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For more information, contact PIO Dianne Litzenburger

d.litzenburger@nwhealth.org

Health Officer Peacock resigns effective April 29

Lisa Peacock, Health Officer for the Health Department of Northwest Michigan, served her resignation to the Board of Health on Tuesday, February 22, 2022. Although at the board's discretion, per her contract, Peacock is giving the board a 60-day notice with her resignation effective April 29.

In her resignation letter she cited the "hostile work environment" and lack of support by some members of the Board of Health.

"One of my top priorities in my Health Officer role has been to maintain the culture of excellence and innovation that the Health Department of Northwest Michigan has been known for over the past 90 years," Peacock wrote in her letter to the Board of Health. "The employees are motivated to do this work because they are truly dedicated to serving the community and they also know that they are valued and supported by the organization's leadership. While by no means is our leadership team perfect, we understand that people function at their highest level when they are supported, valued, trained, and have the tools they need to be successful at their job. The disconnect between this long-standing culture and the current Board of Health is both striking and damaging. It is literally impossible for me to continue to support our team in this way in the face of ongoing efforts by the Board of Health to damage this strong health department and me as its leader."

The Health Department of Northwest Michigan Board of Health is comprised of two county commissioners appointed by their respective County Boards of Commissions in Antrim, Charlevoix, Emmet, and Otsego counties.

Peacock has more than 28 years of experience in healthcare, the last 12 of those at the Health Department of Northwest Michigan and has served as a Health Officer since July 2015. During her tenure she has led the 90-year-old agency to effectively and efficiently meet community needs identified through regional assessment and planning. In addition, among other highlights, she has helped:

- expand services to schools including school-based health clinics, mental health services and served in an advisory role to schools throughout various health concerns, including the current COVID-19 pandemic;
- expand the Northern Michigan Community Health Innovation Region through strong regional partnerships to assure the top health needs of the community are addressed through effective and sustainable services;
- navigate the two-year pandemic response, including working with community partners to establish one of the first drive through testing sites in northern Michigan at the Emmet County

The Health Department of Northwest Michigan is mandated by the Michigan Public Health Code to promote wellness, prevent disease, provide quality healthcare, address health problems of vulnerable populations, and protect the environment for the residents and visitors of Antrim, Charlevoix, Emmet, and Otsego counties. For more information, visit nwhealth.org.

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Fairgrounds, organize vaccination clinics for thousands of residents and their families, arranged for additional testing sites, as well as the distribution of free home tests and KN95 masks;

- oversee numerous state and federal grants that have been awarded to the health department to provide vital services to citizens in the region;
- planned and overseen expansion of the Northern Michigan Regional Lab in Gaylord to serve as a regional resource for northern Michigan for COVID testing, water testing and wastewater surveillance; and
- acquire acquisition of a mobile unit to expand the reach of services to more rural regions.

“I am very saddened to offer my resignation,” Peacock said. “I love my job, the employees I work with, and our community partners who support our mission,” she added.

Peacock is working with the health department leadership team on a transition plan.

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