

Lake County General Health District 2023 Annual Report

A Message from the Health Commissioner

In preparing for the future, public health goals will need to include achieving universal healthcare coverage, reducing health disparities, preventing chronic diseases, promoting mental health and well-being, strengthening pandemic preparedness, addressing environmental health challenges, promoting healthy lifestyles, enhancing primary healthcare systems, improving health literacy, and strengthening public health surveillance and data systems.

These goals aim to ensure access to affordable healthcare, improve health outcomes, prevent diseases, prioritize mental health, prepare for pandemics, address environmental factors, promote healthy behaviors, enhance primary healthcare services, promote health literacy, and improve data collection and analysis for evidence-based decision-making. The following goals will assist with improving the health and wellbeing of our community.

- 1. Achieving universal healthcare coverage:** One of the major public health goals for the future is to ensure that everyone has access to affordable healthcare services. This includes not only medical treatment but also preventive services, mental health care, and health education.
- 2. Reducing health disparities:** There is a significant disparity in health outcomes based on factors such as socioeconomic status, race, and geographic location. Future public health goals involve addressing these disparities by improving access to healthcare, implementing targeted interventions, and promoting health equity.
- 3. Preventing chronic diseases:** Chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, and cancer are leading causes of morbidity and mortality worldwide. Future public health goals include implementing strategies to prevent these diseases through lifestyle modifications, vaccinations, and early screening and detection.
- 4. Promoting mental health and well-being:** Mental health issues like depression, anxiety, and substance abuse have a significant impact on individuals and communities. Future public health goals aim to prioritize mental health and well-being by increasing access to mental health services, reducing stigma, and promoting mental health education.



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**Mission of the Lake County General Health District:
Working to prevent disease, promote equity in health, and
protect our community through innovative public health practice.**

5. **Strengthening pandemic preparedness:** The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the need for robust pandemic preparedness and response systems. Future public health goals involve strengthening public health infrastructure, enhancing surveillance and early warning systems, and improving global coordination to effectively manage and prevent infectious disease outbreaks.
6. **Addressing environmental health challenges:** Climate change, air pollution, toxic substances, and other environmental factors have significant implications for public health. Future goals involve promoting sustainable practices, reducing exposure to environmental hazards, and developing strategies to mitigate the health impacts of climate change.
7. **Promoting healthy lifestyles:** Unhealthy behaviors such as tobacco use, sedentary lifestyle, and poor nutrition contribute to the burden of preventable diseases. Future public health goals focus on promoting healthy behaviors through community-based interventions, health education campaigns, and policy changes.
8. **Enhancing primary healthcare systems:** Strengthening primary healthcare systems is crucial for achieving better population health outcomes. Future goals involve improving access to primary healthcare services, increasing the number of healthcare providers, and implementing innovative models of care delivery.
9. **Improving health literacy:** Health literacy, or the ability to understand and use health information, is essential for making informed decisions about one's health. Future public health goals include promoting health literacy by providing clear and accessible health information, improving health education in schools, and enhancing communication between healthcare providers and patients.
10. **Strengthening public health surveillance and data systems:** Effective public health surveillance and data collection are essential for monitoring health trends, identifying emerging threats, and guiding public health interventions. Future goals involve investing in robust surveillance systems, interoperable data platforms, and data analytics to inform evidence-based public health decision-making.



Ron H. Graham, MPH

School Health Services

The Lake County General Health District offers a school health services program to school districts in the area. Based on the school's need, the health department can employ registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, and health aides to work within the clinics in the schools. At this time, we also have one nurse that works with a student one-on-one and, with more needs from schools, we would also be able to expand on this service.

The services that are included in the contracts between LCGHD and the schools include, but are not limited to: daily care of the students, hearing and vision screenings through Ohio Department of Health, immunization tracking and reporting also through Ohio Department of Health, medication administration, educational opportunities from the nurse to the school staff, substitute services, coverage for the nurse if he/she is out, field trips, education for the school staff through the health department to maintain their licensure, medication orders (such as epinephrine) through our medical director, benefits and wages for the nurse, and more.

Lake County General Health District works with Madison schools, Perry schools, Fairport schools, Mentor schools, and Our Shepard Lutheran School in Painesville. Nine nurses are employed full-time within the schools and one nurse is part-time. There are also two PRN nurses.

Community Health Services

The goal of public health is to prevent disease and promote health. One way in which prevention of disease is achieved successfully here in Lake County is through an effective immunization program for both children and adults! The availability of safe and effective vaccines has had a remarkable impact on the health of our residents. In 2023, the immunization program nurses administered a total of 1,255 vaccines. There were 409 vaccines administered to children from birth to 18 years of age under the Vaccine for Children Program and gave 846 immunizations to adults. This vaccine protection helps to prevent at least 14 different diseases and decreases the potential for disease outbreaks in our population.

Although the immunization clinics see many clients all year round, the clinic sites in July and August are especially busy, as the children come to receive the vaccines that are required for school attendance. The clinics and the immunization van work with schools and community agencies to help the children meet the school vaccine requirements. In July - August just prior to the start of school, nursing staff gave a total of 160 vaccines. It is also important to protect adults from vaccine preventable diseases. Some 64 vaccines were given to uninsured adult clients in the clinics as well as community sites, including homeless shelters. In addition, 116 Hepatitis vaccines were given to protect against Hepatitis A and B in the clinics and in community outreach sites serving clients at risk for these diseases.

Vital Statistics

	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
Birth Certificates Issued	5,908	6,518	7,232	5,537	4,499
Out of County Birth Certs Issued	*	*	*	*	2,615
Death Certificates Issued	8,625	10,305	11,426	10,541	8,181
Fetal Death Certificates Issued	1	1	0	3	1
Burial Permits Issued	1,236	966	818	686	604
Free Veterans' Copies Issued	224	276	355	308	301
Affidavits Issued	207	252	319	261	448
Supplements Issued	396	586	437	421	354
Birth Certificates Filed	1,174	1,402	1,521	1,533	1,640
Death Certificates Filed	1,880	2,272	2,414	2,315	1,761

*Beginning in 2020, the totals for in-county and out-of-county birth certificates issued have been combined. The total for both is listed in the category "Birth Certificates Issued".

COVID-Related Deaths

The table below highlights the COVID-related deaths of Lake County residents from March 2020 through December 2023**. The data was extracted from the Electronic Death Registration System (EDRS) and was based on the date of death. **Death reporting is delayed, so final numbers are not yet available for 2023.

	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
COVID-Related Deaths	50	196	359	246	N/A

Environmental Health

Food Safety Program

The food safety program is the first line of defense against foodborne illness. The inspectors work to protect the public by ensuring that all facilities that sell food are using safe food handling practices. These places include restaurants, grocery stores, food trucks, temporary food operations (like food sold at fairs), and vending machines.

Licensed Food Facilities	1287
Temporary Licenses Issued	59
Mobile Licenses Issued	97
Vending Machine License Issued	103
Food Complaints Investigated	92
Total Food Facility Inspections	5165

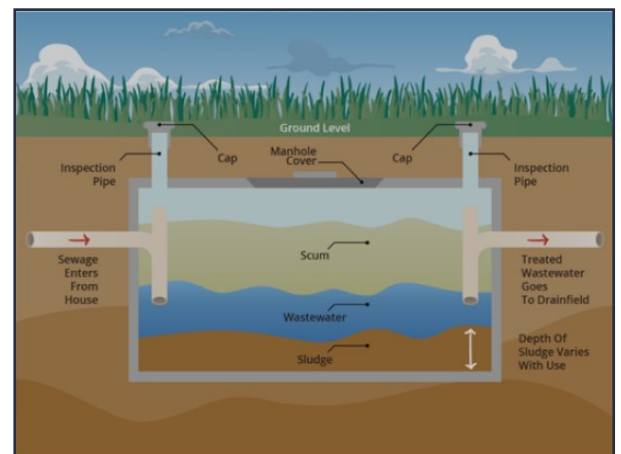


Household Sewage Treatment Systems

The household sewage treatment staff works to keep the ground and surface water safe from potential contamination by enforcing the sewage treatment system rules. Staff is responsible for issuing permits and inspecting sewage treatment systems and operational permits.

Sewage Treatment System Permits Issued	144
Septic System Inspections	587
Operation Permits Issued	2454
Total systems operation and maintenance enrolled to date	12,435
Commercial Septic Inspections	216
Grant Funds Awarded for Septic Repair	\$181,297







Septic Tank



Environmental Health

Wildfire Smoke from Canada Infiltrated the Midwest

During the week of June 5, 2023, wildfire smoke from Canada infiltrated the Midwest. Particulate Matter (PM) 2.5 hourly concentrations, measured at our Painesville site reached 50 ug/M3 on June 7. Air alerts were issued from June 8 through June 10. The smoke cleared but returned the week of June 25. The monitor recorded our highest concentration on June 29, 173 ug/M3. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) website Airnow had Lake County classified in the very unhealthy range. Luckily the smoke cleared again before the 4th of July.

	US AQI Level	PM2.5 (µg/m ³)	Health Recommendation (for 24 hour exposure)
WHO PM2.5 (µg/m ³) Recommended Guidelines as of September 22, 2021: 0-5.0			
	Good 0-50	0-12.0	Air quality is satisfactory and poses little or no risk.
	Moderate 51-100	12.1-35.4	Sensitive individuals should avoid outdoor activity as they may experience respiratory symptoms.
	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups 101-150	35.5-55.4	General public and sensitive individuals in particular are at risk to experience irritation and respiratory problems.
	Unhealthy 151-200	55.5-150.4	Increased likelihood of adverse effects and aggravation to the heart and lungs among general public.
	Very Unhealthy 201-300	150.5-250.4	General public will be noticeably affected. Sensitive groups should restrict outdoor activities.
	Hazardous 301+	250.5+	General public at high risk of experiencing strong irritations and adverse health effects. Should avoid outdoor activities.

Population Health and Emergency Planning

LCGHD Tests Capabilities for Bioterrorism Response

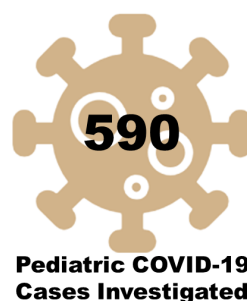
On October 18-20, 2023, LCGHD staff participated in a statewide exercise to test response capabilities for an anthrax attack in Northeast Ohio. Participants included the Ohio Department of Public Health, local health departments, hospitals, emergency management agencies, and other response partners. Functions tested in the exercise included:

- Emergency notification
- Incident management
- Internal and inter-agency information sharing
- Public information and warning
- Ordering, transporting, and receiving antibiotics from the Strategic National Stockpile
- Determining appropriate antibiotics for exposed persons
- Preparing allocations for first responders and general public
- Activating a closed point of dispensing (POD) to distribute medications



LCGHD would like to thank the Lake County Medical Reserve Corps, Eastlake Fire Department, Mentor Fire Department, Lake County Emergency Management Agency, Lake County Buildings and Grounds, Elara Caring, and Ohio Living for their participation in this exercise. In total, LCGHD tested five of the fifteen Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Capabilities and 44 of the 93 associated tasks in this exercise, and will be using findings to update portions of its Emergency Response Plan and inform upcoming staff trainings for 2024.

Epi Quick Facts



Lake County Disease Investigation

Table 1. Reportable Communicable Diseases

Communicable Disease	2023	2022	2021
Babesiosis	0	0	0
Campylobacter	32	30	31
CP-CRE	12	30	25
Chikungunya	0	0	0
Chlamydia	478	534	591
COVID-19	5983	17,350	28,435
Coccidioidomycosis	0	3	2
Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease	0	1	1
Cryptosporidiosis	5	2	5
Cyclosporiasis	1	0	2
E. Coli 0157:H7	10	5	7
Ehrlichiosis/anaplasmosis	0	1	1
Giardia	6	6	6
Gonorrhea	132	129	237
Haemophilus Influenza	9	7	0
Hepatitis A	0	4	8
Hepatitis B (acute)	0	0	1
Hepatitis B (chronic)	21	39	41
Hepatitis B (perinatal)	0	1	3
Hepatitis C (acute)	0	0	0
Hepatitis C (chronic)	79	152	177
Hepatitis C (perinatal)	1	1	1
Hepatitis E	0	0	2
Influenza-Hospitalized	57	155	2
La Crosse Virus Disease	0	0	0
Legionnaires Disease	12	15	20
Leptospirosis	1	0	0
Listeriosis	1	2	1
Lyme Disease	15	28	43
Malaria	1	0	0

Table 1 (continued). Reportable Communicable Diseases

Communicable Disease	2023	2022	2021
Meningitis-aseptic/viral	5	2	0
Meningitis, Bacterial not Neisseria	2	4	12
MIS-C associated with COVID-19	0	1	1
Mpox	1	11	0
Mumps	0	1	0
Mycobacterium Tuberculosis	0	4	3
Pertussis	9	9	4
Rocky Mountain spotted fever	0	0	0
Salmonella	31	24	32
Shigellosis	9	8	3
Staph Aureus VRSA	0	0	0
Streptococcal Group A (SGA)	17	14	13
Streptococcal Group B Newborn	1	1	0
Streptococcus Pneumonai (ISP)	13	17	18
Syphilis	30	14	25
Tetanus	0	0	0
Varicella	3	22	17
Vibriosis	1	0	0
West Nile Virus	0	0	1
Yersinia	1	2	1
Totals	6979	18,629	29,772

The Communicable Diseases listed above are reported to LCGHD for Lake County residents under the direction of Ohio Administrative Code Chapter 3701-3.

Typically, reports are made by diagnosing physicians or laboratories, and depending on the disease, LCGHD follows up with the resident or resident's guardian or caregiver to obtain more information about exposures and contacts to prevent further spread of the illness. In some cases, such as COVID-19, where a home test is available, individuals may also self-report.

How a Communicable Disease is reported:

1. Provider reviews the Ohio [Infectious Disease Control Manual](#) for specific reporting information and educational material about the suspected disease.
2. Provider completes the [Ohio Reportable Disease Form](#) in the Ohio Disease Reporting System or faxes report to the Health Department Confidential Fax Line: (440) 350-2956.
3. Provider (or individual in some cases) contacts the Health Department Communicable Disease Investigator: (440) 350-2467 or (440) 350-2554.
4. Disease Investigator attempts to contact provider and/or patient to complete the investigation and provide information about what to do to prevent spreading the illness further.

Population Health and Emergency Planning

Community Health Improvement Plan In Action

In March the 2023-2025 Lake County Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) was finalized and approved. Based on results of the 2022 Lake County Community Health Needs Assessment, this plan was developed by individuals representing over 20 community stakeholder organizations invested in improving the health of Lake County residents.

Priority areas include:

- Community Conditions
- Access to Healthcare
- Mental Health & Substance Abuse and Misuse, and
- Chronic Disease



Kiwanis Park StoryWalk® Opens in Painesville

In August, LCGHD, along with Morley Library, City of Painesville, Friends of Morley Library, and Boy Scout Troop 62 gathered to celebrate the grand opening of their StoryWalk® collaboration at Kiwanis Park in Painesville.



Storywalks® were identified in the CHIP as strategies to impact both childhood literacy and the need for improved physical activity. Each post along the StoryWalk® holds a page from a children's book along with opportunities for learning and early literacy development.

The multi-sector collaboration represents the commitment of LCGHD to support policy, systems, and environmental changes that improve community conditions and promote health.

Supporting Wellness at Food Pantries

Increasing healthy food options in Lake County’s food pantries is another CHIP strategy. In 2023, LCGHD began assisting food pantries with implementation of the Supporting Wellness at Pantries (SWAP) program, which is a stoplight system designed to promote healthy choices at food banks and pantries. Using an assessment calculator, foods are labeled with a simple color-code:

- Green: Choose Often,
- Yellow: Choose Sometimes, and
- Red: Chose Rarely

Guests are able to select foods based on their own family’s needs. St. Gabriel’s Food Pantry in Concord was the first pantry to implement SWAP Lake County with positive feedback from volunteers and guests.



Wickliffe Family Resource Center’s Impact Grows

LCGHD remains a proud collaborator with the Wickliffe Family Resource Center as they continue to address the social determinants of health.

2023 Community Impact

Back-to-School Bash
Provided free school supplies to 100 local students at our 3rd-Annual event.

Sports Physicals
Provided sports physicals to 37 students through our Signature Health medical services.

Thanksgiving
Provided Thanksgiving meals for 41 local families, including fresh food.

Partnerships
Shared WickKloset inventory with local partners such as Birthright, Project Prom, Hope Delivered, and Lake County’s Back to School Bash.

Tax Clinics
Hosted VITA Program through Lifeline serving 84 clients at our location.

WickKloset
Provided 675 individuals with food, clothing, toiletries, or household goods.

Blood Drives
Held 2 American Red Cross Blood Drives and collected 40 units of blood.

Dental Services
Provided dental services to 76 students at our Smile Programs Mobile Dental Clinic in May.

Health Education and Outreach

Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

This year has definitely been a year of transitions for WIC.

Waivers

Since March 2019 to August 2023, WIC has been operating with the COVID waivers that were set by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The waivers included:

- **Physical presence:** All heights, weights, and bloodwork were waived.
- **Food Package Substitutions:**
Milk: Participants will no longer be able to substitute low-fat milk (skim or 1%) with 2% milk.
Eggs: Participants will no longer be allowed to purchase any grade of eggs. Only large grade A or AA are allowed.
- **Infant Formula Waivers:** All waivers allowing non-contract brand primary formulas, imported formulas, and additional container sizes have expired.

At the end of August, all waivers were suspended. Currently, all WIC clinics are operating with pre-COVID WIC policies.

Location Changes

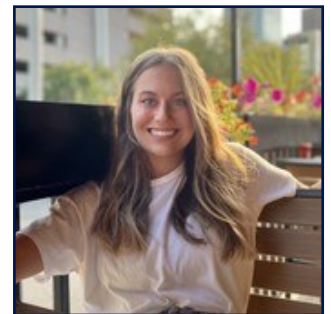
In May, the Wickliffe clinic moved to a mobile unit because the current Wickliffe School building was demolished. In July 2023, the move to the new Wickliffe School Campus took place.

In August, the Painesville clinic moved to 89 Chester St. in Painesville. The Lake County Free Clinic is right next door and that partnership continues to grow.

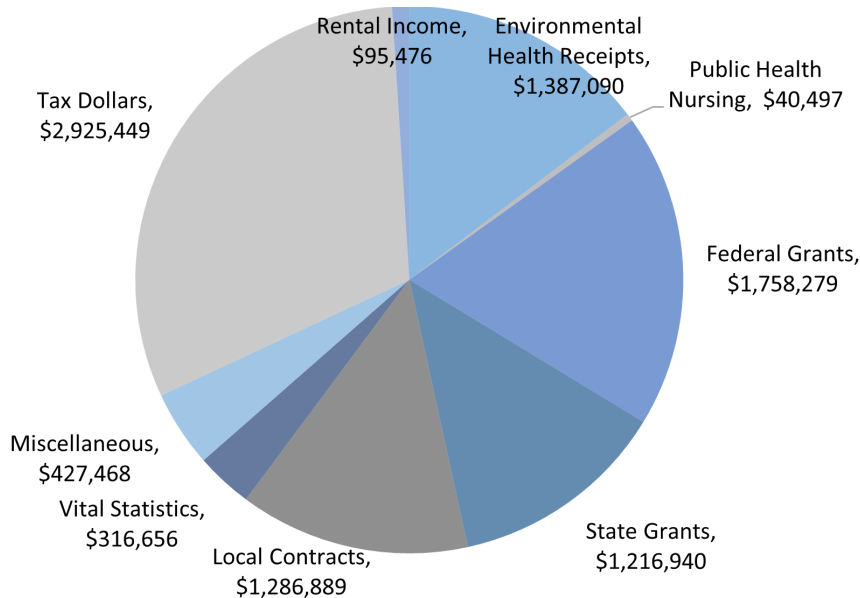
Successes

In 2023, the Farmers Market program distributed 4,500 coupons, the highest distribution rate to date. The redemption rate for the program has not been released from State WIC.

For staff, this year has been challenging, but with many successes. Liz Homans, Lead Peer, received her International Breastfeeding Consultant Lactation Certification (IBCLC) and Marley Siegel, Registered Dietitian received her Certification Lactation Specialist (CLS) status. The staff continue to be a hardworking, dedicated, and professional group of women who continuously shine.



Agency Financial Report



Total Revenue
\$9,454,744.00

The largest funding sources for the Lake County General Health District in 2023 include:

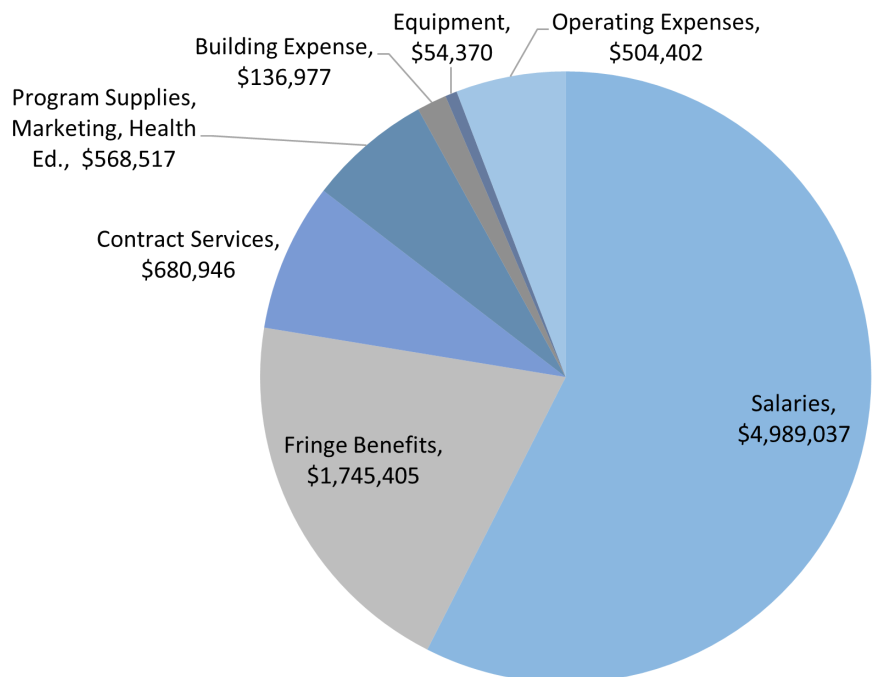
- Tax Dollars (31%)
- Federal Grants (19%)
- Environmental Health Receipts (15%)

Total Expenditures
\$9,273,809.00

Salary and fringe benefits to support the Lake County General Health District's employees represent the principal expenditure for the agency in 2023, accounting for more than half (74%) of total disbursements.

Other notable expenditures include:

- Transportation and Travel (\$67,095.00)
- Capital Improvement (\$356,365.00)
- Office Supplies and Postage (\$35,127.00)
- Returns (\$2,794.00)



This Is Public Health

Below Is a Listing of Services Provided by Your Health Department

Administration 440-350-2455

Community Health Services 440-350-2554

- Children with Medical Handicaps Program
- Car Seats
- Cribs
- Immunizations (Child, Adult, & Seasonal Flu)
- Lead Testing Clinic and Education
- School Nursing Program
- Tuberculosis Skin Testing, Case Management, and Preventive Medicine

Environmental Health Services 440-350-2543

- Air Pollution Control
- Food Protection
- Food Safety Education Classes
- Mosquito Control
- Nuisance Complaints
- Open Burning
- Pharmaceutical Drug Disposal
- Private Water Supply (Wells)
- Rabies Prevention
- Radiological Health
- Recreational Programs (Camps, Bathing Beaches, Pools, and Spas)
- School Inspections
- Sewage Treatment Systems, Operation and Maintenance
- Smoke-Free Workplaces
- Solid and Infectious Waste Disposal
- Storm Water Management
- Tattoo and Body Piercing

Lake County Connections 216-318-1211

Population Health & Emergency Planning 440-350-2939

- Disease Investigation
- Emergency Preparedness
- Epidemiology
- Health Communications
- Health Data
- Health Promotion
- Infection Prevention and Control
- Medical Reserve Corps
- Project DAWN (Deaths Avoided with Naloxone)
- Safe Communities Coalition
- Tobacco Use Prevention & Education
- Public Health Accreditation

Health Education & Outreach 440-350-2447

Wickliffe Family Resource Center 440-943-6113

WIC - Women, Infants, & Children

- Breastfeeding Counseling and Peer Support
- Nutrition Screenings, Education, and Counseling Referrals
- Supplemental Foods

WIC Painesville 440-350-2552

WIC Madison 440-428-2003

WIC Wickliffe 440-833-6007

WIC Chardon 440-214-9440

WIC Middlefield 440-251-6522

Vital Statistics 440-350-2549

- Birth Certificates - Statewide Issuance
- Death Certificates - Lake County Only



**Lake County
General Health District**

Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

