



CLAY COUNTY

PUBLIC HEALTH CENTER



INDEPENDENCE
★ HEALTH AND ANIMAL SERVICES ★

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
New Poll Shows Strong Public Support & Trust
in Local Public Health Agencies

April 14, 2025 - A new statewide survey reveals that Missourians overwhelmingly trust and support their local public health agencies (LPHAs)—and they want to see them thrive. The Missouri Public Health Trust Poll, conducted in early 2025, highlights both the strengths and opportunities in public health outreach across the state.

Key findings include:

- Nearly 60% of Missourians have used their local public health agency—demonstrating the essential role LPHAs play in communities.
- 71% of LPHA users trust their local health department, reinforcing the importance of direct engagement.
- 83% of Missourians support increased public health funding, recognizing its impact on community well-being.
- 26% of Missourians are unaware of the services available through their local LPHA, highlighting an opportunity for increased outreach and education.

“In a time where it can be confusing to know who to trust as a source of reliable information, it’s reassuring to see these results and know that people still largely trust their local health agencies,” said Darrell Meinke, Clay County’s director of public health. “I hope they can look at the members of our team and recognize neighbors who are working hard to make a positive impact on the health of their own community, to the best of their ability.”

The results provide a roadmap for strengthening public health trust and accessibility in Missouri. For both the Independence Health Department and Clay County Public Health Center that means expanding outreach efforts, increasing visibility in the community, and ensuring that every resident has access to the vital health services they need.

“We are in our community every day, providing everything from car seat inspections for new families and oral health classes to preschoolers to public health preparedness, food safety inspections, and mental health care,” said Christina Heinen, Health Director for Independence. “Public health is here for everyone, and these results show that Missourians believe in the work we do. One of our most successful outreach programs

pairs a community paramedic from the Fire Department with one of our licensed clinical social workers. They have made a tremendous impact in our community – responding to 800 persons in mental health crisis in our community last year alone, eliminating almost \$300,000 in ambulance and emergency room costs.”

The Independence Health Department ensures the public's health through activities that protect the public from environmental hazards, prevent injury and disease, and promote healthy lifestyles. These goals are accomplished through enforcement of ordinances, health promotion, planning, and surveillance activities. In 2024, it handled 3,624 communicable disease cases, distributed 481 boxes of Narcan, and performed 1,757 permitted health inspections. It is located within Independence City Hall at 111 E. Maple, Independence, MO 64050 and more information can be found on [its website](#).

Clay County Public Health Center aims to empower everyone to lead healthier lives through clinical services like immunizations and STI testing, as well as WIC services and school-based dental services. They also work to prevent foodborne illness, track diseases, connect community members with resources, and educate about healthy behaviors. Their building is located at 800 Haines Dr., Liberty, MO 64068 and more information can be found at clayhealth.com.

About the Missouri Public Health Trust Poll

The Missouri Public Health Trust Poll, which was conducted by Breakthrough Campaigns, surveyed 607 Missouri adults from February 26 – March 3, 2025, with an oversample of rural residents to ensure balanced representation. Respondents included a mix of urban and rural residents, individuals across income levels, and diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds.

To check out the full breakdown of the Missouri Public Health Trust Poll visit: <https://mophi.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Trust-Poll-Breakdown.pdf>