

City of New Castle Board of Health  
Annual Report to City Council  
January 23, 2026

In accordance with Ordinance 545, the New Castle Board of Health is providing this report of our 2025 activities.

In 2025, the Board of Health met 5 times (4 regular meetings and 1 special meeting). We continue to look for ways to add value to our community and our activities reflect that approach. The following list highlights our activities in 2025:

- We decided to highlight mental health awareness in 2025. We kicked that off in May with a proclamation from Mayor Leary recognizing May 2025 as Mental Health Awareness month in the City of New Castle
- We tied green ribbons on the light posts on Delaware Street in recognition of Mental Health Awareness month
- A 3-part series on Mental Health Awareness was initiated in The Weekly in May with an article about mental health. An article on accessing emergency services and what to expect came out in late summer/early fall and the final article on how to help a loved one struggling with substance abuse has just been completed and is in the queue for publishing in The Weekly.
- As part of our regular meetings, we always look at what infectious diseases are trending in our area. In 2025, we decided to share that information with the New Castle public in The Weekly after each of our meetings. We've missed one or two because there wasn't anything significant to share (it was a very quiet summer) or information was sparse during the government shutdown. We are planning to continue this activity when it makes sense to do so.
- It was reported last year that we wanted to have a small health fair related to mental health issues in late summer or fall. Ms. Tantillo and Councilperson Mattaway encouraged us to think more broadly and with their significant support we participated in a very successful City Health Fair at the Goodwill Fire Hall in September of 2025. The health fair coincided with the Blood Drive.
- During the Health Fair, we collected some data using our newly developed Health Survey. The survey was completed with help from Ms. Tantillo and her interns. Data collected at the Health Fair were collected on paper forms and inputted into the computer to be collated. As a result of this first foray into data collection, the survey was adjusted slightly to make it more usable, and more data will be collected online in the near future.

We still have not been able to attend CERT training. It is being offered the first 2 Saturdays in March in 2026 in case some of those interested can attend. Currently, no other dates for this training are noted on the State CERT web page. In regard to FOIA training, Tish Gallagher and Jamie Majewski have had FOIA training. David Bechtel, Susan McLaughlin, and Jackie Metz have not yet been FOIA trained. Some of the members would like to update their CPR training and we will probably explore options for that this year. It may be something we can open to the community as well.

Currently, we do not feel that we need more training on how to deliberate or be more effective.

We receive great logistical support from Ms. Tantillo and the staff in the city office and deeply appreciate their help and guidance.

The Board of Health does not interact with a professional advisor. It is important to note that, currently, the Board has significant breadth and depth of pertinent education and experience in the health field.

We currently have no openings on the Board, and the members work together well.

The Board of Health has received no complaints since our last report to City Council.

Our plans/goals for the upcoming year include the following:

- **Health Fair 2026.** Planning is currently underway for a repeat Health Fair sometime in 2026.
- **Health related articles in The Weekly.** Once we collect some more data from the survey, we will use the results to guide us in what topics are of interest to our population. The data (and the trends in infectious diseases) will help determine what articles we prepare and what activities we propose in the coming years.
- **Public education related to dog parks.** In 2025, one Board member expressed concerns about potential health issues related to having a dog park in our community. The concerns were mainly: people being bitten while using the park and who is going to clean up the park if owners don't pick up after their own pups. Like many concerns we have, we believe the answer is public education and we want to do some of this when the dog park nears completion. At this point, we don't know what form this public education will take. It could be done as part of the health fair, in an article in The Weekly, as a gathering of those interested in using the dog park, or some combination of these approaches. Proposed topics include basic dog park

etiquette, recognizing dog body language, and how to safely respond to worrisome dog body language and/or behavior.

- **Infectious diseases.** Continue to share information about infectious disease trends that have the potential to impact our community.
- **PFA (“forever chemicals”).** The City is pursuing a grant to educate the New Castle public about these substances. We hope to be involved in that activity in some way if the grant is awarded.
- **Possible CPR training for Board members.** We may be able to open this opportunity to others as well.

We do not know of any grant funding requests currently.

For FY 2027 our budget request includes \$900 for meeting room and stenographer, \$600 for supplies (posters/handouts, etc. for Health Fair and dog park presentation), and \$400 for professional development opportunities.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our activities and goals with you and thank you for your ongoing support!

Respectfully submitted,  
The City of New Castle Board of Health  
David Bechtel  
Tish Gallagher  
Jamie Majewski  
Susan McLaughlin  
Jackie Metz