



FORTBEND
HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Fort Bend County Health & Human Services Annual Report 2022



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Letter from the Director

Fort Bend County Community,

We are pleased to present the Fort Bend County Health and Human Services (FBCHHS) Fiscal Year 2022 Annual Report, a reflection of our continuous commitment to the health and well-being of our county. As the new Public Health Director, along with our Local Health Authority, Dr. Minter, it is our privilege to serve you, the residents of Fort Bend County, and to share the progress and accomplishments of the past year.

With the continuous growth of Fort Bend County comes the requirement for more service and resource provisions, which include housing, employment, roads and highways, parks, and most notably more access to public health services. These services include disease prevention and health promotion through community engagement and direct services, particularly for obesity, heart disease, and prenatal care, which were highlighted by respondents in our 2022 Community Health Assessment followed by our Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). Your involvement remains critical to our mission, and we are committed to continuously improving our services based on your needs and concerns.

As the Public Health Emergency Declaration ended, FBCHHS continued to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic with resilience and dedication. By responding to requests for vaccination, testing, and educational outreach efforts, to safeguard the health of our community, we demonstrated our sincere commitment to addressing all the health needs that are essential to our community. The connections we established and strengthened include local, regional, and state governmental leaders, healthcare providers and systems, community-based organizations, businesses, faith-based organizations, school districts, and academic institutions. We will continue to seek out and break new ground for additional partnerships that will evolve to meet the unique and diverse needs of our Fort Bend County home.

This annual report highlights the dedication and hard work of nearly 400 employees serving in the eleven offices, divisions and programs that make up FBCHHS. In collaboration with our community partners, we have achieved remarkable progress in the face of adversity.

As we move forward, we remain committed to our vision of healthy neighbors living, learning, working, and playing together in healthy communities and to serving you, our valued residents. Your well-being is at the core of everything we do, and we invite you to join us in making Fort Bend County an even healthier and more vibrant community in the years to come.

We would like to express our gratitude to all our partners, stakeholders, and community members for their unwavering support. We look forward to the opportunities and challenges that Fiscal Year 2024 may bring and to continuing our journey toward a healthier, more resilient Fort Bend County.

Sincerely,

Dr. Letosha Gale-Lowe
Health Director

Dr. Jacquelyn Minter
Local Health Authority

About the Annual Report

The Fort Bend County Health & Human Services (FBCHHS) 2022 Annual Report highlights the major achievements that our divisions and offices have performed over the past year that contributed to making Fort Bend County a healthier place for all residents. Additionally, this report addresses how we have responded to public health crises and infectious diseases, increased communications and partnerships, are centering equity in our work, laying the foundation to apply for accreditation, and building infrastructure for better practices.





Fort Bend County Health & Human Services

Fort Bend County Health & Human Services is the principal agency for protecting the health of county residents and providing essential human services, especially for those who are least able to help themselves.

Mission:

The mission of Fort Bend County Health & Human Services (*FBHHS*) is to promote and protect the health and well-being of the residents of Fort Bend County through disease prevention and intervention, public health emergency preparedness and response, community engagement, and helping to assure the equitable provision of basic human needs.

Vision:

Healthy neighbors living, learning, working, and playing together in healthy communities.

Values:

- Integrity
- Innovation
- Servant Leadership
- Commitment
- Compassion
- Collaboration
- Quality
- Respect
- Equity

Organizational Structure and Services

The Fort Bend County Health and Human Services Department (*FBCHHS*) is governed directly by Fort Bend County Commissioners Court. The FBCHHS Director reports directly to the Commissioners and County Judge. The FBCHHS Director, as the local health authority, leads ten service providing Divisions/programs and three supporting Offices.

Divisions & Programs

- Animal Services
- Clinical Health Services
- Long Term Response
- Emergency Medical Services
- Environmental Health
- Epidemiology
- Indigent Health
- Public Health Emergency Preparedness
- Social Services

Supporting Offices

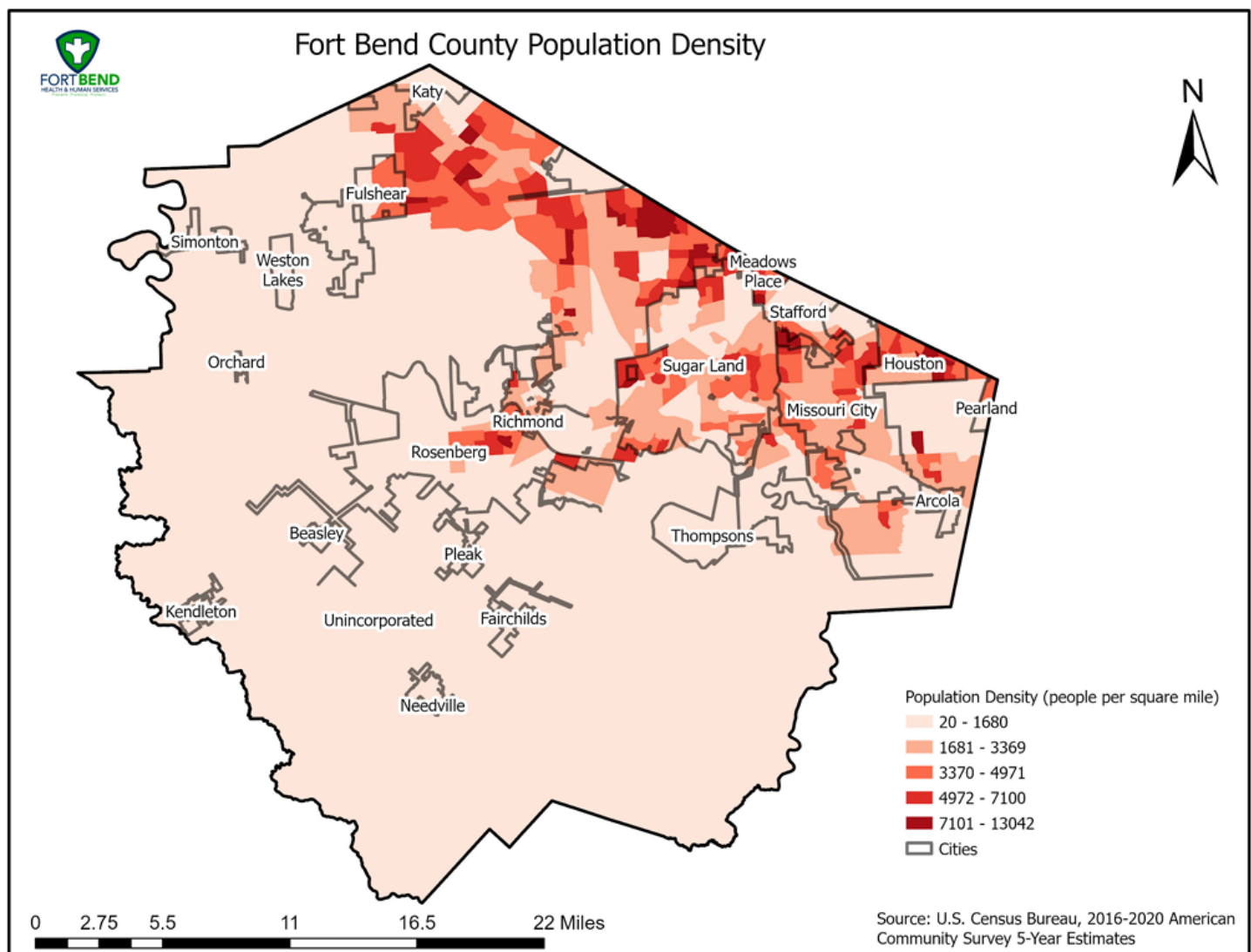
- Finance & Operations
- Communications, Education & Engagement
- Performance, Policy & Policy

About the Region and FBCHHS Services Map

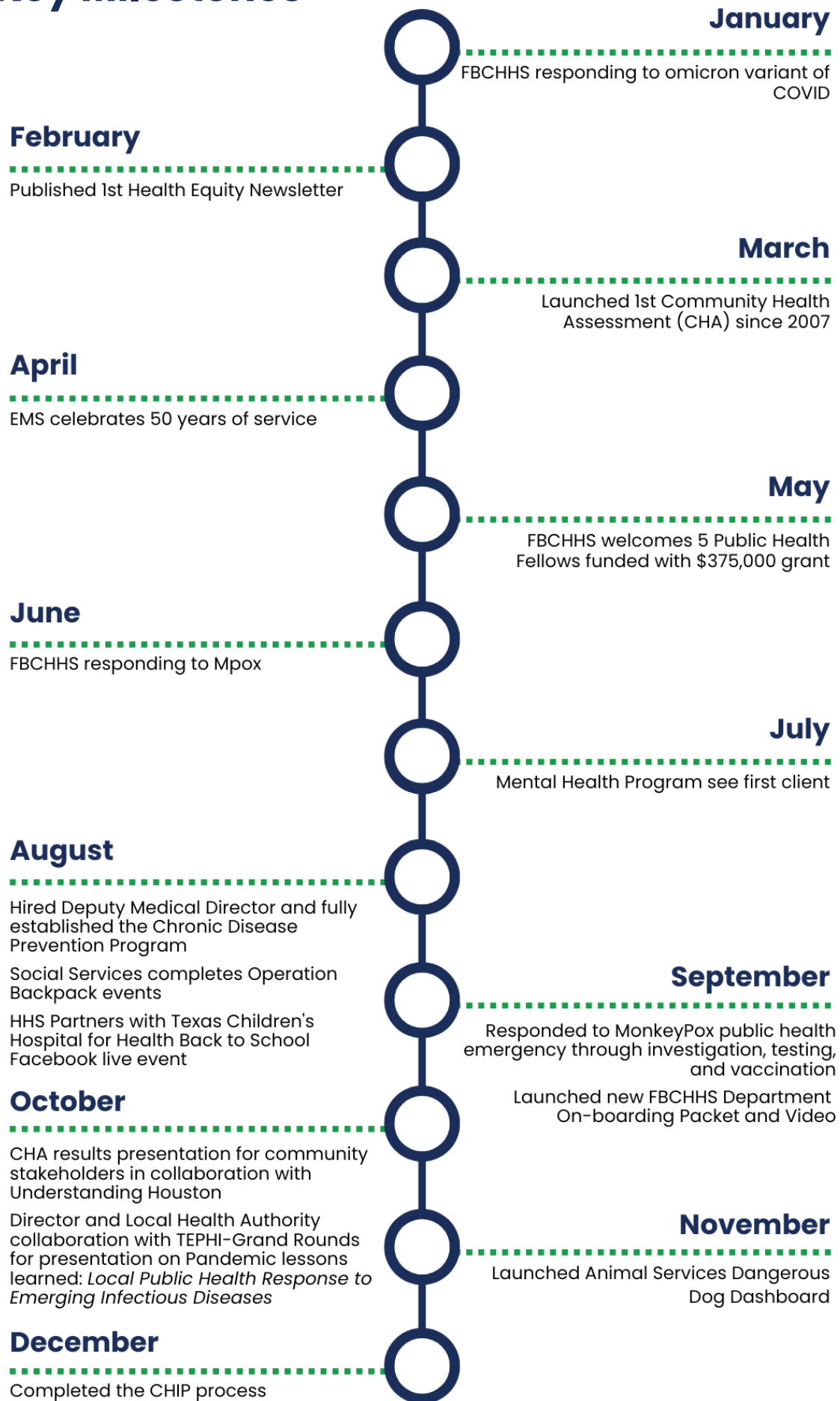
Location and Population Served

Fort Bend County, Texas, is one of the fastest growing counties in the nation. In 2010, the county's population was 585,375 by 2021 the population grew to 858,527 (*US Census Bureau*). It is estimated that by 2030 the population will have grown to over 1.1 million and by 2050 over 1.4 million people (*Fort Bend County*). Fort Bend County is located in the Houston metropolitan area of southeast Texas, encompassing a total of 875 square miles. It consists of urban areas from the City of Houston, suburban sprawl, mid- to small-sized cities and towns, and farmland.

The extremely geographically diverse county is also diverse in its race and ethnic composition. Approximately 30% of residents identified as White (*non-Hispanic*), followed by 25% identifying as Hispanic or Latino, 21.6% as Asian (*non-Hispanic*), and 21.9% as Black or African American (*US Census Bureau*). Over a quarter (27%) of the county's population is below the age of 18 and 12.1% is 65 year and over. 51% of the county's population is female and 49% is male (*County Health Rankings*).



2022 Key Milestones



2022 Office and Division Highlights

ANIMAL SERVICES

Division Overview

Animal Services has the goal of eradicating and mitigating the spread of rabies among the county's animals, preventing rabies in the human population, and controlling wild and potentially dangerous animals in densely populated areas. The Division also strives to enhance the quality of life in the community through education initiatives that are designed to prevent pet overpopulation, to provide compassionate enforcement of current laws relating to the treatment of animals, and to place animals in the care of the shelter with loving and responsible families. These goals are accomplished by offering Lifesaving Programs, including adoption and fostering, Trap-Neuter-Return services, Animal Control Services, and Animal Cruelty enforcement.

2022 Animal Services Accomplishments

- More than **3400** dogs and cats entered the shelter
- **1080** animals were rescued
- The shelter had a **93%** animal save rate
- **261** animals were redeemed
- **778** animals were adopted
- **950** cats were served in our Community Cat Program
- Over **300** pets were transported to Midwest and east coast states through partnerships with Houston Pet Set, Rescued Pets Movement and Animal Rescue Kingdom
- Pre-July 4th clinic microchipped over **200** dogs and cats
- Installed a heating system for our outdoor kennels to be used in conjunction with our garage doors. Funding was provided as a joint project with the Fort Bend County and Fort Bend PAWS (*Pets Are Worth Saving*)
- Received over \$180,000 in grant funding for 2022-2024 Lifesaving Programs initiatives
- Developed a Dashboard as a public safety measure to identify location of dangerous dogs in Fort Bend County



CHRONIC DISEASE PROGRAM

Program Overview

The Chronic Disease Program provides education and prevention services to reduce rates of illnesses such as heart disease and diabetes, and to promote healthy living and well-being.

2022 Animal Services Accomplishments

- Hired and on-boarded the first two grant funded staff members and initiated the Chronic Disease clinical program in August 2022
- Conducted **16** Chronic Disease Case Conferences
- Developed two dozen educational promotions
- Attended over **50** community health events and provided screening and health education
- Completed in-clinic diabetes and hypertension education for patients at the Rosenberg and Missouri City Clinics
- Launched partnership with Texas Children's Pediatric Behavioral Health Program in Fort Bend County - \$1.5 million grant supporting five Texas Children's Clinics in the county



▲ Two Chronic Disease Program staff conducting community health screenings

CLINICAL HEALTH SERVICES

Division Overview

Fort Bend County Clinical Health Services promotes health and wellness by partnering with community organizations and ensuring the equitable access to affordable health services to residents. The goal is to prevent infectious diseases such as measles, mumps, influenza, tuberculosis, chlamydia and HIV. Our team of caring nurses, providers and support staff offer clinical services in the Rosenberg, Missouri City and Katy Annexes and in the community providing immunizations, medications, and testing for these and other diseases.

2022 Clinical Health Services Accomplishments

- **Immunizations**
 - Provided annual in-person education for over **75** service providers about Children's Immunizations for the first time since the pandemic hit.
 - **3191** unduplicated immunization clients
 - **1002** Adult Safety Net vaccines provided
 - **4466** Texas Vaccines for Children vaccines provided
 - **3191** immunization patient clinic visits
- **Tuberculosis Services**
 - Investigated two high school-related TB cases and one workplace TB outbreak
 - Saw an influx of people from Ukraine needing screening
 - **626** unduplicated TB patients
 - **5059** TB patient visits
 - **1419** TB Case management visits
 - **185** Latent TB Infection patients
 - **31** skin tests given
- **HIV Prevention and Disease Intervention Programs**
 - Increased program footprint with over **100** client encounters
 - Assumed local control of case investigations
 - Completed 340B pharmacy program initiation to begin generating revenue
 - **89** office visits for STIs
 - **85** of unduplicated STI clients
 - **428** clients tested for STIs
 - **66** clients treated for STIs
 - **463** clients tested for HIV



◀ Social media post promoting HIV prevention and intervention services

Clinical Health Services Staff



EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

Division Overview

Emergency Medical Services, or EMS, performs the acute care functions of public health for Fort Bend County. This elite group of highly trained paramedics and command staff is responsible for approximately 40,000 responses of emergency medical assistance, including heart attacks, strokes and motor vehicle accidents each year. In April of 2022, Fort Bend County EMS celebrated 50 years of outstanding service to Fort Bend County residents and is a major contributor to the excellent quality of life enjoyed by Fort Bend County residents.

2022 Emergency Medical Services Accomplishments

- Acquired \$1.8 million in ARPA funding for Emergency and Support vehicles
- Processed over \$8 million in revenue
- Hosted the 3rd Annual EMS Week Medical Symposium which provided over 500 hours of continuing education
- AMBUS Deployment for nine State Missions and seven Local Mutual Aid responses
- Completed six new hire academies
- Received the American Heart Association Gold Plus Quality Award, recognizing for two or more consecutive calendar years of **85%** or higher adherence to evidence-based guidelines in the treatment of people cardiac related illness/disease



Fort Bend County EMS on the scene for medical monitoring

An EMS paramedic providing education on life saving equipment

Two EMS paramedics posing with a Fort Bend County medical vehicle



EMS providing firefighter rehab for a local fire department during an incident

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Division Overview

Environmental Health Services protects the environmental health of the people in Fort Bend County through four major programs: Food safety, On-site Sewage program, Environmental Enforcement and Nuisance Abatement. Food safety includes routine restaurant inspections and investigating complaints of foodborne illness notifications. The on-site sewage program regulates water and waste systems for properties not served by municipalities; also known as onsite sewage facilities/septic. Environmental enforcement addresses dumping of materials and other practices that create health hazards in the community requiring environmental officers to investigate and implement fines as necessary. Nuisance abatement protects the community from activities and conditions that create health hazards.

2022 Environmental Health Services Accomplishments

- Hired new Director/Division Manager in June 2022
- Implemented first phase of transitioning to a paperless system across all units within Environmental Health.
- Utilized contract labor to assist with food establishment plan reviews in order for businesses to not be impacted by delaying the opening of their establishments.
- Additional staff approved and filled by Commissioners Court that was desperately needed to meet the needs of our programs in order to support our constituents.
- Completed and implemented a cross collaborative Foodborne Illness process that includes food sampling, environmental sampling, and human disease testing.
- Reviewed gaps of all process and procedures across Environmental Health including modernizing fee structure and regulations to include all updated language in Texas Administrative Code
- Assessed and made recommendations for Mosquito Control and Pool Safety public health responses
- **1360** on-site sewage facility inspections
- **3696** food inspections
- **18** foodborne illness inspections
- **369** mobile vendor inspections
- **650** environmental crimes complaints
- \$1,041,980.60 in general fees



◀ An Environmental Health Officer surveying the scene of illegal dumping



Mobile vendors preparing for inspection by Environmental Health staff ▶

EPIDEMIOLOGY

Division Overview

The epidemiology division is responsible for gathering, analyzing and reporting health data that provides information to keep our community safe. These highly skilled scientists and their support staff are disease detectives who answer the who, what, where, when and sometimes why of well-known diseases such as salmonella in foods and new diseases such as Mpox. The data gathering is a continuous and vital cycle in predicting and preparing for seasonal disease occurrence, as well as recognizing new or ongoing threats such as COVID. They also use statistical analysis to study conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, asthma and obesity to help guide planning of programs designed to prevent illness and keep us living longer and healthier lives. We have epidemiologists to thank for disease investigation of outbreaks and use of the latest technology and information systems to create real-time reports for use by healthcare providers and decision makers.

2022 Epidemiology Accomplishments

- Responded to two Declarations of Public Health Emergencies, COVID-19 and Mpox.
- Produced over **4000** pages of reports for use by stakeholders and State and Federal Partners
- Maintained and updated two dashboards (COVID-19 and Mpox)
- Monitored over **100** Fort Bend County persons for Ebola, Mpox and Avian Flu in response to global outbreaks
- Reviewed and processed over **1.3 million** confirmed disease reports; including almost **20 thousand** non-COVID disease reports
- Responded to outbreaks of Norovirus, Cyclospora, Candida Auris, Mpox, COVID and Salmonella.
- This includes over **900** facility calls for assistance (nursing homes, day cares, schools and businesses)
- Awarded \$225,000 in grant funding to host three new graduate epidemiologists to assist in response at no cost to County



Epidemiology division staff

INDIGENT HEALTH

Program Overview

The Indigent Health Program is responsible for funding the medical care needs of County residents living in extreme poverty. The County Indigent Health Care Program (CIHCP) is mandated by the Indigent Health Care and Treatment Act of 1985. According to Section 61 of the Texas Health and Safety Code, counties that are not fully served by a hospital district or a public hospital are responsible for administering an indigent health care program for indigent residents of all or any portion of the county not served by a hospital district or a public hospital. The Indigent Health Program emphasizes education, wellness, and preventive care by coordinating accessible health and social services and serving as a key partner in Community Engagement for response and basic human needs including, operation backpack, community social services eligibility events and Holiday Toy Drive.

2022 Indigent Health Accomplishments

- **1398** clients served
- **4470** client encounters



◀ Indigent Health Care Division Manager Martha Hernandez (center) and staff at community Back to School Event

LONG TERM RESPONSE

Division Overview

The Long Term Response Division is responsible for on-going vaccinations, testing, and education for diseases that require large coordinated responses, such as COVID, Mpox and influenza. This team works closely with the other FBCHHS Divisions and community partners to decrease rates of disease and increase vaccine uptake.

2022 Long Term Response Accomplishments

- Led over **250** vaccine outreaches for nursing homes, group homes, faith communities, schools and non-profit agencies
- Coordinated a team of nurses and contract staff to respond to community requests
- Conducted massive vaccine data reconciliation effort for over **35,000** paper vaccination records
- Provided mass educational training for required FBCHHS staff that included diabetes, high blood pressure, COVID and Mpox
- For COVID Response - administered 4090 COVID injections and collected **4333** COVID test
- For Mpox Response -administered over **200** vaccines starting September 9, 2022 and performed in home and in clinic Mpox testing
- For Flu Response - administered over **300** vaccines for persons aged 5-65+ starting September 2022
- Participated in **17** flu outreach events during the months of October and November 2022



Long Term Response staff ▶



◀ Long Term Response staff providing drive-thru vaccinations to the community



PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS & RESPONSE

Division Overview

Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response leads the mission to protect the health of County residents during a public health emergency and has the ability to effectively respond to a range of public health threats, including infectious diseases, natural disasters, and biological, chemical, nuclear, and radiological events. This team also helps us minimize health consequences of natural and man-made disasters, such as floods and hurricanes or hazardous material spills in Fort Bend County. The dedicated employees in this division coordinate the training, planning and preparation of staff and the public to respond to disasters efficiently and effectively while minimizing the resulting poor health outcomes and loss of life.

2022 Public Health Emergency Preparedness & Response Accomplishments

- Provided leadership in the public health response to Mpox and Ebola
- Supported the deployment and demobilization of multiple vaccination and testing sites
- Supported of County Judge's Office Toy Distribution Event
- Collaborated with See to Succeed – vision outreach for Fort Bend County school children in FBISD and LCISD
- Provided supplies, including personal protection equipment for vaccination sites, testing sites, and County Departments
- Initiated tracking and inventory of public health preparedness resources in Rosenberg Annex Warehouse
- Organized infirmary setup for Warming Centers during December 2022 Winter Weather response
- **139** staff completed mandatory National Incident Management System training
- **8** exercises completed
- **9** outreaches with Medical Reserve Corps
- **2** exercises with County partners
- **5** After Action Reports completed



Public Health Emergency Preparedness & Response staff in personal protective equipment before a drill

Mobile Medical Unit (MMU) is a HHS public health emergency response asset for providing care, triage, treatment, transfer, & or discharge



SOCIAL SERVICES

Division Overview

Social Services addresses the basic human needs of our most vulnerable residents who lack food, shelter, and medication. Service is provided to eligible residents including those who are victims of crimes, families with children, veterans, and those suffering from untreated mental and behavioral illnesses. The team of social services employees work with compassion and skill to connect residents with needed services at our offices in Missouri City and Rosenberg in addition to being present at multiple locations within the community to address needs for those without the ability to travel to the office.

2022 Social Services Accomplishments

- Coordinated three Operation Backpack events for youth and children
- Organized Thanksgiving Family Food events
- Facilitated Veterans and Victims of Crime monthly connection meetings
- Led the December 2022 Winter Weather event Blanket response
- Hosted 6-10 summer youth interns and graduate student interns
- Assisted with general and faith-based outreaches with food, supplies and general assistance
- Distributed over \$1.3 million dollars in financial assistance to over 7000 clients
- Opened new Mental Health Program in late summer of 2022, receiving over 90 referral and having over 30 client encounters
- **3339** unduplicated households served
- **546** unduplicated households served with rent/mortgage assistance
- **254** unduplicated households served with Emergency Shelter Assistance
- **1045** unduplicated households served with food
- **1055** unduplicated households served with utility assistance
- **20** unduplicated households served with medication assistance
- **53** unduplicated households served with unmet needs



Social Services staff providing service information to families at a local public school



Social Services staff providing eligibility assistance to individuals and families at a community event

Social Services staff attending a community event



FINANCE & OPERATIONS

Office Overview

The Office of Finance & Operations provides coordination and support of facilities, fleets, IT, HR and finances for FBCHHS. The office provides logistics coordination by tracking inventory, procurement of resources/supplies, packing, transport & delivery of supplies, and assists with outreach set-up. Financial coordination includes guidance and monitoring of expenditures of divisional budgets, preparation of financial projections for executive team, grant administration, and the provision of direct support/guidance for audits and assisting with budget review.

2022 Finance & Operations Accomplishments

- Implemented inventory management system in order to be grant compliant
- Responded to all audits
- Coordinated administrative team



COMMUNICATIONS, EDUCATION & ENGAGEMENT

Office Overview

The Office of Communication, Education & Engagement supports the overall activities and services of FBCHHS by providing accurate, timely and consistent public health messages that are responsive to diverse cultural health beliefs and practices, preferred languages, health literacy, and other communication needs. Community Health Workers and Community Health Education Specialists partner with organizations such as schools, health care organizations, faith-based partners, businesses and non-profit groups to engage and provide outreach activities to the community.

2022 Communications, Education & Engagement Accomplishments

- Produced a FBCHHS Onboarding video
- Supported Epidemiology public facing documentation
- Provided branding for Community Health Assessment documents and Health Equity Newsletter
- Administered Community Health Assessment survey
- Supported Risk Communications with public health impact for the County Judge in collaboration with other County Departments
- Supported all divisions for community outreach, media responses and educational materials, which included the creation of over **750** health education media pieces
- Supported over **300** community engagement events and internal workforce trainings
- Awarded \$75,000 to host a public health fellow to assist with health literacy initiatives



Health Education table created by OCEE outreach staff

OCEE outreach staff attending Culver Elementary 'Fall Festival'

OCEE outreach team attending a community event with Animal Services



OCEE outreach staff playing 'spin-the-wheel' with community youth

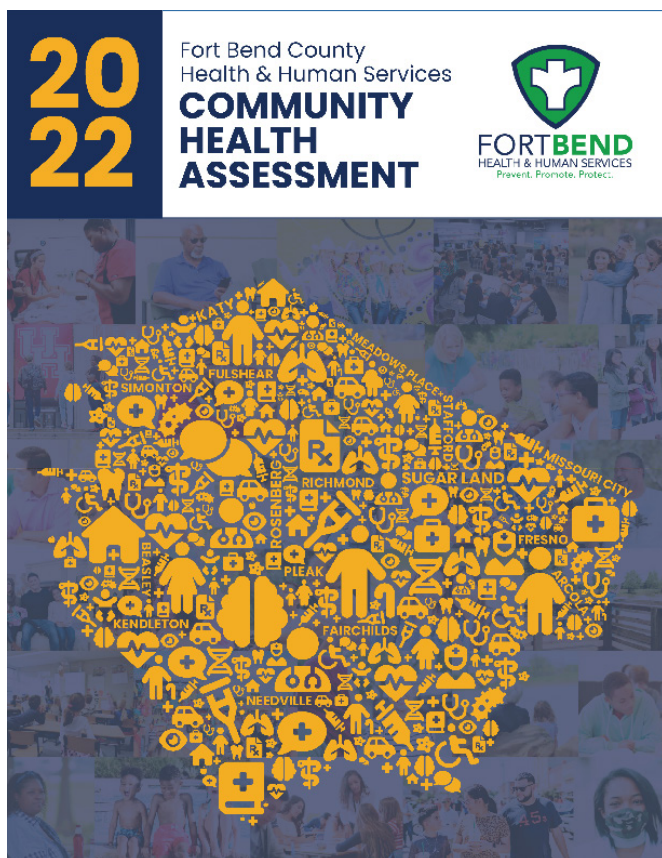
PERFROMANCE, POLICY & INNOVATION

Office Overview

The Office of Performance, Policy, and Innovation works with FBCHHS Divisions to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of services through the ongoing process of measuring, monitoring, and reporting progress towards strategic organization, division, and program goals and objectives and assists with policy development and review. The Office's three main roles include: moving the department towards accreditation and adopting better practices, centralizing health equity across programs and services, and adopting quality improvement projects across all FBCHHS divisions. The goal is to champion internal initiatives and policies for addressing public health in innovative ways to meet the ever-evolving needs of Fort Bend County residents.

2022 Performance, Policy & Innovation Accomplishments

- Completed the Community Health Assessment process including over **845** survey responses and **25** Key Informant interviews
- Initiated, developed and completed the Community Health Improvement Plan process which included gathering community feedback from more than **150** Fort Bend County leadership, residents, stakeholders and health champions and over **70** organizations.
 - Partnered with Understanding Houston for “Fort Bend County – The Big Picture” to share Community Health Assessment information and seek community input on solutions to community needs
- Completed the Performance Management and Continuous Quality Improvement Plan
 - Initiated plan implementation through training staff and developing program specific improvement projects
- Developed **23** FBCHHS Internal Policies – submitted to HR, CAO, and IT for review
- Created a digital Onboarding manual for FBCHHHS new hires and Division Manager Onboarding process
- Awarded \$75,000 to host a public health fellow to assist with population health initiatives
- Accreditation milestones –on target for summer 2023!



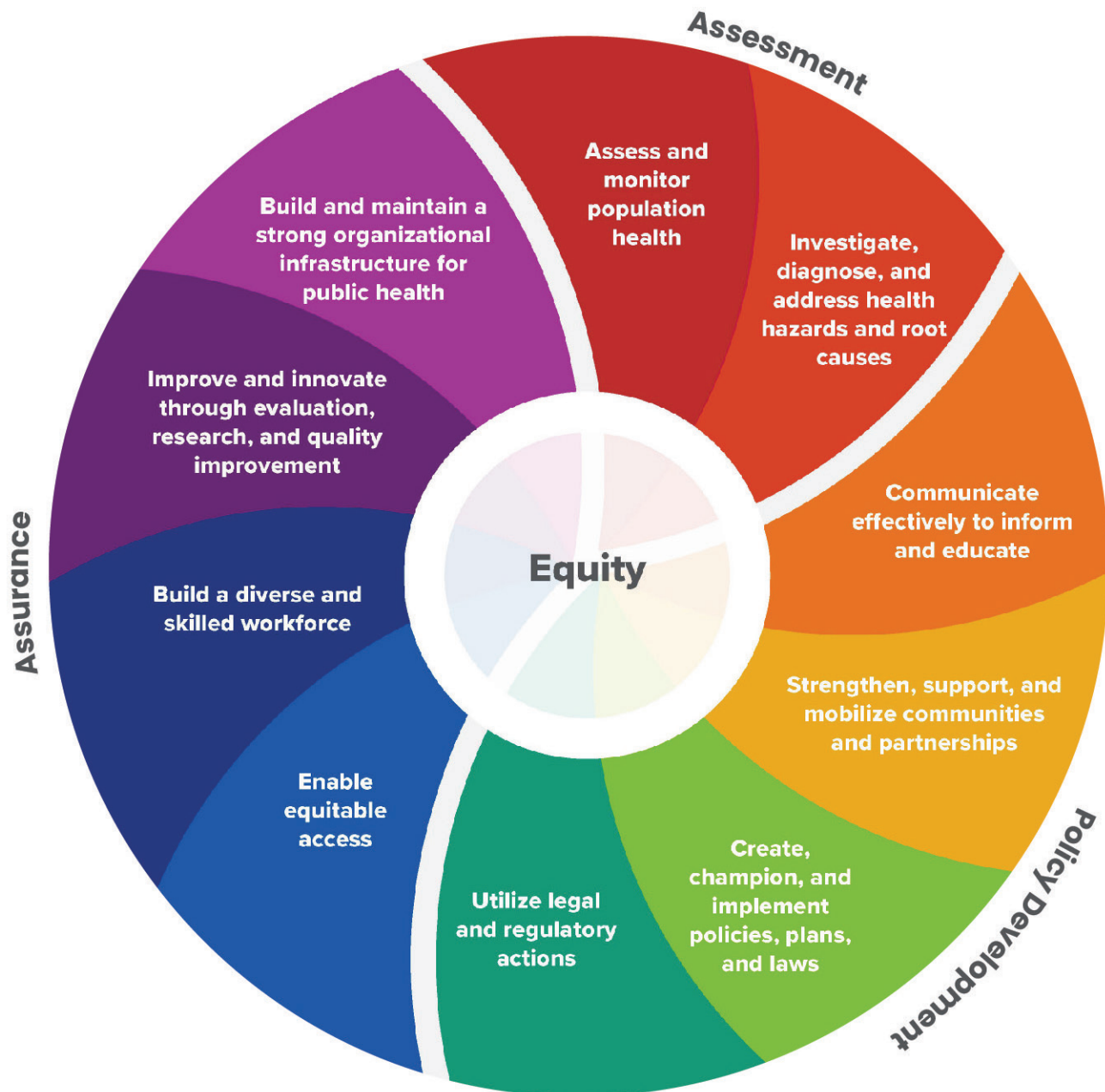
FBCHHS completed the first [Community Health Assessment \(CHA\)](#) since 2007



Carrie Rai leading the discussion with community stakeholders to develop a Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) in response to the Community Health Assessment (CHA) data

THE 10 ESSENTIAL PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

To protect and promote the health of all people in all communities.



The 10 Essential Public Health Services provide a framework for public health to protect and promote the health of all people in all communities. To achieve optimal health for all, the Essential Public Health Services actively promote policies, systems, and services that enable good health and seek to remove obstacles and systemic and structural barriers, such as poverty, racism, gender discrimination, and other forms of oppression, that have resulted in health inequities. Everyone should have a fair and just opportunity to achieve good health and well-being.

Source: [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)