



525-535 West Jefferson Street • Springfield, Illinois 62761-0001 • www.dph.illinois.gov

State Board of Health Policy Committee
Thursday, May 15, 2025
1:00 PM-3:00 PM
Minutes

Meeting Recording:

[May 15, 2025 State Board of Health Policy Committee Meeting-20250515 1804-1 - Webex](#)

Location

WebEx Video Conference Service

Join by phone: +1-312-535-8110 United States Toll (Chicago) or +1-415-655-0002 US Toll

Meeting number (access code): 2633 423 3347

Meeting password: M9vmJCj2mS8

Join by video: <https://illinois.webex.com/illinois/j.php?MTID=mcbf67177944dcfb16270f810de8536e9>

Agenda

1. Call to Order
 - Members Present: Damon Arnold, Dawn Brown, Rashmi Chugh, John (“Jack”) Herrmann, Esther Sciammarella, Susan Swider
 - Members Not Present: Not Applicable
 - IDPH Staff Present: Allison Nickrent, Jessica Bounds, Louis Lee, Randal Ralph, Emily F. Spangler, Gregory M. Willis
 - Guests: Karen Phelan
2. Public Comment
 - a. Not Applicable
3. New Business
 - a. Food Safety and Security
 - Broad threats to food safety: environmental disasters, weakened EPA restrictions, bioterrorism, supply-chain disruptions.
 - Damon Arnold referenced *The Game Changers*, a documentary available on Netflix that explores the impact of plant-based nutrition on performance and health. He described it as one of the best films he has seen on the topic of nutrition.
 - Historical dietary insights: “Gladiator” diet (largely vegetarian), importance of plant-based nutrients and microbiome health.
 - Dietary risk factors: saturated fats, salt, sugar, additives, and lifestyle elements (smoking, alcohol, stress) contributing to chronic inflammation and disease.

- Food reactions: distinctions between allergies, sensitivities, and intolerances; prevalence and common triggers (e.g., peanuts, tree nuts, dairy, wheat, soy, sesame).
- Food additives & dyes: legal definitions, functions (preservatives, flavoring, coloring, fortification), and health concerns.
 - RFK Jr.'s initiative aims to phase out petroleum-based synthetic dyes (e.g., Red 3, Yellow 5 and 6, Red 40, Blue 1 and 2) by 2026.
 - Illinois Senate Bill 2637, which passed the Senate on April 18, 2024, proposes banning four synthetic dyes, brominated vegetable oil, potassium bromate, and Purple Paraben. The manufacturing ban would take effect on November 1, 2027, and the sales ban on November 1, 2028.
- Emerging contaminants: microplastics and nano plastics linked to cardiovascular mortality; arsenic in rice.
- Key Recommendations:
 - Expand “food safety” to include nutritional security and chronic-disease prevention.
 - Establish a “Healthy Foods” subcommittee within the policy committee.
 - Pursue federal/state funding for food safety and nutrition initiatives.
 - Coordinate with the Illinois Department of Agriculture on agricultural-health policy intersections.
 - Assess food-system vulnerabilities to deliberate contamination or market shocks.
- Food Additives Legislation (Allison Nickrent)
 - House Bill 1600 referenced; committee to review and support as appropriate.
- Microplastics & Packaging (John (“Jack”) Herrmann and Damon Arnold)
 - Discussion of phased approach: short-, intermediate-, and long-term goals for reducing plastic exposure and promoting alternatives.
 - Damon Arnold suggested John (“Jack”) Herrmann present on animal-feed additives at next meeting; Committee will consider public-awareness campaign on plastics.
- IDPH Food Science Engagement
 - Proposal to invite IDPH’s food-science staff to brief the Committee on current issues and initiatives.
 - Damon Arnold suggested Susan Swider to give a presentation on Community Cottage Food at the next Committee meeting.
- Consumer Awareness Campaigns (Esther Sciammarella)
 - Suggests leveraging Community Health Workers and nutritionists to raise awareness about safe food handling, packaging, and dietary choices in underserved areas.



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4. Old Business

a. Reduced Vaccine Preventable Disease Exploratory Committee approved.

- No chair confirmed, but members include Damon Arnold, Rashmi Chugh, David Chung, Esther Sciammarella, Claire Simon, Susan Swider.
- Work with Department staff to get meeting scheduled.

5. 2025 Meetings

a. **STATE BOARD OF HEALTH 11:00 AM – 1:30 PM**

- i June 5
- ii September 4
- iii December 11

b. **STATE BOARD OF HEALTH RULES COMMITTEE 1:00 – 3:00 PM**

- i August 14
- ii November 6

c. **STATE BOARD OF HEALTH POLICY COMMITTEE 1:00 – 3:00 PM**

- i August 21
- ii November 13

6. Adjournment