



**LARIMER COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & ENVIRONMENT**

2021 ANNUAL REPORT



A YEAR OF HOPE AND RESILIENCE

A LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

2021 was a year of challenges and hope. With the approval of multiple COVID-19 vaccines, we were provided with an essential tool toward achieving higher community-level immunity. As always, Larimer County banded together and worked tirelessly to get this life-saving vaccine into arms as swiftly as possible. This strong collaboration included many organizations and people, including local public health, nineteen vaccine providers, municipalities, preK-12 and higher education, hospitals, pharmacies, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, nonprofits and many others working together to provide easy and equitable access to the vaccine. During 2021, we administered well over half a million vaccines to eligible persons in our county. This was unprecedented work, to be sure. As we watched the daily vaccine numbers increase on the COVID-19 data dashboard, we breathed a collective sigh of relief watching case-rates and hospitalizations decrease during late spring and early summer.

We began to slowly transition back to a pre-pandemic lifestyle with the hope that the worst was behind us. We continued to work on the Community Health Improvement Plan and toward forming stronger collaborations in the community, including those within underserved communities and with groups whose voices and input have been underrepresented in Larimer County. We looked inward and invested in our public health workforce, improved key processes, and carried out activities in our strategic plan initiatives.

The arrival of the Delta variant in the summer was a game changer. As we saw the case rate, hospitalizations and deaths increase, our county again came together under challenging circumstances to do the necessary work to keep our communities safe. Once more, I was reminded of why we are so fortunate to live in Larimer County as I watched our fatigued communities come together to make sacrifices and save lives.

At the end of 2021, the even more contagious, yet less severe, Omicron variant arrived. While this additionally impacted and stressed our systems and communities, the trajectory of the virus changed. Through vaccinations and infections, we achieved our greatest level of immunity to date, and we are filled with additional hope and anticipation that we are closer than ever to the transition from pandemic to endemic.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas R. Gonzales". The signature is fluid and cursive.

TOM GONZALES, MPH

Larimer County Public Health Director

Our Mission

Working to provide everyone in Larimer County the opportunity for a healthy life.

Our Vision

Larimer County is a thriving, health aware community where everyone has access to healthy choices and a healthy environment.

Our Values



Leadership Team

Tom Gonzales, MPH
Public Health Director

Andrea Clement-Johnson, MS
Deputy Public Health Director

Chris Manley, REHS
Director of Environmental Health

Erika Cathey, MPH
Office of Communicable Disease &
Emergency Preparedness and Response

Kelsey Lyon, MPH
Office of Public Health Planning and
Partnerships

Kori Wilford, MPH
Office of Communications and Technology

John Voss
Office of Accounting and Business
Operations

Larimer County Board of Health

Bernard Birnbaum, MD, President
Brian DelGrosso, Vice President
Jennifer Lee, MS
Janna West Kowalski, MS
Tony J. Van Goor, MD

Larimer County Commissioners

Kristin Stephens, District I
John Kefalas, District II
Jody Shadduck-McNally, District III

STRATEGIC PLAN HIGHLIGHTS

The Larimer County Department of Health and Environment (LCDHE) has a long history of delivering diverse services to the community. The 2020-2025 Strategic Plan represents the desire to support staff as they build on the Public Health 3.0 model to engage multiple sectors and community partners to address social, environmental, and economic conditions that affect health and health equity. The 5-year plan provides direction for the organization and helps us understand where we need to allocate resources and efforts. By successfully implementing this plan over the next 5 years, LCDHE will be positioned to address the changing demographics and needs of the community.



BE PREPARED FOR PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCIES AND EMERGING THREATS

In disasters, LCDHE serves as the lead agency for Emergency Support Function 8, Health and Human Services Branch, coordinating public health, environmental health, emergency medical services, hospitals, behavioral health, human services, and fatality management.



INVEST IN OUR PEOPLE

LCDHE continued to prioritize work-life balance for our staff by conducting a series of interviews and surveys to learn more about individuals' needs. The 2020-2025 Strategic Plan is to invigorate the organization's operations and position staff to have the tools and support needed to propel us into the future.



INVEST IN OUR INTERNAL PROCESSES AND SYSTEMS

A new electronic health record system was implemented and an enterprise system to support Environmental Health and Vital Statistics functions was initiated.



BE HEALTH STRATEGISTS

LCDHE began a new partnership with the Colorado School of Public Health and the Environmental Health and Radiological Sciences as an Academic Health Department. As part of this partnership, LCDHE will standardize an internship program, develop processes for requesting guest lecturers and explore data sharing between CSU and LCDHE.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS & INITIATIVES



Transfer of Title Program Protects Water and Homebuyers

A transfer of title program for on-site wastewater treatment systems began in July and requires inspections of systems at the time of property transfer to ensure they are in good working order. These inspections are critical to protecting surface and groundwater, public health, and property values of homeowners who utilize these systems. In the 6 months the program was in place in 2021, 294 inspections associated with property transfers were completed and 45% resulted in some level of deficiency that required correction.



LCDHE Helps Stop Salmonella Outbreak

LCDHE staff worked with the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment to identify the source associated with a multi-state outbreak of *Salmonella* Thompson, which sickened 115 people between May and October of 2021. Twenty individuals were hospitalized as part of this outbreak. Of the 93 Coloradans who experienced illness as part of this outbreak, 13 were residents of Larimer County. Through detailed interviews, collection of invoices from local restaurants, extensive laboratory analysis including whole-genome sequencing, and partnership with state and federal partners, it was determined that seafood sold by a distributor in Denver had caused the illnesses, and all potentially contaminated products were recalled by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). This quick action taken by LCDHE and our state and federal partners prevented many more illnesses from occurring throughout the state and within our communities.



SNAP PEAS Helps Fight Hunger in Larimer County

The SNAP PEAS (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Partners Engaging in Application Services) program was initiated at LCDHE at the end of April 2021; it is a collaborative partnership with Hunger Free Colorado, funded through grants from the federal government and local partners. SNAP PEAS is staffed with 2 Navigators, each working 6 hours/week with the program. The Navigators provide outreach to community members and other programs by delivering training and answering questions about SNAP, and they assist residents by providing 1:1 support to walk them through the application process. Many applicants are eligible for both the SNAP and WIC programs, so the Navigators educate about the benefits, similarities, and differences of each program, and ensure that clients are receiving the needed assistance from either or both programs, whenever eligible.

Health Equity: A Public Health Priority

In 2021, a Health Equity Coordinator position was created within the department. Five Equity Initiatives were established, focusing on enhancing internal equity first. These initiatives provide actionable steps to ensure that health equity is considered in every aspect of the department's work.

1

Accessible Communications - In 2021, LCDHE staff began working on a Language Access Plan that will ensure English and Spanish are the primary languages used to communicate with the public, and that additional language services are available. It is a priority to incorporate plain language principles into department communications and prioritized work to revise all digital communications so they are accessible to persons living with disabilities.

2

Employee Resource Groups - Employee resource groups within the department were initiated to develop and foster a workforce that is diverse and inclusive.

3

Culture of Learning on Health Equity - Staff began designing tools, including a Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Training Calendar, that sources free learning opportunities for staff.

4

Strategic Plan Alignment - Staying accountable to the value of equity, staff are aligning initiatives and considering equity in every step of the Strategic Plan.

5

Innovative Community Engagement - Staff began exploring and implementing ways to better engage with members of the community who have been historically marginalized and are working to be innovative in elevating their voices within the organization.



These initiatives will carry into 2022 and beyond, with ongoing improvement informed by staff and members of our community.

2021 COVID-19 PANDEMIC- A YEAR OF HOPE

At the end of 2020, the world's first COVID-19 vaccines became available, bringing hope that the tragic suffering and death associated with severe COVID-19 illness would soon become a thing of the past. COVID-19 vaccines were administered by nineteen vaccine providers in Larimer County.

573,497



COVID-19 VACCINE DOSES GIVEN

Free, mass drive-thru sites were organized throughout the county along with smaller community-focused mobile clinics. LCDHE alone conducted 348 clinics in 2021.



251,234

Eligible Larimer County residents that received at least one dose of COVID-19 vaccine in 2021. *

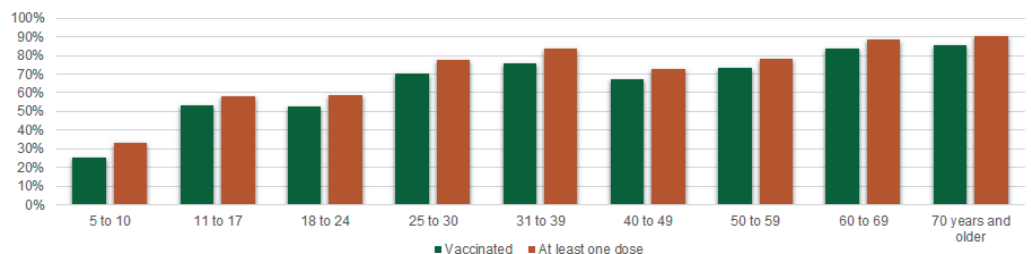


108,901

booster doses given to Larimer County residents in 2021*

2021

Vaccination Rates of Larimer County Residents by Age Group



**Does not include doses administered by federal agencies (e.g. VA, fed prison system) or doses given to residents in other states.*

2021 COVID-19 PANDEMIC- A LOOK BACK

JANUARY - MARCH

- By the end of January, over 20,000 Larimer County residents had received at least one dose of COVID-19 vaccine.
- LCDHE, FEMA, and CDPHE set up mass vaccination sites at The Ranch complex in Loveland, vaccinating thousands of people each week.

JULY - SEPTEMBER

- Mass vaccination sites and smaller mobile equity-based clinics continue throughout the summer months.
- By August, countries around the world are facing a new threat with the onset of the Delta variant.
- Due to Delta, by the end of September, 65 people are in local hospitals with COVID-19 and the percent of ICU utilization for usual care levels in Larimer County hospitals is at 100%.
- The majority of hospitalized patients are unvaccinated against COVID-19.

Cases/100k: 7-Day Rate



APRIL - JUNE

- By the end of April, 56% of Larimer County residents ages 16+ are fully vaccinated.
- The new Alpha variant causes a spike in cases throughout the spring months.
- At the end of June, 39 people are in Larimer County hospitals with COVID-19.

OCTOBER - DECEMBER

- In October, there are 30 active COVID-19 outbreaks in Larimer County schools.
- LCDHE issues a public health order, requiring masks in public indoor spaces for those ages 3 and older.
- On December 16, there are 81 people in Larimer County hospitals with COVID-19. Larimer County hospitals are overburdened with close to 50% of patients in ICUs having COVID-19.
- By the end of December, 417 Larimer County residents having COVID-19 have died since the beginning of the pandemic.
- 5-11 year-olds become eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine.
- Promising new treatments, including monoclonal antibodies and oral antivirals, bring renewed hope.

2021 DEPARTMENT SERVICES



2,829

WIC PARTICIPANTS
SERVED EACH MONTH



27

INFLUENZA
HOSPITALIZATIONS



197

NURSE FAMILY
PARTNERSHIP FAMILIES



1,837

RESTAURANT
INSPECTIONS



6 BATS, 4 SKUNKS
POSITIVE FOR RABIES



979

BURN PERMITS ISSUED



60

PUBLIC POOLS INSPECTED

BIRTH CERTIFICATES ISSUED

7,006

DEATH CERTIFICATES ISSUED

20,080

SEPTIC SYSTEM PERMITS

292

CHILDCARES AND SCHOOLS
INSPECTED

41

LAND USE REVIEWS

273

FOOD ESTABLISHMENT PLAN
REVIEWS COMPLETED

138

RETAIL FOOD ESTABLISHMENT
LICENSES ISSUED

1,962

LICENSED EMS SERVICES

126

TITLE X QUALIFYING
CLINIC VISITS

1,264

STI TESTS

773

PATIENTS TESTED FOR
CERVICAL CANCER

271

PRENATAL PLUS ENCOUNTERS

37

FAMILIES SERVED - HCP

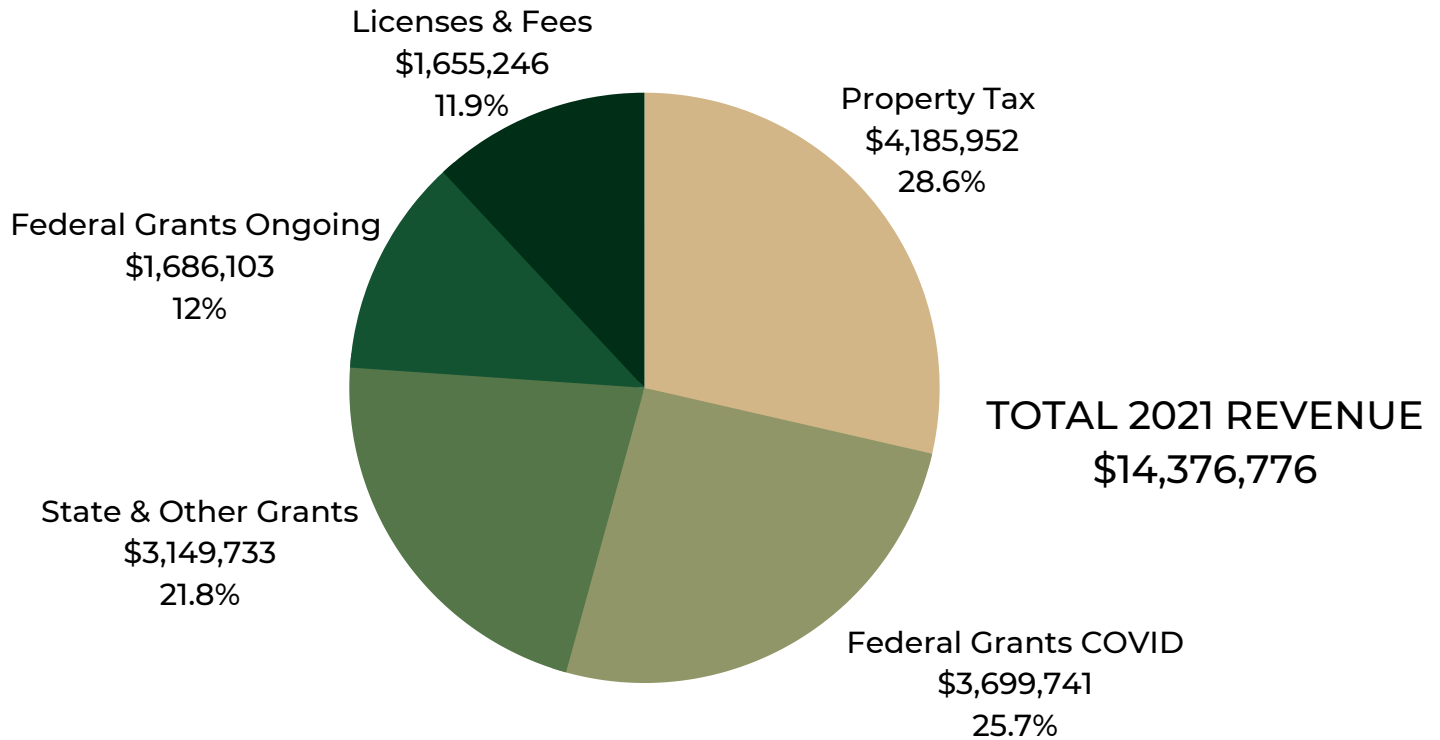
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INFLUENZA SHOTS GIVEN

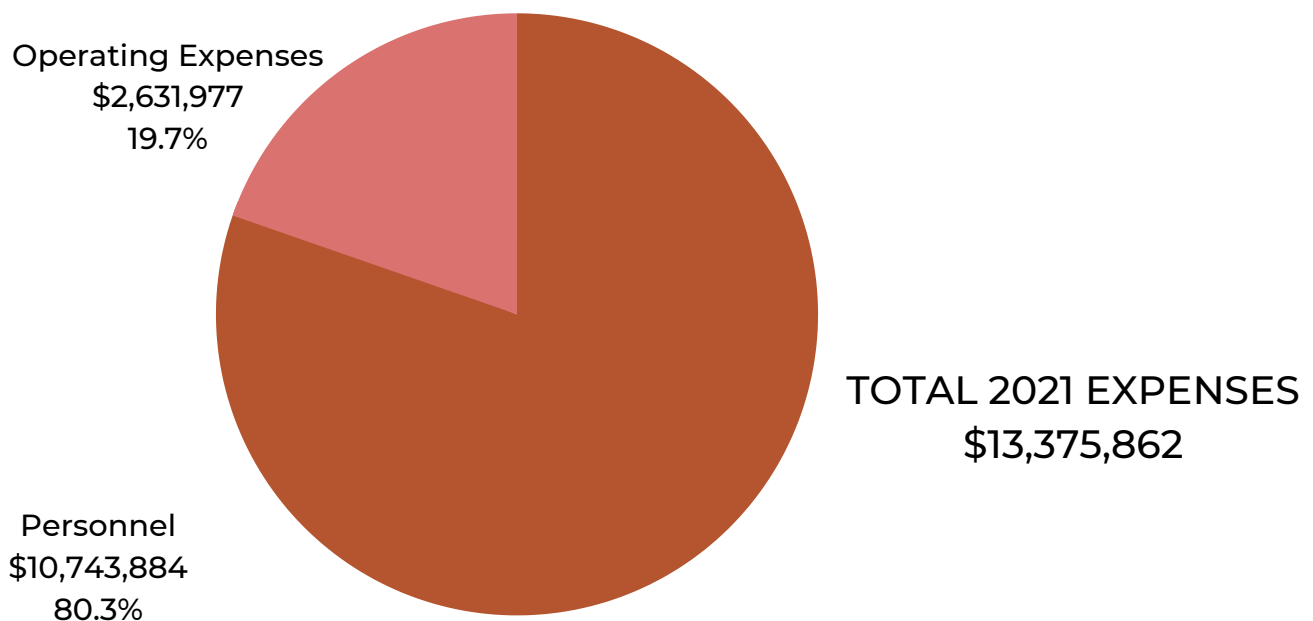
586

2021 FINANCIALS

2021 Revenue



2021 Expenditures



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