



Norfolk County-8 Coalition

December 1, 2025 Meeting Minutes



Time:
11:00 am – 1:00 pm

Virtual Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89433773990?sjt=2>

Attendance Roll Call

Voting members present:

Katie Paciorkowski, Dedham

Meg Goldstein, Canton

Stacey Lane, Norwood

Caroline Kinsella, Milton

Melissa Ranieri, Walpole

Lenny Izzo, Wellesley - *joined late*

Jared Orsini, Westwood - *joined late*

Non-voting members present:

Aine Studdert-Kennedy, BME Strategies

Cynthia Baker, BME Strategies

Manizeh Afzidi, BME Strategies

Brad Clarke, BME Strategies

Abbie Atkins, Norwood

Jenna Conroy, Canton

Jhana Wallace, Wellesley - *voted to begin the meeting*

Trish Fisher, Walpole

Julie McCarthy, Needham

Voting members absent:

Sam Menard, Dedham

Melissa Ranieri motioned to start the meeting. Meg Goldstein seconded the motion.

Canton: Y

Dedham: Y

Milton: Y

Norwood: Y

Walpole: Y

Wellesley: Y

Westwood: joined late

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The regular meeting of the Norfolk County-8 (NC-8) Local Public Health Coalition was called to order at 11:06 AM on December 1, 2025.

I. Welcome

BME provided an overview of the agenda to start the meeting.

Melissa Ranieri made a motion to approve the minutes from the November 2025 Coalition Meeting and the minutes from the November 2025 Regional Epidemiologist Approval Meeting. Meg Goldstein seconded the motion.

Canton: Y

Dedham: Y

Milton: Y

Norwood: Y

Walpole: Y

Wellesley: Y

Westwood: Y

Minutes were approved.

II. Announcements and Reminders

a. Public Health Excellence (PHE) Updates

i. Term 1 (T1) Reporting Updates

1. BME provided an update on Term 1 reporting for the Public Health Excellence grant. Annual Notifications for Participating Municipalities were sent out ahead of the October 31st reporting deadline. All required expenditure and workplan updates were submitted to the state by the December 1st deadline. Despite early staffing changes this fiscal year, the coalition remains on track with budget and program implementation.

ii. SAPHE 2.0 Reporting

1. BME provided an overview of upcoming SAPHE 2.0 reporting requirements for the current year. The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) will release two surveys that local public health agencies must complete to remain in compliance:
 - a. **Workforce Standards Survey** - Expected Winter 2025/26. This survey will assess current workforce expertise and identify future training needs.

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- b. **Performance Standards Survey** - Planned Early Spring 2026. This self-assessment will allow local public health agencies to report current and projected Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26) capacity to meet performance standards. Data analysis is anticipated later in Spring 2026, with results informing statewide trends and resource needs.
- iii. **Staff Credentialing Survey**
 - 1. The staff credentialing survey, which was launched to better understand training needs across local public health staff roles, received strong participation with 34 responses across all municipalities. Next steps include finalizing and sharing the NC-8 Training Guide shortly, along with individualized training plans and trackers before the end of the calendar year.
- iv. **Contractor Support Spending**
 - 1. Spending updates were provided for contracted Food Protection and Title 5 services. Available funds remain under both contracts, and municipalities are encouraged to continue requesting support as needed. BME will continue to monitor expenditures and provide advance notice if spending approaches contract limits, helping municipalities plan ahead and ensure uninterrupted support.

III. Procurement Updates

- a. **Regional Communications Project Update**
 - i. BME provided an update on the Regional Communications Standard Operating Procedure (SOP). The draft SOP has been finalized by Crawford & Associates and is currently under second review from Vital Learning Strategies. Once this review is complete, the draft will be shared with the planning team, with a goal of finalizing the SOP by the end of December. In early January, planning will begin to socialize the SOP with a broader stakeholder group through seminars.
- b. **Community Health Assessment (CHA) Update**
 - i. BME reached out to Norwood's procurement team for a high-level update on the timeline for reviewing vendor proposals. Next steps include convening the review committee to move the process forward once updates are received.
- c. **Procurement of Hygiene, Testing, and Prevention Supplies**
 - i. Procurement efforts for hygiene supplies and COVID-19/flu test kits are underway, with orders being placed based on requests submitted by participating municipalities.
- d. **Digitization**
 - i. BME shared an update on the proposed digitization of municipal files. Westwood, Canton, and Norwood expressed interest, and information on file types and volumes was gathered to support a project quote from MetaSource. The initial quote exceeds

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the \$10K threshold, so BME has connected with Norwood procurement to issue an RFQ to additional vendors, ensuring compliance with procurement regulations.

- ii. Approval was requested to move forward with the digitization procurement process for the interested communities.

Motion to Approve

Melissa Ranieri motioned to approve moving forward with a procurement process for a digitization project involving Norwood, Canton, and Westwood. Meg Goldstein seconded the motion.

Canton: Y
Dedham: Y
Milton: Y
Norwood: Y
Walpole: Y
Wellesley: Y
Westwood: Y

Motion passes.

IV. Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) Updates

- a. BME provided an update on recent MRC activities. Jackson Lieb and Eric Olsen, the regional MRC coordinator, met with Melissa Ranieri, Trish Fisher, and John Lightbody (Walpole EMD) on Friday, November 14th, to discuss initial objectives for a sheltering exercise in Walpole. Next steps include developing the sheltering plan and consulting with other MRCs that have recently conducted sheltering drills. Jackson will follow up with the Duxbury MRC for additional insights.
- b. **Upcoming Trainings:** Massachusetts DPH recently released new trainings on accessibility and disability accommodations, with Continuing Education Units (CEUs) available to volunteers. A Mental Health First Aid training will be held in Norwood on December 16th. Elizabeth Barrett, Norwood's Mental Health Awareness Training Program Director, will be leading the training. Additionally, a Question Persuade Refer (QPR) training is being scheduled virtually the same evening due to trainer availability.
- c. **Massachusetts Responds (MA Responds) Transition:** The MA Responds platform will undergo a major upgrade on December 8th to support easier volunteer coordination. Jackson has been sharing updates with volunteers over the past two weeks and will provide another reminder before the migration. The new system will be reviewed at the January advisory group meeting.



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V. Regional Staff Updates

- a. BME shared updates on hiring and recruitment for regional staff positions.
 - i. **Regional Epidemiologist:** Sarah Lavari has accepted the offer and will start on Monday, December 8th.
 - ii. **Regional Public Health Nurse:** The RPHN job description has been finalized and reposted on Dedham's town website and Indeed, with upcoming postings on Massachusetts Health Officer's Association (MHOA), Massachusetts Association of Public Health Nurses (MAPHN), and the Office of Local and Regional Health (OLRH) Local Health Careers Page. Priority will be given to applicants applying within the first two weeks. The goal is to fill the role by early next calendar year, with updates shared throughout the process. Key priorities for this role include supporting maternal and child health initiatives, seasonal clinic support, disease surveillance, and fostering strong community relationships.
 - iii. **Regional Staff Materials Onboarding Materials Review:** The NC-8 Staff Guidelines and Regional Staff Performance Review process were reviewed and approved by the coalition.

Motion to Approve

Melissa Ranieri motioned to approve the NC-8 Regional Staff Guidelines and the Regional Staff Performance Review Process. Lenny Izzo seconded the motion.

Canton: Y
Dedham: Y
Milton: Y
Norwood: Y
Walpole: Y
Wellesley: Y
Westwood: Y

Motion passes.

VI. Public Health Excellence Vaccine Purchasing Discussion

- a. BME facilitated a discussion about development of a regional vaccine program through the MDPH Immunization Division's Vaccine Access Program. The discussion focused on identifying a lead municipality to manage vaccine ordering, storage, compliance, and

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program oversight.

- b. Coalition members plan to engage with the MDPH Vaccine Management Unit to clarify operational, financial, and liability considerations before finalizing participation and responsibilities.

VII. Fiscal Year 2026 Strategic Planning Kickoff Prep

- a. Brad Clarke provided an overview of what to expect during the strategic planning process, including a review of the overall workflow, visioning and values exercises, Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats (SWOT) discussions, health equity and racial justice considerations, and the stakeholder engagement plan.
- b. He also shared guidance on how members can prepare for the kickoff, encouraging participants to come ready to engage, reflect on priority needs and opportunities for the coalition, and consider key stakeholders who should be involved to support both input and long-term buy-in.
- c. The kickoff meeting is scheduled for December 16th, in-person in Westwood.

VIII. Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Discussion

- a. BME presented the first FY26 budget modification with updated consultant, staffing/fringe, and supply allocations. A motion to approve a rolling budget modification was passed unanimously.

Motion to Approve

Melissa Ranieri motioned to approve the FY26 budget modification. Meg Goldstein seconded.

Canton: Y
Dedham: Y
Milton: Y
Norwood: Y
Walpole: Y
Wellesley: Y
Westwood: Y

Motion passes.

IX. Community Updates

- a. Dedham is using funds to support youth-focused programs, including school-based

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education, after-school activities, and sober living scholarships through community partners such as Mass Partnerships for Youth, NH Theater Project, and Power Forward.

- b. Members discussed options for behavioral health support in schools, including Care Solace and Interface, noting differences in cost, integration, and prior experiences in other communities. Further exploration of these options is ongoing to ensure appropriate use of opioid abatement funds.

The next regular NC-8 Coalition meeting (virtual) is scheduled for January 5, 2026, 11AM - 1PM.

The meeting adjourned at 12:57 PM.

Documents used and referenced during the meeting:

NC-8 December 2025 Meeting Presentation

Performance Review Feedback Process for Regional Staff

NC-8 Staff Guidelines

PHE Vaccine Access Program MOU Template

PHE Vaccine Access Program SOP Template

FY26 PHE Budget Modification