



Division of Health 2020 Annual Report



TOWNSHIP OF HAMILTON
Department of Health, Recreation, Seniors, and Veterans Services

2100 Greenwood Ave, Hamilton, NJ 08609



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Message from the Director	3
Message from the Health Officer	4
Contact Information	5
Division of Health Structure	6
Demographic and Health Profile of Hamilton	7
Greater Mercer Public Health Partnership	8
What does Public Health do?	9
Administration	10
Public Health Nursing	11
Childhood health	11
Communicable Diseases	12
COVID-19	14
Adult Health Services	17
Environmental Health Services	18
Retail Food Establishments	19
COVID-19 Compliance	21
Vital Statistics	22
Animal Shelter and Adoption Center	23
Animal Welfare Transition Committee Report	26

Message from the Director

I am pleased to present our 2020 year-end Annual report. Inside you will gain insight into the work of the Hamilton Township Division of Health, whose mission is to protect the health and well-being of our Hamilton residents. The achievements highlighted in the 2020 Annual Report would not be possible without the expertise and dedication of our Hamilton Division of Health staff.

Our division is comprised of the following sections: Public Health, Environmental Health and Animal Control Services. Each of our sections are dedicated to providing high quality services to our community within the challenges and opportunities encountered in the evolving public health and healthcare environments.

Animal care is another key component of a healthy community and this section maintains the highest standards of humane animal sheltering; promotes the placement of animals into homes; and encourages responsible pet ownership through education, enforcement, and community partnership.

As the pandemic disrupted our nation and state, our Hamilton Township Division of Health never faltered in delivering essential public health services to our community. I'm also very proud of the exceptional staff at the division that rose to the occasion on every front as we addressed the hardships of COVID-19. They worked tirelessly and passionately to protect the public's health while continuing to address other programmatic priorities.

I would like to thank the residents of our community for their perseverance and adherence to many restrictions put upon us during these unprecedented times. Your compliance in wearing masks, socially distancing and practicing hand hygiene has helped to control the spread of the virus and keep us all safe.

Thank you to Mayor Martin, his Administration, and our Township Council for their ongoing support of our Department. Our team will continue to work hard in protecting the health and safety of all those we are so privileged to serve in our community.

Yours in Health,

Kathleen Fitzgerald, RN, BSN, CALA, CDP
Director of Health

Message from the Health Officer

This past year was trying for everyone. Throughout it all, the staff here within the Division of Health stepped up to the plate to ensure that the residents of Hamilton were taken care of. In this report you'll find a summary of the activities that the staff conducted in 2020, and where data was available for 2019 as well. I am proud to present this report to the residents of Hamilton as it demonstrates the dedication, competence, and compassion that your local public health professionals exhibit.

I started as Health Officer in April, 2020. Under the leadership of Director Fitzgerald and Mayor Martin, the Division had two mandates: 1) respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and 2) improve the Hamilton Township Animal Shelter. As a team, we were able to accomplish both.

The COVID-19 pandemic reshaped our entire world and everyone has been affected in some way. The Division of Health has been working 7-days a week to conduct contact tracing, case investigation, provide technical assistance to businesses, investigate and case manage outbreaks, provide health education, and conduct public health enforcement when warranted. Finally, and most excitingly, there was good news announced in December of 2020 with the approval of two vaccines to aid in the fight against COVID-19. The Hamilton Division of Health was one of the first locations in the country to start vaccinating with the Moderna vaccine. These early clinics helped vaccinate our community's healthcare professionals.

The Shelter Management Team, consisting of the Director of Health, Health Officer, Shelter Manager, and Assistant Township Attorney, spent 2020 reviewing all of the activities of the Hamilton Township Animal Shelter. Through this process of quality improvement, the core functions of the shelter have been realigned and strengthened to ensure that each animal that comes into the Township's care are afforded the "Five-freedoms." In this report, you'll find a full outline of the improvements the Shelter Management Team oversaw.

As we look forward to 2021, all of us at the Division of Health hope for the return to a sense of normalcy. The only way this will be achievable is if each one of us continues to do our part: avoid crowds, wear an appropriate mask correctly, stay home when you're sick, wash your hands with soap and warm water often, and get vaccinated! The Divisions three overarching goals for 2021 are:

1. By the end of 2021, every eligible resident who would like to be vaccinated against COVID-19 will have had the opportunity to be vaccinated.
2. By the end of 2021, in order to increase convenience for our businesses, all health business license payments will able to be made online.
3. By the end of 2021, decrease by 10% the average length of stay for animals at the shelter.

Thank you again for taking the time to review the division's annual report.

In good health,

Christopher Hellwig, MPH MCCHS
Health Officer

Contact Information

Division of Health	
<u>Administration</u>	609-689-5562
Director	609-890-3686
Health Officer	
Accounts Receivable/Payable	
<u>Public Health Nursing</u>	609-890-3884
Health Education	hamnurse@hamtonnj.com
Childhood Vaccinations	
Flu / Pneumonia Vaccinations	
STD Clinic	
Infectious Disease Investigations	
<u>Environmental Health</u>	609-890-3828
Inspections and Licensing	
Public Health Nuisances	
<u>Vital Statistics</u>	609-890-3826
Marriage Licenses	vitalstats@hamtonnj.com
Certified Copies of Marriage, Birth, and Death Certificates	
<u>Animal Shelter</u>	609-890-3555
Animal Control	(ACOs) 609-890-3550
Adoption Inquiries	
Dog Licensing	animal-shelter@hamtonnj.com
<u>After Hours and Holidays (HTPD)</u>	609-581-4000



Visit Hamilton Division of Health Online

www.hamtonnj.com/health

www.hamtonnj.com/animalshelter

Like us on Facebook at:

www.facebook.com/HamiltonTwpNJ

www.facebook.com/HamiltonAnimalShelter

Follow us on Twitter at:

@HamiltonTwpNJ

Like us on Instagram at:

@HamiltonTwpNJ

@HamiltonTownshipAnimalShelter

Division of Health Structure

The Township of Hamilton Division of Health serves as the local health authority for the township. Under the guidance of Mayor Martin, Hamilton Board of Health, and NJAC 8:52, the Division of Health is responsible for the program areas of public health nursing, environmental health, vital statistics, licensing, administration, animal control, sheltering, and adoptions.

The vision of the Division of Health is to create a culture of health through *preventing* disease, *promoting* wellbeing, and *protecting* all those who live, work, and play in Hamilton.

The Township Council serves simultaneously as the Board of Health under the authority of NJSA 26:3-1, to ensure a reliable and efficient public health system exists in Hamilton. Additionally, the Board of Health is responsible for the oversight of the activities of the Division of Health as they pertain to NJAC 8:52, the public health practice standards of performance for local boards of health in New Jersey.

Organization Chart	
<u>Director</u>	Kathleen Fitzgerald
<u>Health Officer</u>	Chris Hellwig
<u>Administration and Vital Statistics</u> Jessica Purdy - Supervisor Principal Clerk Typist	Sarah Papadem - Registrar Cindy Mains - Senior Clerk Typist
<u>Environmental Health</u> Lisa Surtees - Supervisor Chief REHS	Kelly Thomas - REHS Eric Cuperwich - REHS Randy Donovan - REHS Trainee Angela Feasel - Clerk Typist
<u>Public Health Nursing</u> Giovanna Guerraggi - Supervisor Admin Director of Nursing	Jill Belviso - Asst PHN Supervisor Anita Masiello - Senior PHN Kelly Colton - Head Clinic Nurse Patricia Buczynski - PHN Christine Santoro - PHN (PT)* Veronica Eisenmann - Field Rep, Health Edu* Jill Rudd - Clerk Typist
<u>Animal Shelter</u> Donielle Gioia - Supervisor Management Specialist	Marion Munford - ACO Anthony Agabiti - Asst ACO Jay Schutz - Asst ACO Shaquille Pennerman - Asst ACO John Kohlke - Animal Attendant Sherry Valdora - Animal Attendant Heaven Icara - Animal Attendant (PT) Noelle Goodwin - Animal Attendant (PT) Nicole Muller - Clerk Typist Donna Peroni - Senior Clerk Typist

*Grant funded positions

Demographic and Health Profile of Hamilton

Health starts in our homes, schools, workplaces, neighborhoods, and communities. Most residents have heard the recommendations of a healthier lifestyle: seeking preventative care, not smoking, eating more fruits and vegetables, and getting regular exercise. But, did you know that where you live has an important role in you and your loved ones' health? According to HealthyPeople 2020, which is a set of national health objectives, our health is also determined in part by access to social and economic opportunities; the resources and supports available in our homes, neighborhoods, and communities; the quality of our schooling; the safety of our workplaces; the cleanliness of our water, food, and air; and the nature of our social interactions and relationships. In the tables below, are selected characteristics intended to provide a quick glance at the indicators that play a role in determining the health of Hamilton residents.

Table 1. US Census Bureau (2019) Demographic Characteristics for Hamilton Township, NJ

Demographic Characteristic	Measure
Total Population	87,424
Veteran Population	6.2%
Disabled Population	11.1%
Age	
Persons under 18 years	18.9%
Persons over 65 years	18.0%
Race and Ethnicity	
White alone	75.2%
Hispanic or Latinx	15.8%
Black or African American alone	14.9%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latinx	63.7%
Asian, alone	4.4%
Two or more races	2.1%
Education	
High school graduate or higher, persons 25+ years	91.0%
Bachelor's degree or higher, persons 25+ years	30.6%
Income	
Median household income	\$78,177
Persons in poverty	7.9%

Table 2. BRFSS 2017 Age-Adjusted Comparison of Health Indicators for Hamilton Township (n=81) and Mercer County (n=540), NJ

Health Indicator	Hamilton Twp.	Mercer County
Fair or Poor Health Status Reported	24.3%	16.9%
Adults with at least one chronic condition	12.3%	14.0%
Diabetes	5.3%	9.3%
Pre-Diabetes	7.0%	11.6%
Angina or Coronary Heart Disease	5.6%	3.5%
Cancer, other than skin cancer	7.4%	5.5%
Frequent mental distress	3.8%	16.8%
Obese, individuals 20+	27.8%	28.0%

Table 3. Comparison of Mortality Data (deaths due to any cause) between Hamilton Township and Mercer County, NJ, 2019

Mortality Statistic	Hamilton Twp.	Mercer County
Avg. age at death, 2000-2019, years	76.9	74.5
Age-Adjusted Rate, Deaths per 100,000 population	718.6	646.3

References

New Jersey Behavioral Risk Factor Survey (NJBFRS). New Jersey Department of Health, Center for Health Statistics, New Jersey State Health Assessment Data (NJSRAD) [online]. Accessed at <http://nj.gov/health/shad> on Feb., 5, 2021 at 9:00am.

New Jersey Death Certificate Database, Office of Vital Statistics and Registry, New Jersey Department of Health. Statistics, New Jersey State Health Assessment Data (NJSRAD) [online]. Accessed at <http://nj.gov/health/shad> on Feb., 5, 2021 at 9:00am.

New Jersey Death Certificate Database, Office of Vital Statistics and Registry, New Jersey Department of Health. Statistics, New Jersey State Health Assessment Data (NJSRAD) [online]. Accessed at <http://nj.gov/health/shad> on Feb., 5, 2021 at 9:00am.

Population Estimates: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates. Statistics, New Jersey State Health Assessment Data (NJSRAD) [online]. Accessed at <http://nj.gov/health/shad> on Feb., 5, 2021 at 9:00am.

US Census Bureau (2019). Hamilton Township, Mercer County, New Jersey. Accessed at <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/profile?g=0600000US3402129310> on Feb., 5, 2021 at 9:00am.

HealthyPeople.gov (2020). Social Determinants of Health. Accessed at <https://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/social-determinants-of-health> on March 5, 2021 at 1:00pm.

Greater Mercer Public Health Partnership

The Greater Mercer Public Health Partnership (GMPHP) is a collaboration of local hospitals, health departments, human and social services agencies, and other not-for-profit organizations which jointly work to measurably improve the health of residents of the Greater Mercer County community. The development of the most current Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) began in September of 2018, following completion of the Community Health Assessment (CHA) that identified significant health needs for Mercer County. The process included a combination of data collection and analysis of primary and secondary source data. This process resulted in the Community Advisory Board (CAB) and Executive Board identifying Mercer County's priority health areas to be addressed in a plan for collaboratively improving the community's health.

The issues included:

- Underserved Populations/Health Equity
- Mental Health and Substance Abuse
- Food Security/Obesity
- Chronic Disease
- Safe Transportation/Safe Recreational Spaces
- Maternal and Child Health

Starting in 2021, GMPHP is working on the next version of the CHIP. Keep an eye out for opportunities to share your thoughts and health priorities!

What does Public Health do?

The Hamilton Township Division of Health (HTHD) works tirelessly to protect and improve the health and well-being of our community, as well as the environmental resources upon which we all depend. Since 1900, the average lifespan of U.S. residents has increased by more than 30 years, with 25 years of this gain attributable to advances in public health, such as:

Vaccination	Safer and healthier foods
Motor-vehicle safety	Healthier mothers and babies
Safer workplaces	Family planning
Control of infectious diseases	Fluoridation of drinking water
Decline in deaths from coronary heart disease and stroke	Recognition of tobacco use as a health hazard

Today, HTHD, along with our sister agencies across New Jersey and the country continue to promote health and wellness. The Division of Health...

- **Protects you from health threats.** HTHD works to prevent disease outbreaks and makes sure the water you drink, the food you eat, and the air you breathe are all safe. We are also ready to respond to any health emergency – be it bioterrorism, Ebola, food-borne diseases, rabies, or COVID-19.
- **Educes you and your neighbors about health issues.** HTHD provides you with information that helps you to make more healthful decisions, like exercising more, eating right, quitting smoking, and washing your hands to protect yourself from communicable diseases. During a public health emergency, we also provide important alerts and warnings to protect your health.
- **Provides healthy solutions.** HTHD offers the preventive care you need to avoid disease and maintain your health. The Division took the lead in Mercer County and launched COVID-19 vaccination for eligible residents in December 2020. We continue to provide the annual flu vaccine to all township residents and the pneumonia vaccine to residents aged 65-older. We also provide eligible children with the immunizations required for them to attend school. Additionally, the Division provides confidential STD testing, screening, and treatment to residents.
- **Advances community health.** HTHD takes part in developing new policies and standards that address existing and emerging challenges to our township's health while enforcing a range of laws to help keep our residents safe. We work through research and staff training to maintain expertise and deliver up-to-date, cutting-edge health programs.



Administration

The Office of the Health Officer within the Division of Health plans and executes the decisions needed to ensure continued compliance with all applicable rules, laws, and guidelines set by township, state, and federal agencies. Additionally, the Health Officer is in charge of:

Financial Management	Strategic Planning
Public Information	Workforce Development
Record Keeping	Inter-Governmental Affairs
Personnel Management	Public Health Enforcement

Division of Health Staffing	
Number of Employees	28
Number of Contract Staff	3
Number of Volunteers	23
Number of Contract Organizations	2

Residents seeking information on the division's services and functions may request specific documents through the Open Public Records Act (OPRA). Request online at:
townshipofhamiltonnj.nextrequest.com

Under the direction of the Health Officer, the Division of Health works diligently to obtain new grants to off-set costs or to expand new or existing services.

During 2020, the division was successfully awarded numerous grants in addition to being a sub-awardee of grants received by other township departments.

OPRA Requests

2020

Division of Health



301

Total Requests
for Information
to Health



131

Animal Shelter
Requests



179

Environmental
Health
Requests



180

Approx. Staff
Hours Spent
on OPRAAs



6

Approximate
Requests per
Week



\$3,600

Approximate
Cost for Staff
Time

2020 Grants

NJACCHO - Capacity Building Grant	\$5,763.15
NJACCHO - LHD COVID-19 Grant	\$40,906
NJDOH - Strengthening Public Health	\$142,236
NJDOH - Childhood Lead Grant	\$53,000
TOTAL	\$241,905.15

Public Health Nursing

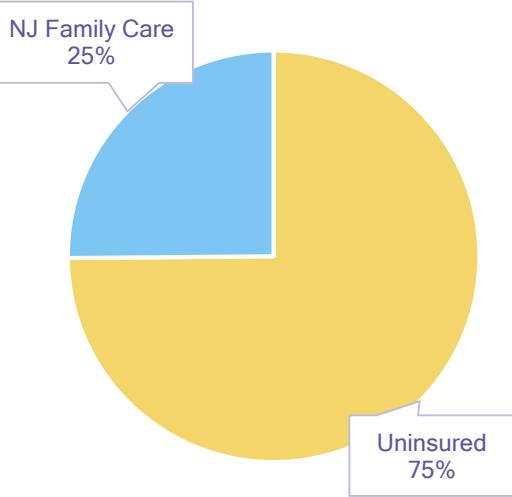
The Division of Health employs Public Health Nurses to provide health promotion services to our residents in Hamilton Township as well as the residents of the municipalities the division has shared services agreements with. The nurses and staff in the Public Health Nursing Section work closely with all the sections of the division in order to support the following services:

Flu and Pneumonia Vaccinations	Health Education
Childhood Immunizations	STD Screening and Treatment
Childhood Blood Lead Screenings	Communicable Disease Investigations
School Immunization Audits	Public Health Clinics

Childhood health

	2019	2020
Well child Home Visits	7	2
Individual Children Seen in Clinics	645	403
Childhood Immunizations Administered	1,450	978
Blood Lead Level (BLL) Screenings	33	8
Reported Children with Elevated BLLs	13	7
Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Enrollment	301	208
Children Tested for Anemia (Iron Deficiency)	33	7
School Immunization Records Audited	3,077	3,612

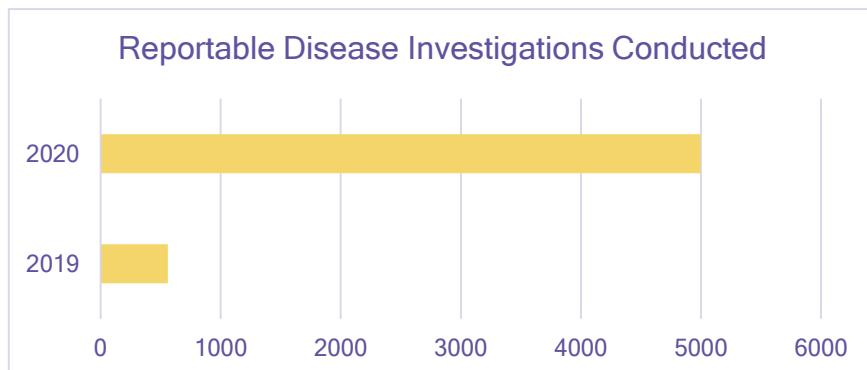
Children Seen in Clinics by Insurance Type, 2020



Communicable Diseases

The Public Health Nursing Section is responsible for the investigation of all communicable diseases that occur within Hamilton Township. The nurses provide case management with medical providers and residents to ensure that all of the required information is collected to prevent the further spread of disease, proper treatment is given, and the diagnosis is correct. The nurses also work closely with congregate settings, schools, and high density housing located within the township on any outbreaks which may occur. In 2020, the Public Health Nursing Section investigated 4,998 cases which are broken down as follows:

DISEASE NAME	COUNT	PERCENTAGE
NOVEL CORONAVIRUS - 2019 NCOV	4,550	91.04%
INFLUENZA, HUMAN ISOLATES	262	5.24%
HEPATITIS C	54	1.08%
LYME DISEASE	39	0.78%
CHLAMYDIA TRACHOMATIS	15	0.30%
LEGIONELLOSIS	11	0.22%
SALMONELLOSIS	10	0.20%
CAMPYLOBACTERIOSIS	8	0.16%
HEPATITIS B	8	0.16%
PERTUSSIS	7	0.14%
GIARDIASIS	5	0.10%
GONORRHEA	5	0.10%
STREPTOCOCCUS PYOGENES (GAS)	4	0.08%
SHIGA TOXIN-PRODUCING E.COLI (STEC)	3	0.06%
STREPTOCOCCUS PNEUMONIAE	3	0.06%
BABESIOSIS	2	0.04%
SHIGELLOSIS	2	0.04%
YERSINIOSIS	2	0.04%
CYCLOSPORIASIS	1	0.02%
EHRLICHIOSIS/ANAPLASMOSIS - ANAPLASMA PHAGOCYTOPHILUM (PREVIOUSLY HGE)	1	0.02%
MALARIA	1	0.02%
MUMPS	1	0.02%
SPOTTED FEVER GROUP RICKETTSIOSIS	1	0.02%
STREPTOCOCCUS AGALACTIAE (GBS)	1	0.02%
SYPHILIS	1	0.02%
VARICELLA	1	0.02%



The investigations associated with COVID-19 solely contributed to the almost 800% increase in year over year case investigations.

Seasonal Influenza and Pneumonia Vaccinations

Each year, the Public Health Nurses offer Hamilton residents their annual seasonal flu vaccine at no out-of-pocket costs. The flu clinics are held each fall throughout the township. Additionally, the nurses will make home visits to residents who may be homebound. Residents who are eligible for the pneumonia vaccine are also able to receive it at no out-of-pocket cost from the Division of Health.

	2019	2020
Number of flu clinics held	26	15
Total number of flu vaccines administered	2,638	1,624
Number of High-Dose flu vaccine administered	300	401
Total number of pneumonia vaccines administered	181	39
Total number of home visits made for vaccination	52	85

Directly Observed Therapy (DOT) Program

Hamilton residents diagnosed with Tuberculosis (TB) are required to complete antibiotic treatment under the observation of a Public Health Nurse in order to prevent the spread of TB in the community. Treatment schedules can range from a few months to over a year depending on the strain of TB, and the resident's compliance. The Public Health Nurse visits the residents home daily to ensure the medication is taken.

	2019	2020
Number of residents placed under DOT	3	1
Number of home visits conducted	214	10

Internships and Clinical Education

The Division of Health strongly supports the training of future public health and nursing professionals. The division provides real world community experience for students interested in public health and nursing. Students assist within the clinics, inspections, and outreach under the guidance of a mentor.

	2019	2020
Number of College/University affiliation agreements	3	4
Total number of interns/student nurses	20	11



Public Health Nursing staff with TCNJ
Public Health Intern, Jeury Dipre,
celebrating the end of his internship.

COVID-19

The Public Health Nursing section was and continues to be the leaders in the Division's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The township had its first resident test positive in March of 2020 and by December of 2020 4,550 residents had contracted the virus. Unfortunately, 202 of those residents succumbed to the disease. The division continues to devote many of its resources to combating COVID-19 and works closely with our partners at the local, county, and state levels to advocate for and share the most up-to-date information on the pandemic with residents. Throughout the height of the pandemic, the division's staff was working 7 days a week, mornings, nights, and holidays to ensure the work that needed to be done was completed. That work includes:

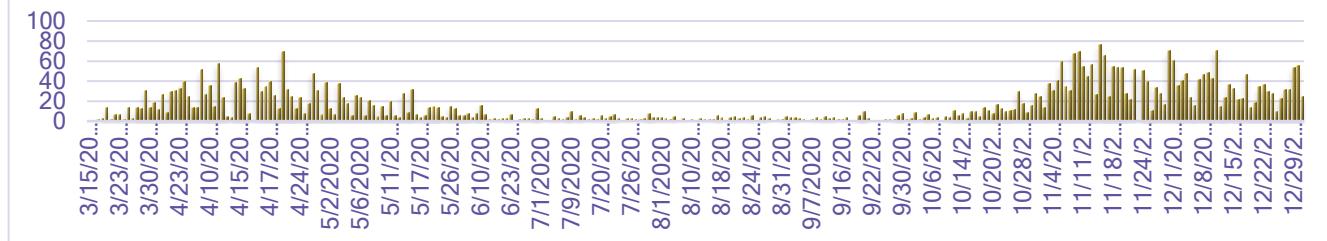
Contact tracing	Case investigation
Long Term Care (LTC) outbreak coordination	School guidance
Technical assistance to businesses	Health education
Vaccination	Public health enforcement



Contact Tracing and Case Investigation

Contact tracing is an important tool public health uses to control and contain COVID-19. The division's staff made contact with residents testing positive for COVID-19 and their close contacts so education could be provided and issue quarantine directives.

2020 Confirmed Cases by Date Tested, Hamilton NJ



Long Term Care Facilities

As has been the case throughout the state, the LTC facilities within Hamilton have been heavily impacted and have worked hard to control the outbreaks within their facilities. The Division is in daily, in reality multiple times per day, communication with those facilities. The Public Health Nurses work closely with each facility's infection control team to ensure compliance with all communicable disease and outbreak reporting requirements as well as to provide technical assistance on NJDOH, CDC, and CMS guidelines. It's important to remember that the division does not inspect or license LTCs, which is the responsibility of NJDOH.

	2020
Number of LTCs located within the Township	8
Number of LTC COVID-19 outbreaks reported	23
Number of LTC residents testing positive for COVID-19	534
Number of LTC residents succumbing to COVID-19	149
Number of LTC staff testing positive for COVID-19	367
Number of LTC staff succumbing to COVID-19	2

School Guidance

The division also worked closely with the Hamilton Township School District (HTSD) and the other schools located within the Township on their reopening plans and procedures. Additionally, throughout 2020 the Division's staff worked closely with school nurses to provide technical assistance and guidance on school closures, contact tracing, and case investigation. The Division collaborated with the School District to build capacity and train the school nurses on COVID-19 case investigation in order to allow the school nurses to investigate cases within their school communities. Additionally, the school nurses worked closely with the division's Public Health Nurses to provide refresher training on vaccination technics.

	2020
HTSD nurses trained in COVID-19 case investigation	15

Technical Assistance

The Division of Health prides itself in being a trusted resource to the community and that includes residents and businesses. The division provided health education, conducted case investigation, identification of close contacts, assisted with personal protective equipment and cleaning questions, and gave courtesy reviews of business' COVID-19 plans and procedures.

Together with the Division of Senior Services, the Division of Health also assisted with providing disposable masks to our residents residing within our older adult communities and the township's community centers.

	2020
Older adult communities provided with disposable masks	14
Approximate number of masks distributed	4,000

COVID-19 Vaccination

In December of 2020, the FDA authorized two vaccines under an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) to assist with combating the COVID-19 pandemic. The Division of Health worked collaboratively with the Mercer County Health Officers' Association (MCHOA) to roll out the vaccine in Mercer County. Hamilton Division of Health hosted the first clinic on December 28, 2020 at the Nottingham Firehouse. Each municipality in Mercer County supported the initial vaccination roll out and demonstrated local capacity for vaccine distribution. Hamilton Division of Health, along with the Mercer County local health departments, was among the first sites nation-wide to provide Moderna vaccine and still one of the few non-county based health departments in New Jersey to provide COVID-19 vaccinations. The first clinics focused on vaccinating the healthcare workforce.



Mayors and public health staff representing the municipalities assisting the Mercer County Health Officers' Association launching the first COVID-19 vaccination clinic on December 28, 2020 at the Nottingham Firehouse.

2020	
Number of COVID-19 vaccination clinics held	2
Total number of individuals vaccinated	424

Director of Nursing, Giovanna Guaraggi, giving the first shot to Nottingham First Aid Squad Chief, Robert McQueen. (Screenshot from 6ABC)



Adult Health Services

Throughout the year, the Division of Health operates clinics that provide for certain community health services for the Township's residents. These services include the Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD) Clinic, Nursing Evaluation Clinic, and Community Home Evaluations. The Division's health services are overseen by the Advanced Practice Nurse (APN) who works with the Public Health Medical Director to ensure that standing orders are in place for all procedures being performed by the nursing staff and that best practices are being followed.

STD Clinic

Hamilton Township provides free and confidential STD Clinical services for the residents of the following municipalities through shared-service agreements:

Ewing Township	East Windsor Township
Hightstown Borough	Hopewell Township
Lawrence Township	Princeton Township
Robbinsville Township	West Windsor Township

	2019	2020
Total clients seen in clinics	292	88
Hepatitis B screenings performed	24	4
Hepatitis C screenings performed	54	16
Oral screenings for Chlamydia and Gonorrhea	193	55
Urine screenings for Chlamydia and Gonorrhea	231	63
Syphilis screenings performed	190	55
Vaccines administered during clinic	36	26

Note: Due to COVID-19, the STD clinic is now by appointment only and had been closed Apr-Aug and Dec.

Nursing Evaluation Clinic

This clinic is offered monthly, by appointment, at both of the Senior Centers in Hamilton Township (Hamilton Township Senior Center and the John O. Wilson Neighborhood Center). Blood pressure, blood sugar and cholesterol tests are performed and referrals made when indicated.

	2019	2020
Health assessments performed	102	14

Community Home Evaluations

The Division will make home visits based off referrals to assess and follow up on public health concerns/situations by other agencies as well as individuals. They range in ages of infant through adulthood as well as elderly/senior citizen referrals. Services include vaccinations, neglect issues, and public health concerns.

	2019	2020
Home visits conducted	52	85

Environmental Health Services

The Division of Health's Environmental Health Services section is responsible for the enforcement of State Sanitary Codes; the protection of food and potable water supplies; environmental health activities and public health nuisances. In addition to inspections, this section also is responsible for licensing all retail food establishments, recreational bathing facilities, vending machines, camps, and body art establishments. This section performs the following services for the township:

Body Art Program	Public Health Nuisance Program
Childhood Lead Program	Youth Camp Program
Retail Food Program	Wastewater Control Program
Public Recreational Bathing Program	Animal Facilities Program

Wastewater Control Program

In order to prevent the pollution of the Township's water supply, the Division ensures compliance will local and state rules for the installation of residential septic systems. Staff review all plans for new construction, alterations, and repairs for septic systems within the township. Additionally, the staff review septic systems before real estate transactions.

	2019	2020
Number of properties with septic systems	360	360
Permits issued for construction or alteration	14	14
Properties reviewed for real estate transactions	<i>Not available*</i>	14

Private Well Testing Act

Environmental Health staff review private well water analysis results for compliance with NJAC 7:9 during real estate transactions.

	2019	2020
Number of wells reviewed for real estate transactions	<i>Not available*</i>	16

Body Art

Environmental Health Services inspects tattoo, piercing, and permanent cosmetic facilities operating within the Township to ensure proper sanitation and safety standards are being followed. Starting in 2021, these facilities will be licensed by the Division of Health.

	2019	2020
Number of Body Art establishments operating	3	1

*Data/records not kept during time frame

Retail Food Establishments

The Division of Health inspects and regulates restaurants, grocery stores, and other retail food facilities to ensure compliance with safety and sanitation rules. The Environmental Health staff work closely with the Public Health Nurses to investigate and control disease outbreaks linked to retail food facilities. The division also licenses these facilities. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 related restaurant restrictions, some retail food establishments closed prior to receiving their annual inspection in 2020.

Licenses	2019	2020
Number of Retail Food Establishment licenses issued	540	527
Number of Full Year-Temporary/Mobile licenses issued	32	25
Number of Vending Machine licenses issued	204	105
Number of Temporary Single-Event licenses issued	117	19

Inspections and Investigations	2019	2020
Number of routine inspections completed	505	446
Number of re-inspections completed	83	94
Number of pre-operational inspections completed	22	31
Number of retail food plan reviews completed	14	22
Number of complaint driven investigations completed	63	206
Number of Notices of Violations issued	143	282



In 2020, the Division of Health worked with NJDOH to investigate cases of Legionellosis (Legionnaires' disease) within the community. Part of that investigation was the visual inspection and sampling of cooling towers located within the Township.

Legionella is a type of bacteria found naturally in freshwater environments, like lakes and streams. It can become a health concern when it grows and spreads in human-made building water systems.

For more information, visit:
www.cdc.gov/legionella

Youth Camps

In order to safeguard the health and wellbeing of the youth who attend camps within the Township, the Division of Health conducts inspections of these facilities. NJDOH is the licensing agency for youth camps.

	2019	2020
Number of inspections completed	11	7

Public Recreational Bathing

Environmental Health Services conducts safety and sanitation inspections of public recreational bathing facilities to reduce the spread of communicable diseases and protect consumers who use these facilities from avoidable harm and danger.

	2019	2020
Number of licenses issued	34	9
Number of inspections completed	108	34

Childhood Lead – Environmental Interventions

While the City of Trenton provides Public Health Nursing case management for children residing in Hamilton with elevated blood lead levels, the Division of Health's Environmental Health Services section conducts the environmental interventions within the homes of children identified with high levels of lead.

	2019	2020
New cases of children with EBLLs	12	7
Number of homes completing lead abatement	1	3

Animal Facilities

Starting in 2020, the responsibility of inspecting the Township's animal facilities was transferred from the Township's Animal Control Officers to the Environmental Services Staff. The Division of Health inspects kennels, pet shops, shelters, and pounds to ensure that these facilities are operating in compliance with sanitation, safety, and animal welfare rules.

	2019	2020
Number of licenses issued	5	5
Number of routine inspections completed	5	5

Massage/Somatic Establishments

The Division of Health enforces safety and sanitation standards for these facilities in order to protect the health and safety of consumers who patronize massage and somatic facilities. Licenses are issued by the Township's Clerk's Office.

	2019	2020
Number of inspections completed	9	8

Public Health Nuisances

The Environmental Health Services staff conducts investigations into quality of life complaints that pose a nuisance to Township residents. In 2020, the responsibility investigating property maintenance (high grass and weeds, junk, rubbish, debris, etc.) related complaints was transferred to the Department of Community and Economic Development which explains the large reductions in NOVs being issued by Environmental Health Services*.

	2019	2020
Number of Notices of Violations issued	724	13*

COVID-19 Compliance

The Environmental Health Services staff, in addition to assisting with COVID-19 case investigation and contact tracing, provided technical assistance and compliance reviews for the Township's business community in order to help reduce the spread of the virus. The staff conducted these activities above and beyond the routine inspections performed throughout the year.

	2020
COVID-19 compliance checks for indoor/outdoor dining	90
Inspections completed on RFEs after COVID-19 related closure	7
COVID-19 Pool Operation Prevention Plan reviews completed	36
Youth camp compliance plan review	1
Sports program compliance plan reviews	1
Number of RFEs temporarily closed or out of business from COVID-19	36



Vital Statistics

The Vital Statistics section of the Division of Health is charged with the responsibility of maintaining records in regards to marriages, births, and deaths that take place within the Township. The Registrars process applications for marriages and civil union licenses; issue birth, marriage, civil union, domestic partnership, and death certificates; and issue disinterment and burial permits. Additionally, the Registrar can assist with certain corrections to these records.

	2019	2020
Home birth or birth en-route	7	2
Birth certificates issued	613	296
Death certificates issued	2,128	2,832
Marriage certificates issued	1,606	974
Marriage licenses issued	565	451
Domestic Partnership certificates issued	0	0
Domestic Partnership registrations issued	0	0
Civil Union certificates issued	0	0
Civil Union registrations issued	0	0
Disinterment permits issued	5	1
Burial permits issued	3	0
Corrections requested	56	11



The Division of Health Staff at the Health Building

Animal Shelter and Adoption Center

The Hamilton Township Animal Shelter and Adoption Center (HTAS) serves as the Township's rabies control facility which ensures the health, safety, and welfare of the animals and citizens of our community. The Shelter's goal is to place animals into humane environments through adoption, and to educate the community on responsible pet ownership. HTAS works tirelessly so that the animals in its care are afforded the "Five Freedoms."

Freedom from discomfort	Freedom from hunger and thirst
Freedom from pain, injury, and disease	Freedom to express normal behavior
Freedom from fear and distress	

Quick Stats

Animal Intake	2019			2020		
	Dogs	Cats	Other	Dogs	Cats	Other
Surrendered by owner	27	20	0	31	24	11
Stray/Impounded	201	197	2	178	102	15
Animals received from other organizations	1	0	0	5	13	0
Other (cruelty investigation, animal bite, etc.)	6	2	1	2	1	0
TOTAL	235	219	3	216	140	26
Animal Outflow	2019			2020		
	Dogs	Cats	Other	Dogs	Cats	Other
Reclaimed by owner	129	6	0	131	5	4
Adopted	74	136	1	75	103	16
Euthanized	1	22	0	3	7	0
Animals transferred to other organizations	11	31	2	16	25	1
Other (escaped, died at shelter, etc.)	0	7	0	0	6	1
TOTAL	215	202	3	225	146	22

Animal Control Services

The Division of Health's Animal Control Officers (ACOs) are charged with enforcing the Township's animal control laws and responding to animal emergencies. The ACOs respond to animals at large, transporting sick and injured animals, investigating animal bites, assist with rabies clinics, and provide public education. Additionally, the ACOs work closely with the Hamilton Police Department's Humane Law Enforcement Officers (HLEOs) on animal welfare and cruelty investigations.

	2020
Number of field calls	2,614
Number of animal bite investigations	133
Number of summonses issued	50
Number of wildlife transported to rehabilitation centers	124

	2019	2020
Number of dog licenses issued	4,065	3,554
Number of free rabies vaccinations administered	853	928



Animal Shelter Staff at the Shelter
Check out the latest adoptable animals at:
www.hamtonnj.com/animalshelter

DID YOU KNOW? In 2020 HTAS had a **73.6% return rate of stray dogs** to their owners. All dogs entering the shelter as strays are photographed and posted on the shelter's Facebook page and shared by shelter staff to local Lost and Found Pages (Hamilton Area and Mercer County). This is a 9.4% increase from 2019 when 129 of 201 dogs were reclaimed. This is significantly higher than the 2019 state average for stray dogs redeemed, which is only 27.6%

Source:
www.nj.gov/health/vph/shelter_survey_by_county_detailed_2019.pdf

Unfortunately, cats have a dramatically lower reclaim rate, approximately 5%, which is consistent with county and state averages.

Volunteers

The volunteer program at HTAS has been revised, including the agreement/waiver packet that all volunteers must complete prior to beginning their volunteer service. On October 29, 2020 the shelter hosted its first volunteer orientation and has been hosting new orientations monthly since.

	2020
Number of volunteers	23

Foster Program

The shelter initiated a foster program to assist with space and the well-being of the animals in the care of Hamilton Township. Some animals are very stressed in the shelter environment and/or need more individual care.

	2020
Number of animals fostered	25

Transfer Program

HTAS initiated a rescue/transfer program to assist in maximizing lifesaving efforts and placement of adoptable animals. Approved rescue organizations with different or more resources often assist with medically or behaviorally challenging animals.

	2020
Number of animals transfer to other organizations	42

Non-Live Outcomes

Unfortunately, not all animals that come to the shelter are placed into their “furever” homes. Some animals are terminally ill, others die during treatment, and others present a public safety or public health risk. The Division of Health takes the decision of euthanasia extremely seriously and with humility, and as such the Shelter Management Team makes those decisions jointly. HTAS is proud to be a no-kill shelter.

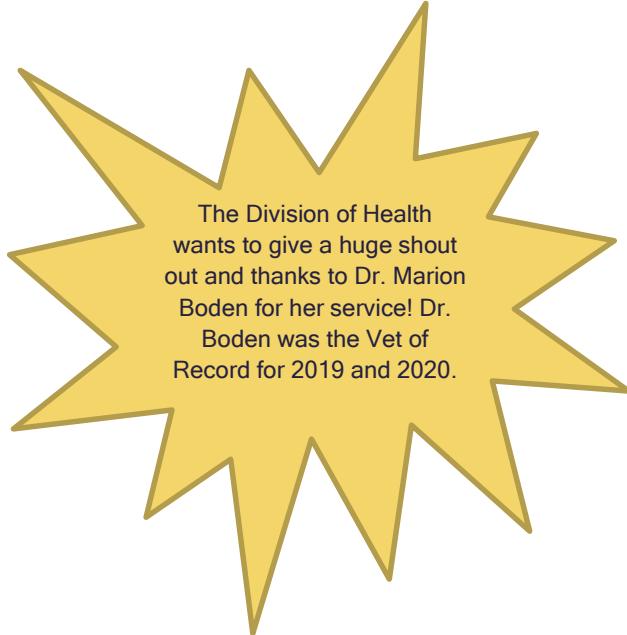
2020			
Euthanasia	Dogs	Cats	Total
Aggression to people	2	0	2
Cancer	1	0	1
Major organ failure	0	1	1
Medical – severe	0	5	5
Medical – emergency	0	1	1
TOTAL	3	7	10

2020			
Died in care	Birds	Cats	Total
General	0	0	0
Panleukopenia	0	2	2
Post-surgical	0	1	1
Trauma	0	0	0
Unknown	1	3	4
TOTAL	1	6	7

Note: no dogs died in care in 2020

2020 Annual Live Release Rate: 97.4%

The Annual Live Release Rate is calculated by dividing total live outcomes (adoptions, outgoing transfers, and return to owner/guardian) by total outcomes (total live outcomes plus euthanasia not including or died/lost in shelter/care). The generally accepted live-release rate to be considered a no-kill shelter is 90%, which HTAS is proud to exceed.



Animal Welfare Transition Committee Report

In February 2020, the members of Mayor Martin's Animal Welfare Transition Committee issued a report outlining recommendations for the shelter to assist with better management, animal care, and documentation. The Hamilton Township Shelter Management Team, consisting of the Director of Health, Health Officer, Assistant Township Attorney, and Shelter Manager, took swift actions and implemented the recommendations and more throughout 2020. The Shelter of today is not the shelter of the past, and the Shelter Management Team is proud to welcome all of Hamilton's residents to come see the changes for themselves.

Recommendation	HTAS Action Taken
Hire a qualified shelter manager	The Township hired Donielle Gioia, a seasoned animal advocate with many years of experience working in animal shelters.
Secure a permanent veterinarian of record	As required by law, HTAS contracts with a veterinarian to provide these services. The contract goes out to bid annually.
Become a "progressive shelter"	HTAS has reviewed, updated, and re-initiated its volunteer program, foster program, rescue and transfer program, behavioral program, and social media presence.
Improvements to outside runs and kennels areas	The Shelter Management Team oversaw improvements to outside dog runs and grounds to ensure safety for the animals as well as for staff, residents, and volunteers. The original shelter kennels were refurbished, a new dog walk area was opened, and the fencing in the dog runs was fixed, just to point out a few of the physical improvements made during 2020.
Establish a presence on Petfinder and social media	HTAS lists its adoptable animals on Petfinder, Petango, and on social media.
Expand shelter hours	Due to COVID-19 shelter hours remain the same, Monday thru Saturday from 10:30am to 3:30pm. Once the pandemic subsides, the shelter will introduce evening hours on Thursdays.
Increased education and enforcement of laws	COVID-19 has limited the number of in-person educational opportunities shelter staff are able to engage in but HTAS has updated its website to include helpful information for pet owners and residents. In addition, shelter staff answer residents' questions over the phone and via email. The ACOs work closely with the HLEOs to enforce laws.
Adopt a Trap-Neuter-Vaccinate-Return ordinance and evaluate other animal related ordinances	The Township adopted a TNVR ordinance. Additionally, the Shelter Management Team has reviewed all of the animal related ordinances and updated as needed.
Improve ACO records and on-call hours	As required by law, the township provides for 24/7 ACO coverage. An ACO is on-duty Monday through Saturday at the shelter. After-hours and holidays ACOs are available for emergency response by calling the Hamilton Police Department. Animal Control related complaints are placed into the Township's QAlert system.
Review shelter and licensing fees	Fees and licenses were reviewed and updated.
Review shelter budget, spending, and funding	The Shelter Management Team has conducted reviews of the Dog Trust account and realigned what is charged to the trust. The Shelter Manager has also partnered with new vendors to bring cost savings to the shelter.

Recommendation (continued)	HTAS Action Taken (continued)
Create written policies	The Shelter Management Team believes in Continuous Quality Improvement and has developed new policies and revised existing ones.
Required animals to be spay/neutered before adoption	All animals at the shelter are spayed or neutered prior to being placed in their adoptive home.
Improve the owner surrender process	Owner surrenders should always be a last resort, and HTAS works with the owners to identify other avenues for their pets. HTAS will assist owners to the best of its ability. HTAS will also gather as much information on the animal as possible so a new and appropriate living situation can be attempted.
Develop a “Safe-Keep” policy	HTAS now has policies in place to help govern residents’ unforeseen circumstances which may require their animal to be held at the shelter for a limited and temporary time frame without the worry that their animal will be adopted.
Increased shelter programming	Although COVID-19 has limited the number of events and programs that can be held, HTAS successfully held its “Fall in Love with the Shelter” open house in October 2020. Additionally, HTAS hosts volunteer training sessions and orientation each month.
Streamline and improvement recordkeeping	HTAS is now utilizing new software programs to assist with improving and streamlining recording keeping. For shelter volunteers, the shelter is now using the volunteer management software Volgistics. For overall animal records management, the shelter is using PetPoint.
Partner with rescue organizations	HTAS has improved its partner organization process, which allows reputable animal rescue organizations to work with HTAS to assist in re-homing and/or providing specialized care animals currently at the shelter.
Grant opportunities	Through the Township of Hamilton’s grant writing vendors and the Shelter Management Team, HTAS continues to explore options for additional funds to expand or launch new services.

Thank you for taking the time to read through the Division of Health's 2020 annual report.
Have a happy, and healthy 2021!!
- Your Health Team



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.