



JEFFERSON COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH
Wednesday, February 11, 2026 - 5:00 p.m.
5th Floor Board Room

Present: Michele Kong, MD, Weily Soong, MD, Andre' McShan, MD, and Alison Heaton, MD

Absent: Elizabeth Turnipseed, MD and Commissioner Jimmie Stephens

Others Present: Bryn Manzella, Kim Bullock, Ekta Choudhary, PhD, Loretta Hicks, Rodney Holmes, David Hicks, DO, David Maxey, Esq., Terrie Hartley, Khalilah Brown, MD, Senitra Blackburn, and Wesley Willeford, MD

Call to Order

Prior to calling the meeting to order, Dr. Kong announced that in the absence of Dr. Turnipseed, Board Chair, she was asked to serve as Chair Pro Tempore. Upon the motion by Dr. Heaton and seconded by Dr. McShan, Dr. Kong was unanimously approved to serve as Chair Pro Tempore for this meeting.

Dr. Kong, Chair Pro Tempore, called the meeting to order.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the January 14, 2026 meeting were approved as distributed.

January 2026 Financial Statements

Mr. Rodney Holmes, Finance and Administration Director, presented a quarterly update on the January 2026 Financial Statements and responded to questions from the Board.

In response to a Board member inquiry, Dr. Khalilah Brown, Clinical Services Director, provided an update regarding pediatric primary care services and associated revenue.

Contracts

On the motion of Dr. Soong, and seconded by Dr. McShan, the following contracts are approved:

Renewal of a contract with Jefferson-Blount-St. Clair Mental Health Authority (payee) for provision of mental health access and services to JCDH patients who participate in the Child Health Primary Care Program; not to exceed \$95,000 from October 1, 2025, through September 30, 2028.

A new contract with Courtney French Broadcasting, LLC (payee) for radio commercials promoting World Aids Day screening event; not to exceed \$2,500 from November 18, 2025, through December 1, 2025.

A new contract with Radio Estrella (payee) for radio and promotion promoting World Aids Day screening event; not to exceed \$900 from November 18, 2025, through December 1, 2025.

A new contract with Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (payee) for an intergovernmental transfer of funds for trail development at Tannehill Ironworks Historical State Park on its Forever Wild tract within Jefferson County; not to exceed \$90,128.34 from January 6, 2026, through January 5, 2027.

A new contract with Birchfield Penuel and Associates (payee) for master agreement for multiple projects, including but not limited to, parking deck at Guy M. Tate renovations/water leakage; not to exceed hourly rate of \$75 to \$195 from November 21, 2025, to upon completion.

An amendment to a contract with S & G Waldrop Electric, Inc. (payee) to provide additional canopy lights and pole light, perform additional work related to removal and replacement of seven parking lot fixtures, and two wall pack lights at Guy M. Tate building and Western Health Center; not to exceed \$21,317.80 from October 20, 2025, through January 31, 2026.

A new contract with Johnson Controls Fire Protection, LP (payee) to replace 6-inch GRV butterfly valve with tamper; not to exceed \$1,930.50 from October 30, 2025, through January 31, 2026.

A new contract with Johnson Controls Fire Protection, LP (payee) to repair deficiencies noted during recent inspection. Perform five-year hydro on fire department connection and replace outdated gauges; not to exceed \$1,407.52 from October 30, 2025, through January 31, 2026.

A new contract with White Oak Solutions, LLC (payee) for onsite assistance with racking, cabling, and powering of two HA FortiGate cluster at two physical locations; not to exceed \$3,000 from January 16, 2026, through February 28, 2026.

Report of the Health Officer

Dr. Hicks provided the following update to the Board.

Report from State Health Officer – January 2026

Dr. Hicks presented to the Board for their information a summary report for the month of January 2026, from Dr. Scott Harris, State Health Officer, sent monthly to county Boards of Health describing actions taken by the State Committee of Public Health.

Reportable Diseases Update

Jefferson County is experiencing a second spike in influenza-like illnesses as is typically seen annually. The etiology of specimens tested thus far this season as a part of surveillance activities is as follows: influenza A (69%), unspecified (20%), influenza B (9%), respiratory syncytial virus (2%).

Hospital visits for COVID-19-like illnesses have decreased significantly over the past few weeks but remain above baseline.

Infant Mortality Rate

The Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) recently announced the 2024 Alabama infant mortality rate (IMR) was 7.1 deaths per 1,000 live births, a decrease from the 7.8 rate in 2023. Jefferson County's infant mortality rate decreased from 10.2 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2023 to 7.2 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2024. This is the lowest IMR recorded in the county although there remains a disparity in the rates based on race with Blacks having a disproportionately higher rate (12.6) as compared to the rate in Whites (3.3).

Dr. Hicks noted the three causes of infant mortality: (1) birth defects, (2) preterm and low birthweight, and (3) bacterial sepsis. The Board discussed what action can be taken to improve the IMR. Dr. Hicks reminded the Board the Department provides services through the "From Day One" program that is a comprehensive initiative designed to support expectant mothers and their babies, starting from the first trimester of pregnancy to improve birth outcomes and reduce infant mortality rates and the UAB School of Nursing operates the Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) program which aims to improve maternal and child health outcomes by providing personal nurses to pregnant and parenting mothers. Dr. Hicks noted the Department is working on comparing the effectiveness of these programs and could focus on gathering data to assess the underlying drivers of infant mortality.

Gun Violence

According to preliminary figures from the Jefferson County Coroner/Medical Examiner's Office, they investigated 126 homicides in 2025, reflecting a 36 percent reduction compared to the previous year. The data indicates that firearms were involved in 96 percent of these cases. At the request of Dr. Hicks, Bryn Manzella, MPH, Quality Improvement Officer, provided statistics from Violence Intervention and Prevention Partners, a hospital-linked violence intervention program managed by the Offender Alumni Association. Ms. Manzella also provided information on the City of Birmingham's gun violence initiatives.

All-Staff Meetings

This week, Dr. Hicks began conducting all-staff meetings to discuss departmental updates.

2026 Legislative Session Update

Dr. Hicks is participating in legislative update calls with the Alabama Department of Public Health's governmental affairs division. He updated the Board on the following bills that have been introduced in the State legislature:

- HB-12 - Prohibits certain entities from discriminating against an individual on the basis of the individual's refusal of certain drugs, vaccines, or facial coverings for reasons of conscience, including religious convictions.
- HB-25 - Prohibits dispersion of items intended to affect weather.
- HB-72 - Prohibits smoking or vaping marijuana in motor vehicle when child is present, requires mandatory reporting when a child smells of marijuana, and requires ADPH to develop public education materials on the dangers of secondhand marijuana smoke. It has passed in the House and pending committee review in the Senate.
- HB-129 - Proposes that licensed midwives be permitted to both order and administer newborn screening tests.
- HB-136 - Requires the Governor to certify that there is an immediate threat to "public health, safety, or welfare" before a state agency could issue emergency rules. This has passed in the House and pending review in the Senate.

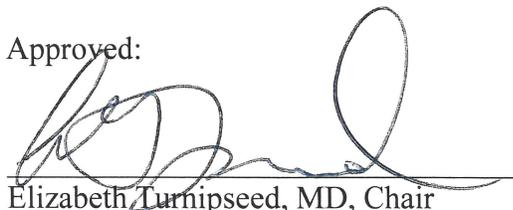
- HB-277 - Authorizes oyster aquaculture licensees to harvest, shuck, and serve oysters from the aquaculture facility for product tasting without a permit from ADPH. This has passed in the House and pending committee review in the Senate.
- HB-381 - Requires camps with residential facilities for campers to obtain an emergency preparedness license from the Alabama Emergency Management Agency as a condition for operation by demonstrating that certain requirements are met.
- SB-71 - Prohibits an agency from adopting a new rule, or amending an existing rule, that establishes standards for certain environmental protection subjects that are more stringent than federal law or regulations. In the absence of federal law or regulations, agencies may not adopt a new rule, or amend an existing rule, that establishes standards for certain environmental protection subjects unless the rule is based on the best available science and the weight of scientific evidence. This bill has passed in the Senate and pending vote in the House.
- SB-9 - Prohibits the smoking of electronic nicotine delivery systems in the same manner as the smoking of tobacco products under the Alabama Clean Indoor Air Act. It has passed in the Senate and pending committee review in the Senate.
- SB-84 - Requires ADPH to assume jurisdiction over sanitation in cafeterias and other food services operated by the Department of Corrections and county and municipal jails by tailoring appropriate requirements which would include regular sanitation inspections and the reporting and correction of sanitary violations.
- SB-112 and SB-136 - Renames the Alabama Massage Therapy Licensing Board to the Alabama Massage Advisory Council and places it as a division within ADPH.
- SB-128 - Places the Alabama Sickle Cell Oversight and Regulatory Commission as a division within ADPH. It has passed in the Senate and passed out of committee in the House.
- SB-197 - Exempts mobile food vendors that hold a valid health inspection certificate and a valid fire inspection certificate from having to obtain additional licenses, permits, or other permissions, in jurisdictions the mobile food vendor temporarily operates.
- SB-278 - Requires private health insurance and the Alabama Medicaid program to pay or reimburse for influenza vaccinations.

The next Board of Health meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 11, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. in the Fifth Floor Board Room. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:09 p.m.



Alison Heaton, MD, Secretary

Approved:



Elizabeth Turnipseed, MD, Chair