



GUIDELINES FOR ENGAGING WITH YOUR LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

INTRODUCTION

During the Covid years, many Massachusetts boards of health and other town boards advocated for heavy-handed measures and medical mandates which lacked a basis in modern science and epidemiological experience. These actions were also contrary to basic civil liberties and fundamental freedoms. In many cases, these measures and mandates caused far more harm than good.

The enforcement of these arbitrary measures revealed the importance of public engagement on a local level to counter authoritarian tendencies of governmental officials in real time.

The following guidelines are intended to provide basic direction for individuals to become involved with local boards and town staff so that they can effectively support public health-related policies and actions they favor, and oppose those they consider harmful. Feel free to contact Health Rights MA Advocacy (HRMAA) if you have any questions or would like some further guidance in your efforts to influence the decision-making and actions of local boards and officials.

SURVEYING THE ENVIRONMENT

Check your town website and find the board of health page. You should be able to find most if not all of the following information:



- Determine whether your board of health is elected or appointed.
- Note the main email address for your BOH.
- Create a list of names and emails of the people on your town board of health (including staff), their title, and when their term expires.
- Identify any people involved with the BOH are supportive of health freedom; having allies on the inside is helpful.
- Find out whether town citizens have an opportunity to speak at BOH meetings and, if so, what the process is. For example, some boards include a citizen speak time as a regular agenda item (an "open comment period"), while other boards may require a citizen to formally request an opportunity to speak.
- Find out whether your town has entered into an Inter-Municipal Agreement (IMA) in order to be part of a "regional alliance" with "shared services." If so, how did the town approve the IMA? Some alliances may be new, but some may be many years old.
- If your town is part of a regional alliance, identify the composition of the group and note the alliance leadership and staff, their titles, contact information and other information that may be relevant (e.g., whether members serve terms and, if so, when the expire). Identify other stakeholders who may be influencing board of health decision-making; for example, is a local dentist, doctor or city councilor leveraging close personal relationships with BOH members? Has there been pressure on the BOH to stick to the MA DPH or CDC script to the point that citizen voices are ignored or minimized?

- Read the Agendas and watch the last few BOH meetings online and/or attend upcoming meetings to get an idea of how the board functions and what recommendations, if any, they are making when it comes to medical interventions such as vaccines, masking, fluoridation, etc., and whether they are considering measures related to any diseases or situations currently considered a threat to people's health.

- ▶ Has your town applied for, or do they plan to apply for, Public Health Excellence Grant Money? Check the agendas over the last several months to see where your town is in the process. This grant funding has strings attached that compel cities and towns to comply with national standards if they accept PHE Grant funding.

- If your town currently adds fluoridation chemicals to the water, determine if there is an autonomous Water Commission in charge, or whether fluoridation in your community is governed under Chapter 111, Section 8C. If the prior, it is a simple process to end. If the later, it is an onerous process that requires a "special act" from the MA General Court requested by local legislative body (Town Meeting or City Council) to exempt the community from the fluoridation law in order to establish a Home Rule ordinance banning fluoridation.



NOW TAKE ACTION Share your findings with Health Rights MA Advocacy and join our team of BOH watchers. We have a form where you can input your findings. **Go To tinyurl.com/BOHWATCHER** HRMAA can help you locate health freedom-loving people that live in your communities to join your efforts to protect health freedom

ENGAGING WITH THE BOARD

Unless citizens actively engage with their local board of health, other boards and individual officials responsible for health-related policies, there is no guarantee that these boards and officials will necessarily promote policies and make decisions that protect medical/healthcare freedom. In fact, during the Covid years, many boards of health in MA promoted useless, draconian anti-health-freedom measures

such as masks, vaccine passports, “social distancing,” and school and business closures, as well as coercive measures and mandates to pressure people to get the experimental Covid shots. These sorts of harmful actions demonstrate how vital it is for residents to be actively engaged on the local level.



Here are some ways you can engage with your BOH

- **Show up at BOH meetings** and organize others to show up. Showing up sends a message that people who support health freedom are monitoring the actions of the board.
- **Supply information to the board from reliable sources** such as medical journals and major publications that counters mainstream dogma on Covid or other issues related to health freedom (e.g., information demonstrating that the Covid shots are neither safe nor effective; masking is ineffective for preventing transmission of viral illnesses; draconian measures caused more harm than good) and that raises questions about public health issues and actions that the board may be considering. For example, if the board is considering sponsoring “Covid vaccine clinics,” providing information on the dangers associated with the shots, including contamination by oncogenic materials, may persuade them to not go ahead.

- Request to speak at your BOH on a topic relevant to current items on the board's agenda. Speaking at public meetings of the BOH not only may get them to change their perspectives and actions regarding Covid and other issues that impact health freedom, but may also give other people observing the meeting the courage to speak out.
- Speak privately with staff and individual board members who are supportive of health freedom about how you can support them in their official roles. People with official roles who hold minority viewpoints welcome the opportunity to work with like-minded concerned citizens to coordinate their efforts.
- Run for local board positions or seek out opportunities for appointment to local boards.

Making public presentations

- Be calm and polite when speaking before a board and with individuals: it's easier for someone in a position of authority to write off a citizen's viewpoints if they seem overly emotional, agitated or angry.
- Be as well-informed as possible about topics you speak about. Include written references substantiating your statements, and consider making these available ahead of time so that the Board has copies.
- Make sure that there is a good context or reason for the comments you are offering; addressing a current issue or circumstance will give your input relevance.
- Be aware of the time limit for comments and practice your presentation beforehand to ensure that your comments can be delivered within the time limit.



- Be clear about the points you wish to make. Usually, it's good to make no more than three main points.
- Be clear about anything you are requesting of the board or individual so that you can state the request precisely, i.e., clearly articulate your "ask" especially at the end of your comment.
- Develop some questions you might pose to the board or individual to get them to think more deeply about a certain topic. For example: Will there be harmful impacts on specific groups due to the proposed actions? Will closing businesses devastate economic stability of owners and workers? Could masking pre-schoolers or requiring medical interventions to participate in society regardless of individual medical contraindications result in adverse mental or medical effects?
- Let the board or individual know that you are happy to serve as a resource for them.
- If a board or an individual is putting off meeting with you, be politely persistent in insisting on being given an opportunity to speak.
- Thank the board or individual for their time and attention.



COURAGE IS CONTAGIOUS!

Share your efforts! Use video clips of your citizen engagement to share on social media town pages.

Write an Oped for your local paper.



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