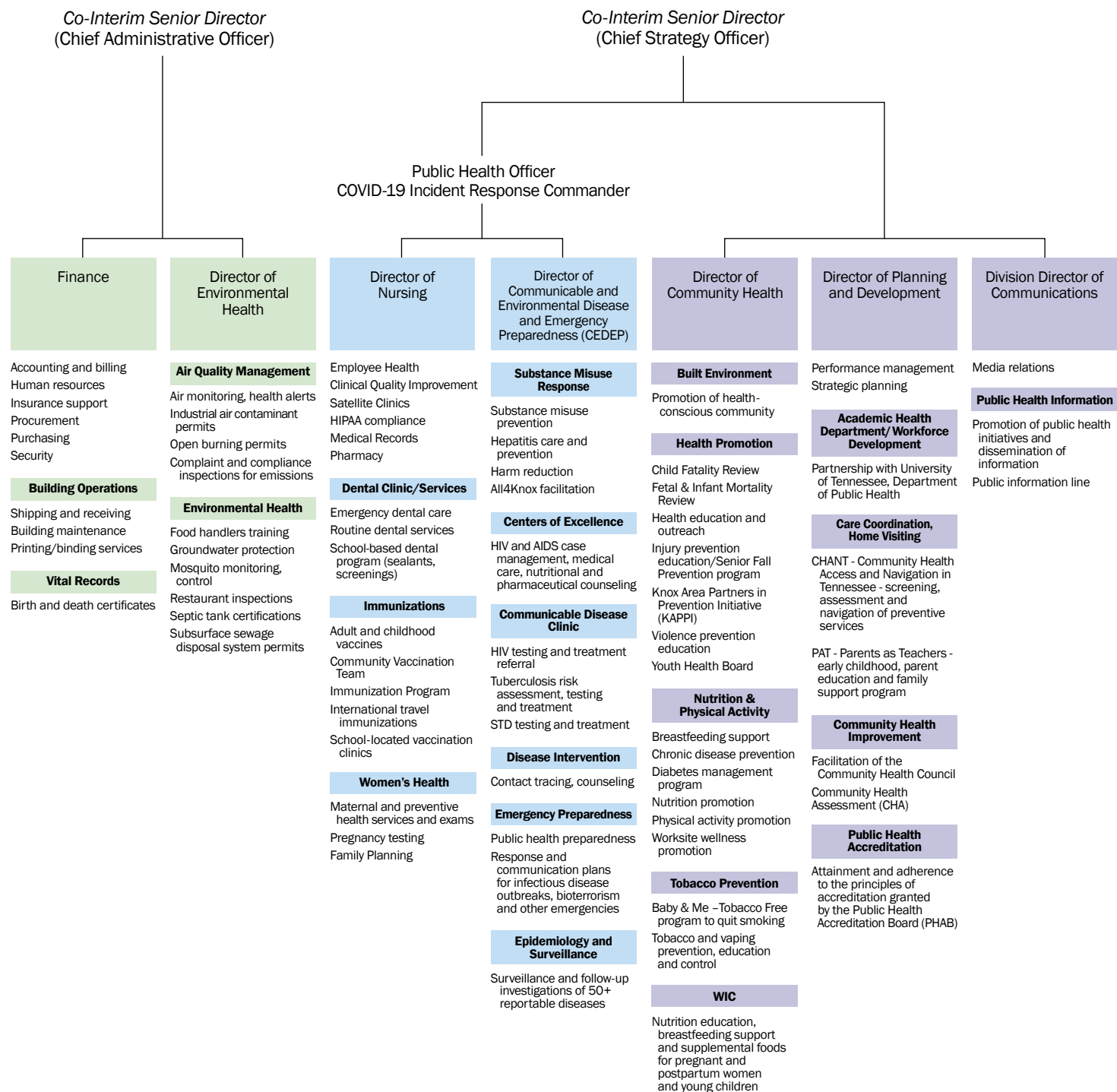
Please call 865-215-5000 or email health@knoxcounty.org with any suggestions or questions.



ORGANIZATION

The Knox County Health Department is a division of Knox County Government under the supervision of Knox County Mayor Glenn Jacobs.

KCHD consists of numerous divisions and employs more than 250 professionals including epidemiologists, nurses, environmental specialists, public health educators, dentists, dieticians, and emergency preparedness specialists.



WHO WE ARE

VISION

Every person a healthy person

MISSION

To encourage, promote and support the development of an active, healthy community through innovative public health practices

CORE VALUES

- Responsiveness and commitment to our community
- Excellence through evidence-based and innovative practices
- Accountability and integrity in our operation
- Leading by example

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- Continually assure that the Knox County Health Department infrastructure empowers us to be at the forefront of public health
- Build communitywide understanding and value for public health
- Respond effectively to our community's public health issues
- Facilitate a community approach to better health



GENERAL INFORMATION

- Hours of operation: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Days and hours of service may vary per department. Please call the appropriate clinic before arriving.
- Main: 865-215-5000
- Email: health@knoxcounty.org
- Online: www.knoxcounty.org/health
- Facebook: @KnoxCountyHealthDepartment
- Twitter: @KnoxCoHealthTN
- Instagram: @KnoxCountyHealthDepartment
- On the first Wednesday of each month, all offices and clinics are closed in the morning for staff in-service. On these days, the main location opens at 11 a.m.

WHAT WE DO



EDUCATE AND ENGAGE

Providing accurate, reliable health information to the public is crucial to improving the community's health, both in good times and in times of crisis. Within the Health Department, there is a dedicated and diverse team of experts who carry out this work. In addition to managing crisis communications, KCHD team members provide education on a variety of topics including substance misuse prevention, nutrition and physical activity, dental hygiene, food safety, adolescent health, maternal and child health, chronic disease prevention, and many others. Just last year, the Health Department provided content, data, and interviews for hundreds, if not thousands, of news stories. Education and outreach accompany nearly all aspects of the department's work, but it doesn't stop there. Strategic partnerships are built with schools, farmers markets, health care providers, nonprofits, law enforcement agencies, etc. KCHD convenes, organizes and facilitates coalitions, including All4Knox, Knox/East TN Healthcare Coalition, East Tennessee Wellness Roundtable, Fetal Infant Mortality Community Action Team, Knox County's first Overdose Fatality Review Team, and the Community Health Council. All this work is to help ensure community members have the information they need and support systems in place.



ASSESS AND RESPOND

To improve the health of everyone in Knox County, we study Knox County's overall health. Epidemiologists collect and analyze health data so a comprehensive picture of the community can be shared. In addition to conducting surveys, this team examines data from a variety of sources, including hospitals, medical providers, and schools. The largest report that is produced internally is the Community Health Assessment, which provides a "state of health" for Knox County. As the cornerstone publication, this report helps the Health Department, its partners, nonprofit organizations, and community leaders evaluate needs, make policy decisions, and plan for the future. In addition to studying the community's overall health, the Health Department prepares for and responds to public health threats. This year, the COVID-19 pandemic response continued on top of monitoring, investigating, and containing other infectious diseases. The highly skilled epidemiology and emergency response teams continue to be a crucial part of preventing and responding to outbreaks, and providing emergency preparedness education/guidance to families, businesses, churches, partner agencies, schools, and others.



PROVIDE AND CONNECT CARE

Providing and connecting the community to medical care is a key public health service. During a typical year, the Health Department serves thousands, reducing the human and economic costs of illness, and ultimately the burden of disease in the community. Standard services include a broad range of preventive care and treatment, including adult and child immunizations, women's wellness and gynecological care, screening and treatment for sexually transmitted infections, and dental care. Clinical work also extends beyond the walls of the KCHD building. One excellent example is the Community Vaccination Team, which has brought the COVID-19 vaccine to locations across the community to increase access to the life-saving vaccine. This team has provided vaccines at businesses, nonprofits, churches, and to individuals who are homebound. Connecting care does not apply to just medical care. The Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program not only provides nutrition and breastfeeding education, it also provides growth screenings and electronic benefit cards for purchasing healthy foods, all while connecting families to important community services and programs.



PROTECT HEALTH

Part of the role as a public health agency is to enforce public health laws, which are designed to prevent and reduce potential health threats. These laws help ensure important conditions are regulated so that every resident can be healthy. The Environmental Health division enforces state public health regulations for public swimming pools, restaurants, hotels, grocery stores and others. On average, this team conducts thousands of food-related regulatory inspections annually and provides extensive food safety education for these agencies and the public. This work helps ensure food in Knox County is prepared, stored, and served safely. This team also includes the Groundwater Protection Division, which works to protect the groundwater supply and environment from pollutants by enforcing state laws governing onsite wastewater systems (septic systems). And finally, this division also works to maintain the EPA's National Ambient Air Quality Standards in Knox County. This is accomplished in many ways, including the continuous monitoring of fine particulate matter and ozone in the outdoor air; issuance of air quality health alerts; and permitting of air contaminant sources, such as industrial manufacturers, gas stations, and dry cleaners.

ANNUAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- KCHD provided nearly 53,000 doses of COVID-19 vaccine in 2021, giving these individuals the best protection against the COVID-19 virus and its variants. Vaccine became available in December 2020, and the Health Department hosted many large events where 1,000 or more vaccines were given in one day. Support was also given to partners in the community by assisting them with their vaccine clinics. Additionally, health department team members provided education to community partners about vaccine and coordinated with them to get those most vulnerable vaccinated.
- KCHD conducted nearly 35,000 COVID-19 tests for approximately 28,500 patients in multiple locations across the community to increase access and convenience.
- KCHD's epidemiology division investigated more than 50,000 cases of COVID-19 and more than 10,000 cases of other reportable diseases, including sexually transmitted and foodborne illnesses.
- As a part of KCHD's work to improve physical activity, the Health Department partnered with Knoxville Parks and Recreation in the spring to implement a pilot program that offered free yoga classes in Knoxville parks. Classes will resume spring 2022, and will continue to be led and organized by community members.
- Through the Baby & Me Tobacco-Free Program, KCHD conducted 82 individual counseling sessions to help people in Knox County stop using tobacco. Numerous women who enrolled in the program reported they were tobacco-free prior to delivery, thereby protecting their health and the health of their babies. Additionally, KCHD's Tobacco Use Prevention and Control program partnered with Metro Drug Coalition to facilitate "Catch My Breath," a youth vaping prevention program at a Knox County elementary school. This spring, three additional elementary schools will be starting the program.
- Flu vaccine clinics were held in centralized community locations to increase access. More than 1,500 flu vaccines were given at these events.
- KCHD's School-Based Dental Program provided more than 22,000 dental resource bags and dental education pamphlets to schools and facilities in Knox County.
- KCHD grew its Substance Misuse Response Division to eight team members. As a part of the division's harm reduction focus and through a state grant, two peer navigators were placed in Fort Sanders Regional Medical Center's Emergency Department to support patients who come to the emergency department with substance-misuse related issues. These navigators offer treatment/recovery and harm reduction resources to patients.
- The Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Program continued to provide 100% remote service delivery, and managed to serve nearly 1,000 more clients during the past fiscal year. The program also facilitated providing all women and children with increased dollar amounts for purchasing fruits and vegetables. This funding was part of the federal pandemic response, and it more than tripled the dollar amount allotted to each woman and child. Additionally, farmers market vouchers were provided to eligible WIC families which resulted in more than \$11,000 worth of redemptions paid directly to local farmers.
- KCHD's Parents as Teachers (PAT) program is an evidence-based home visiting model that helps parents know how to be their child's first and most influential teacher. This year, PAT increased their acceptance rate (families shared from state referral system that receive services) from 6% to 12%
- KCHD's Air Quality Management Division replaced particulate matter filter-based monitors with continuous monitors, saving annual costs associated with filter analysis and resulting in real-time data on particulate matter concentrations.
- Environmental Health inspectors monitored approximately 2,500 food service establishments; 540 schools, day care facilities, and hotels; and 600 swimming pools and tattoo parlors. In 2021, they conducted more than 6,400 public health inspections and trained and certified more than 1,600 food handlers in Knox County with online food safety training program. Additionally, KCHD added the option to pay and renew permits online in order to provide more convenient access.
- KCHD's Groundwater Division permitted approximately 300 new constructions for septic systems and responded to around 1,400 drain field location-related inquiries.
- KCHD's Women's Health Clinic added an obstetrician-gynecologist to the clinic thereby allowing for additional services offered for our clients.
- KCHD's CHANT (Community Health Access and Navigation in Tennessee) program, which provides free care coordination services for qualifying children and pregnant women, received the Metro Drug Coalition Community Champion Award for innovations in Substance Misuse Prevention.

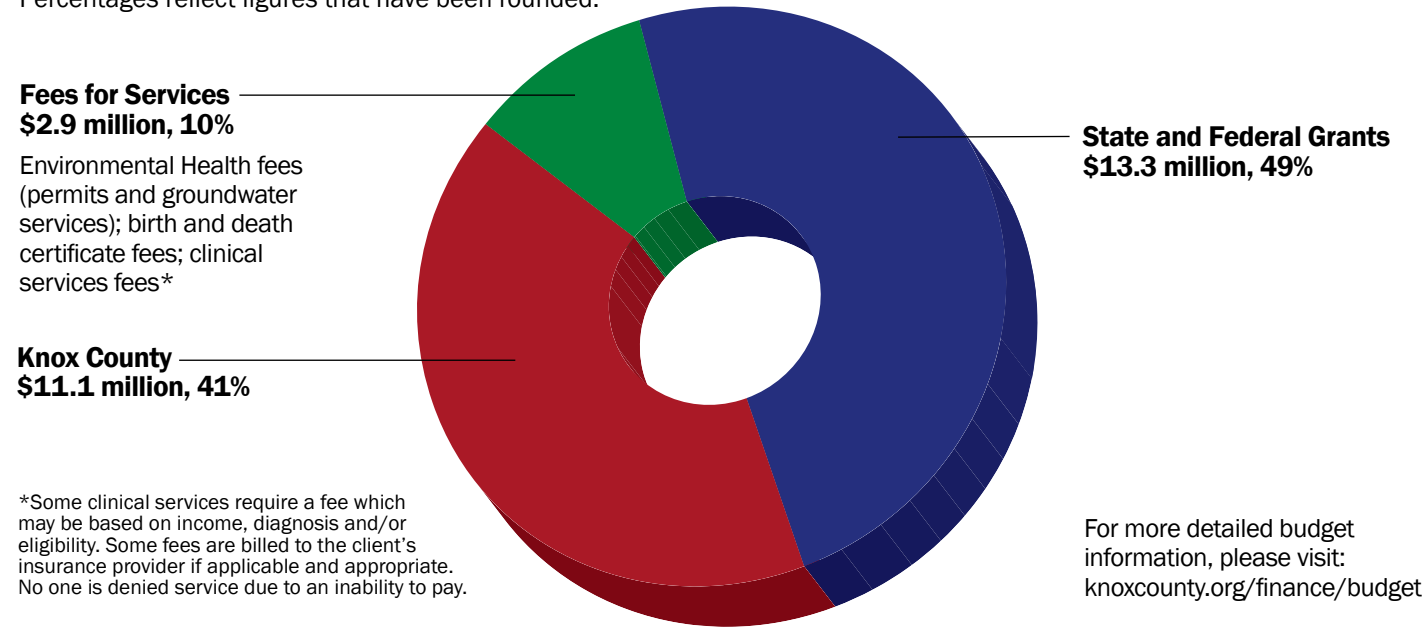


FINANCE

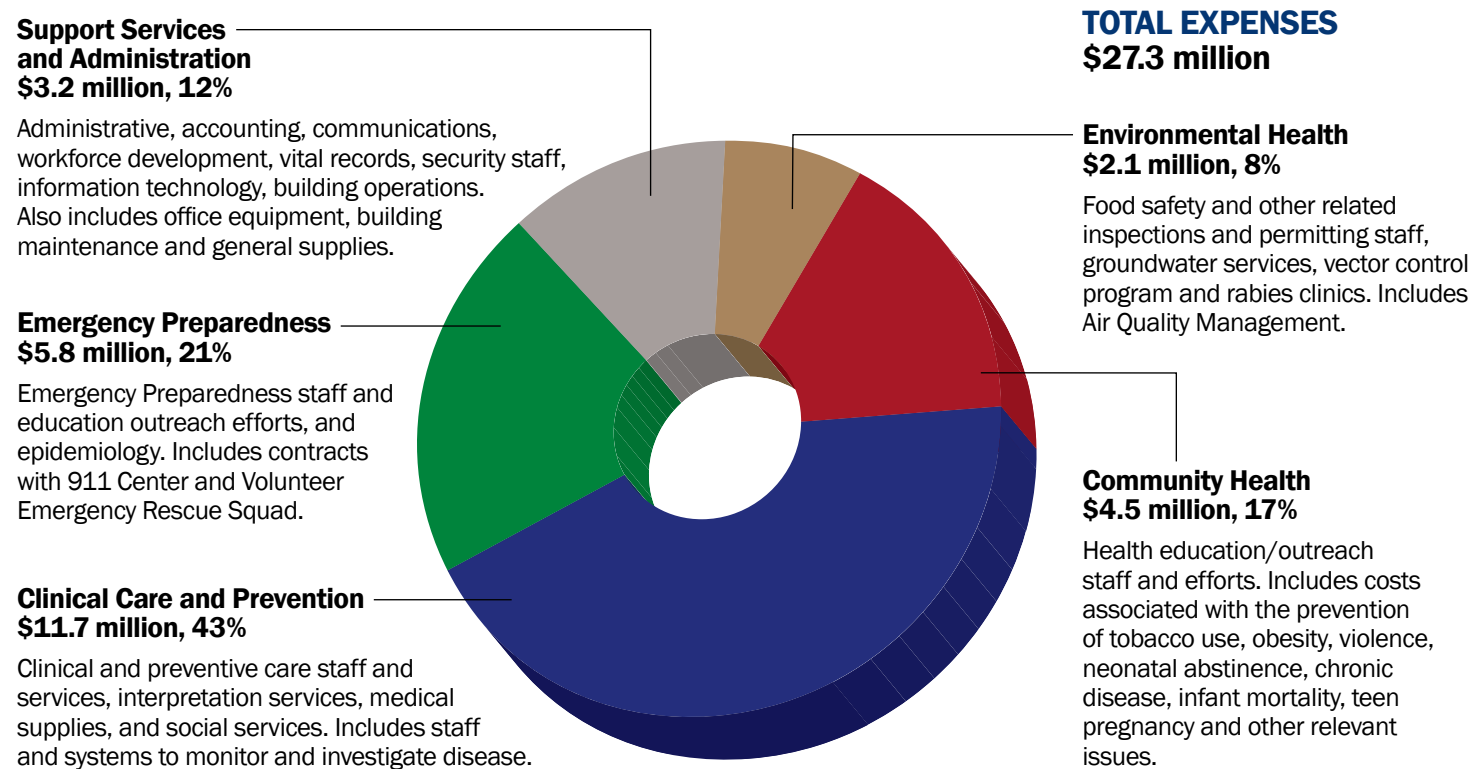
The Knox County Health Department serves a population of 478,971 people, according to the 2020 U.S. Census. In the 2021 fiscal year, KCHD had an operating budget of approximately \$27.3 million.

FISCAL YEAR 2021 KCHD FUNDING SOURCES

Percentages reflect figures that have been rounded.



FISCAL YEAR 2021 KCHD OPERATING EXPENSES





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