

Note on Policy Change Submission

The intent of these policy changes is to clarify the school nurse's responsibilities for trips that occur outside of their regular workday. Additionally, the procedural section has been removed from the policy to allow for necessary operational adjustments and to provide more detailed guidance in a separate procedural document. This change ensures flexibility in implementation while maintaining clear expectations.

TOWN OF FAIRFIELD PUBLIC HEALTH NURSING

MANUAL: School Health Manual

PREPARED BY: Nursing Supervisor

SECTION: Volume 2

APPROVED BY: Board of Health 12/8/1997

POLICY: Field Trips

DATE REVIEWED: 12/8/2003, 4/21/2025

PROCEDURE: Field Trips

PAGES: 1

POLICY

The school nurse shall be notified of school field trips as part of the planning process so that health needs and concerns may be identified and met for individual students and groups.

For trips occurring outside of normal school hours, the nurse cannot delegate the administration of medications.

PROCEDURE

~~a) The teacher shall notify the school nurse in writing at least fourteen days in advance of the following field trip information:~~

- ~~• destination~~
- ~~• duration~~
- ~~• names of participants~~
- ~~• nature of planned activities.~~

~~b) The school nurse shall identify students with special health needs who will participate in the field trip and instruct the teacher and other appropriate school personnel regarding the plan of care, including emergency measures.~~

~~c) Field trips will be planned so that necessary accommodations may be made in advance to meet identified needs of students with health conditions.~~

~~d) Medications shall be administered on field trips in accordance with C.G.S. Section 10-212a and Board of Education Policy and Administrative Regulations Re: Administration of Medications.~~

~~The school nurse shall train qualified school personnel to administer the medication.~~

~~Only qualified school personnel trained by the nurse may administer the medications. When field trips are scheduled to extend beyond usual school hours, parents will be asked on the trip Permission Form to inform the school nurse of any medications their child may require during those extended hours and to comply with regulations pertaining to medication administration~~



Fairfield Health Department

Annual Report FY 2024

July 1, 2023—June 30, 2024



Mission, Vision, and Values

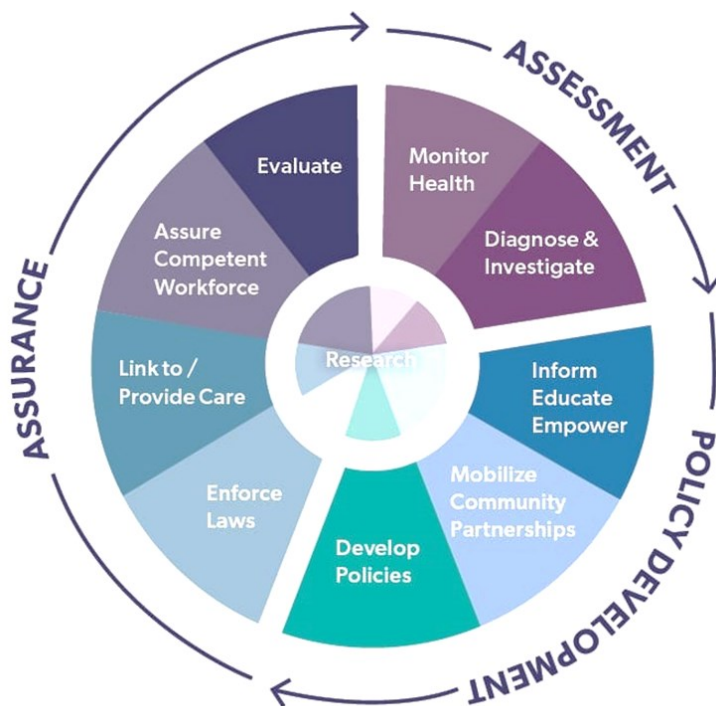
Mission: Innovation, education, and action to improve community health and well-being.

Vision: A healthy community through professional excellence.

Values:

Commitment to integrity
Compassion in conduct
Creative teamwork
Continuous improvement

The Ten Essential Public Health Services



The responsibility of the health department is to prevent disease and injury by promoting and protecting the health, safety and well-being of the public and our environment.

The Fairfield Health Department seeks to achieve its mission, vision, and values by applying the Ten Essential Public Health Services as a framework.

<https://www.fairfieldct.org/health>

Visit our Social Media platforms to stay updated on healthy living, current outbreaks, recalls, and other health news.



@FairfieldHD



@fairfieldhealth



@FairfieldHD



@FairfieldHealthDept

Department Programs

Administrative

The Administrative program ensures that public health policies and procedures align with the mission of the Fairfield Health Department. The program consists of our Director of Health, Special Projects Coordinator, Billing Coordinator, and Administrative support staff.

Community Health

In the Community Health program, we work with a variety of partners to develop policies and provide solutions to help improve the overall health and well-being of our community. The program consists of our Assistant Director of Health for Community Health, two infectious disease investigators and an immunization support nurse and community health worker who helped increase our vaccination outreach.

Environmental Health

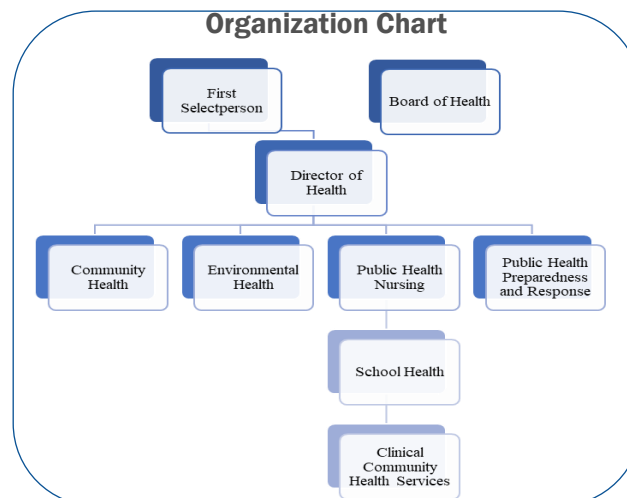
The Environmental Health program consists of four Registered Sanitarians that performs inspections at food service establishments, daycares, cosmetology, public pools, rental housing and hotels. In addition, Sanitarians conduct plan reviews, permit sign offs, septic system oversight, complaint investigations and identify deer ticks for submission to the state lab for testing. Public swimming areas are sampled weekly between Memorial Day and Labor Day to ensure waters are safe for swimming.

Public Health Nursing

The Public Health Nursing program plays a critical role in ensuring the health and safety of our community, and fulfills a vital role in supporting student health and academic success. Their responsibilities include providing direct care for illnesses, injuries and chronic conditions; administering medications and treatments; conducting health screenings; managing immunization compliance; and serving as liaisons between families, healthcare providers and school staff. They also develop health plans for students with medical needs, promote wellness education, and contribute to creating a safe and healthy school environment.

Public Health Preparedness and Response

The Public Health Preparedness and Response program builds and strengthens local capabilities in response to public health threats such as infectious diseases, natural disasters, and biological events. This program is led by the Health Department's Emergency Management Team comprised of the Director of Health, the Assistant Directors of Health, emergency preparedness coordinators, and other stakeholders. Collectively, we work to strengthen community preparedness and resilience by promoting awareness and access to resources and care, identifying at-risk populations with functional needs, and coordinating other preparedness efforts with community partners. This program participates in and conducts local and regional preparedness training and exercises.



Community Health

The Assistant Director of Health for Community Health collaborates with community and local partners to encourage wellness and healthy behaviors. In FY 2024, key evidence based health promotion strategies that were developed, implemented and sustained included initiatives like immunizations, diabetes support groups, and social media campaigns, among others.

Social Media Outreach

In Fiscal Year 2024, our Facebook reach surged by 74%, reaching a total of 37,400 unique users who viewed our content, compared to 21,500 in FY 2023.

The most viewed social media content included information on the lifting of the Mill River blue crab meat consumption advisory, COVID vaccine availability, new COVID isolation guidelines, product recalls, tips to protect against norovirus, and guidelines for viewing the partial solar eclipse.



New Health Department Grants

Immunization Grant

The Fairfield Health Department was awarded \$143,667.00 to be spent from September 1, 2023 - June 30, 2025 for activities related to COVID-19, flu, and other immunizations to the community. With these funds, we were able to hire one part-time immunization support nurse and one part-time community health worker to increase our vaccination capacity and outreach. Additionally, the grant requires that \$51,573 be allocated for media funding, advertising, and printing, which allowed the Health Department to hire a media company, along with five surrounding towns, to develop and distribute educational campaigns to promote vaccine confidence.



Workforce Development Grant

The Fairfield Health Department was awarded \$152,729.00 to be spent from November 1, 2023 - November 1, 2027 to help further advance the Health Department's workforce. Funds will help retain a current full time grant funded staff who will continue to work on communicable disease surveillance, contact tracing for other reportable diseases, quality improvement projects, and other tasks as needed.

Programs and Events

The **Diabetes and Chronic Disease Support Group** is facilitated by a Registered Dietitian, Certified Diabetes Educator, and our Assistant Director of Health for Community Health that allows participants to meet monthly and receive support from their peers and engage in active group discussions. Each month focuses on a different health topic and include various guest speakers. For FY 2024, there were **eight** sessions held and **63** participants in attendance.

Know Your Numbers is a screening campaign by the American Heart Association that the Fairfield Health Department organizes as key markers of heart health like blood pressure, cholesterol, blood sugar, body mass index (BMI), and waist circumference. Our Public Health Nurse conducts a simple blood test to determine A1c, blood pressure, and BMI. Resources and information are also provided to support individuals to take the steps in reducing their risk. We were able to screen a total of **34** people from the **multiple** screenings we hosted.



QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) is a three-step suicide prevention training that can be used in response to someone in crisis during an emergency. Our Assistant Director of Health for Community Health, Public Health Nurse, and Fairfield Warde School Nurse are certified gatekeeper instructors which allows them to conduct QPR trainings to others. In FY 2024, they provided QPR trainings to **121** Fairfield employees.



Community Health

The **Matter of Balance** program is an evidence-based program that was developed by the Partnership for Healthy Aging and designed to reduce the fear of falling and increase activity levels among older adults. Comprised of **eight** 2-hour sessions, participants learn how to view falls as controllable, set goals for increasing activity, make changes to reduce fall risk at home, and exercise to increase strength and balance. In FY 2024, there were **12** participants in the program.

A MATTER OF
BALANCE
MANAGING CONCERNS ABOUT FALLS



COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Every three years, the Health Department collaborates with neighboring Health Departments from Bridgeport, Stratford, Trumbull, Monroe, and Milford, as well as St. Vincent's Hospital, Bridgeport Hospital, and several other partners to conduct a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA). This assessment gathers valuable data from residents, through a variety of measures, to identify the health needs of our community.

Beginning in the spring of 2024 and continuing through the summer, the Fairfield Health Department, alongside our partners, initiated the CHNA data collection process. This included informing residents that Data Haven's Community Wellbeing Survey (DCWS) was underway and that they may receive a call from the *Siena College Research Institute* to participate in the survey. Efforts were made encouraging them to "Answer the Call" whereby residents were asked questions regarding their health and about other social drivers of health including food, financial and housing security and opinions about their neighborhood and community.

In addition to the survey, data collection also involves a Community-Based Assets and Needs Survey, interviews with key stakeholders, and focus groups, which continued into late summer and fall 2024. Results from these data collection methods will help us identify the needs of our community.

PARTNERSHIPS

Collaborating with local and regional partners is important to maintaining a healthy community. Our staff members represent the Department by serving on numerous committees that promote wellness and healthy behaviors.



Connecticut Association
of Directors of Health



National Association of County & City Health Officials
The National Connection for Local Public Health

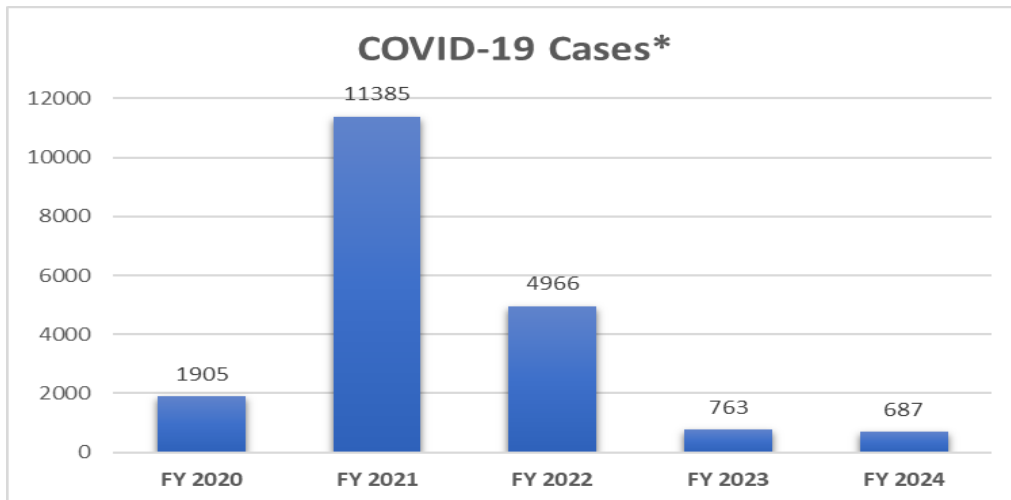


Community Health

The number of communicable diseases dropped drastically from FY 2022 to FY 2024, with the largest decrease seen in Coronavirus cases, as vaccinations and effective treatment options increased, along with an uptick in at-home testing. Influenza numbers had increased greatly in FY 2023, following post-pandemic lockdowns, but FY 2024 saw a noticeable decrease in infections. RSV, however, has seen a tripling of cases over the last fiscal year, due to increased routine testing.

Disease or Condition	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024
Coronavirus (COVID-19)	4,966	763	687
Hepatitis A	0	1	0
Hepatitis B	1	3	4
Hepatitis C	7	0	1
Influenza	253	1,118	747
Campylobacteriosis	19	10	26
Legionellosis	0	0	2
Lyme Disease	9	32	52
Mpox	0	1	0
Pertussis	0	0	5
RSV	8	132	422
Streptococcus pneumoniae	1	2	2
Yersiniosis	2	0	5
Total	5,266	2,062	1,953

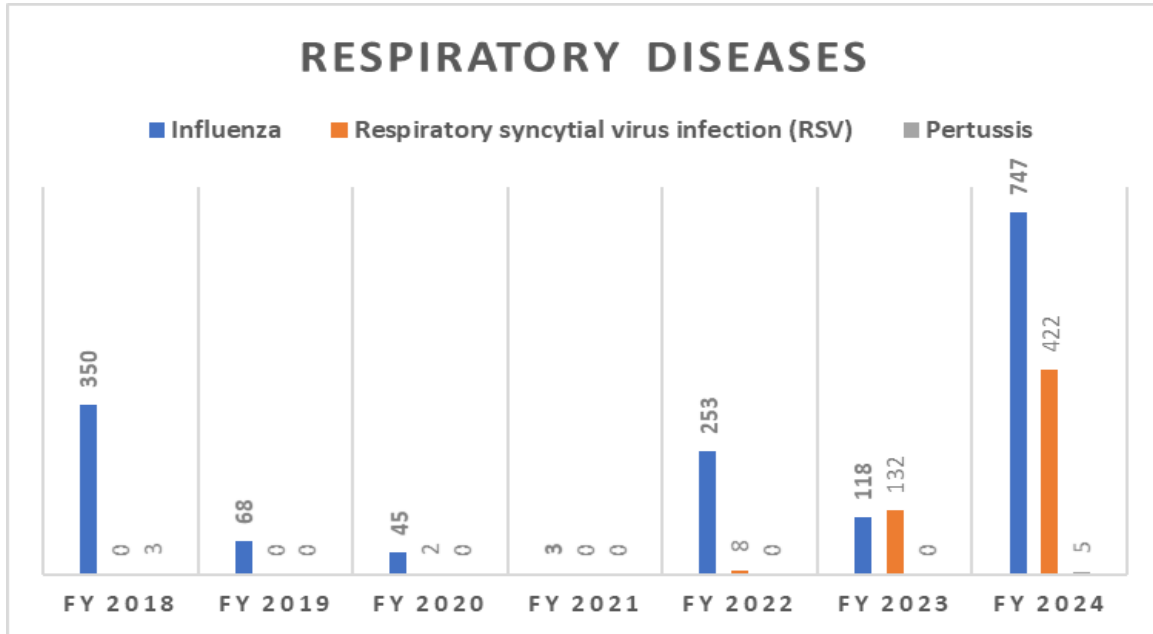
After a peak of over 11,000 COVID-19 cases in Fairfield in FY 2021, cases declined dramatically as the global health emergency came to an end in May 2023. Although COVID-19 cases still arise, they are typically more mild and result in fewer deaths.



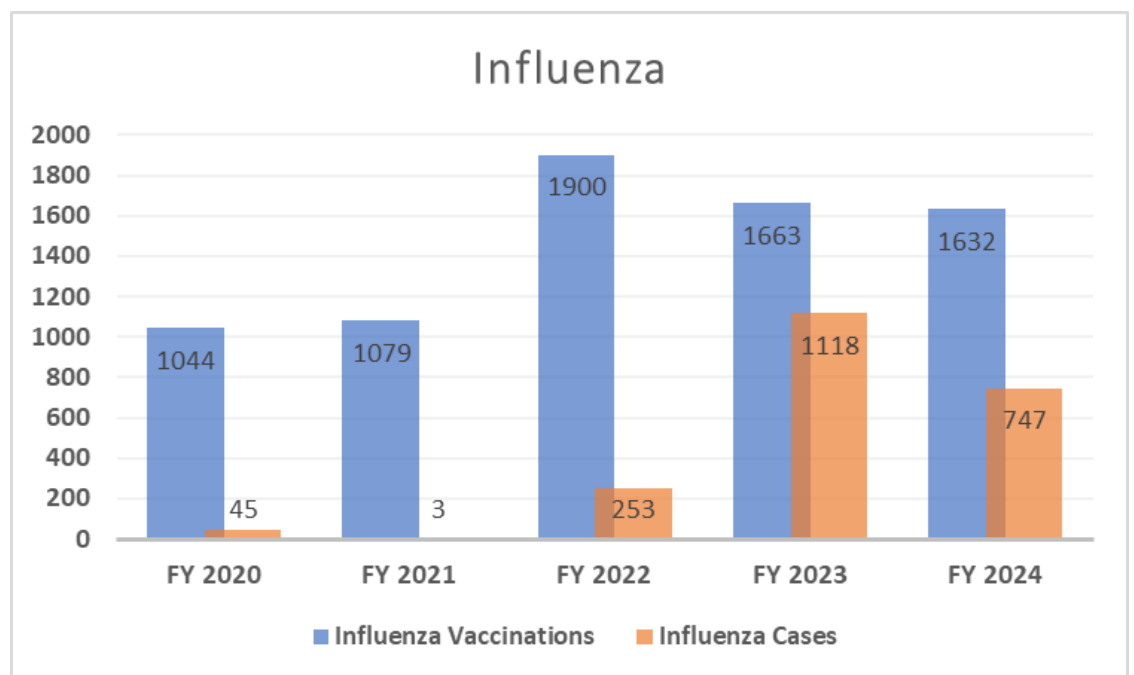
*Data collected from Connecticut Electronic Disease Surveillance System

Community Health

Influenza cases and RSV both increased dramatically in FY 2024. The easing of pandemic restrictions and the resumption of social interactions may have played a part in this increase. In addition, increased testing for RSV is likely contributing to a higher reported number of cases.

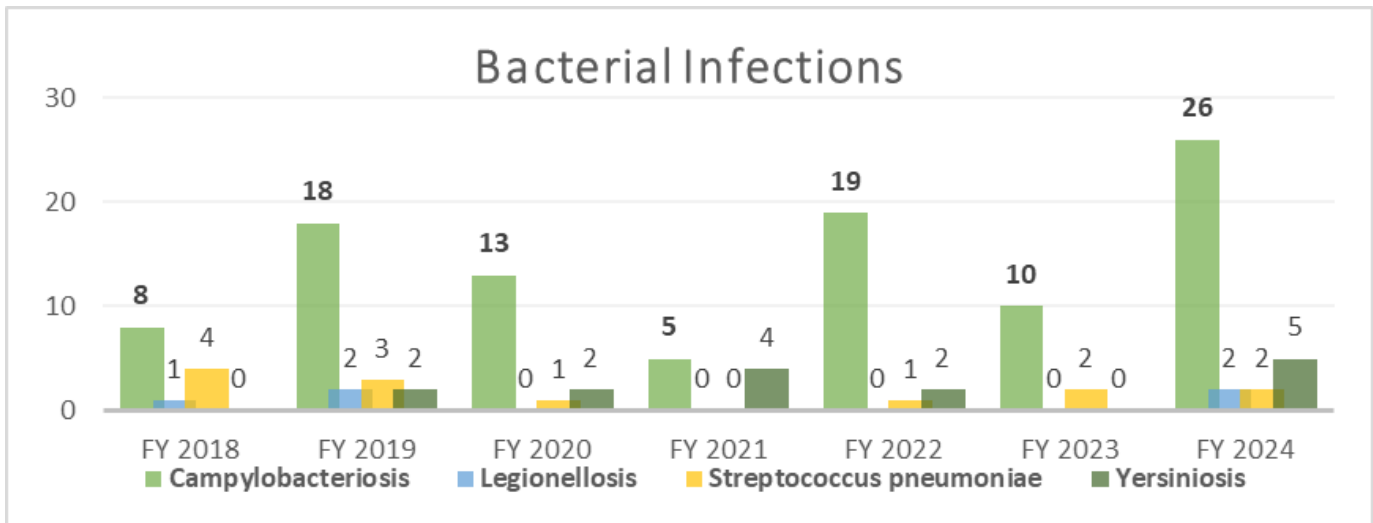


Our vaccination rates have remained steady over the last five years, with a slight dip during the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic. Cases of influenza dramatically dropped during the lockdown with mask-wearing, social distancing and stay-at-home orders. FY 2023 and 2024 have seen a rise of influenza cases to pre-pandemic number.

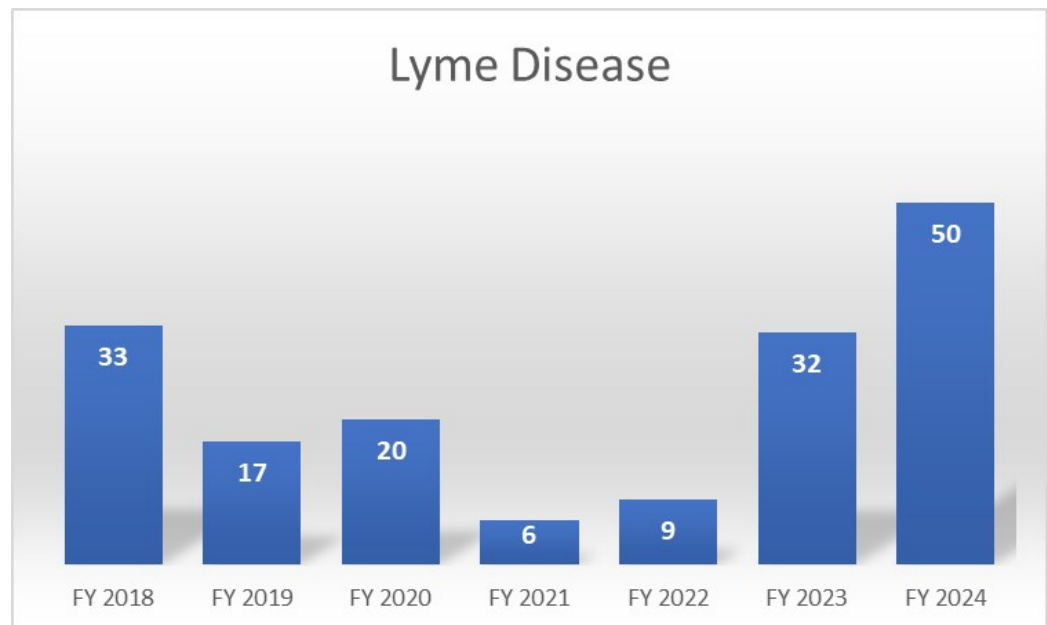


Community Health

The number of cases of Campylobacteriosis has fluctuated over the past six years, reaching its current peak in FY 2024. This infection occurs when eating contaminated food, drinking contaminated water or touching infected animals. This increase highlights the importance of the work of our Sanitarians in ensuring that commercial kitchens are cooking all food to proper temperatures and avoiding contamination amongst raw meat, eggs and poultry.



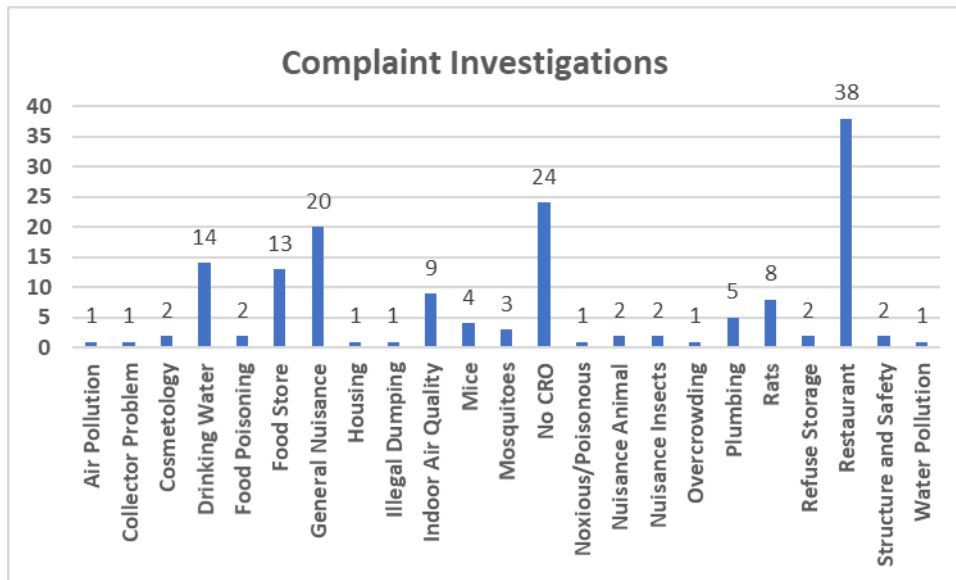
Cases of Lyme disease have increased over the last several years, from a low of 6 in FY 2021 to 50 in FY 2024. In 2022 the CDC changed how Lyme cases were reported, which has contributed to this increase. In addition, climate change, with warmer temperatures and longer tick seasons may also be a contributing factor.



Environmental Health

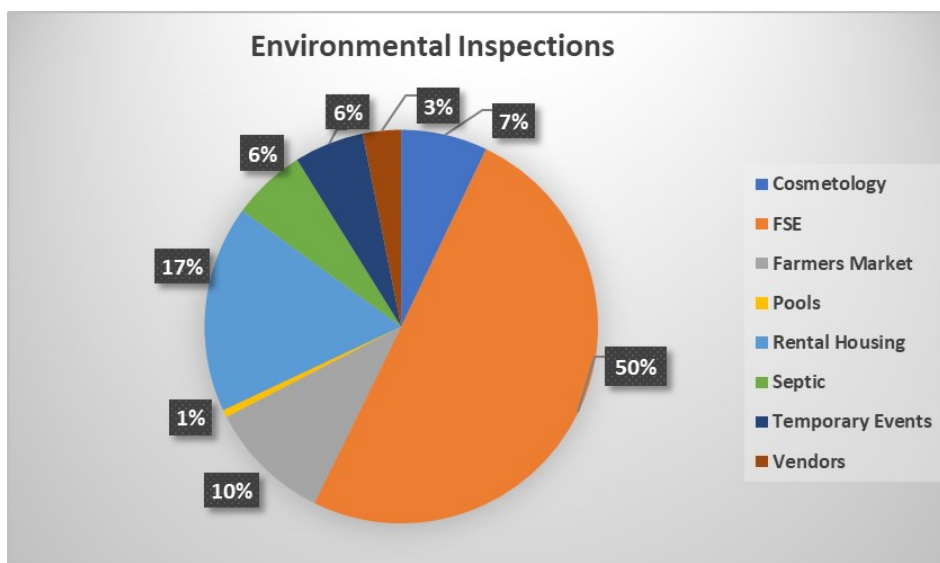
Complaint Investigations

For FY 2024, there were **157** total complaints that were investigated by our sanitarians, with **38** of those complaints related to restaurants. This is similar to the percentage of restaurant complaints in FY 2023, where there were **203** complaints and **43** investigations involving restaurants. General nuisance issues and missing CRO's were other common complaints noted.



Environmental Inspections

There were **1,463** inspections conducted by our sanitarians for the FY 2024 with **734** inspections for our food service establishments. In comparison to FY 2023, where a total of **1,292** inspections were conducted, with **531** food service inspections. Additional inspections in FY 2024 included rental housing CRO inspections at **249**, cosmetology inspections at **104** and farmers market inspections at **148**.



Environmental Health

FDA Food Code Implementation

In February 2023, the state of Connecticut adopted the FDA Food Code, prompting local food establishments to begin adjusting to new health department inspection guidelines throughout fiscal year 2024. This transition marked a significant shift in food safety regulations, requiring restaurants and food vendors to align their practices with updated standards designed to enhance public health protection.

Fairfield Sanitarians have taken over 45 online courses and numerous hours of training to educate restaurant owners on how to effectively comply with these new standards. The number of priority violations discovered, reflected in the chart below, shows the challenge faced as stricter standards and shorter correction times are being enforced.

The Food Code is structured into three tiers of violations, each with specific correction timelines designed to enhance food safety. Priority violations must be addressed within 72 hours, ensuring immediate attention to critical issues that could pose a significant risk to public health. Priority foundation items require correction within ten days, while core foundation items have a longer time frame of 90 days for resolution. This tiered approach replaces the previous pass/fail system, offering a more nuanced framework that allows local food establishments to prioritize and manage compliance effectively, ultimately promoting safer food handling practices.

The transition to the new FDA Food Code has been a learning experience for many restaurants as they adapted to the updated inspection guidelines. Most restaurant owners appreciate the increased enforcement, particularly the opportunity to address violations while inspectors are still onsite, which encourages immediate corrective action. However, this shift has also presented challenges, as the new codes shorten times for fixing violations can be more demanding than previous standards. As establishments work to comply with these quicker timelines, they are learning to balance the urgency of corrections with maintaining their daily operations, ultimately aiming for a higher standard of food safety.

Priority violations are critical infractions that directly impact the elimination, prevention, or reduction of hazards associated with foodborne illnesses or injuries. Examples of these violations include inadequate separation between raw and ready-to-eat foods, improper hot and cold holding temperatures, failure to follow proper handwashing procedures, and issues related to sanitizer strength. Addressing these priority violations promptly is essential to ensuring the safety of food served to the public, as they pose significant risks that can lead to serious health consequences.

Priority foundation items are those that support, facilitate, or enable compliance with priority items, ensuring that the critical aspects of food safety are upheld. These items play a vital role in creating a strong foundation for safe food handling practices. On the other hand, core items relate to general sanitation, operational controls, and sanitation standard operating procedures (SSOPs). While they may not pose immediate risks like priority violations, addressing core items is essential for maintaining overall hygiene and operational effectiveness within food establishments. Together, these categories create a comprehensive framework for promoting food safety and protecting public health.

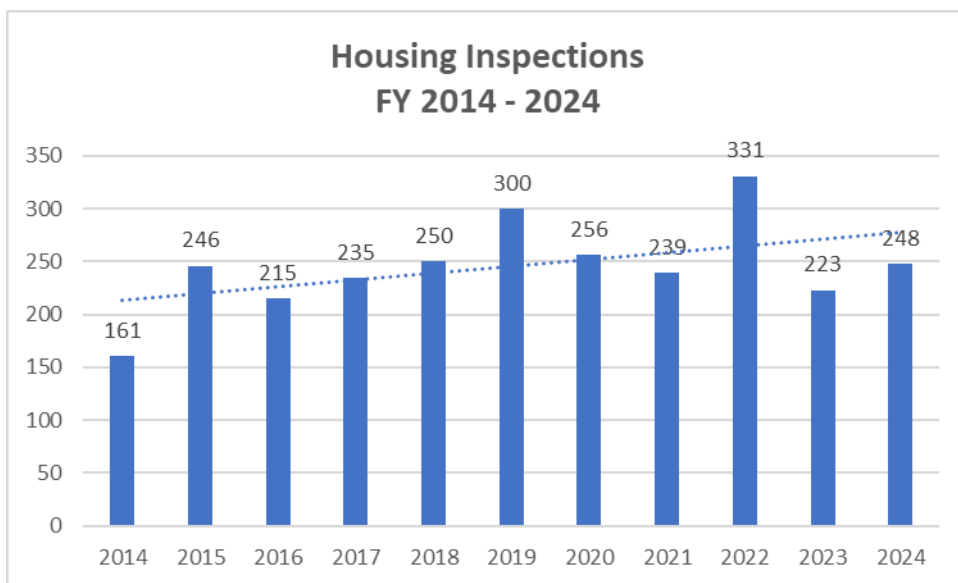


Environmental Health

Housing Inspections — Certificates of Rental Occupancy

Fairfield is one of only a handful of towns in Connecticut requiring rental properties to secure a Certificate of Rental Occupancy from their local Health Department. Our Sanitarians inspect new rental properties, as well as rental units with a change of tenant, to ensure rental properties meet local building codes and safety standards. This ensures that the property is suitable for habitation and complies with local regulations, including working appliances, fire safety measures, proper heating and unsafe conditions. This protects both the landlord and the tenant and provides legal recourse if code violations should arise.

Fairfield has seen a tremendous increase in apartment buildings over the last several years, and the trend is continuing, putting a particularly large burden on our resources. In addition, each fall Fairfield University students descend onto the beach area, where student housing must be inspected and maximum occupancy guidelines overseen. Since students live amongst our local residents in prime beach locations, the Health Department plays a critical role in ensuring that rental overcrowding is not contributing to tensions in the beach area. The chart below shows a steady upward tick in housing inspections, which are expected to continue to rise.



Girl Scouts in Government Day

In April, 2024, the Fairfield Girl Scouts visited the different departments in Town Hall for Government Day. Two Girl Scouts shadowed our Sanitarians in the Health Department for the day and learned the ins and outs regarding enforcing the Public Health Code. The Girl Scouts visited a school cafeteria, where the inspectors showed them how to take the temperature of food being served, tested hand sanitizer strength and were taught about general food safety. They also inspected a septic system and toured the Public Health Nursing office to understand the role of our school nursing staff.



Public Health Nursing

COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES

1 Assistant Director of Health for Nursing
1 Part-time Public Health Nurse
1 Part-time Administrative Aide

- 9 Community Flu Clinics
- 33 COVID Vaccinations
- 1,632 Flu Vaccinations
- 34 Know Your Number Clients
- 292 Pediatric Vaccinations (not COVID)
- 17 PPD Testing
- 6 Pneumonia Vaccinations
- 12 Respirator Fit Testings



SCHOOL NURSING

2 Nursing Coordinators
23 Full-time School Nurses
14 Part-time School Nurses
2 Part-time Health Aides
1 Part-time Audiometric Aide
1 Full-Time Dental Hygienist

- 1,160 Healthcare Plans Developed
- 4,278 Hearing Screenings
- 14,208 Medications Administered
- 1,134 Meetings Attended
- 106,993 School Nurse Visits
- 799 Scoliosis Screenings
- 4,317 Vision Screenings
- 974 School Staff Training for Medication Administration
- 147 Dental Cleanings
- 147 Fluoride treatments
- 2,306 students Receiving Dental Classroom Education



Public Health Emergency Preparedness Program

The Public Health Preparedness and Response program works across all departmental divisions to improve emergency response capabilities and build community preparedness by coordinating and conducting drills, exercises, and trainings for our department's staff and volunteers.

Community Preparedness Forum

The Fairfield Health Department hosted a **Community Preparedness Forum** which focused on servicing those with Access and Functional Needs. These are individuals who may require assistance before, during and/or after a disaster or an emergency, due to restrictions or limited ability to perform activities normally considered routine. The forum promoted a discussion-based tabletop exercise where participants highlighted their roles and organizational responses to an emergency scenario impacting this community.

Call Center Setup Drill

Participation in drills and exercises can improve preparedness efforts and responses during an emergency event. Call centers can be set-up in any town building and are essential in relaying accurate information during an emergency.

In FY 24, our preparedness coordinators conducted a drill at Fairfield Warde High School, in which tactical operations associated with setup/breakdown of the call center were demonstrated, along with noting the time required for transportation and breakdown functions.

COVID-19 Test Distribution

In September, 2023, the State of Connecticut distributed COVID-19 test kits to communities throughout the state. Fairfield received 1,700 kits which were inventoried and distributed to town facilities including local schools, the public libraries, Town Hall and the Fairfield Senior Center. In addition, kits were made available to locations reporting outbreaks.



Training and Drills

- Participation in four quarterly staff notification and call down drills
- Took part in monthly UASI radio drills with local health departments
- Staff social media training for Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication (CERC)
- Staff participation in Fairfield County Trauma Response Team Training
- Staff training in Incident Command System (ICS 300 and ICS 400)

Health Department Staff

Administrative

Sands Cleary, *Director of Health*
Mary Cannon, *Project Coordinator*
Andrea Flynn, *Administrative Assistant*
Gina Flynn, *Billing Coordinator*
Jim Vozzo, *Data Entry/Receptionist*
Chelsea Zapata, *Data Entry/Receptionist*

Community Health

Santina Jaronko, *Assistant Director of Health for Community Health*
Orlando Segui, *Infectious Disease Investigator*
Emma Sharp, *Infectious Disease Investigator*

Environmental Health

Robert Guerrero, *Assistant Director of Health for Environmental Health*
Debrina Hudson, *Sanitarian*
Kim Huynh, *Sanitarian*
Jonathan Oldham, *Sanitarian*
Kenneth Rubano, *Sanitarian*
Melissa Soricelli, *Sanitarian*

Emergency Preparedness

Susan Jacozzi, *Emergency Preparedness Coordinator*
Nicholas Jossem, *Emergency Preparedness Coordinator*
Kenneth Kellogg, *Emergency Preparedness Coordinator*

Public Health Nursing

Jill Mitchell, *Assistant Director of Health for Public Health Nursing*
Bonnie Rotelli, *Administrative Assistant*
Maribeth Allison, *Nurse*
Michele Britell, *Nurse*
Janette Buckley, *Nurse*
Tracy Capizzuto, *Nurse*
James Capuano, *Nurse*
Jenn Coulsen, *Nurse*
Jacqueline DeFabio, *Audiometric Aide*
Patricia Erikson, *Nurse Coordinator*
Peggy Gagner, *Nurse*
Rachel Jarvis, *Nurse*
Sreshta Kantamneni, *Nurse*
Elisabeth Kelly, *Nurse*
Laura King, *Nurse*
Gulaine Kinney, *Nurse*
Jenna Klein, *Nurse*
Wendy Kovacs, *Dental Hygienist*

Rebecca Lee, *Nurse*
Jeanne Lynch, *Health Aide*
Lisa Magrone, *Nurse Coordinator*
Melanie Merkle, *Nurse*
Terri Mastriani, *Nurse*
Tricia Morrisroe, *Nurse*
Mary McCarthy, *Nurse*
Julie McCullough, *Clinic Coordinator*
Joan Miller, *Nurse*
Christine Nightingdale, *Health Aide*
Kailey O'Brien, *Nurse*
Sara O'Callaghan, *Nurse*
Joanna Ogorzalek, *Nurse*
Myriah Stietzel, *Nurse*
Margaret Sullivan, *Nurse*
Claudia Otoshi, *Nurse*
Kiki Perrini, *Nurse*
Jennifer Pida, *Nurse*
LeeAnne Power, *Nurse*
Damara Rodriguez, *Nurse*

Elizabeth Rodriguez, *Nurse*
Jennifer Staecker, *Nurse*
Linda Terrell, *Nurse*
Mei-Ching Tseng, *Nurse*
Cara Vino, *Nurse*
Beth Walker, *Nurse*

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