LAWRENCE TOWNSHIP HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD

2207 LAWRENCE ROAD
LAWRENCE TOWNSHIP, NEW JERSEY 08648
(609) 844-7089

MEETING MINUTES
March 17, 2026
5:15 P.M.
Virtual Meeting

Present: Keith Levine-Health Officer/Secretary, Laurie Wilson-member, Martha Friend-member, Brielle Easton-Chairperson, Anthony Brickman-member, Maureen Adams-member, Ellen Maak-member, Hilary Jersey-resident

Absent: Council liaison

I. Review of Minutes

12/9/25 HAB minutes were approved by the board.
Laurie Wilson volunteered to be Chair of the board for 2026.

II. Old Business

A. The Health Department received an additional allocation of combined COVID-19/Influenza A&B home test kits. Kits continue to be distributed to residents. Discussion included test kit expiration dates and guidance that many tests remain functional beyond the printed expiration date when stored properly.

III. New Business

A. Avian Influenza (Bird Flu) Update: The health department has seen an increase in reports of sick and deceased birds in Lawrence Township, including Canadian geese and swans, 2 deceased fox kits also tested positive for H5N1. Burlington County to the south of us is experiencing outbreaks and some of those animals may be making their way to Lawrence. Cases were observed at multiple locations, including Cold Soil Road, Colonial Lake, Brunswick Pike, and the BMS campus. Wildlife exhibiting symptoms are brought to the Mercer County Wildlife Center. Residents are advised to avoid contact between pets and wildlife and to report sick or deceased birds to animal control. Discussion included concerns regarding the potential future transmission of avian influenza among humans and the importance of continued monitoring. The Health Officer discussed links between zoonotic disease outbreaks and intensive livestock production practices (factory farming) and encouraged public awareness and advocacy regarding safer practices, animal health and food production standards.

B. Lawrence Drug & Alcohol Alliance (LADA) update: The Lawrence Police Department appointed Elwood Dasher as a community liaison through the *Arrive Together* program, which provides mental health crisis response support through partnerships between law enforcement and behavioral health professionals. Elwood is a great community resource given his contacts with various organizations dealing with mental health and substance use issues and he's been appointed to our LADA group as well, we welcome Elwood.

C. Emergency Preparedness Exercise: John Sullivan, REHS and Keith attended a regional emergency preparedness exercise hosted by Mercer Count, involving a simulated gas explosion scenario. The exercise focused on emergency communications, public messaging, evacuation planning, and interagency coordination. Participants emphasized the importance of preparedness planning and cross-agency collaboration.

D. The Board discussed recent national vaccine policy developments, the NJ Department of Health Department confirmed they will continue to follow established evidence-based vaccination recommendations and state requirements around vaccines.

IV. Other Business

A. Lawrence Health Dept. received the New Jersey Department of Health's highest Influenza Honor Roll recognition for 2025, the award acknowledges the Township's efforts to promote influenza vaccination and public health education. Lawrence Township was one of only two health departments in New Jersey in 2025 to receive the Top Honors Honor Roll Award.

B. Quarterly Nursing Report was distributed to members and discussed at the meeting.

V. Next Meeting Date

June 2026

VI. Adjournment

A. motion to adjourn was made and seconded. There being no further business, meeting was adjourned at 6:20p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Keith Levine, Health Officer