

**2021 Child Lead
Exposure
Elimination
Commission
Annual Report**



**Michigan Department
of Health and Human
Services**

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Childhood lead exposure is one of the most preventable environmental health hazards in history. While numbers and rates of elevated blood lead levels in children have decreased substantially over the past few decades, mounting evidence suggests that even low-level lead exposure can have long lasting impacts on children. We must ensure that all children in our state have healthy environments in which they can live, learn and play.

With vulnerable communities in our state still reeling from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, we cannot allow these same populations to be placed at further risk because of undetected lead exposure. We must stay vigilant by ensuring that young children receive appropriate testing for lead exposure and case management for children with evidence of exposure while we seek to identify and eliminate lead exposures before they occur.

Michigan's Child Exposure Elimination Commission (CLEEC) has been at the forefront of advocacy for children across our state. The CLEEC provides the director of the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) and the Governor invaluable advice regarding the policies the state's lead response programs should emphasize, preferred methods for financing, and other matter relevant matters. The Commission has a clear vision and roadmap to identify and eradicate lead health risks through primary prevention.

It is with great enthusiasm that I share the CLEEC's 2021 Annual Report. I am grateful to the members of the Child Lead Exposure Elimination Commission for their time, expertise and tireless efforts to protect Michigan's children from exposure to lead.

Sincerely,

Natasha Bagdasarian
Chair
Chief Medical Executive
Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

ABOUT THE CLEEC

The [Child Lead Exposure Elimination Commission \(CLEEC\)](#) acts in an advisory capacity to the Governor and the MDHHS director to coordinate and collaborate with all levels of government and stakeholders regarding programs and policies related to the elimination of child lead exposure.

This includes providing guidance to the Governor and MDHHS director regarding the state's coordination of all efforts to eliminate child lead exposure throughout the state and work with the previous temporary Child Lead Poisoning Elimination Board and stakeholders to prioritize the recommendations made in the 2016 Child Lead Poisoning Elimination Board Roadmap to Eliminating Child Lead Exposure Report.

VISION

The Child Lead Exposure Elimination Commission envisions a state free of lead exposure by 2030 to benefit the health of Michigan's children. To achieve this vision, the Commission believes a focus on primary prevention is essential in eliminating all sources of lead exposure

MISSION

The Child Lead Exposure Elimination Commission will work with all levels of government and stakeholders throughout the state to eliminate lead exposure for Michigan's children.

VALUES

The Child Lead Exposure Elimination Commission believes in eliminating lead in air, soil, water, products and homes by using health equity as a lens and leveraging policy, partnerships, programs and public engagement in a targeted way that accounts for the inequitable burden of lead exposure among individuals and communities.

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2021 CLEEC MEMBERSHIP



Natasha Bagdasarian
Chair
Chief Medical Executive



Christine Callahan
Early Childhood



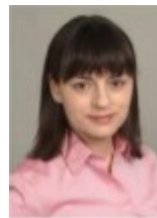
Paul Haan
Lead Exposure Advocacy



Mona Hanna-Atisha
Vice Chair
Physician



Angela Hood-Beaugard
General Public



Joanna Kica
General Public



Rebecca Meunick
Lead Exposure Advocacy



Kathy Moore
Local Public Health



Anthony Russo
Ad-Hoc Member



Lyke Thompson
Research & Technology



Trina Townsend
Child Family Agency



Al Vanderberg
Local Government

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2021 CLEEC EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS



Dan Lince
Michigan State Housing
Development Authority



Larry Horvath
Michigan Department of
Licensing & Regulatory
Affairs



Eric Oswald
Michigan Department of
Environment, Great Lakes
& Energy



Carin Speidel
Michigan Department of
Health and Human
Services

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2021 Meeting Dates

January 11, 2021

February 8, 2021

March 8, 2021

April 19, 2021

May 21, 2021

July 23, 2021

September 13, 2021

October 11, 2021

November 8, 2021

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94,032

children less than 6 years of age tested for lead exposure in Michigan in 2020.

2,301

less than 6 years of age with confirmed blood lead levels of 5 $\mu\text{g}/\text{dl}$ or greater. This was 2.4% of the total tested population in 2020.¹

378

children with confirmed blood lead levels of 10 $\mu\text{g}/\text{dl}$ or greater. This was 0.4% of the total tested population in 2020.

¹Values ≥ 4.5 $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ are included

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290

properties had lead hazard control work completed through Lead Safe Home and Community Development Unit funding in fiscal year 2020.

1,396

individuals were certified to perform lead hazard control activities (LIRA, Worker/ Supervisor) in 2020.

193

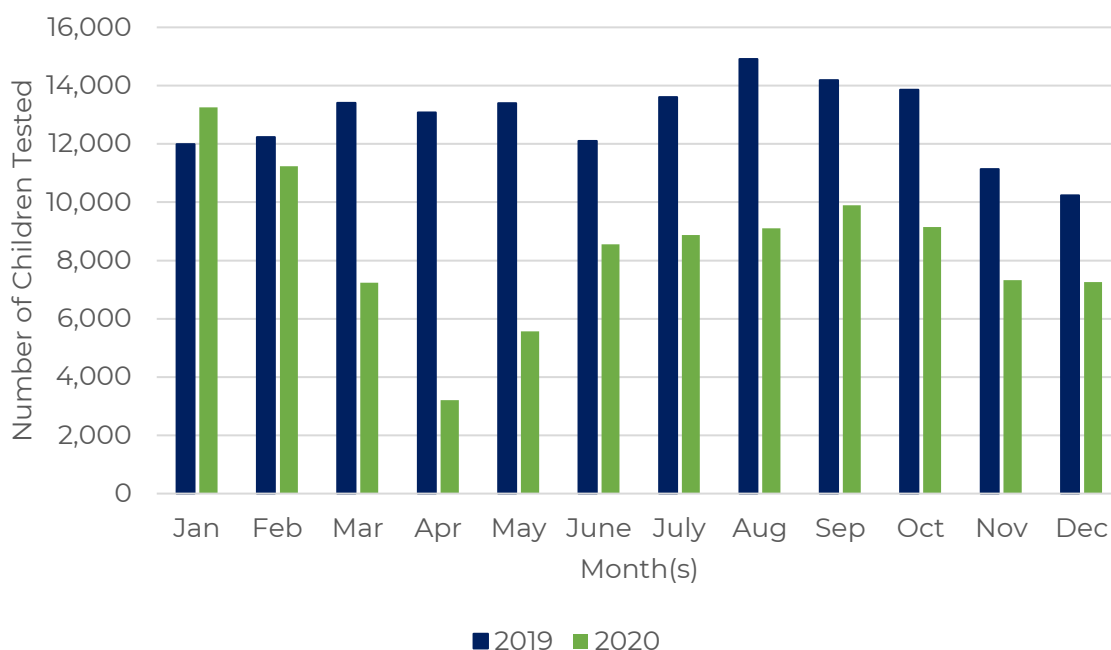
firms were certified to perform removal activities through September 2020.

COVID-19 IMPACTS

Based on the 34 jurisdictions across the United States, the COVID-19 pandemic has stretched Michigan’s public health infrastructure in unforeseen ways. During January–May 2020, 34% fewer U.S. children had blood lead testing compared with those during January–May 2019, with an estimated 9,603 children with elevated BLLs missed. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has worked to raise awareness of the drop in testing and plans to help state and local health departments track down children who missed lead tests.

Since the onset of the pandemic, there has been a significant drop in well-child visits in Michigan, resulting in delays in appropriate screenings and referrals. Michigan’s blood lead testing data reflect the same drop in testing as national data, notably starting in March 2020 with the onset of the pandemic shutdown.

Table 1: Number of children under age 6 tested for lead in Michigan by month, comparing 2019 to 2020

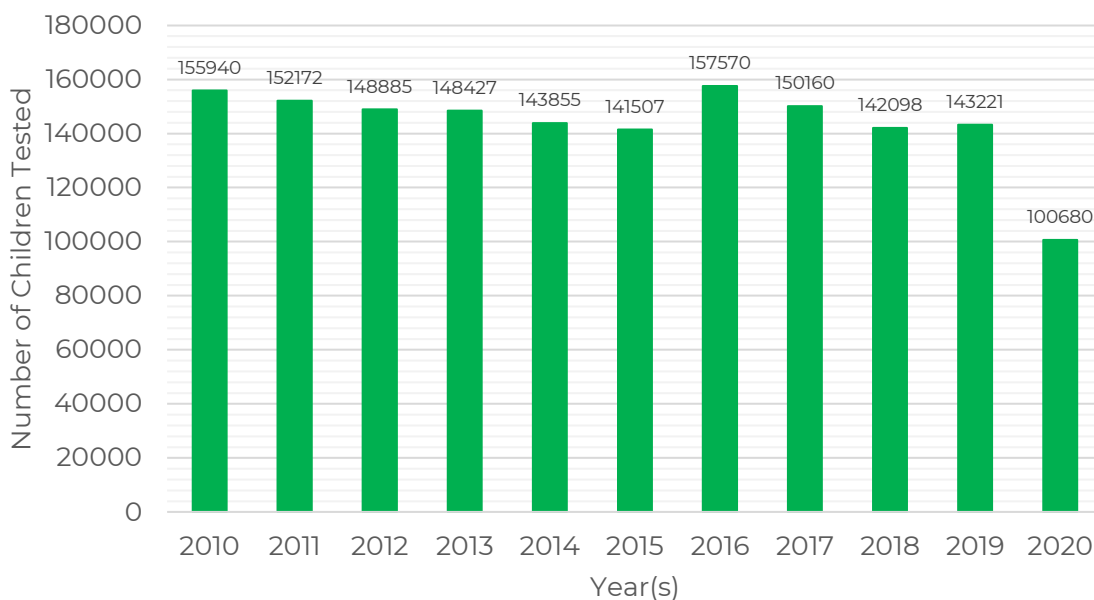


²Courtney JG, Chuke SO, Dyke K, et al. Decreases in Young Children Who Received Blood Lead Level Testing During COVID-19 — 34 Jurisdictions, January–May 2020. MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep 2021; 70:155–161. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm7005a2>

2020 Michigan Childhood Lead Testing Statistics

In 2020, 94,032 Michigan children under age 6 years of age received a blood lead screening test, a 34% decrease compared to the 143,221 children tested in 2019. (Table 2) In 2020, there were 2,301 children with blood lead levels of 5 µg/dl or greater, including 1,309 with venous-confirmed elevated levels. This was 2.4% and 1.4% of the total tested population in 2020, respectively. Further, there were 378 children with venous-confirmed blood lead levels of 10 µg/dl or greater. This was 0.4% of the total tested population in 2020. (Table 3) The 2020 data shows a continued decrease in the percent of children with confirmed elevated blood lead levels compared to previous years. (Table 4) It is important to note the interpretation of 2020 data is complicated by the significant drop in testing compared to other years because it is unclear if those missing had the same risk (or higher or lower risk) of lead exposure than those who did not get tested.

Table 2: Number of children, less than age 6 years of age tested for elevated blood lead levels in Michigan (2010-2020)

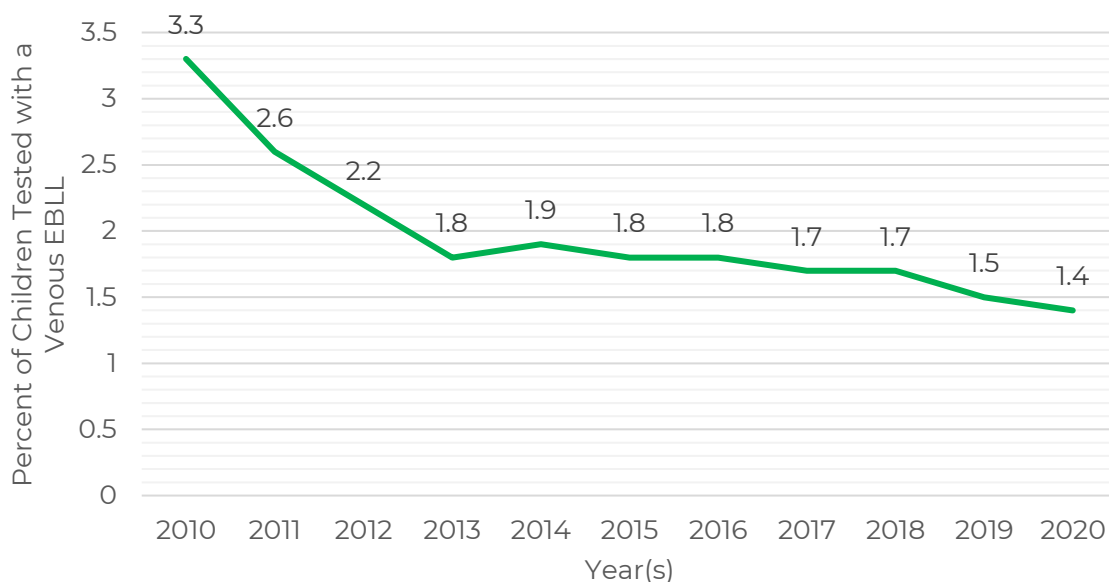


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Table 3: Michigan children tested and venous confirmed blood lead levels: 2020

Venous Confirmed Blood Lead Levels									
2020 Michigan	Total Tested	5-9 µg/dl	10-14 µg/dl	15-19 µg/dl	20-44 µg/dl	45+ µg/dl	Total ≥5 µg/dl	Percent Tested with ≥5 µg/dl	Percent Tested with ≥10 µg/dl
TOTAL	94,032	931	212	89	70	7	1309	1.4%	378

Table 4: Percent of children tested with a venous elevated blood lead level in Michigan ≥4 µg/dl (2010-2020)



All data was obtained from the [MiTracking Michigan Environmental Public Health Tracking](#) website.

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MDHHS has created an action plan to increase testing. This includes:

Data

- Regular reporting of number of children tested to local health departments
- Identifying areas with low testing rates for targeted outreach
- Improving data reporting and linkages with Medicaid

Healthcare Provider Education

- Collaboration with the Michigan Chapter of American Academy of Pediatrics
- Conducting direct outreach to providers
- Talks with providers in training and practice

Public Awareness

- Launching multiple lead media campaigns

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**HEALTHY HOMES PROGRAM
HIGHLIGHTS**

The Healthy Homes Section strives to improve the health and well-being of Michigan residents by promoting safe and healthy home environments through comprehensive home-based intervention programs, lead certifications and regulations, public education and outreach, quality assurance and improvement, and statewide partnerships. This section’s efforts include: investigating lead contamination in homes with children; overseeing work to reduce or eliminate exposure to household; and training, certifying and regulating the contractors to the work.

Table 5: Healthy Homes Section Lead Services Dashboard FY20

Action	Quarter 1 (Oct-Dec)	Quarter 2 (Jan-Mar)	Quarter 3 (Apr-June)	Quarter 4 (Jul-Sep)	Cumulative
Applications Received					
LSHP Total Applications Received	180	143	88	158	569
CDU Total Applications Received	69	45	16	40	170
Applications Denied/Closed					
LSHP Applications Denied/Closed	183	166	115	59	523
CDU Applications Denied/Closed	13	15	1	10	39
Total EIs Complete					
LSHP Total EIs Complete	150	142	12	34	338
CDU Total EIs Complete	36	41	3	29	109
Projects Under Contract, Awaiting Construction					
LSHP Projects Under Contract, Awaiting Construction	22	11	11	24	68
CDU Projects Under Contract, Awaiting Construction	0	0	0	3	3
Projects Completed and Cleared					
LSHP Projects Completed and Cleared	56	71	32	53	212
CDU Projects Needing MDHHS Waiver	19	21	10	28	78
Number of Children Served					
LSHP Number of Children Served	157	119	72	139	487
CDU Number of Children Served	65	39	15	28	147

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Action	Quarter 1 (Oct-Dec)	Quarter 2 (Jan-Mar)	Quarter 3 (Apr-June)	Quarter 4 (Jul-Sep)	Cumulative
Average Project Timeline (EBL, non-hospitalized)					
LSHP Average Project Timeline	534 days	536 days	526 days	521 days	529 days
CDU Average Project Timeline	320 days	231 days	310 days	319 days	296 days
Average Project Timeline					
LSHP Average Project Timeline (Non-EBL)³	597 days	624 days	751 days	679 days	644 days
CDU Average Project Timeline (Non-EBL)³	285 days	320 days	427 days	424 days	356 days

Table Key

Acronyms

CDU: Community Development Unit

EBL: Elevated Blood Lead

EI: Environmental Investigation

LSHP: Lead Safe Home Program

³ Non-EBL < 5 µg/dL

2020 KEY LEAD EXPOSURE PREVENTION ACTIVITIES

CLEEC Strategic Planning

The CLEEC initiated strategic planning prior to the pandemic and continued this process virtually. The group revisited [recommendations](#) from the 2018 Child Lead Exposure Elimination Commission Annual Report and identified action steps for operationalizing priorities.

The CLEEC's goals are:

1. To support primary prevention efforts, including a regulatory environment that promotes best practice lead elimination.
2. To ensure that statewide lead elimination activities are fully and sustainably resourced.
3. To implement universal blood testing to better identify and support children exposed to lead.
4. To create and maintain an effective centralized database and information technology systems for sharing of data and utilization technology best practices.
5. To develop and maintain robust stakeholder partnerships.

CLEEC Regulatory Toolkit

The CLEEC is supporting the department as it develops a regulatory toolkit for communities that desire to be “lead safe.” The toolkit is designed to help municipalities understand lead safe work practices, lead abatement, how to identify lead-certified contractors locally and determine how many additional are needed. These resources will also be beneficial to schools and childcares to help educate parents and share interventions for children exposed to lead with schools.

MDHHS Lead Prevention Fund

The creation of public-private partnerships in the form of a Lead Poisoning Prevention Fund enhances Michigan's ability to eliminate lead exposure by injecting public and private capital into primary prevention programs that effectively address lead hazards. In September 2020, Governor Whitmer signed Michigan's 2021 budget which included an initial \$2 million of seed capital for the fund. After completing the request for proposal process, Michigan Saves has been identified as the administrator and will work closely with the department to implement this innovative opportunity.

MDHHS Lead Workforce Incentive Program

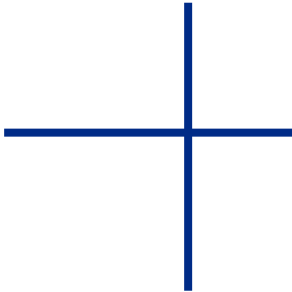
MDHHS has identified an extensive shortfall in the lead abatement workforce needed to handle the increased volume of households seeking assistance. MDHHS launched the Lead Workforce Incentive Program (WIP) to incentivize quality lead abatement work when performed through the various HHS programs. Eligible contractors can qualify for up to \$5,000 per fiscal year to offset the costs of lead abatement work provided they have zero citations within the fiscal year, are not currently within workmanship probation status and the project is completed successfully without workmanship issues. Since launching the program, \$39,000 has been administered to eligible contractors.

FUTURE OF THE CLEEC

Michigan has made unprecedented progress protecting children from lead exposure. But along with these advances, significant hurdles still exist. As of the writing of this report, the state is actively responding to elevated levels of toxic lead in municipal water supplies, including the water for Benton Harbor. MDHHS and Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy are working to provide residents with bottled water and filters to remove lead levels from drinking water and permanently remove lead by replacing lead service lines. These further underscores the importance of collaboration and coordination to provide resources to keep cities like Benton Harbor safe.

The CLEEC will continue to engage Michigan's stakeholders in the process of actively working toward the elimination of all sources of lead exposure in the state. With many regulatory innovations and policy considerations in discussion, there are opportunities to see systemic change. We have within our reach the possibility of protecting our children from lead exposure.

We believe Michigan will become a place where children, especially those in vulnerable communities, live, learn and play protected from lead exposure and its harmful impacts.



The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services will not exclude from participation in, deny benefits of, or discriminate against any individual or group because of race, sex, religion, age, national origin, color, height, weight, marital status, gender identification or expression, sexual orientation, partisan considerations, or a disability or genetic information that is unrelated to the person's eligibility.

