

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Land and Materials Administration

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LEAD POISONING PREVENTION COMMISSION October 9, 2025 • 9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. • Hybrid Meeting Meeting Minutes

Members Present:

Adam Skolnik	Cliff Mitchell	Naadiya Hutchinson
Alexandra Nestadt	Fred Banks	
Barbara Moore	Manjula Paul	Nicola Tran
Benita Cooper	Mary Washington	Ruth Ann Norton
	Michael Ichniowski	Susan Kleinhammer

Members Absent:

Anna Davis	Jacob Benzaquen
Christina Peusch	Nicole Hart

Guests Present:

Adewole Adegborioye-MDE	Katherine Taylor-BC-DHCD	Shadia Musa-GHHI
Anastasia Solano-MDE	Kevin Stanley-MDE	Shamola Dye-MDE
Andrew Roelke-MDE	Kira Videan-MDE	Sheneka Frasier-MDE
Attilah Edges-BCHD	Lenora Thompson-GEO	Steven Homola-BCDHCD
Bay Hanson-GHHI	Marjorie D'Ambrosio-MDE	Thelonious Williams-MDH
Brionna Adams-GHHI	Matthew Koning-MDE	Tiffany Price-MDH
Chris White-ARC	Nancy Servatius-MDH	Tim Rule-MDE
Denifah Bun-Tejan-MDE	Nekia Randall-BC-DHCD	Wade McCord-MDE
Eunice Johnson-GEO	Patrick Connor-CECS	Wendy Phillips-MDE
George Stewart-GHHI	Paula Montgomery-MDE	
Jeanny Pope-OAG	Rashad Taylor-MDE	
Jonathan Riddix-BC-DHCD	Reva Smith-MWPH	

Documents Distributed:

- Agenda 10_09_25
- Draft Minutes 09_04_25
- Lead Commission Strategic Planning Survey Results
- Lead Week Information

Welcome and Introductions:

Ruth Ann Norton, President of the Green & Healthy Homes Initiative (GHHI) and Commission Chair welcomed the Commissioners and guests to the meeting and acknowledged the Jewish holidays, Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, which coincided with the original Commission meeting date. As a result, the Commission rescheduled the meeting from October 2, 2025, to October 9, 2025.

Opening Remarks, Acknowledgements, and Other Discussions:

- **Legal Proceedings Against Mr. Barkley:** Chair Norton commended Chris Cororsine, Assistant Attorney General for the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) for bringing charges against Mr. Barkley, whose case was discussed in recent news, regarding environmental fraud against Maryland citizens. The state is pursuing both civil and criminal penalties, and a bill is being pursued to ensure inspectors have liability insurance to prevent similar fraud. Sentencing is anticipated in February, and the environmental crimes unit has sought impact statements from the lead program. Naadiya Hutchinson from Baltimore Renters United (BRU) and Commissioner expressed satisfaction with the criminal charges and inquired about continued coordination between Maryland and D.C. regarding Mr. Barkley's potential accreditation in D.C., to which Frederick Banks, Program Manager for MDE's Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (LPPP) and Commissioner confirmed past information sharing and pledged to follow up.

Approval of Minutes:

A motion was made by Adam Skolnik, Executive Director for the Maryland Multi-Housing Association, Inc. (MMHA) and Commissioner seconded by Chair Banks to approve the June 2025 minutes. All present commissioners were in favor and the minutes were approved.

Old & New Business:

- **Survey Results:** Chair Norton provided material titled "Lead Commission Strategic Planning Survey Results" and presented a summary of a commission survey, noting 13 respondents and keeping it open until the afternoon. The top priorities identified were updating regulations regarding lead status of housing, expanding lead safety options for owner-occupied homes, and collaborating with the Maryland Department of Labor on lead worker education and certifications. Chair Norton also noted that funding challenges were ranked as the lowest priority among the options. Dr. Clifford Mitchell, Bureau Director for the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) and Commissioner pointed out that while the strategic plan was not a top choice, it was many people's second choice, and Chair Norton affirmed that all ranked items would be worked on as part of the overarching strategic plan.
- **Proposed Committee Structure and Topics Not Surveyed:** Chair Norton proposed organizing the commission's work into committees focusing on direct services, policy, community engagement, training and accreditation, and funding. Commission members were asked to self-identify their top two committee preferences, with the intent of having commission members chair subcommittees and allowing non-commission members to be invited to participate. Chair Norton also addressed topics not explicitly listed in the survey, such as identifying lead-poisoned children and developing a forum between regulators and inspection companies, suggesting they fall under direct service and training areas, respectively. Chair Norton reiterated the commission's broadening activities beyond lead paint issues, including reviewing the commission structure, transparency, and public involvement mechanisms.
- **Addressing Gaps in Lead Certification and Contractor Oversight:** Mary L. Washington, Maryland State Senator District 43 raised concerns about the overlap in regulation and code between lead

certification and the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). Nicola Tran, Director of Housing and Building Energy Programs for MD-DHCD and Commissioner confirmed that lead certification for contractors is a state law requirement for their programs but acknowledged a gap in ensuring general contractors adhere to lead-safe practices and training, especially when customers choose their own contractors. Chair Skolnik, emphasized that the Maryland Department of Labor and the MHIC (Maryland Home Improvement Commission) are crucial areas for intervention, as DHCD's involvement in housing is relatively small compared to licensed contractors. Paula Montgomery, LPPP's Lead Outreach and Education Coordinator for MDE advocated for tying MHIC licensure to adherence to state lead laws and requiring lead education for contractors to obtain their license. Chair Norton also suggested that state legislation could instruct local permitting processes to include questions about property age and contractor lead certifications. She also asked that Ms. Montgomery research laws that may require the Department of Labor to address the issue of lead certification for contractors and report in November.

- **Legislative Action and Enforcement for Lead Safety:** Senator Washington expressed willingness to sponsor legislation to address the identified gaps, including potentially eliminating variances in local laws to ensure adherence to state lead standards. Chair Norton along with Chair Skolnik, Ms. Montgomery, and Susan Kleinhammer, President of Leadtec Services, Inc. (LSI) and Commissioner will work to craft legislation to address the MHIC issue and that instructs local permitting processes. Chair Hutchinson and Chair Kleinhammer will help with the committee structure work to ensure functionality. Chair Norton also discussed the possibility of strengthening federal disclosure laws to require lead testing as an active part of the home sale process, rather than just disclosure of known lead. A participant added that buyers can already request a lead paint inspection as a contingency of their offer.
- **EPA RRP Rule vs. Maryland Law:** Chair Norton raised a concern that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)'s Renovation, Repair, and Painting (RRP) rule is significantly weaker than Maryland law in terms of occupant protection. However, Chair Kleinhammer respectfully disagreed, stating that the RRP rule requires remodelers to test surfaces for lead paint before disturbance and use lead-safe work practices similar to Maryland abatement regulations, with the primary difference being that dust testing is optional under RRP. Chair Norton maintained their concern about the RRP's training being weaker and its vagueness in enforcement, suggesting that it provides an underlying baseline but should not be considered sufficient for contractors working on rental properties in Maryland.
- **Addressing Lead Exposure in Western Maryland:** Chair Norton highlighted the critical issue of severe lead exposure in almost every house in Western Port, attributing it to recent climate-related flooding. She mentioned that an 11-agency response, including emergency management and DHCD, is working to permanently address housing issues in Western Port, where a 16-year-old died from a mold-induced asthma attack as a direct result of the floods. Chair Norton also noted that efforts are underway to secure supplemental funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), including those previously returned by Baltimore City, to support lead remediation and home repair, which is necessary before new heating systems can be installed.

The group will receive an update in the next meeting from Nicola and the other two healthy homes production grantees.

- **Baltimore City's Lead Grant Update:** Katherine Taylor, Director of the Baltimore City-DHCD Lead Hazard Reduction Program provided an update on their federal lead grant, reporting that their operations have not ceased despite the federal shutdown, with HUD maintaining essential staff to support their work. She announced that four units have been completed under the new grant, exceeding quarterly expectations, with six more scheduled to start and seven others under obligation. Ms. Taylor also highlighted successful outreach efforts, resulting in over 100 applications from interested individuals in Baltimore City, and mentioned increased social media engagement and upcoming participation in Lead Week with the Health Department. Chair Norton requested Ms. Taylor to provide a monthly dashboard report on lead program statistics, including applications in the pipeline and units cleared.
- **MDH Lead and Asthma Program Funding:** Theo Williams, Healthy Homes Program Administrator for MDH reported that MDH's home visiting program for children with elevated blood lead levels and asthma currently has approximately 500 children enrolled for tracking, encompassing several fiscal years. He clarified that the program's current award, including state and federal Medicaid matching dollars, totals about \$4.5 million, which has been fully disbursed to 11 local health jurisdictions, a nonprofit partner, and internal EHB costs. Mr. Williams confirmed that no additional funds from this program will be available for new lead projects until the next fiscal year's renewal in July, following the state legislature's budget allocations.
- **Supplemental Funding for Lead Case Management:** Commissioner Dr. Mitchell clarified that while MDH does not have specific intervention funding for lead remediation beyond durable goods, they have received and dispersed approximately \$225,000 in Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO) funding for the last three years to support lead case management in 13 jurisdictions not covered by the Medicaid CHIP program, including Allegany County. Commissioner Dr. Mitchell also noted that three Lead Care 2 devices, received from the EPA by GHII, have been dispersed, with one specifically allocated to Allegany County to increase screening in Western Maryland. Chair Norton added that three more test kits were shipped to a doctor in Allegany and Garrett County.
- **National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week Activities** Shadia Musa, Outreach and Education Manager for GHII outlined a comprehensive schedule of events for National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week, occurring from Sunday, October 19th, through Saturday, October 26th. Activities include a read-aloud with "Derek the Dinosaur" at Harford Heights Elementary, a webinar on lead laws and tenants' rights for property owners, and a "Lunch and Learn on Lead" followed by a community resource fair in Cambridge, Maryland, in partnership with the Dorchester County Health Department. Additional events include a "Trunk or Treat" at the GHII office and blood lead testing and a community resource fair at Curtis Bay Elementary School in partnership with the Baltimore City Health Department. Chair Norton also announced a national webinar on October 23rd with the New Jersey Department of Health and Rutgers University, presenting lessons from prenatal and perinatal population screening for lead and mercury.

Agency Hot Topics/Current Events

- **MDE** (Maryland Department of the Environment) Chair Banks reminded the Commission that renewal season is coming. MDE increased the fee for Lead Free Certification from \$10 to \$30. By the end of the year the increases for the registration fee will be posted online changing from \$30 to \$75 every 2 years.
- **MDAAP** (American Academy of Pediatrics, Maryland Chapter) Dr. Michael Ichniowski, Pediatric Environmental Health advocate for the Maryland Chapter, MDAAP and Commissioner will be making a short video to be uploaded to social media to encourage lead testing.
- **BCHD** (Baltimore City Health Department): Brionna Adams, Lead Program Director for BCHD announced Camille Burke's promotion to Chief Operating Officer and introduced Jennifer Martin as the new Assistant Commissioner over lead and other agencies within the Baltimore City Health Department. They reiterated the department's participation in Lead Week with blood lead testing on Friday and a resource fair on Saturday at Curtis Bay Elementary School, emphasizing the importance of bringing educational materials and accommodating Spanish-speaking families with translators. Brionna Adams also shared that the Baltimore City Health Department has hired more community health educators and will hold a walk-in lead testing clinic on October 14th from 10 AM to 2 PM at the immunization clinic at 1200 East Fayette, with a goal to circulate future testing dates.

Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 11:00

Future Meeting Date:

Next Meeting Reminder: Thursday, November 6, 2025, 9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. which includes the