



**ADAMS COUNTY  
HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

*Your Health. Our Mission.*

# **ADAMS COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT: IMPROVING HEALTH THROUGH POLICY**

**2023 LEGISLATIVE SESSION SUMMARY**



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Adams County Health Department (ACHD) promotes and protects the health of our residents and the communities where they live, learn, work, and play by working to assure the conditions in which people can be healthy. ACHD serves as the Chief Health Strategist for Adams County: monitoring health data, connecting with people in our communities, researching and promoting best practices, and informing public policy that will ultimately improve community health and advance health equity for our residents.

ACHD launched on January 1, 2023, and we immediately began our policy and legislative work at the Colorado State Capitol for the 2023 Colorado State Legislative Session. Our policy work is critical as a local health department because the Capitol is where decisions are made on important issues that impact not only our public health infrastructure and funding, but also other factors that influence Adams County residents' physical health, mental health, environmental health, and the social determinants of health. ACHD monitored the daily activity at the Capitol and responded to inform policy to protect and promote our residents' health.

For more information on how Adams County Health Department engages legislatively, or for any questions about specific bills listed in this document, please reach out to Michael Ruddock at [mruddock@adcogov.org](mailto:mruddock@adcogov.org) or 720.523.6774.



# COLORADO GENERAL ASSEMBLY SNAPSHOT



Number of legislators in the General Assembly, 16 of which represent Adams County

100



Number of days in the annual Legislative Session

120



Number of bills introduced during Legislative Session

617

# ADAMS COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT YEAR IN REVIEW



Number of bills ACHD monitored

96



Number of times ACHD staff testified to support a bill

8



Number of ACHD-supported bills that became law

21



# ADAMS COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT PRIORITY BILL TRACKING

Below is a comprehensive list of bills that ACHD supported this year.

Legislative Session came to a conclusion on May 8, 2023. Bills below are either:

- ▶ Became Law;
- ▶ Postponed Indefinitely (*the bill was voted down*);
- ▶ Left on Calendar (*the bill was not voted down, but it didn't move through the process quick enough and will not become law*).
- ▶ For each bill, those names in bold represent Adams County.



## FOOD ACCESS



### **HB23-1008 Food Accessibility**

Sponsors: **Representative Mike Weissman** (D-Aurora); **Senators Rhonda Fields** (D-Aurora), Nick Hinrichsen (D-Pueblo)

This bill will provide tax credits for small food retailers and small family farms that invest in equipment that allows for more widespread sales of nutritious food. Purchases could include things like point-of-sale services, cold storage, or display shelving. This will allow small retailers to sell more healthy, fresh foods in places that currently don't have access to them.

▶ **Status:** Became Law

▶ **Category:** Physical Health, Social Determinants of Health





### **HB23-1158 Colorado Commodity Supplemental Food Grant Program**

Sponsors: **Representatives Jenny Willford** (D-Northglenn), Rick Taggart (R-Grand Junction); **Senator Kyle Mullica** (D-Thornton)

This bill will allocate \$1 million to supplement funding for the Everyday Eats program which provides healthy and nutritious food boxes for eligible seniors. With the end of SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) Emergency Allotments, Coloradans have seen a sharp decline in monthly benefits for food, around \$90 less per person per month. Adams County partners with community partners such as Senior Hub and North Suburban Medical Center to administer this locally.

▶ **Status:** Became Law

▶ **Category:** Physical Health, Social Determinants of Health



### **SB23-027 Food Pantry Assistance Grant Program**

Sponsor: **Senator Lisa Cutter** (D-Lakewood); **Representative Tammy Story** (D-Conifer)

This bill would have appropriated \$3 million from General Fund to the Food Pantry Assistance Grant Fund in the Department of Human Services. The program was created in 2020 to provide funding for food pantries and food banks to purchase food. In the aftermath of SNAP Emergency Allotments (EAs) ending, this program is a critical backstop for those experiencing food insecurity.

▶ **Status:** Left on Calendar

▶ **Category:** Physical Health, Social Determinants of Health



## **MENTAL/BEHAVIORAL HEALTH**



### **HB23-1009 Secondary School Student Substance Use**

Sponsors: **Representative Mandy Lindsay** (D-Aurora); **Senator Dominick Moreno** (D-Commerce City)

This bill will create an Advisory Committee consisting of youth and school professionals that would study and create recommendations on how to address youth substance use involving alcohol, nicotine, vaping, marijuana, and other illicit drugs, including intervention and referrals. According to data from the Adams County Community Health Assessment, 18% of Adams County youth recently smoked cannabis and 13% of youth reported binge drinking.

▶ **Status:** Became Law

▶ **Category:** Behavioral Health





### **HB23-1153 Pathways to Behavioral Health Care**

Sponsors: Representatives Ryan Armagost (R-Berthoud), Judy Amabile (D-Boulder); Senators Byron Pelton (R-Sterling), Robert Rodriguez (D-Denver)

This bill will require a third party to study the feasibility of creating a system to support individuals with serious mental illness through a collaboration between Colorado's behavioral health and judicial system – an area where data is lacking around diversion, treatment, and community-based services. This work aligns with ACHD Community Health Assessment goals and is complementary to a forthcoming ARPA service mapping project.

▶ **Status:** Became Law

▶ **Category:** Behavioral Health



### **HB23-1167 Reporting of Emergency Overdose Events**

Sponsors: Representatives Said Sharbini (D-Adams), Chris DeGruy Kennedy (D-Lakewood); Senator Robert Rodriguez

This bill will extend the Good Samaritan immunity law to people who report overdose events related to fentanyl and other synthetic opiates. The Good Samaritan law exists to provide legal protections for somebody who calls and cooperates with law enforcement after witnessing a drug overdose. The goal is to shield that person from fear of criminal charges and to save a life of somebody experiencing an overdose. Over 200 Adams County residents suffered from overdoses in 2021.

▶ **Status:** Became Law

▶ **Category:** Behavioral Health



### **HB23-1202 Overdose Prevention Center Authorization**

Sponsors: Representatives Jenny Willford (D-Northglenn), Elisabeth Epps (D-Denver); Senators Kevin Priola (D-Henderson), Julie Gonzales (D-Denver)

This would have allowed municipalities to opt in to creating locally run overdose prevention centers (OPC). OPCs are places overseen by medically trained staff and where people can use illicit drugs, receive clean paraphernalia, and wraparound services such as counseling referrals. As drug overdoses continue to increase in the United States and Colorado, data has shown that OPCs can be a tool to prevent deaths due to overdose, reduce transmission of diseases like Hepatitis C, reduce overall drug use, and increase access to behavioral health services.

▶ **Status:** Postponed Indefinitely

▶ **Category:** Behavioral Health





### **SB23-014 *Disordered Eating Prevention***

Sponsors: **Senator Dominick Moreno** (D-Commerce City); Representative Mandy Lindsay (D-Aurora)

This bill will study disordered eating, a spectrum of unhealthy eating habits, and create a bank of resources to help reduce stigma and provide services, along with coordinating with the Behavioral Health Administration and Office of Suicide Prevention. It's estimated that one in five kids across the world show signs of disordered eating, and Adams County experienced 123 disordered eating related hospitalizations in 2021.

▶ **Status:** Became Law

▶ **Category:** Mental/Behavioral Health



## **ECONOMIC RESILIENCE**



### **HB23-1112 *Earned Income and Child Tax Credits***

Sponsors: **Representative Shannon Bird** (D-Westminster); Senators Chris Hansen (D-Denver), Chris Kolker (D-Littleton)

This bill will expand the state Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and Child Tax Credit (CTC) – proven programs to increase economic resilience for lower-income families. The EITC would be raised from 25% of the federal credit to 40%. The state CTC would adopt the federal rules for child eligibility, moving from 6 and under to 17 and under, as well as increasing the per child amount depending on income. Any Adams County resident currently receiving, or eligible for, the EITC or CTC would see a meaningful financial increase in future years.

▶ **Status:** Became Law

▶ **Category:** Social Determinants of Health



### **HB23-1006 *Employer Notice of Income Tax Credits***

Sponsors: Representatives Mary Young (D-Greeley), Lindsey Daugherty (D-Arvada); Senator Tony Exum (D-Colorado Springs)

This bill will require all Colorado employers to include information about eligibility for state and federal Earned Income Tax Credit, and state and federal Child Tax Credits. Both credits are proven tools to reduce poverty, increase economic resiliency, and reduce other barriers to health.

▶ **Status:** Became Law

▶ **Category:** Social Determinants of Health



## EARLY CHILDHOOD



### **SB23-269 Colorado Preschool Program Provider Bonus Payments**

Sponsors: Senators Janet Buckner (D-Aurora), Janice Rich (R-Grand Junction); Representatives Stephanie Luck (R-Penrose), Meghan Lukens (D-Steamboat Springs)

This bill will provide bonus payments to participating Universal Pre-Kindergarten providers to incentivize additional and continued participation in the program. Additional bonus payments can be made to providers that increase their capacity to serve infants and toddlers or are in low-capacity preschool areas. Universal Pre-K starts this upcoming fall for Colorado four-year-olds, and while hundreds of Adams County families are enrolled, many more are still looking to be matched with a provider.

► **Status:** Became Law

► **Category:** Social Determinants of Health



### **SB23-288 Coverage for Doula Services**

Sponsors: Senators Rhonda Fields (D-Aurora), Janet Buckner (D-Aurora); Representatives Regina English (D-Colorado Springs), Junie Joseph (D-Boulder)

This bill will require the department of Health Care Policy & Financing (HCPF) to initiate a stakeholder process around expanding utilization of doula services for pregnant and postpartum recipients, a practice shown to improve maternal and child health outcomes; it would also explore reimbursing doulas through Medicaid and creating more training resources. Doulas provide prenatal and childbirth assistance and have been shown to increase health outcomes for mothers and their babies, particularly for non-white mothers and mothers who don't speak English as a first language.

► **Status:** Became Law

► **Category:** Physical Health



### **HB23-1290 Proposition EE Funding Retention Rate Reduction**

Sponsors: Representatives Julie McCluskie (D-Dillon), Emily Sirota (D-Denver); Senators Dominick Moreno (D-Commerce City), Rhonda Fields (D-Aurora)

This bill will refer a question to November's ballot and ask voters to keep excess revenue from Prop EE. Prop EE, a tax on nicotine products, was passed overwhelmingly by voters in 2020 to fund Universal Pre-Kindergarten for all 4-year-olds in Colorado. Colorado would have to refund the \$24 million surplus unless voters allow the state to keep the funds. Quality early childhood education is a key foundation for future health outcomes.

► **Status:** Became Law

► **Category:** Social Determinants of Health





## PUBLIC HEALTH WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT



### **SB23-002 *Medicaid Reimbursement for Community Health Services***

Sponsors: **Senators Kyle Mullica** (D-Thornton), Cleave Simpson (R-Alamosa); Representatives Julie McCluskie (D-Dillon), Mary Bradfield (R-Fountain Valley)

This bill will allow for Medicaid reimbursements for community health worker services. A community health worker serves as a liaison between providers or social service providers and community members in order to facilitate access to the full continuum of health and may include health promoters, community outreach workers, or other frontline public health workers. Expanding access to community health worker services in public health settings across the state can contribute to lower health-care costs and better health outcomes.

► **Status:** Became Law

► **Category:** Public Health Infrastructure



### **HB23-1244 *Regional Health Connector Program***

Sponsors: Representatives Chris DeGruy Kennedy (D-Lakewood), Elizabeth Velasco (D-Glenwood Springs); **Senator Kevin Priola** (D-Henderson)

This bill Provides funding and state support to make an important public health workforce more sustainable. Regional Health Connectors are community-embedded workforce that work within 21 regions across Colorado to build relationships between primary care, behavioral health, social and human resources, and community assets to form a statewide network of public health. Adams County Health Department hosts our very own Regional Health Connector that connects public health programs, community, and clinical services.

► **Status:** Became Law

► **Category:** Public Health Infrastructure



## REPRODUCTIVE AND SEXUAL HEALTH



### **SB23-188** *Protections for Accessing Reproductive Health Care*

Sponsors: Senators Julie Gonzales (D-Denver), Sonya Jaquez Lewis (D-Lafayette); Representatives Meg Froelich (D-Englewood), Brianna Titone (D-Arvada)

This bill will create new protections for patients who travel to Colorado for abortions or gender-affirming care – as well as the providers who administer the care – from facing criminal consequences in states where abortion is illegal or limited. As many other states reduce and restrict access to abortion and gender-affirming care, this bill will increase access to those services while also likely drawing more providers into the state.

► **Status:** Became Law

► **Category:** Physical Health



### **SB23-189** *Increasing Access to Reproductive Health Care*

Sponsors: **Senators** Dominick Moreno (D-Commerce City), Lisa Cutter (D-Lakewood); **Representatives** Dafna Michaelson Jenet (D-Commerce City), Lorena Garcia (D-Aurora)

This bill will increase the scope of preventative healthcare covered through health benefit plans, require large employers to provide no-cost abortion care by 2025, and increase Health Departments' ability to provide family planning services by allowing Medicaid reimbursement. This will result in greater upstream health care access and increase ability for ACHD to provide important services like pregnancy testing and counseling and STD testing.

► **Status:** Became Law

► **Category:** Physical Health



### **SB23-190** *Deceptive Trade Practice Pregnancy-Related Service*

Sponsors: **Senators** Faith Winter (D-Westminster), Janice Marchman (D-Loveland); **Representatives** Karen McCormick (D-Longmont), Elisabeth Epps (D-Denver)

This bill would make false advertising by Crisis Pregnancy Centers to people seeking reproductive health care a deceptive trade practice enforceable by the Colorado Attorney General and/or District Attorneys, and make the administration of 'abortion reversal' medication a charge of unprofessional conduct. Reducing false advertising from these centers, predominantly located in minority communities, will increase access to reliable and comprehensive reproductive healthcare.

► **Status:** Became Law

► **Category:** Physical Health





## ENVIRONMENT



### **HB23-1257 Mobile Home Park Water Quality**

Sponsors: Representatives Elizabeth Velasco (D-Glenwood Springs), Andrew Boesenecker (D-Fort Collins); Senator Lisa Cutter (D-Lakewood)

This bill will create stronger water testing and remediation requirements for mobile home parks that are created by the state Water Quality Control Commission (WQCC). It would require mobile home park owners to create, and implement, remediation plans if it's found that their water is unhealthy according to testing. It would also task the WQCC with creating a statewide, proactive action plan to improve water quality at these parks statewide. According to 2019 data, Adams County has 66 mobile home parks with 11,300 mobile homes.

▶ **Status:** Became Law

▶ **Category:** Environmental Health



### **SB23-206 Disclose Radon Information Residential Property**

Sponsors: Senator Faith Winter (D-Westminster); Representatives Dafna Michaelson Jenet (D-Commerce City), Emily Sirota (D-Denver)

This bill will create more transparency and educational materials about known health effects of radon when buying or renting a home. Radon is a colorless, odorless gas typically found in homes. It's a carcinogenic toxin that is the second leading cause of lung cancer in America, and the #1 cause of cancer for non-smokers.

▶ **Status:** Became Law

▶ **Category:** Environmental Health



## ACCESS TO CARE



### **HB23-1300 *Continuous Eligibility Medical Coverage***

Sponsors: **Representatives Shannon Bird** (D-Westminster), **Emily Sirota** (D-Denver); **Senators Rachel Zenzinger** (D-Arvada), **Barb Kirkmeyer** (R-Brighton)

This bill would extend continuous Medicaid enrollment for children from ages 0-3 and for one full year those leaving jail or prison. It would also require studying the benefits of further extending continuous eligibility for children 4-6 as well as to those experiencing homelessness and those experiencing poverty for one full year. It would also study the feasibility of using Medicaid to fund social determinants of health such as access to healthy foods, prenatal care, or housing assistance. This would reduce gaps in critical health care coverage for at-risk populations and allow more residents to have reliable access to care.

▶ **Status:** Became Law

▶ **Category:** Physical Health, Social Determinants of Health



### **SB23-260 *Individual Access to Publicly Funded Vaccines***

Sponsors: **Senators Kyle Mullica** (D-Thornton), **Faith Winter** (D-Westminster); **Representatives Jenny Willford** (D-Northglenn), **Mandy Lindsay** (D-Aurora)

This bill will codify Public Health Emergency Executive Orders around publicly funded vaccine access. The bill prohibits requiring someone who administers a publicly funded vaccine from requiring ID, social security card, health insurance, or payment to receive the vaccine. This is intended to reduce barriers to equitable immunization. It also requires all providers of publicly funded vaccines to advertise they offer those immunizations free of charge for any new prospective patients. This will increase important immunization access by reducing barriers to cost and citizenship status.

▶ **Status:** Became Law

▶ **Category:** Physical Health



### **SB23-284 *Ensure 12-month Contraception Coverage***

Sponsors: **Senators Jeff Bridges** (D-Littleton), **Jessie Danielson** (D-Wheat Ridge); **Representative Iman Jodeh** (D-Aurora), **Ron Weinberg** (R-Loveland)

This bill will require a provider of a health benefit plan to cover and reimburse for the administration of 12 months of contraception, reducing barriers to access. It also firms up coverage for over-the-counter contraception without a prescription, such as condoms and emergency contraception, without prior authorization, step therapy, or cost sharing.

▶ **Status:** Became Law

▶ **Category:** Physical Health