

# MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Land and Materials Administration

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## LEAD POISONING PREVENTION COMMISSION April 2, 2026 · 9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. · Hybrid Meeting Meeting Minutes

### Members Present:

Alexandra Nestadt	Fred Banks	Nicola Tran
Barbara Moore	Manjula Paul	Ruth Ann Norton
Christina Peusch	Michael Ichniowski	Susan Kleinhammer
Cliff Mitchell	Naadiya Hutchinson	

### Members Absent:

Adam Skolnik	Mary Washington	Jacob Benzaquen
		Nicole Hart

### Guests Present:

A.C. Alrey-City of Cambridge	Eunice Johnson-GEO	Neil Roseman-Public
Adewole Adegborioye-MDE	Felicia Graves-MDE	Nekia Randall-BC-DHCD
Anastasia Solano-MDE	George (Wes) Stewart-GHHI	Patrick Connor-CECS
Andrew Roelke-MDE	Jennifer Martin-BCHD	Paula Montgomery-MDE
Ardenia Holland-MDE	Katherine Rush-MDE	Rashad Taylor-MDE
Ashley Brooks-FF	Katherine Taylor-BC-DHCD	Riley Roshong-GHHI
Ashley Ray-MDE	Kevin Stanley-MDE	Robert Allen-Public
Bay Hanson-GHHI	Lenora Thompson-GEO	Samantha Keane-MDE
Brionna Adams-BCHD	Leslie Delcid-MDE	Shadia Musa-GHHI
Carlie Furtaw-GHHI	Lisa Eibner-MDE	Shamola Dye-MDE
Chris White-ARC	Marjorie D' Ambrosio-MDE	Stephanie Cobb-Williams-MDE
Cynthia Herrera-GHHI	Matthew Koning-OAG	Thelonious Williams-MDH
Denifah Bun-Tejan-MDE	Miranda Salters-MDE	Tiffeny Price-MDH
Devona Addison-GHHI	Nancy Servatius-MDH	Wendy Phillips-MDE

### Documents Distributed:

- Agenda 04/02/26
- Minutes 03/05/26

## Opening Remarks, Acknowledgements, and Other Discussions:

- **Welcome and Opening Remarks:** Ruth Ann Norton, President of the Green & Healthy Homes Initiative (GHHI) and Commission Chair welcomed attendees and opened the April 2, 2026 meeting of the Maryland Lead Poisoning Prevention Commission. Chair Norton announced that it was National Healthy Homes Month, encouraging commissioners to share any related activities in the chat and commit to ending the toxic legacy of lead poisoning. Chair Norton also mentioned it was National Public Health Week, noting that public health deserves attention year-round.
- **Update on the Draft Commission Report:** The Maryland Department of the Environment released the annual draft commission report, and amendments suggested by commissioners were adopted. Frederick Banks, Program Manager for MDE Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (LPPP) and Commissioner confirmed that the final report had been approved by the secretary and was on its way to the governor. The plan is to distribute the report to commissioners soon so they may share it as appropriate.
- **Introductions of Commissioners and Attendees:** In-person attendance was taken followed by introductions of all Commissioners who were participating either in person or virtually.

## Approval of Minutes:

A motion was made by Dr. Clifford Mitchell, Bureau Director for the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) and Commissioner seconded by Alexandra Nestadt, Parent of a lead poisoned child and Commissioner to approve the April 2026 minutes. All present commissioners were in favor and the minutes were approved.

## Legislation/Pending Legislative Outcome & Action Dates

- **MDE's Departmental Bill:** The commission discussed MDE's departmental bill concerning performance bonds and liability insurance, which has passed both the House and the Senate. Commissioner Banks explained that the bill grants MDE permission to establish regulations requiring lead inspectors and contractors to be insured, and the next step is to convene a group to outline these regulations, followed by a public comment period.
- **Lead in Baby Food Products Bill:** The bill concerning lead and baby food products is moving forward but was revised to remove specific references to infant formula, while retaining infant cereal. The bill requires the industry to make testing results for contaminants, including lead, arsenic, cadmium, and mercury, publicly available, possibly via a QR code on products. A provision exists to prohibit the sale of formula that exceeds FDA limits. The Commission learned that infant formula was completely removed from the bill, leaving only infant cereal. Riley Roshong, Family Advocate Attorney for GHHI explained that the removal was due to opposition from industry lobbyists, specifically the Infant Nutrition Council of America, but sponsors plan to reintroduce legislation next year to recapture infant formula. Commissioner Dr. Mitchell explained that removing all trace amounts of lead is nearly impossible because lead is widely distributed in materials, machinery, and soil, and modern detection methods are extremely sensitive. Michael Ichniowski, Pediatric Environmental Health advocate for the Maryland Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics (MDAAP) and Commissioner added that the legislation is important for detecting arsenic in infant cereal, as rice cereal has been found to be variably contaminated. Commissioner Dr. Mitchell clarified that the current bill is notification-only and does not contain a ban on the sale of products based on lead content. Chair Norton expressed concern about infant formula being unregulated for the next year and requested that MDE pay special attention to infant formula and cereal, though lead poisoning in Maryland has primarily been linked to spices.
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- **Lead in Ammunition for Hunting:** A bill concerning lead in ammunition for hunting purposes has passed the House and is currently in the Senate, intending to phase out leaded ammunition for hunting, not completely ban it. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is the cognizant agency, but collaboration between DNR, the MDH, and MDE has occurred, including developing educational materials on the hazards of lead in shot. Chair Norton raised the concern of lead poisoning from retained bullet fragments in individuals, particularly young people who have been shot. Commissioner Dr. Mitchell confirmed this is a known issue, noting that some people, including adults, carry retained bullet fragments that can cause significant, long-term lead levels, but removal is often riskier than leaving the fragments. Commissioner Dr. Ichniowski also mentioned the risk of consuming venison killed with lead shot, which can contaminate the meat and expose families to lead.
- **Single Room Tenant Bill:** The single room tenant bill, which would cover an estimated 37,500 units not currently under the lead subtitle, passed successfully out of the Senate and is waiting for a hearing in the House. Chair Norton expressed concern that lead poisoning prevention bills were sent to the Economic Matters Committee for the first time, instead of the Environment or Health committees, which they viewed as potentially deprioritizing the health aspect. Chair Norton noted that committee assignment to Economic Matters could disadvantage communities and requested that MDE provide insight into why the legislative service assigned the bill to this committee. Commissioner Dr. Mitchell stated that departments generally have no influence on the legislature's committee assignments.
- **Modified Risk Reduction Bill:** The modified risk reduction bill is unlikely to move forward this session as it did not pass before crossover, receiving hearings but no favorable committee votes in the House or Senate. Chair Norton explained the bill's thrust was to restore the Maryland lead risk reduction and housing law to its pre-2019 state, requiring property owners to respond to a Notice of Defect when a child has an Elevated Blood Level (EBL). The 2019 legislative change created a loophole, allowing owners to shift the responsibility for immediate inspection and repair onto MDE, resulting in delays that have caused children's lead levels to rise. Chair Norton described this delay as immoral and attributed the loophole to lobbying by property owner groups. She asked MDE to examine records until October to produce a report detailing how many children with EBLs (3.5 or higher) MDE was able to inspect within 30 days, the barriers to doing so, and the cost to the state. She also requested that legal services track families put at risk by the loophole and whose children's lead levels rise. Ms. Roshong affirmed that GHHI would track the requested information internally. Ms. Roshong highlighted MDE data showing that only about half of environmental investigation referrals in 2023 were completed, and that significant harm has resulted from delays, citing a case where a family waited since July of the previous year for a landlord to address issues due to an incomplete MDE investigation. Chair Norton emphasized that if the onus remains on MDE, the department must be funded to act quickly. Naadiya Hutchinson from Baltimore Renters United (BRU) and Commissioner asked for the historical context of the 2019 change. Chair Norton explained that the loophole was a legislative compromise made to pass a bill that moved the environmental investigation trigger to 3.5, aligning with Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidance, but the amendment gave property owners a way to avoid immediate responsibility. Commissioner Banks countered a specific case example by noting that Baltimore City performed the inspection in a timely manner. Commissioner Banks noted that MDE shares the responsibility of conducting environmental investigations with Baltimore City, which completed an investigation in a timely manner for a specific family. Paula Montgomery, Lead Outreach and Education Coordinator for MDE's LPPP observed that they encounter many refusals at the lower levels of investigation, suggesting it is easier for the property owner to gain access.

## **Old & New Business:**

- **Commission Committee Function and Open Meetings Law:** Chair Norton updated the commission on the plan to utilize a summer student from Hopkins to help establish and support the commission's committees. Commissioner Dr. Mitchell raised a critical concern regarding how the committees will operate in compliance with the Open Meetings Law, specifically concerning nuances like publishing agendas and minutes. Chair Norton agreed to refer the matter to the Attorney General's office for research and present clarity on the open meetings law impact at the next meeting.
- **Ethics Rules:** Chair Norton would like to bring some brief reminders about the commission's ethics rules and reporting requirements to the next meeting.
- **Meeting Schedule Discussion:** Regarding the meeting schedule, Commissioner Banks motioned to move the commission to quarterly meetings. The commission agreed to amend the motion to start the quarterly schedule in January 2027 (FY27) and to take a vote on the proposal in May, after reviewing the statutory minimum requirement of quarterly meetings and the constraints on committee meetings.
- **Commissioner Reappointments and Vacancies:** Wendy Phillips, Executive Associate III for MDE's Land and Materials Administration (LMA) informed the commission about current openings and expiring terms in September, reminding members who need re-appointment to submit a reapplication via a forthcoming email. The process for commission appointments is handled directly by the governor's office and there is a need to fill specific open positions.
- **Adoption of New EPA Lead Dust Standards:** Commissioner Banks announced MDE's plan to proceed with adopting the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) lowered dust lead standards, which went into effect on January 12th. He confirmed that MDE will couple these new standards with both the abatement and the risk reduction standard, working with the Attorney General's office to expedite the process to Annapolis for public comment. The new standards for lead contaminated dust will be five micrograms per square foot on the floor and 25 micrograms on a window sill. Susan Kleinhammer, President of Leadtec Services, Inc. (LSI) and Commissioner inquired about communication to property owners regarding the discrepancy between the new EPA standards and the existing, more lenient MDE standards for risk reduction certificates. Commissioner Banks stated that until the Maryland regulations (COMAR) are changed, property owners must follow Maryland's current law. They noted that current data suggests 83% of properties would still pass under the new standard.

### Agency Hot Topics/Current Events

- **MDE (Maryland Department of the Environment)** Chair Banks provided an update on MDE's involvement in a multi-jurisdictional project for consumer items containing lead, creating a large database to share information and establish protocols for addressing these hazards. Commissioner Dr. Mitchell noted that the project is led by New York City, and they are working with MDE to determine how to report Maryland's results to the public, although New York City already makes its results public.
- **MDH (Maryland Department of Health)** Commissioner Dr. Mitchell updated the commission on MDH's continuing work with GHHI on a comprehensive healthy homes resource guide and the evaluation of the home visiting program. Commissioner Dr. Mitchell also provided the following in the meeting chat.
  - Thursday, April 9, 3-6 p.m. - Cecil County Health Department Open House, 975 Solomons Island Road N, Prince Frederick. Join colleagues and community members in Prince Frederick at the Cecil County Health Department Open House, featuring a tour of the Mobile Crisis Team Van, cooking demonstrations, community resources, giveaways and more.
  - Saturday, April 18, 11 a.m. - 3 p.m., Building African American Minds Public Health Fair, 31 Jowite St., Easton. The Talbot County Health Department is cosponsoring a community health fair offering free health screenings, and more.

- **MDAAP** (American Academy of Pediatrics, Maryland Chapter) Commissioner Dr. Ichniowski volunteered to coordinate with chapter leadership to create informational videos and mailings concerning lead testing and heavy metal poisoning in children's food.
- **MD-DHCD** (Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development) Nicola Tran, Director of Housing and Building Energy Programs for the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) and Commissioner announced that the department is close to hiring a new program manager for the lead program and is developing internal marketing campaigns to revise outreach strategies. Chair Norton indicated that she will receive an invite from GHHI to a lunch convening all agency communications staff to foster a statewide coordinated outreach approach.
- **BCHD** (Baltimore City Health Department): Brionna Adams, Lead Program Director for the Baltimore City Health Department (BCHD) reported that they partnered with iHeart Radio for an eight-week streaming campaign to raise awareness about point-of-care testing in specific zip codes with high Elevated Blood Levels (EBLs). They are also working with Young Gifted and Green and MedStar to provide education and awareness about point-of-care testing to providers and schools. Chair Norton requested that the BCHD discuss its outstanding lead violation list at the May meeting, including its accessibility to the public, the status of old adjudications, and any cross-walk efforts with the city's vacant property program. The goal is to ensure developers rehabbing vacant properties receive guidance and that properties are cleared of lead hazards before re-occupancy.
- **BCDHCD** (Baltimore City Department of Housing and Community Development) Nekia Randall provided an update on Baltimore City's lead hazard reduction program, noting they have two active grants totaling nearly \$10 million, with goals to complete 100 units on the newest grant. They are actively seeking new contractors and committed to sharing program information and recruitment links with the commission. Ms. Randall also provided the following links.
  - <https://cityservices.baltimorecity.gov/suppliers/bid-details/RFO-000803>
  - <https://www.instagram.com/bmoreleadsafe/>
  - <https://x.com/bmoreleadsafe>
  - [Instagram.com/bmoreleadsafe](https://www.instagram.com/bmoreleadsafe)
  - <https://www.facebook.com/bmoreleadsafe>
  - <https://dhcd.baltimorecity.gov/hho/lead-hazard-reduction>
  - [B-More Lead Safe | Baltimore MD](#)
  - [www.facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com)
- **BRU** (Baltimore Renters United) Naadiya Hutchinson from Baltimore Renters United (BRU) and Commissioner brought attention to conflicting guidance received by a community member about dealing with lead pipes, noting that DPW and 311 operators advised boiling water, which is unsafe for lead-contaminated water. The commission committed to inviting the DPW to address this guidance and to report back on educational efforts directed toward 311 operators.
- **GHHI** (Green & Healthy Homes Initiative) Chair Norton urged Ardenia Holland to advocate for either the state or MDE to issue a proclamation for National Healthy Homes Month and to use MDE social media to promote the observance. They emphasized the importance of public education regarding lead and healthy homes. The GHHI team shared updates on the development of a comprehensive statewide healthy homes resource guide and a super-interactive lead mapping tool that will provide information on available grants, contracts, and services to communities and local government agencies. They also announced a Healthy Homes Tour during National Public Health Week (April 6th–12th), partnering with Baltimore City Community Schools, and the Asthma Summit on May 21st.

**Commissioner Comments and Updates:**

Commissioner Kleinhammer requested that the Baltimore City Health Department provide redacted environmental investigation reports to the commission, similar to those provided by MDE, to study incidents of childhood lead poisoning in the city. Chair Norton requested that Commissioner Kleinhammer submit this formal request directly to the city, while agreeing to put the topic on the May agenda.

**Public Comments and Updates:**

During public comment, Patrick T Connor expressed concern that families are moving into housing with known dust lead hazards, which are reportable levels, and that there is insufficient education about the difference between the action level and the reportable level. Chair Norton committed to surveying all groups and state agencies to determine who is providing this information and what the current response is.

**Adjournment:**

Meeting adjourned by 11:05