

City of Meriden

Department of Health and Human Services

ANNUAL REPORT
July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023



Mission and Vision

Mission Statement:

The mission of the Meriden Department of Health and Human Services is to protect the health and social well-being of the people in Meriden, to promote an environment conducive to healthy lifestyles, and to prevent adverse health outcomes. Whenever possible, the Department will endeavor to employ strategies, policies, and interventions through community engagement and partnerships to ensure health equity.

Vision Statement:

The Meriden Department of Health and Human Services will be a progressive leader providing innovative solutions to achieve optimal health and well-being status for all Meriden residents.

Link to
www.meridenhealth.com



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Ten Essential Public Health Services

1. Assess and monitor population health status, factors that influence health, and community needs and assets.
2. Investigate, diagnose, and address health problems and hazards affecting the population.
3. Communicate effectively to inform and educate people about health, factors that influence it, and how to improve it.
4. Strengthen, support, and mobilize communities and partnerships to improve health.
5. Create, champion, and implement policies, plans, and laws that impact health.
6. Utilize legal and regulatory actions designed to improve and protect the public's health.
7. Assure an effective system that enables equitable access to the individual services and care needed to be healthy.
8. Build and support a diverse and skilled public health workforce.
9. Improve and innovate public health functions through ongoing evaluation, research, and continuous quality improvement.
10. Build and maintain a strong organizational infrastructure for public health.

1. Community Assessment

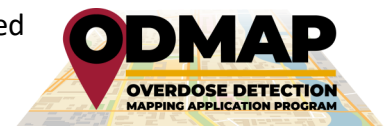
Assess and monitor population health status, factors that influence health, and community needs and assets.

Our programs and services strive to reflect the current needs of the community. One way we determine which programs and services to provide is to conduct and/or participate in community assessments or review current data sets. These data sets include but are not limited to:

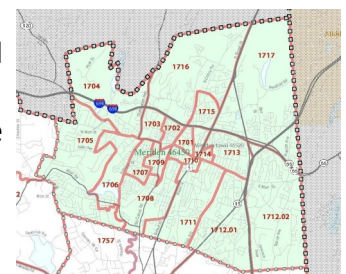
CT Data— CT Data provides information on housing and development, environment and natural resources, public safety, and health and human services, to name a few. Data can be viewed at <https://data.ct.gov/>.



ODMAP—The Overdose Detection Mapping Application Program (ODMAP) is used to map near real-time suspected overdose surveillance data. We use this tool to mobilize response to a sudden increase or spike in overdose events.



Census Tract Data—Meriden is divided into seventeen “tracts” or subdivisions used to collect and report data. If data is available we will use it to make informed decisions on where to directly provide or refer our community partners as to where services or outreach may be needed. Other types of data available include demographics, education, housing, and more. Maps can be found on the United States Census Bureau website at www.census.gov.

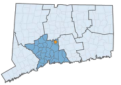


Reports - Several new community reports were released over the past fiscal year.

1. Youth Voices Count: This report is a summary of data that was gathered during the spring semester of 2022 at Meriden Public Schools grades 6-12. Data collected included information about social media, mental health, substance use, etc. and results can be used in the planning and development of strategies, policies, and practices for youth serving organizations.

2. Hartford Healthcare Community Needs Assessment 2022: As determined by analyses of secondary community health data and input provided by community stakeholders, this report identified significant health needs in the community served by MidState Medical Center.

3. Connecticut Healthy Aging Community Profile: This report gives a snapshot of the overall health and well-being of senior citizens in Meriden. Information included in this report are demographics, healthy aging indicators such as falls, prevention, nutrition, chronic disease, housing, transportation, and economics.



2021 CONNECTICUT HEALTHY AGING COMMUNITY PROFILE
Meriden (New Haven)

Meriden is a city in New Haven County with 8,980 residents age 65 or older. Compared to other large cities, older residents trend better on some healthy aging indicators with lower rates of colorectal, gastric, prostate cancer, and hearing impairment. However, they had higher rates of obesity, tooth loss, Alzheimer's disease or related dementias, chronic kidney disease, COPD, diabetes, epilepsy, hypertension, liver and peripheral vascular diseases, osteoporosis or fractured wrists, pressure ulcers, stroke, tobacco, substance, and tobacco use disorders, depression, anxiety and bipolar disorders, schizophrenia and other psychotic disorders, and personality disorder. They are more likely to take the health promotion step of getting cholesterol screening. However, they are less likely to do any physical activity within the last month, meet the CDC guidelines for aerobic physical activity, and more likely to use emergency in the last month. Community resources to support healthy aging include: 161 primary care providers, a hospital, and 6 nursing homes within 5 miles; a caregiver support clinic, 36 home health agencies, a community health center, 12 hospital agencies, 2 senior centers, 3 universities or university colleges, a public library, a YMCA, and an assisted living site.

POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS	Significantly different than STATE RATE	COMMUNITY ESTIMATE	STATE ESTIMATE
Total population all ages		59,864	3,981,504
Population 60 years or older as % of total population	23.8%	23.0%	23.0%
Total population 60 years or older	14,233	823,529	823,529
Population 65 years or older as % of total population	16.7%	16.4%	16.4%
Total population 65 years or older	9,980	589,566	589,566
% 60-74 years	59.0%	60.7%	60.7%
% 75-84 years	27.0%	29.1%	29.1%
% 85 years or older	13.7%	15.2%	15.2%
% 65+ population who are female	54.2%	56.8%	56.8%
% 65+ population who are female	67.1%	66.6%	66.6%
Race and ethnicity of the population 65+			
% White	87.2%	88.4%	88.4%
% African American	7.6%	8.8%	8.8%
% Asian	1.4%	2.3%	2.3%
% Other race	3.7%	2.9%	2.9%
% Hispanic/Latino	17.0%	3.8%	3.8%
Marital status of the population 65+			
% married	48.1%	53.8%	53.8%
% divorced/separated	14.5%	14.9%	14.9%
% widowed	28.8%	24.2%	24.2%
% never married	10.7%	7.1%	7.1%
Education of the population 65+			
% with less than high school education	21.0%	14.7%	14.7%
% with high school or some college	63.4%	53.3%	53.3%
% with college degree	14.7%	21.1%	21.1%
% with graduate or professional degree	7.5%	16.8%	16.8%
% of 65+ population who speak only English at home	76.9%	84.3%	84.3%
% of 65+ population who are veterans of military service	15.0%	17.4%	17.4%

Meriden (New Haven) | PAGE 7

These reports and more can be found on our Data and Statistics webpage:
<https://www.meridenct.gov/government/departments/health-and-human-services/data-and-statistics/>

2. Investigate Health Problems

Investigate, diagnose, and address health problems and hazards affecting the population.

Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention - There were big changes to childhood lead investigations this fiscal year. Public Act 22-49 went into effect January 1, 2023 and lowers the threshold elevated blood lead levels and gives our Department a greater opportunity to investigate potential sources of lead exposure.



In 2022-2023 our office conducted 125 lead screenings in our Clinic, three of which were greater than 3.5 mg/dL. Please note lead level thresholds have changed in alignment with Public Act No. 22-49. Staff followed up on 364 cases, closing 48 in fiscal year 2023. We do expect the number of cases for follow up to increase as the thresholds are lowered. Below is the schedule according to Public Act 22-49.

	Jan. 1, 2023	Jan. 1, 2024	Jan. 1, 2025+
Parental Notice	3.5µg/dL	3.5 µg/dL	3.5 µg/dL
Onsite Inspection	10 µg/dL	5 µg/dL	N/A
Epidemiological Investigation	15 µg/dL	10 µg/dL	5µg/dL

Communicable Disease Surveillance - Per CT General Statute 19a-215, certain communicable diseases are required to be [reported to local health departments](#). We receive mailed paper reports and monitor electronic reports through the Connecticut Electronic Disease Surveillance System (CTEDSS). Please note that this chart is for reports reviewed only and should not be interpreted as rate of illness in our city.

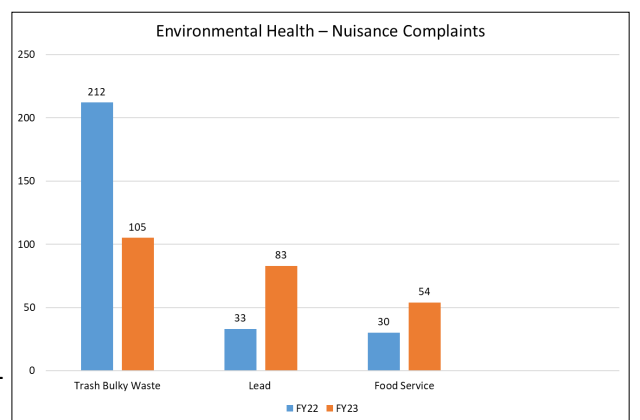
	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Reports reviewed (not including	605	588	989
Influenza	4	31*	505
COVID-19 (lab confirmed)	7,346	9,229	2,911**

* CTEDSS was reporting positive and negative Influenza tests in the system

** This number reflects the number of cases reported July 1, 2022 to May 31, 2023. In alignment with the expiration of Connecticut’s COVID-19 Public Health Emergency Declaration, COVID-19 data reporting will be part of the seasonal respiratory surveillance reporting program, which begins in early October and ends in late May.

To the right is a summary of the most common environmental public health complaints received by our office. The most common is garbage/bulky waste. Staff conducted 465 proactive sweeps in the community, which are issues observed by sanitarians while they are out in the field.

Our office investigates all complaints and may issue orders to correct according to local and state public health codes. All complaints are anonymous per Chapter 368, Section 19a-25 of the state public health code.



Contact Tracing for COVID-19 and Mpox - Our Department continued to call residents who tested positive for COVID-19 via a laboratory test to conduct contact tracing. As quarantine guidelines changed, our Contact Tracers focused on providing education including information about booster doses. Our daily contact tracing ended on May 27 in alignment with Connecticut’s Public Health Emergency Declaration expiring on May 11, 2023. Our office still investigates clusters and outbreak of COVID-19 in our community and will continue to provide isolation guidance to those individuals and organization that call our office, as well as home test kits and disposable masks.



In May of 2022, [cases of Mpox](#) (formerly known as Monkeypox) were reported in more than 50 countries that do not normally report Mpox, including the United States. Within 24 hours of the first case in Connecticut our Department [created a webpage](#) on the City website, had materials translated into Spanish, and worked with hotels/motels, churches, businesses, clubs/bars and pharmacies to provide targeted outreach. Our staff conducted contact tracing with confirmed cases and followed identified close contacts for 21 days, offering guidance and linkages to the JYNNEOS vaccine.

3. Inform and Educate

Communicate effectively to inform and educate people about health, factors that influence it, and how to improve it.

Importance of Messaging

Public health messaging is used to effectively communicate with our community on various health topics and concerns. We focus on creating clear, concise and inclusive messaging to educate, engage, and inspire our community to improve and protect their health. Using social media we are able to disseminate important information and updates in real time. We maintain our webpage (www.meridenhealth.com). Our bi-weekly COVID-19 and seasonal health updates are sent out via email to community partners and agencies and are posted on our website for the public. We submit monthly updates to the Council of Neighborhoods and MidState Chamber of Commerce newsletters and participate in community meetings and events.

We utilize a professional translation company to translate messages, forms, and materials into Spanish and other languages. This ensures our messages are inclusive and reached by everyone in Meriden.

Mosquito Bite Prevention - The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES) has a mosquito trapping and testing site at Falcon Park in Meriden. They test for West Nile, Eastern Equine Encephalitis, and Jamestown Canyon viruses. On August 15, 2022 we were notified that mosquitoes trapped and tested did test positive for West Nile Virus, and we provided this information along with prevention tips to the public.



Childhood Injury Prevention Program - In collaboration with CT Children's Medical Center, in fiscal year 2023 we held 3 car seat installation classes in both English and Spanish, providing parents/caregivers free car seats and injury prevention education. Between these classes and appointments with one-on-one education to parents, we installed 431 car seats! This program is funded by our Preventive Health and Human Services Block Grant through September 2023.



In July of 2022, our technicians also participated in making a car seat installation video, which will be used in our virtual installation classes for parents/caregivers.

QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) Suicide Prevention Training - In partnership with Chesprocott Health District, our Public Health Educator held 10 [community trainings](#) with a total of 139 participants.

This training is an educational program designed to teach "gatekeepers" - those who are strategically positioned to recognize and refer someone at risk of suicide (i.e. parents, educators, health professionals, etc.) the warning signs of a suicide crisis and how to respond by questioning, persuading, and referring the person to appropriate resources.



One of the main focuses of our Department over the past fiscal year has been working with community partners to [conduct harm reduction, overdose prevention, treatment and recovery services](#). In 2022, 35 Meriden residents (1,452 total residents in Connecticut) died of accidental opioid overdoses (Office of the Chief Medical Examiner). We are fortunate to have 3 grants to support this work.

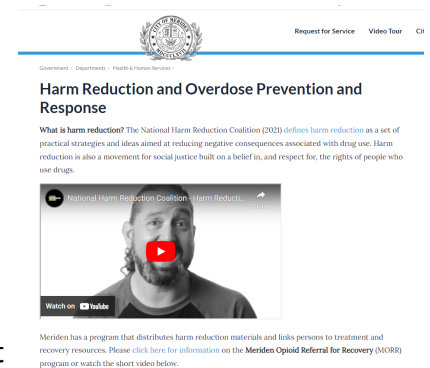
MORR—[Meriden Opioid Referral for Recovery](#) - This 4 year grant program funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA) had 2 tracts: 1) referrals by our Police and Fire Departments, and Hunters Ambulance to trained clinicians at Rushford for treatment and recovery services and 2) prevention and harm reduction efforts including community trainings, harm reduction efforts, distribution of Naloxone to the community and first responders, and outreach at community events and identified areas in our city that may have seen a spike in overdose events.

Year 4 had 88 referrals to the program, over 100 persons trained in Naloxone (known as Narcan™) and over 500 medication disposal bags distributed to our community. Over the 4 year period 288 persons were referred to the program, with 218 successfully reached. This grant ended September 29, 2022; the program continues under the NACCHO IOPSLL grant below. We have submitted another application to SAMSHA to continue MORR from September 2023 to September 2027 and hope to hear soon if awarded funding.

2. MERR—Meriden Early Diversion, Referral, and Retention Project -MERR

is a 5 year grant from SAMSHA (April 2020 to April 2025). The goal of the MERR program is to divert persons with mental illness and/or Substance Use Disorder (SUD) from arrest, allowing them to be evaluated by clinical staff at Rushford and engage in treatment and/or services. The City's first responders, including Hunter's Ambulance, Fire and Police Departments, identify clients for diversion through a brief screening process and make the referral to Rushford. In Year 3 (April 2022 to April 2023) this program had 74 referrals. Clinicians conducted 10 ride-alongs with Meriden Police in an effort to connect with potential clients and build rapport. Staff at Rushford and our office also conducted outreach at community events, trained persons in Narcan, and promoted new mental health resources such as the 9-8-8 suicide and crisis hotline.

3. NACCHO IOPSLL—Implementing Overdose Prevention Strategies at the Local Level - This 15-month grant from the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) is helping our Department build capacity to implement overdose prevention and education strategies. Our 4 primary activities under this grant are 1) increase harm reduction outreach through community feedback, 2) provide anti-stigma training and resources, 3) strengthen our data collection and analysis around overdose trends in Meriden, and 4) reduce stigma around substance use through a communications campaign. We are also able to continue referrals to treatment and recovery services in partnership with our first responders and Rushford. This grant runs November 1, 2022 to January 31, 2024. Please visit our harm reduction webpage at www.meridenhealth.com.



Common across all sources of funding is our ability to provide free Naloxone trainings to our community. Commonly known as Narcan™, in this training participants learn what an overdose looks like and what to do to reverse them, what Narcan™ is and how to administer it, Good Samaritan laws, and local resources. Participants also received a Narcan™ kit with 2 doses and other resources. This past fiscal year we had 121 people complete our trainings.



4. Community Engagement

Strengthen, support, and mobilize communities and partnerships to improve health.

This past year our staff attended several community events and meetings to engage with our community. Staff provided community resources, trainings, COVID-19 test kits, masks, and Department information.

Some of these events include:

- Meriden Farmers Market
- Community Resource Night
- Christmas in the Village
- MidState Chamber of Commerce Expo
- Castle Craig Adult Learners
- Overdose Awareness Day
- DEA Drug Take Back Day
- Yulefest
- Daffodil Festival
- Y's Men of Meriden



National Health Education Week - Held during the third week of October, National Health Education Week focuses on increasing awareness of major public health issues and promotes a better understanding of the role of health education. Our Health Educator participated in a panel presentation to Southern Connecticut State University public health students about the importance of health education. This was an event to promote the field of health education and strengthen the future public health workforce!



Youth Services

1) The Juvenile Assistance and Diversion (JAD) program is the main program of Youth Services. In FY23 JAD had 102 referrals. Breach of peace, assault, and drug possession were the most common types of offenses. Seventy-seven (77) JAD meetings were held and 87 cases were closed.

On January 1, 2023 Connecticut implemented a new Risk Based Assessment process for Juvenile Review Boards (JRB). Youth presenting to Juvenile Court will be screened (except for violent felonies and serious juvenile offenses) and the case will be handled based on screening results. This could mean Diversion, Non-Judicial or Judicial handling, or, depending on the score, will automatically be referred to their community, most often a JRB.

On June 27, 2023, [Public Act 23-188 \(An Act Concerning Juvenile Justice\)](#) was passed and will have an effect on how juvenile cases are handled for the following fiscal year.

2) Our Youth Service Bureau grant also provided [mini-grants](#) for youth developed and led projects in Meriden, provided financial support through the grant to Project Graduation, Meriden Parks and Recreation to run youth programming, and the Meriden Library to provide child and youth programming.

Addressing Community Concerns - Our staff often get referrals from Meriden Police, Fire, and Housing Departments and Hunters Ambulance about the living conditions of residents in our community. Staff will make home visits to assess the conditions and make appropriate referrals for assistance. Family members are also contacted if appropriate. Multiple visits are often needed.



This past year staff completed 64 inspections/visits on open cases. Staff also provided 3 presentations at the Police and Fire Departments for new staff about hoarding behaviors.

Meriden Senior Center - It was another busy year at the Senior Center! This past year the Center had:

- 310 new members
- 17,542 visits and served 8,916 meals
- Gave 17,258 rides (including medicals)
- Volunteers provided 5,099 hours of service, and 40 were honored at our annual volunteer appreciation lunch.
- Our annual health fair in May 2023 had 43 vendors and served 150 guests with a boxed lunch sponsored by Whitney Rehabilitation Care Center.
- We celebrated our 8th year of our Tis the Season for a Senior program, which provided gifts to 93 seniors.



Senior Center Building Committee - In September 2022 the City Council formed a committee to look at the future of the Health and Human Services Department, which may include a new location for services and putting Health services and the Senior Center under one roof. The Director of Health and Human Services and Senior Affairs Administrator provide staffing support to the 7 person committee, comprised of both city councilors and members of the public.

After Requests for Proposals for companies to conduct a feasibility study were solicited and interviews held, the city contracted with EDM, a full-service architecture and engineering firm with significant regional experience in senior centers and senior living design. EDM works with Lifespan Design Studio, a nationally renowned senior center planning and design specialists.

Over the following months the Committee reviewed potential sites, narrowing it down to 2 for consideration (65 Westfield Road and 116 Cook Avenue). There was also extensive outreach done with the community; a bilingual survey was distributed in April to gain insights on programming and potential location concerns, listening sessions were held at the Senior Center, and community meetings were held to provide updates on findings. Floor plans were drafted in order to ensure that all current and proposed programming and services will fit on the 2 sites up for consideration.

The Committee will decide on the location and write a final report in late August 2023, and present this information to full City Council for vote in early September on whether to move forward with the project.

**Meriden Senior Center
Public Interest Survey**



The City of Meriden is in the process of looking at space needs and options for the location of a **NEW** Senior Center. Please complete our short survey about what indoor and outdoor activities you would like to see and your thoughts about a new location for the Senior Center.

ANY RESIDENT over the age of 18 can take this survey.
The survey will close on **APRIL 21, 2023 at 4:00 PM.**

The survey can be accessed using the links below or the QR codes.

Survey in English: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MeridenSC>

Survey in Spanish: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MeridenSCSpanish>



English



Spanish

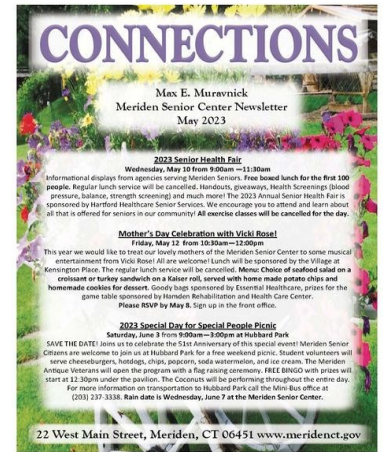
If persons prefer a paper copy of the survey, they can be picked up and completed at the Senior Center or the Mayor's Office in City Hall.



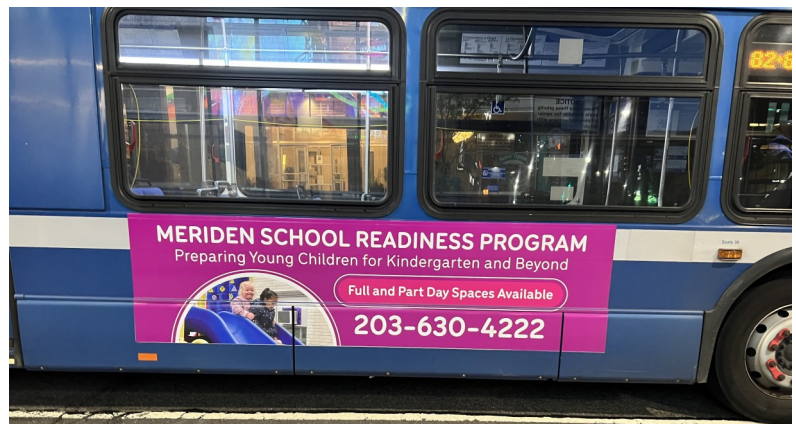
Senior Center—Community Engagement - Staff at the Senior Center are part of many local advisory boards and committees, and actively participate in meetings to promote Senior Center activities and needs of seniors. These local groups include:

- MidState Chamber of Commerce Hispanic Outreach Leaders in Action (HOLA)
- Interagency Council on Aging of South Central CT
- MTeam
- CHOICES
- Meriden Commission on an Aging and Disabilities (staff support)

The Center also publishes and distributes a monthly newsletter, posts programming in the local newspaper, and utilizes social media.



Meriden School Readiness -School Readiness programs provides affordable, high quality early care and education services in our community to help young children prepare for kindergarten. Programs in Meriden receive school readiness and quality enhancement grant funds that allow child care providers to continue to meet the Office of Early Childhood (OEC) mission for children and families who generally would not have access to high quality early care and education services due to low socioeconomic status.



In FY23:

- School Readiness programs successfully filled the total amount of full day slots awarded to the district (356) for the April, May, and June 2023 months.
- Our School Readiness Coordinator worked with the Record Journal and Vector Media to increase awareness of Meriden School Readiness programs, enrollment, and staffing.
- School Readiness and community sponsored health fairs assisted sites in recruitment and hiring efforts.
- Additional funding the School Readiness Quality Enhancement Grant allowed us to contract with various agencies to provide services such as coaching, mentoring, and training around topics including literacy, classroom and behavior management, curriculum, and assessment.
- State legislature allocated 30 million for FY22-24 in funding for an emergency stabilization grant for School Readiness programs. Meriden School Readiness programs applied quarterly for the enrollment grant in which the district and approved for the following amounts based on program reported utilization:

	Full Day	School Day	Part Day	Extended Day	Total
Q1	939	43	N/A	276	\$102,988
Q2	949	137	36	276	\$111,532
Q3	1,046	154	38	276	\$120,476
Q4	1,068	156	39	276	\$122,412

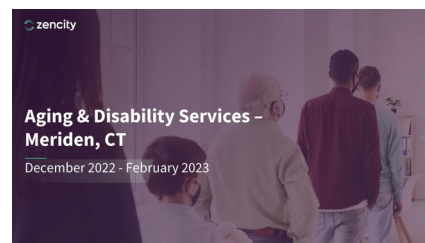
5. Develop Policies and Plans

Create, champion, and implement policies, plans, and laws that impact health.

Strategic Plan - In January 2023 our Department drafted a 5 year operational strategic plan. The plan has 4 sections: 1) Recruit, retain, and develop a competent public health workforce, 2) Ensure data is used to drive programming and decision making, 3) Secure a new location for the Department of Health and Human Services, and 4) Continue to be leaders in public health practice. The plan outlines staff responsible, outcome indicators, estimated and actual results.

Testimony - In 2023 our Department provided testimony in favor of the following 2 proposed bills: 1) SB 1163: An Act Authorizing the Use of Opioid Settlement Funds to Provide Municipal Police Officers with Opioid Antagonists and 2) H.B. No 6582: An Act Concerning A Pilot Program Regarding Addiction Services Experts at Police Departments. Through the Advocacy Committee of the CT Association of Directors of Health we followed multiple additional bills that, if passed, would impact our services.

Community Survey - In late 2022 Meriden's [Commission on Aging and Disabilities](#) worked with Senior Center staff and ZenCity to conduct a community survey on services for seniors and the disabled in Meriden. The survey had 567 respondents. The Commission and Senior Center staff will use survey results to improve and advocate for current and future services in the community.



6. Public Health Laws

Utilize legal and regulatory actions designed to improve and protect the public's health.

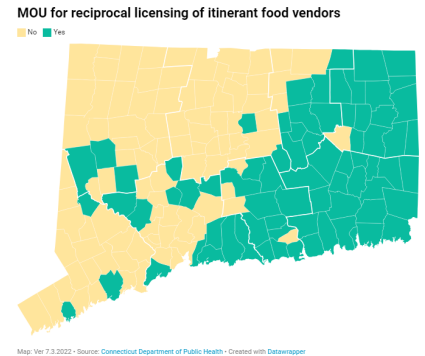
Licensing and Inspections - Our Environmental Health staff play an important role in preventing foodborne illness and ensuring a safe and healthy environment. Our Registered Sanitarians are responsible for licensing and inspecting food service establishments (including temporary vendors such as food trucks), public swimming pools, and barbershops/hair salons/nail salons. They also respond to public complaints and elevated child lead cases. Both local and state public health codes lay the foundation and guidance for much of their work.

Activity	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Food Service Establishment Inspections	774	938	994
Barbershop/Hair/Nail Salon Inspections	97	63	100
Nuisance Complaints and Proactive Sweeps	751	748	782
Childhood Lead Inspections	356	413	364
Public Swimming Pool Inspections	30	41	32

FDA Food Code Adoption - In February 2023 the Connecticut General Assembly passed regulations to adopt the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Food Code statewide. Our Department started prepping for this change originally in 2018 by completing courses on the FDA Food Code. In February when the adoption became official, our department updated signage, protocols and procedures for food service establishments (FSE's) in line with the updated inspection form. Changes were promoted to FSE's via a new webpage on www.meridenhealth.com and through a mailing to our food service establishments.



Itinerant Food Vendor Reciprocal Licensing Agreement - Meriden has signed on to participate in the [CT Department of Public Health Itinerant Food Vendor Reciprocal Licensing pilot project](#). This pilot project is to test a reciprocal license system for itinerant food vendors. In participating towns and cities, the vendor can receive a license, be inspected by one local health jurisdiction and then be allowed to operate in another local health jurisdiction. This does not include participating in temporary events like fairs, carnivals, and music festivals. All vendors must register with the event coordinator and get the necessary approvals for selling food at these events, which may include several town/city departments. Best if vendors reach out to us before setting up in Meriden to review this process.



The map above shows towns/cities (in green) who are part of this pilot program as of June 30, 2023. Please visit our website at www.meridenhealth.com for more information.

City of Meriden—Code Enforcement - Here is a list of some of the local codes our Department enforces:

- Chapter 70 Barbershops, Hairdressing and Cosmetology Shops
- Chapter 112 Food and Food Services Establishments
- Chapter 144 Nuisances, Health
- Chapter 158 Swimming Pools



The Meriden City Code can be found at www.meridenct.gov.

There were several raised bills that had the potential to impact the public health of our community and our Department operations. Our office regularly reviews raised bills and has provided testimony through our professional organizations, such as the Connecticut Association of Directors of Health. Below are some of the raised bills we followed this past legislative session.

[HB 5902—An Act Requiring Food Allergy Awareness in Restaurants \(passed\)](#)

This bill requires DPH to ensure that restaurants provide adequate training and certification to improve food allergy awareness for their staff and the public.

[SB 1163: An Act Authorizing the Use of Opioid Settlement Funds to Provide Municipal Police Offices with Opioid Antagonists \(failed\)](#)

If passed, this bill was to provide funds to municipal police departments for the purpose of equipping police officers with opioid antagonists, with priority given to departments that do not currently have a supply of opioid antagonists.

SB 959—An Act Concerning Mold in Residential Housing and Commercial Buildings (passed)

This bill requires the Department of Public Health (DPH) to do the following by January 1, 2024:

- Evaluate information or guidance published by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on identifying, assessing, and remediating mold and limiting mold exposure.
- Develop uniform standards for identifying and assessing, and remediating mold in residential housing; including any necessary revisions to DPH’s guidelines establishing mold abatement protocols.
- Develop guidelines for limiting mold exposure in residential housing and uniform standards for assessing the health threat from this exposure, including its effect on indoor air quality.

HB 6733—An Act Concerning The Department of Public Health’s Recommendations Regarding Various Revisions To The Public Health Statutes (passed)

This bill requires the implementation of DPH’s recommendations regarding various revisions to public health statutes. Some of the topics covered include:

- Assisted Living Services Agencies
- Social Work Licensure
- Esthetician and Nail Technician Licensure
- Paramedic Licensure
- Emergency Medical Services Vehicle Inspections
- Municipal Health Director Qualifications
- Hepatitis C Screening
- Asbestos and Lead Abatement Professionals

7. Access to Health Care

Assure an effective system that enables equitable access to the individual services and care needed to be healthy.

Vaccines Given - Our Clinic office provides adult and child vaccinations, including the seasonal flu shot and COVID-19 vaccines. We are able to provide childhood vaccines at no cost through the [Connecticut Vaccine Program](#) (CVP), which is Connecticut’s expanded pediatric vaccination program. All vaccines are given by Registered Nurses.

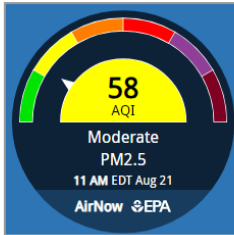
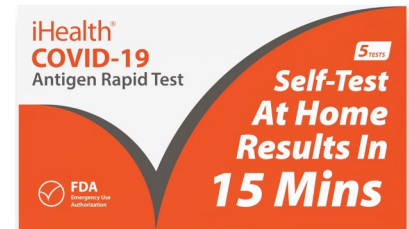


Year	Number of Adult Vaccines Given	Number of Child Vaccines Given
2021-2022	1,898	2,958
2022-2023	1,507	2,686

Tuberculosis Screenings - Our Clinic nurses planted 519 tuberculosis skin tests, and read 507 of them. This is an increase from the prior fiscal year (275 planted, 269 read). The test requires two visits with a health care provider. On the first visit the test is placed; on the second visit the health care provider reads the test.



COVID-19 PPE and Home Tests - In FY23 our office distributed thousands of blue disposable masks and held multiple home test kit give away days. Kits were delivered to those who were homebound. We also kept the community updated on test kit extended expiration dates. The COVID-19 emergency declaration ended May 11, 2023; we continue to distribute masks and test kits to the general public and vulnerable populations upon request.

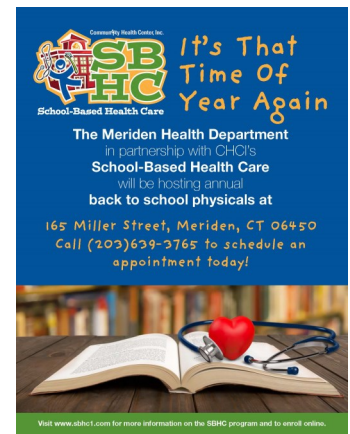


In June 2023 N95 masks were distributed as a result of poor air quality alerts from Canadian wildfires. An air quality “widget” has been placed on our website for the public to review before deciding on participating in outdoor activities during times of alerts.

Mobile Food Pantry - In an effort to address food insecurity in Meriden our office partnered with New Opportunities to host the CT Food Share Mobile Pantry every-other Thursday from 1:00-2:00pm. The van parked in the Miller/Center Street lot and served close to 150 families every week. The van will continue to come to our lot in fiscal year 2024.

Community Health Center Back to School Physicals Partnership- School physicals are required for entry into Kindergarten, 7th, and 10th grade.

In the summer of 2022 we continued our partnership with the Community Health Center’s School Based Health Center program to increase access to school and sports physicals. Physicals were provided at no charge on-site in our Clinic at 165 Miller Street. The service was extremely popular—we reached 76 students and hope to continue this partnership for years to come!



Meriden Department of Health and Human Services
El Departamento de Salud y Servicios Humanos de Meriden

**Flu and COVID-19 Booster Vaccines
By Appointment Only**
*Vacunas de Refuerzo Contra la Gripe y el COVID-19
Solo Por Cita*

- Flu Shots:**
- Child doses are FREE for Meriden children 18 and under.
 - We accept Medicare, Medicaid, Aetna, Connecticare and Cigna insurances.
 - \$20 for self-pay (\$30 for Flublok), cash or check accepted.
- Vacunas Contra la Gripe:**
- Las dosis para niños son GRATIS para los niños de Meriden menores de 18 años.
 - Aceptamos seguros de Medicare, Medicaid, Aetna, Connecticare y Cigna.
 - \$20 por autopago (\$30 por Flublok), se acepta efectivo o cheque.
- COVID-19 Moderna Booster - No Cost:**
- Available for those 6 years and older.
 - Please bring your vaccine card with you to your appointment.
- Refuerzo COVID-19 Moderna - Sin Costo:**
- Disponible para mayores de 6 años.
 - Por favor traiga su tarjeta de vacunas a su cita.

To make an appointment, please call our clinic at
(203) 630-4234.
Para hacer una cita, llame a nuestra clinica al
(203) 630-4234.

Flu and COVID-19 Vaccine Clinics - This past year our office provided 849 adult and child flu shots and 215 COVID-19 vaccines (mostly boosters).

During 2022 the COVID-19 vaccine and boosters became more widely available and community agencies such as Community Health Center Inc., Hartford HealthCare, and the Griffin Health Van continued to offer COVID-19 vaccination pop-up clinics in Meriden. These clinics were held at the Meriden Public School summer lunch sites, the Meriden Public Library (inside the Meriden Mall), and during community events such as the Farmers Market, Yulefest, and more. We assisted the Community Health Center Inc. in their homebound COVID-19 vaccination efforts by forwarding referrals when received and advertising availability.

As a result of our coordinated COVID-19 vaccination efforts, as of February 16, 2023, 75% of Meriden residents have been fully vaccinated and 80% of residents have received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. Vaccination data was officially archived by the Department of Public Health as of February 16, 2023; the portal will resume in October 2023. Pop-up clinics and homebound vaccination services ended on June 30, 2023.

School Health - Our School Health program provides comprehensive school health services in Meriden’s 8 elementary schools, 3 middle schools, 2 high schools, and Venture Academy. The program has 16 full time 10-month Public Health Nurses, 4 part time Public Health Nurses, and 9 Health Aides. We are fortunate to have a nurse in every school!

School Health Service	2021-2022	2022-2023
Sick care visits (students)	29,802	39,233
Sick care visits (staff)	612	880
Psycho-Social visits	1,089	1,522
Specialized procedures (such as G-tube feedings, tracheotomy care)	6,715	10,000
Screenings (such as vision/hearing/scoliosis)	4,783	6,664
Medications administered	14,763	18,878

Meriden Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program - WIC is a health and nutrition program that provides nutrition and health education, healthy foods, breastfeeding support and referrals to other services free of charge to families who qualify. The goal is to keep pregnant women, postpartum women, and breastfeeding women and their children up to the age of 5 healthy. This past fiscal year our WIC program had a roster of 3,488 participants. WIC is a 100% grant funded program.



Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Program - This is year 2 of implementing our 100% grant funded breastfeeding peer counseling program. This program support spregnant and breastfeeding families enrolled in the WIC program.

This past fiscal year our Peer Counselor increased her client base to 54 families. Families enrolled in the program are contacted to discuss breastfeeding education and support, as well as complete an assessment of needs for referrals and resources. Postpartum moms are contacted within 48 to 72 hours after delivery to assess their breastfeeding needs and are followed through their first year postpartum or until they no longer need services.



Senior Center Mini-Bus Transportation - Our transportation service provides one-way rides and medical rides to in-town appointments. It is a vital lifeline to keep seniors independent and socially engaged!

Year	2021-2022	2022-2023
One-Way Rides (not including medical rides)	9,553	13,630
Medical rides	4,000	3,628

Social Services Worker - Our Social Services Worker saw 1,191 clients this past fiscal year. Clients included senior citizens, disabled households, working families with children, single, and mixed generation households. Services provided included:

- Assistance with Medicare and medical insurance enrollment.
- Assistance with SNAP, housing assistance, TFA, SAGA, SSI, and Social Security applications.
- Referral to other community partners based on necessity of additional support services.

Rent Rebate Program **What is Renters' Rebate?**

It's a reimbursement program for Connecticut renters who are elderly or totally disabled, and whose incomes do not exceed certain limits. Persons renting an apartment or room, or living in cooperative housing or a mobile home may be eligible for this program. Renters' rebate can be up to \$300 for married couples and up to \$150 for single persons. The renters' rebate amount is based on a graduated income scale and amount of rent and utility payments made in the calendar year prior to the year in which the renter applies.

**If you are totally married (husband & wife) or a single parent, you may qualify for a higher amount.*

**If you are not totally married (husband & wife) or a single parent, you may qualify for a lower amount.*

Appointments can be made from April 30 to September 29th by calling 203-630-4700, 203-257-0066 or 203-630-4273

Meriden Senior Center
Renters' Rebate Office - Lower level of the Senior Center
22 West Main Street

**Regardless of how early or late you apply, you will receive your check between mid October and November.*

New Renters' Rebate Income Guidelines

Applicant's qualifying income in the calendar year 2022 must not exceed \$40,300 if unmarried, or \$49,100 if married

What documents to bring to your appointment?

- If you receive regular Social Security income provide us with your 1099 form from 2022
- If you receive SSI - bring a letter from Social Security which clearly states your total 2022 income. Call 1-800-772-1213 to request this document if you do not have it.
- If you are younger than 65 and you have a disability - you MUST bring proof of disability from the Social Security Administration.
- Proof of any other of 2022 income (pension, employment, interest, dividends, etc.)
- A copy of the 2022 Income Tax Returns signed and submitted to the IRS (if you filed one with the IRS)
- Proof of all 2022 rent payments (rent receipts for each month in 2022 signed by landlord or rent ledgers from housing complex)
- Proof of all 2022 utility payments, i.e. electric, gas, oil, and water (bring a full year print out from Enersource etc. for 2022)

Must have all documents to complete application!

Community Services Worker - Our new Community Services Worker started in March 2023. From March to June 2023, 274 clients were served by this office.

Services and supports included:

- Coordinating the Renters Rebate program (April—October, 928 applications were processed last season).
- Helping clients manage their basic needs such as housing, food, medical, social, and wellness.
- Making referrals to agencies and community partners based on necessity.
- Advocate for clients to help them through situations of crisis and other support.

Community Development Block Grant - Our Senior Center was awarded a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) through the Office of Community Development. With this funding staff was able to provide personal hygiene packs to 110 Meriden seniors in need.

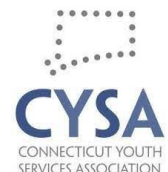
8. Maintain a Competent Workforce

Build and support a diverse and skilled public health workforce.

Staff Training - Our Department recognizes that regular staff training is needed to stay current in best practices related to public health and human services. Continuing education is also necessary to maintain certifications required to carry out services, such as food service inspections and lead testing. Over the past year, staff have participated in trainings on (not an inclusive list):

- Influenza and Vaccinations
- Bloodborne Pathogens
- Workforce Development
- Early Childhood Education
- Gender Affirming Care
- Opioid Use Disorder
- Narcan Training (in-person)
- School Nursing Best Practices
- Health Equity

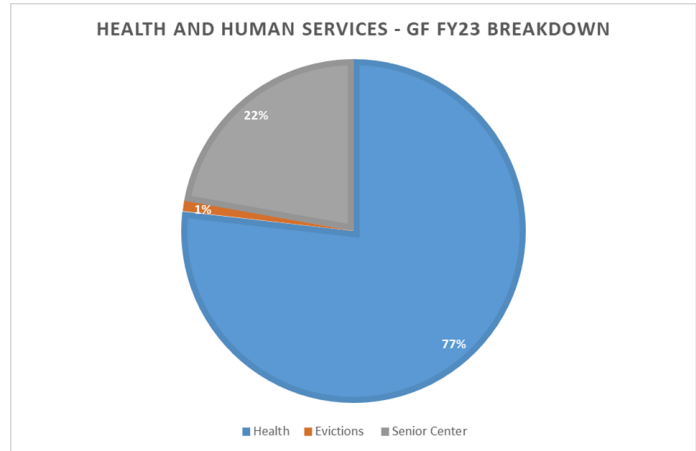
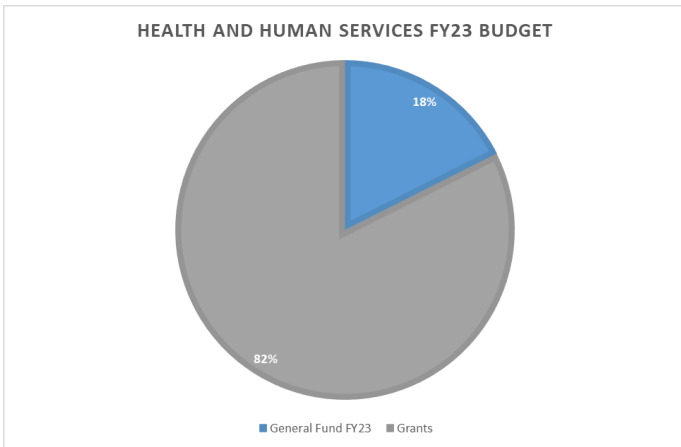
Professional Organizations - Staff are members of many professional organizations. These organizations provide grant opportunities, continuing education, health alerts, research journals, best practices, data and advocacy.



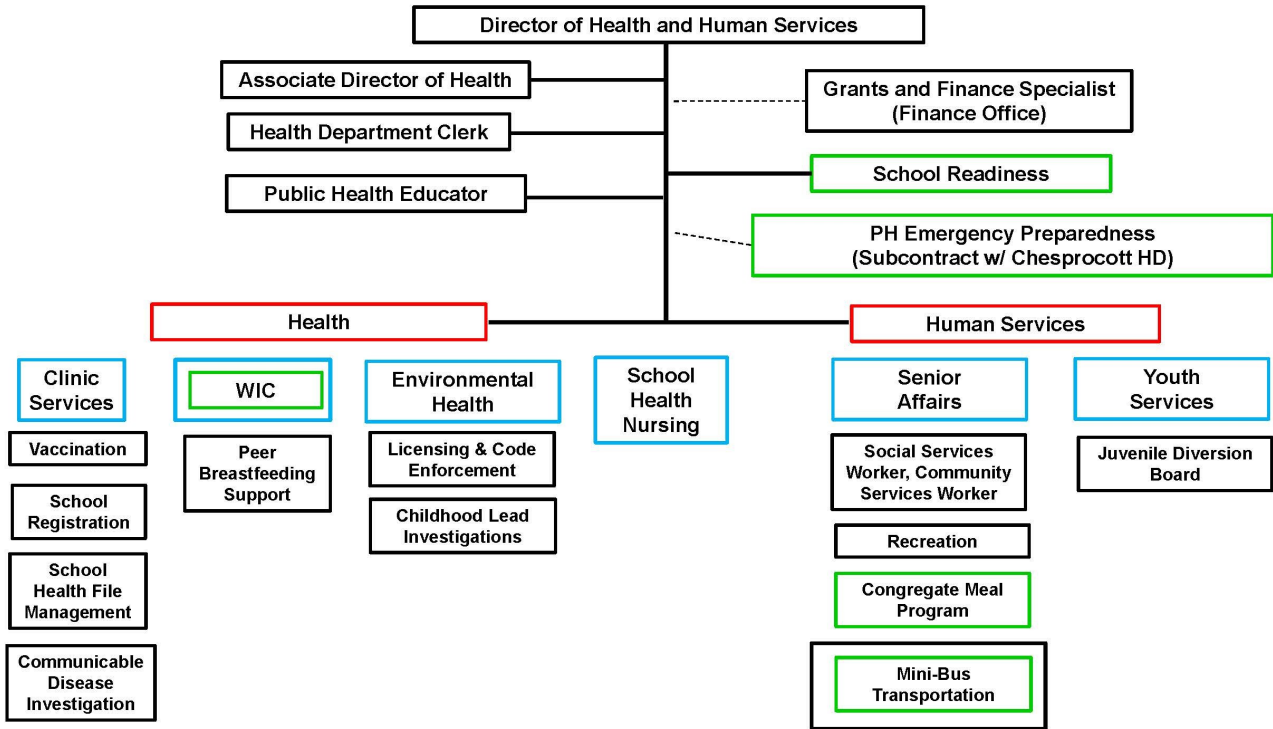
Finances and Organizational Chart

Our Department has 68 employees - 49 are full time, 16 are part time, and 3 are per diem. Of our staff, 17 are either fully or partially grant funded.

Our budget for FY23 was a total of \$17,092,507. Of this, \$14,089,320 is grants and allocations (many are multi-year, 82% of our budget) and \$3,003,187 is city general funds (18% of our budget). Of the general fund, \$2,306,631 is Health, \$30,000 is Evictions, and \$666,556 is Senior Center.



City of Meriden, Department of Health and Human Services



Key: Blue = office, Green = grant funded/federal program, black = general fund

Department Contact Information

Meriden Health & Human Services Department

165 Miller Street

Meriden, CT 06450

Main Number: (203) 630-4226

Fax: (203) 639-0039

Website: www.meridenhealth.com

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lcrown@meridenct.gov

Stephanie G. Denya, MPH, RN, NCSN
 Associate Director of Health
 (203) 630-4223
sdenya@meridenct.gov

Program	Contact	Phone	Email
Environmental Health	Carrie Buckley	(203) 630-4282	cbuckley@meridenct.gov
Public Health Emergency Preparedness	Lea Crown	(203) 630-4221	lcrown@meridenct.gov
Public Health Education/ Youth Services	Elizabeth DeMerchant	(203) 630-4288	edemerchant@meridenct.gov
School Health	Christine Kronenberger	(203) 630-4249	ckronenberger@meridenct.gov
Clinic Services	Euvrena Heriveaux	(203) 630-4224	eheriveaux@meridenct.gov
School Readiness	Rhonda Knight	(203) 630-4222	rknight@meridenct.gov
Senior Affairs	Rick Liegl	(203) 237-0066	rliegl@meridenct.gov
Social Services Worker	Natalie Gill	(203) 630-4273	ngill@meridenct.gov
Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)	Shelley Carpenter	(203) 630-4248	scarpenter@meridenct.gov
Youth Services—JAD	Tammy Kudla	(203) 639-5058	tkudla@meridenct.gov