

2025

Annual Report

Lincoln County Public Health
A division of Health and Human Services

Prepared by
Asia Richardson
March 16, 2026



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Lincoln County

A Message from the Director

Over the past five years, public health has faced significant challenges. The COVID-19 pandemic placed immense strain on an already underfunded and understaffed system, and workforce changes affected communities across the state, including Lincoln County. While this period was deeply taxing, it also created an opportunity for Lincoln County Public Health to restructure and strengthen our ability to serve the community while continuing to advance Oregon's Public Health Modernization framework and essential public health services.

During this time, we expanded our capacity to communicate with the diverse communities that make up Lincoln County and to serve as a trusted source of information and services for both the public and our partners. We built on partnerships formed during the pandemic, listened to community feedback, and adapted programs to better meet local needs. We also strengthened regional collaborations and developed systems to more effectively monitor diseases and serious health outcomes, such as overdoses and suicides, allowing us to respond earlier and prevent further harm.

2025 was particularly eventful for public health, marked by federal funding reductions, changes to immunization guidance, and the loss of public health and social benefits for some community members. At the same time, new efforts such as the West Coast Health Alliance emerged to continue advancing science-based public health leadership.

Locally, 2025 also brought the successful maintenance of Lincoln County Public Health's accreditation through the Public Health Accreditation Board, reflecting our commitment as a small rural health department to the highest standards of practice.

I am proud to present the 2025 Lincoln County Public Health Report, which highlights the programs, services, and priorities our team focused on over the past year.



Florence Poutal
Public Health Division Director

Mission, Vision & Values



Mission

To promote health, well-being, and recovery by providing high quality services, that protect, heal, and empower everyone in Lincoln County.

Vision

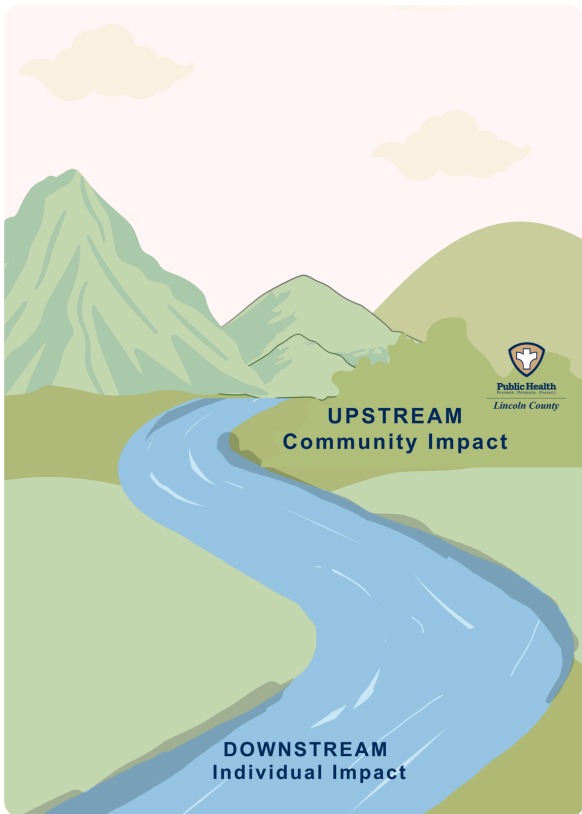
A community committed to optimal health, wellness, and recovery for all, wherein everyone has access to high quality, reliable, and timely services.

Values

Collaboration | Accountability | Trust | Community | Compassion | Adaptability

Lincoln County Public Health operates within the Lincoln County Health and Human Services (HHS) Department and shares the department's mission, vision, and values.

Who is Public Health?



The upstream parable:

A community along a river once noticed a steady stream of damaged boats drifting past, some with broken oars, others taking on water. People worked tirelessly to pull the boats ashore and make repairs. Their work was essential, and many boats were saved.

Over time, someone asked a simple question: Why are so many boats arriving damaged?

A small group traveled upstream and discovered the cause. Farther up the river, the waterway narrowed around sharp rocks, warning signs were missing, and maintenance had been neglected. Boats entering this stretch were at high risk before they ever reached the downstream helpers.

The community realized that while repairing boats downstream would always be necessary, lasting change required action upstream by removing hazards, improving navigation, and strengthening supports before damage occurred.

Public health works the same way. Responding to illness and injury is essential, but the greatest impact comes from preventing harm before it happens. At Lincoln County Public Health, this upstream approach guides our work every day, across the lifespan and throughout the community. Much of this work is mandated by Oregon statute, ensuring that communities receive essential public health protections and services. Our programs are designed to prevent illness and injury before they occur, promote physical, mental, and social well-being, and protect the public from health risks that are both visible and unseen.

Prevention & Promotion

Prevention and health promotion are central to our work. We support families from the very beginning through home visiting programs that connect pregnant people and families with babies and young children with nursing support, guidance, and local resources. We provide nutrition and breastfeeding support through WIC to promote healthy development for babies and children. Prevention and education efforts help reduce tobacco, alcohol, and other substance use by building skills, increasing awareness, and supporting healthy choices across the lifespan. Vaccination services and outreach help prevent the spread of disease and protect people of all ages, while clear, timely health communication supports informed decision-making throughout the community.

Protection

Protection is a core public health responsibility and often happens behind the scenes. Lincoln County Public Health monitors disease trends, respond and investigate communicable disease reports, and works to prevent further spread in households, schools, long term care facilities and other public settings. Environmental Health programs help ensure food is safe to eat and recreational water spaces are safe to use through licensing, regular inspections, and operator education.

Preparedness & Response

Public health also plays a critical role in preparedness and response. From emergency planning to outbreak response and environmental health threats, our staff work with partners to identify risks early and act quickly to reduce harm. Overdose prevention and harm reduction efforts save lives now while strengthening long-term community health.

Health is shaped by more than healthcare alone. By addressing root causes and working with community partners and local governments, Lincoln County Public Health helps create healthier environments for all.

Guided by our mission to protect and promote the health of our community, Lincoln County Public Health works to prevent illness, reduce harm, and create the conditions that support well-being for all. Through prevention, promotion, and protection, we partner with the community to address today's health needs while building a healthier future for generations to come.

Lincoln County Public Health: Maintains National Accreditation Status



This year, Lincoln County Public Health successfully completed a comprehensive, multi-year review process to maintain national accreditation status through the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB). By maintaining accreditation for another five years, we demonstrate our continued commitment to meeting rigorous national standards and dedication to evolving, improving, and advancing public health practices to best serve the people of Lincoln County.

Public health accreditation is a voluntary process that health departments may undertake to demonstrate accountability, transparency, and adherence to nationally recognized standards of excellence. Lincoln County Public Health was first accredited in 2018 after completing a rigorous, multi-year, peer-reviewed assessment of its programs, services, and organizational practices.

A Commitment to Quality and Continuous Improvement

Achieving reaccreditation reflects the collective work, dedication, and collaboration of staff across the Public Health Division. In preparation for reaccreditation, we strengthened systems and practices that support continuous improvement and long-term effectiveness. This work included

establishing a Quality Improvement Committee to foster a culture of learning and innovation, adopting a performance management system to track progress toward key metrics, and developing emergency preparedness and response plans to guide future public health responses.

National Accreditation Cont.

Lincoln County Public Health also invested in strengthening communication and accessibility by redesigning its website to improve usability and access to information, and by developing a division-wide communications plan and branding guide to ensure clear, consistent messaging. Additional efforts included completing an assessment of access to health care in Lincoln County and conducting a comprehensive evaluation of staff skills and capacities, resulting in the development of a Workforce Development Plan to support professional growth and a positive work environment.

These efforts represent only a portion of the work required to achieve reaccreditation, but together they reflect our commitment to delivering high-quality, equitable, and effective public health services.

Recognition from PHAB

In its final reaccreditation report, PHAB recognized Lincoln County Public Health's strong alignment with foundational public health practices, noting:



“Lincoln County is an example to other small agencies pursuing accreditation and should be very proud of their alignment and commitment to the foundational public health services.”

Annual Accomplishments

The following pages provide a snapshot of key accomplishments at Lincoln County Public Health in 2025. While not exhaustive, these highlights reflect the breadth of work underway to support the health and well-being of our community.



Disease Prevention & Harm Reduction



In 2025, the Disease Prevention and Harm Reduction Section strengthened both local and regional public health capacity through strategic partnerships and systems improvements. The team secured a \$432,000 grant to expand access to health resources across Lincoln County by partnering with two community-based organizations and supporting 3.5 funded positions.

In addition, the Communicable Disease Section advanced regional coordination by partnering with Benton and Linn counties to support disease information sharing and investigation. The team also finalized and implemented a communicable disease communications plan, streamlining internal processes to ensure timely, accurate, and coordinated public health messaging.

205 communicable disease reports received and managed

6 outbreaks reported and responded to

74% of reportable disease case investigations completed*






32 Flu Vaccine Clinics held

782 Rapid syphilis, hepatitis c and HIV tests administered

585 Safer sex kits distributed

956 Narcan kits distributed
1911 individual doses

29,917 Syringes returned to Harm Reduction

31,640 Syringes distributed by Harm Reduction

677 Safer injection kits distributed



*cases not completed: 18% unreachable 19% declined interview

Environmental Health & Vital Records

The Environmental Health Section improved support for food operators in 2025 by updating the restaurant and mobile food unit plan review processes. These updates improved clarity, consistency, and timeliness for applicants, helping food operators better navigate requirements while continuing to protect public health and safety.



1281 Inspections at licensed facilities

28 School kitchen inspections



158 Temporary food inspections

26 Complaints responded to



foodborne illness outbreaks



208

Birth certificates issued



3,070

Death certificates issued

Health Promotion

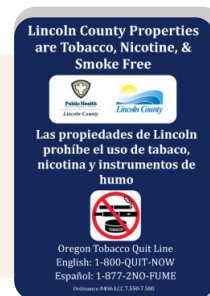
In 2025, Health Promotion's Tobacco Prevention and Education (TPEP) program advanced from Tier 2 to Tier 3 funding, allowing for expanded programming to include seven strategies and increased staffing to address the harms of commercial tobacco use in the county. The program supported two policy changes, one removing parks exemptions from the Lincoln County Tobacco and Smokefree properties policy and the second supporting Angell Job Corps to become a smokefree campus.

Health Promotion's Mental Health Promotion Program continued to provide suicide prevention training with QPR Question, Persuade, Refer to community members, community partners agencies, and Lincoln County staff. This program also supported a Trauma Informed Care training for all Health and Human Services staff members during the fall.

The Alcohol and other Drug Prevention and Education Program (ADPEP) helped to coordinate the 17th annual Walter Ackerson Hands Across the Bridge event during September's Recovery and Wellbriety Month in Waldport. This event brought together over around 130 people and multiple recovery-based community partners to raise awareness, reduce stigma and honor those in recovery from substance use and mental health challenges.

TOBACCO-FREE POLICY IMPLEMENTED

ALL Lincoln County property is now smoke, vape, and tobacco free. All Lincoln County Properties, including parks and campgrounds, are now tobacco, smoke, and nicotine-free.



4 Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR) Suicide Prevention Classes held

14 public school health classes taught



50 Tobacco Retail Assessments completed

2 Indoor Clean Air Act Complaints resulting in:
1 initial letter and **1** site visit



15 outreach and engagement labeling events, resulting in:
1,200 individual interactions with community members

Maternal, Child & Family Health (MCFH)

Maternal, Child, and Family Health (MCFH) continued to expand community engagement and service capacity in 2025. MCFH hosted the second annual Spring Family Fest, welcoming 275 attendees and partnering with 28 community organizations.

The Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) program was accepted into the NFPx expansion project, allowing services to reach an expanded population of clients. In addition, the Lincoln County CaCoon program presented at the annual OCCYSHN conference and helped launch a workgroup focused on addressing the need for skilled in-home nursing care for children and youth with special health needs.

The Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program's implementation of Teletask, a new two-way texting platform, improved participant retention in the WIC program and strengthened communication with families. Through Teletask, WIC staff provided nutrition education materials and facilitated communication for certification and recertification appointments of participants, as well as appointment scheduling and rescheduling. During this time, we also gained additional flexibility to offer remote appointments, helping reduce barriers to participation such as transportation challenges and improving access to WIC services for families.

We implemented the updated WIC food package, enhancing nutrition and expanding food choices for families in Lincoln County and statewide. The updated food package also better supports special dietary needs, including gluten-free, vegan, and allergen-free options.

Our Lincoln County WIC agency exceeded state-mandated training requirements, expanding staff knowledge, and strengthening the delivery of high-quality services to participants.



Babies First!



Parents as Teachers, Babies First, CaCoon, Family Connects, and Nurse Family Partnership:



412 referrals received for Babies First, CaCoon, Family Connects, and Nurse Family Partnership



398 clients served for Parents as Teachers, Babies First, CaCoon, Family Connects & Nurse Family Partnership

5 families completed the Parents as Teachers program



20 Parents as Teachers parent groups held

3,249

visits completed for Babies First, CaCoon, Family Connects & Nurse Family Partnership



324

visits completed by Parents as Teachers Program

Women, Infants and Children (WIC):



\$811,094

total WIC dollars spent by participants at local stores

1,476

Individuals served



864

Families served

95% of WIC participants initiated breastfeeding

46% exclusively breastfed through six months



100%

Farm Direct allocation distributed



474

Farmers market voucher booklets to eligible participants

\$8,048 total Farm Direct dollars paid to local farmers

Modernization

In 2025, Lincoln County Public Health advanced modernization by strengthening core systems that support effective and equitable services and developing a multi-year plan to guide this work. A highlight was building workforce capacity, including onboarding staff dedicated to modernization and adding a program manager to improve coordination and long-term sustainability across core public health functions.

To support alignment and shared priorities, the Health and Human Services department completed a division-wide review to assess how programs align with Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) goals. This effort strengthened collaboration, clarified how current work supports community priorities, and informed future planning.

Additional modernization efforts improved access and readiness through accessibility-focused website updates and strengthened emergency preparedness with the distribution of water filtration systems and emergency supplies.

Together, these efforts demonstrate Lincoln County Public Health’s commitment to a modern, collaborative, and prepared public health system.



7 Emergency community water filters staged across Lincoln County Health and Human Services facilities

5 staff FTE dedicated to modernization work

8 plans and policies written or revised

11 community outreach events - Emergency Preparedness

60 CHIP aligned projects and initiatives identified across HHS

84 materials reviewed for accessibility and readability

17 data requests completed



ONE COMMUNICABLE DISEASE RESPONSE EXERCISE CONDUCTED

Looking Ahead

Thank you for taking the time to review this report. Looking ahead to 2026, Lincoln County Public Health has an ambitious year underway, including the development of a new multi-year strategic plan, participation in a regional health assessment, and the realignment of select programs and services to ensure sustainable implementation. Together, these efforts will help ensure our work remains responsive, coordinated, and aligned with the evolving needs of our community.



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Lincoln County

Contact Us

www.co.lincoln.or.us/1005/Public-Health

541-265-4112

36 SW Nye St.

Newport, OR 97365