

**Nebraska State Board of Health**  
Public Meeting  
**Minutes**

This is a draft. Minutes  
have not been approved  
by the State Board of  
Health.

Monday, June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2026, 1:00pm

**MEMBERS:** Mark Bertch, DPT; Jaime Dodge, MD; Staci Hubert, PharmD; Micah Kohles, DVM, MPA; Brett Lindau, DO (Secretary); Ryan Palmer, OD; Connie Lynn Petersen, PhD; David Reese, MHA (Chair); Jeremiah Rethwisch, DC; Jacob Sikes; Kimberly Stuhmer, RN, MT; Ken Tusha, DDS; Dan Vehle (Vice Chair); Jeffrey Wienke, Jr, DPM.

**STAFF:** Caryn Vincent, Emma Davis, Ellie Rohr

### 1. Call to Order and Roll Call

David Reese, Board of Health Chair, called a regular meeting of the State Board of Health to order at 12:59 PM on June 15, 2026, in the Goldenrod Conference Room in the Lower Level of the Nebraska State Office Building in Lincoln. Copies of the agenda were mailed electronically to board members prior to the meeting and posted on the Health and Human Services website. The following members were present: Mark Bertch, DPT; Staci Hubert, PharmD; Brett Lindau, DO; Ryan Palmer, OD; Connie Petersen, PhD; David Reese, MHA; Jeremiah Rethwisch, DC; Jacob Sikes; Kimberly Stuhmer, RN, MT; Ken Tusha, DDS; Dan Vehle; Jeffrey Wienke, DPM. Members not in attendance: Jaime Dodge, MD. Quorum met.

Staff and others in attendance: Caryn Vincent, Emma Davis, Ellie Rohr

A copy of the Open Meetings Act was available in the meeting room.

### 2. Adoption of the Agenda and Approval of the Draft Minutes

- Mr. Reese asked if there were any changes to the minutes from January 26, 2026 minutes. With no changes proposed, Dr. Petersen made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Mr. Vehle; voting yes: 11 (Bertch, Hubert, Lindau, Petersen, Reese, Rethwisch, Sikes, Stuhmer, Tusha, Vehle, Wienke); voting no: 0; not voting: 1 (Kohles). Motion carried.
- Mr. Reese asked if there were any changes to the agenda for the June 15, 2026, meeting. With no changes proposed, Dr. Lindau made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Dr. Hubert; voting yes: 10 (Bertch, Hubert, Lindau, Petersen, Reese, Rethwisch, Sikes, Stuhmer, Tusha, Vehle); voting no: 0; not voting: 2 (Kohles, Wienke).

### 3. Reports and Updates

- Chief Medical Officer – Tim Tesmer, MD
  - Dr. Tesmer gave an update on the status of the Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP). The state was awarded \$218.5 million for the first year to improve rural health access, care, and workforce.
    - By October 1, 2026, all \$218.5 million needs to be allocated. DHHS has been working very hard to get everything out.
    - There are 7 initiatives for RHTP. Making Nebraska Healthy Through Food as Medicine, Regionalized Rural Access and Navigation, Rural Workforce Acceleration, eHealth and Mobile Care, Rural Emergency Behavioral Health, Assisted Living Facility Special Needs Population Incentive Model, and Nebraska Rural Health Technology Catalyst Fund and Partnership Initiative. Not all initiatives will be funded this first year but will be focused on throughout the five-year period.

- There have been around 18 requests for applications that have been released for this year. About one third of applications are still open but are quickly closing.
    - The focus has been releasing applications and getting the agreements through procurement. There are around 160 agreements that are in the process.
    - November 1, 2026, will be the start of year two.
    - Visit the RHTP website for more information. <https://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Rural-Health-Transformation.aspx>
- State Epidemiologist – Sydney Stein, DVM, MPH
  - Dr. Stein gave an update on Hantavirus. At the beginning of May there was an outbreak on a cruise ship in the Atlantic Ocean. WHO confirmed it was the Andes Hantavirus and is the only Hantavirus that transmits person to person. This is not a species typically found in the U.S. Sin Nombre Hantavirus is found in the U.S. and is not transmitted person to person. We received 18 passengers to the National Quarantine Unit in Omaha. So far, 10 of the 18 have been transported back to their residence and continue to be monitored by their state. There are 13 total cases with 3 deaths, but none were in the U.S.
  - Dr. Stein gave an update on the Ebola virus outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Specifically, this species is Bundibugyo virus. The only other known outbreaks were in 2007 and 2012. There is not very much knowledge about this species and is still considered a high consequence infectious disease with a high case fatality rate. There are no known medical measures for this species, only supportive care. Clinical trials are being set up but have not been started. On May 17, WHO declared this a Public Health Emergency of International Concern. On May 21, the CDC started screening U.S. citizens who have traveled to South Sudan, Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Uganda. No patients have been brought to the U.S., but there are discussions of the National Quarantine Unit (NQU) house high risk travelers, but nothing has been decided. NQU will be ready to house if necessary. Nebraska has received 35 returning travelers. All are still in their incubation period. Any travelers are being enrolled in the RedCap monitoring systems.
  - Dr. Stein gave an update on the New World Screwworm (NWS). On June 3, USDA confirmed the first case in Texas in a calf. As of June 12, there have been 12 total animals (mostly cattle, sheep, goats, and 1 dog) who have been confirmed to be infested. This fly crossed over from North and Central America. This is mostly an opportunistic infestation of animals. USDA is all hands-on deck. The U.S. does not have a sterile fly production facility – the method how the fly is pushed out. It is not likely that NWS will be affected.
  - CDC announced on June 12 that infant botulism is linked to the organic whole milk powdered infant formula by Nara Organics. This was sold online and at Targets. DHHS has sent notification to the Local Health Departments with a Target and are working with NDA to coordinate formula being pulled off the shelves. Nebraska is currently not affected but it is all can sizes and lot numbers. A Health Alert Network will be sent out.
  - College World Series and World Cup are ongoing. So far, only upticks in illnesses are related to heat, alcohol, and brawls.
- Licensure Unit – Lindsay Braddock
  - Ms. Braddock introduced Lisa Osborn, the new Administrator II for Health Facility Licensure.
  - Update on the licensing issuing system. The unit is working to integrate the facility licensure into this system.
  - Ms. Braddock gave updates from 2025.
    - 324 licensees that were disciplined. In 2022, there 197 licensees disciplined.
    - For childcare licensees, there were 125 that received corrective action or discipline. In 2022, there were 122.
    - All of this information is available on DHHS's public website and stays public for 10 years.
  - Reminder that effective July 1, APRN Board is merging with the Nursing Board, and the Alcohol and Drug Counselor Board is merging with the Mental Health Board.

- Mental health professions will begin license renewals soon. This will end on September 1.
- Renewals occurring now are optometry, occupational therapy, and chiropractic and will conclude August 1. Wholesale drug distributors and community pharmacies are occurring now and will end July 1.
- Board of Health Chairperson – Mr. Reese
  - Welcome Dr. Kohles. He is filling the veterinarian vacancy.
  - Dr. Bertch attended the Board of Occupational Therapy meeting.
    - At the meeting, they discussed dry needling and updating their scope of practice.
    - Let Emma know if you attend any meetings for the Board of Health.
  - All Board of Health members should have submitted their annual Statement of Accountability and Disclosure by March 1. If you have not completed this form, please contact Emma and she can help you.
  - Mr. Reese brought up the idea of having a meeting outside of the Lincoln area. It was decided the September meeting will be in Lincoln and a future meeting in 2027 outside of Lincoln.
  - The Board has a vacancy for physician and professional engineer members. If you know anyone or have connections to possible applicants, please send them the application.
  - Board of Health member Patricia Kucera passed away in late May. Her celebration of life is July 25<sup>th</sup>.

#### 4. Credentialing Review Committee – Dr. Bertch, Committee Chair

- Dr. Rethwisch has been established as the Vice Chair.
- The committee reviewed the Crematory Operators credentialing review.
  - Technical Review Committee members proposed: Jeffrey Howorth, David Deemer, Michael O’Hara, Peter Hunt, Kyle McCartney, Gary Anthone. Mr. Reese asked to make a motion to approve the members of the Crematory Operators Technical Review Committee. Dr. Wienke made a motion to approve the committee, Ms. Stuhmer seconded; voting yes: 13 (Bertch, Hubert, Kohles, Lindau, Palmer, Petersen, Reese, Rethwisch, Sikes, Stuhmer, Tusha, Vehle, Wienke); voting no: 0; not voting: 0.
  - Technical Review Committee Chair proposed: Dr. Mark Bertch. Mr. Reese asked to make a motion to approve the Technical Review Committee Chair for the Crematory Operators credentialing review. Mr. Sikes made a motion to approve the Chair, Ms. Stuhmer seconded; voting yes: 12 (Hubert, Kohles, Lindau, Palmer, Petersen, Reese, Rethwisch, Sikes, Stuhmer, Tusha, Vehle, Wienke); voting no: 0; not voting: 1 (Bertch).
- The committee reviewed the Certified Nurse Midwives credentialing review.
  - Technical Review Committee members proposed: Brandon Holt, Mark Malesker, Stacy Waldron, Jamie Dolan, Judy Neville, Tamara Dolphens. Mr. Reese asked for a motion to approve the Technical Review Committee for the Certified Nurse Midwives credentialing review. Dr. Wienke made a motion to approve the committee, Ms. Stuhmer seconded; voting yes: 13 (Bertch, Hubert, Kohles, Lindau, Palmer, Petersen, Reese, Rethwisch, Sikes, Stuhmer, Tusha, Vehle, Wienke); voting no: 0; not voting: 0
  - Technical Review Committee Chair proposed: Jacob Sikes. Mr. Reese asked to make a motion to approve the Technical Review Committee Chair for the Certified Nurse Midwives credentialing review. Dr. Palmer made a motion to approve the Chair, Dr. Wienke seconded; voting yes: 12 (Bertch, Hubert, Kohles, Lindau, Palmer, Petersen, Reese, Rethwisch, Stuhmer, Tusha, Vehle, Wienke); voting no: 0; not voting: 1 (Sikes).
- If you are going to Professional Boards meetings, please let the Board know we are looking for more Technical Review Committee members for our pool.
- No other updates.

#### 5. Rules and Regulations Committee – Dr. Dodge, Committee Chair

- Rules and Regulations Committee did not meet prior to this meeting. There are no updates.

Contact Information:                      402-471-0709                      dhhs.boardofhealth@nebraska.gov

Board of Health homepage: [dhhs.ne.gov/licensure/Pages/Board-of-Health.aspx](http://dhhs.ne.gov/licensure/Pages/Board-of-Health.aspx)

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## 6. Professional Boards Committee – Dr. Hubert, Committee Chair

- Committee conducted interviews today for Professional Boards vacancies. The committee proposed the following members:
    - Board of Nursing – Elizabeth Mollard, PhD, WHNP, CNM – Certified Nurse Midwife vacancy
    - Board of Cosmetology – Stephanie Moss – School Owner vacancy
    - Board of Chiropractic – MaryLou Camenzind, D.C. – Chiropractor vacancy
    - Dr. Wienke made a motion to approve Dr. Mollard, Ms. Moss, and Dr. Camenzind to their respective Professional Boards, seconded by Dr. Palmer; voting yes: 13 voting yes: 13 (Bertch, Hubert, Kohles, Lindau, Palmer, Petersen, Reese, Rethwisch, Sikes, Stuhmer, Tusha, Vehle, Wienke); voting no: 0; not voting: 0.
  - On March 16<sup>th</sup>, the committee hosted more interviews for Professional Board vacancies. The committee proposed the following members:
    - Board of Mental Health – Victor Gehrig, LADC and Colton Nisley, LIMPH, LADC, LPC – Licensed Alcohol and Drug Counselors vacancies
    - Board of Veterinary Medicine – Logan Donaldson, DVM, DACVIM – Veterinarian vacancy
    - Board of Physical Therapy – Crystal Stuhr – Public Member vacancy
    - Board of Nursing – Gina Crudden, DNP, APRN-CNS, ACCNS-AG, CMSRN – Clinical Nurse Specialist vacancy, Indra Sukhram, DNP, APRN-NP – APRN vacancy
    - Board of Cosmetology and Board of Occupational Therapy – Elizabeth Bailey – Public Member vacancies on both boards.
    - Dr. Wienke made a motion to approve Mr. Gehrig, Mr. Nisley, Dr. Donaldson, Ms. Stuhr, Dr. Crudden, Dr. Sukhram, and Ms. Bailey to their respective Professional Boards, seconded by Dr. Palmer; voting yes: 13 voting yes: 12 (Bertch, Hubert, Lindau, Palmer, Petersen, Reese, Rethwisch, Sikes, Stuhmer, Tusha, Vehle, Wienke); voting no: 0; not voting: 1 (Kohles).
  - Dr. Hubert asked the Board to let their professional associations know we will have vacancies that will need to be filled in September.
  - No other updates.
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## 7. Public Health, Education, & Legislation Committee – Dr. Petersen, Committee Chair

- Dr. Petersen provided a recommendation for the Public Health Recognition Program. Dr. Petersen proposed the Connection Project in Norfolk and O’Neill. Mr. Reese asked to make a motion to approve the Connection Project for the Public Health Recognition Program. Dr. Wienke made a motion to approve, seconded by Dr. Bertch; voting yes: 13 (Bertch, Hubert, Kohles, Lindau, Palmer, Petersen, Reese, Rethwisch, Sikes, Stuhmer, Tusha, Vehle, Wienke); voting no: 0; not voting: 0.
  - No other updates.
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## 8. Approval of Committee Reports

- Dr. Wienke made a motion to approve Committee Reports, seconded by Dr. Palmer; voting yes: 13 (Bertch, Hubert, Kohles, Lindau, Palmer, Petersen, Reese, Rethwisch, Sikes, Stuhmer, Tusha, Vehle); voting no: 0; not voting: 0. Motion carried.
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## 9. Public Comments

- Amy Reynoldson, Executive Vice President with the Nebraska Medical Association came to the Board to inform them on Medicaid reimbursement rates. Their partners at the Medicaid Program are moving forward with an increase on the reimbursement rate without the green light from the federal government. This would increase rates for all providers who bill on the practitioner fee schedule. Practitioners in Lancaster, Douglas and Sarpy counties are already receiving an increase of 20% of all Medicaid reimbursements. Practitioners in the other 90 counties in Nebraska will receive a 30% increase on all Medicaid reimbursements. If practitioners do not see these increases, Ms. Reynoldson urges them to contact Medicaid. This funding will also develop a Primary Care Medical Home program. This is only

eligible for family physicians, pediatricians, OB-GYNs, and internal medicine. This gives these providers an opportunity to go after additional funds (\$75 per member per month) to provide additional services for access to care for their Medicaid patients. Nebraska Medical Association is working with the State on this program and are planning to roll this out January 1 of next year. For more information on this, go to LB527.

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**10. Unfinished Business**

- No unfinished business
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**11. New Business**

- No new business
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**12. Topics for Next Meeting**

- None
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**13. Next Steps and Adjournment**

- Next regular meeting is Monday, September 21, 2026, at the Nebraska State Office Building in Lincoln.
- Meeting was adjourned at 2:45pm. Minutes were taken by Emma Davis and will be reviewed at the September 21, 2026, meeting.

Note: *If you would like any attachments mentioned in these minutes, or have other questions, please contact [dhhs.boardofhealth@nebraska.gov](mailto:dhhs.boardofhealth@nebraska.gov).*

Updated: June 22, 2026