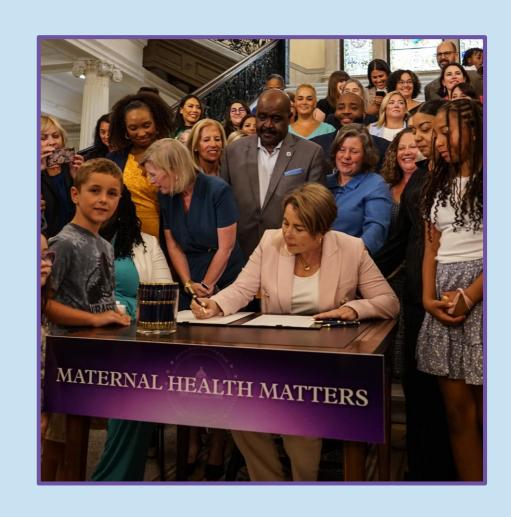


# Promises in Practice: The Momnibus Bill, One Year In

Thursday, November 6, 2025 9:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.





#### **Massachusetts Department of Public Health**

# Massachusetts Maternal Health Law: DPH Implementation during 2025

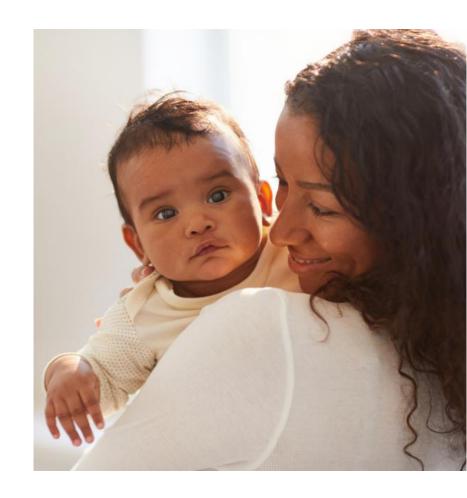
November 6, 2025

**Elaine Fitzgerald Lewis, DrPH, MIA** 

Director, Bureau of Family Health & Nutrition State Title V Maternal & Child Health Director

# Agenda

- Introduction to the Bureau of Family Health and Nutrition
- Overview of the MA Maternal Health Law
- Summary of DPH implementation progress
- Deeper dive into:
  - Certified professional midwife regulations
  - Birth center regulations
  - Pregnancy loss information campaign
  - Maternal Mortality & Morbidity Review Committee
  - Universal home visiting program (Welcome Family)



#### What is the Bureau of Family Health & Nutrition?

The Bureau of Family Health & Nutrition is the home of the Title V Maternal & Child Health Block Grant in Massachusetts.

Title V enables BFHN to develop, implement, and evaluate policies and programs for pregnant people, parents, infants, and children and youth—including those with special health needs—serving over 1 million families each year.



#### **BFHN Divisions**



#### **Nutrition Division**

Helps ensure that all families have the healthy foods they need, and the knowledge, resources, and care necessary to live healthy lives.



**Early Intervention Division (EI)** 

Supports families and caregivers with infants and toddlers at risk of developmental delays to enhance their child's learning and development.



**Division of Pregnancy, Infancy, and Early Childhood (DPIE)** 

Promotes healthy, safe, and nurturing environments for children, birthing people, and families by providing direct services, research, and policy development.

# **BFHN Divisions (continued)**



#### **Division for Children & Youth with Special Health Needs (DCYSHN)**

Promotes the health and well-being for children and youth with special health needs and collaborates with families and providers to address a range of medical, developmental, and behavioral conditions.



#### **Division for Family Health Data & Analytics (DFHDA)**

Focuses on the surveillance, research, and training to improve health outcomes for all birthing people, children, and families.



#### **Division of Administration & Finance**

Oversees the management, administration, and operations of BFHN's financial resources in support of promoting families' health outcomes across the state.

#### What is the Maternal Health Law?

- "An Act promoting access to midwifery care and out-of-hospital birth options"
- Goal: Strengthen maternal health practices and expand coverage for services including midwifery, birth centers, doulas, and screening and treatment for postpartum depression for birthing and pregnant families in MA



#### **DPH & Implementing the Maternal Health Law**

The Department of Public Health (DPH), in collaboration with other state agencies and partners, is leading the following activities for the maternal health law:

Activity	Status
Birth center regulations *	Complete
Expansion of authority for the Maternal Mortality & Morbidity Committee*	Complete
Quality guidelines for the use of donor milk	Complete
Establishment of a Maternal Health Task Force with the Health Policy Commission	Implemented
Pregnancy loss information campaign*	In progress
Digital resource center for Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorders	In progress

#### **DPH & Implementing the Maternal Health Law (continued)**

Activity	Status
Certified professional midwife regulations*	In progress
Expansion of universal home visiting program (Welcome Family)*	In progress
Newborn screening recommendations and advisory committee	In progress
Lactation consultant licensure	In progress
Establishment of Fetal & Infant Mortality Review program	In progress
Grants program to address perinatal mental health and substance use disorders	In progress

### **Certified Professional Midwives (CPMs) regulations**

Goal	Develop and implement regulations for certified professional midwives
Objectives	<ul> <li>Establish Board of Midwifery to oversee and develop:         <ul> <li>Regulations for CPMs licensure</li> <li>Guidelines for the practice of professional midwifery</li> <li>Guidelines for access to medications</li> </ul> </li> <li>Temporary licensure will be made available by May 2025; permanent licensure by November 2025</li> <li>Develop seamless and equitable integration and transfer of care systems</li> </ul>
Progress to date	<ul> <li>Inaugurated Board of Midwifery in February 2025</li> <li>Board is preparing for temporary licensure and medication access</li> <li>Developed a Community Birth Integration plan that includes developing guidelines and protocols for transfer of care across the state</li> <li>Started working with hospitals &amp; CPMs to conduct transport drills</li> </ul>

# Birth center regulations

Goal	Review birth center regulation to enable the opening and operating of birth centers
Objectives	<ul> <li>DPH reviewed regulations to include:         <ul> <li>Transfer of care plans to nearby hospital</li> <li>Policies and procedures for people who risk out or are referred</li> <li>An administrative director</li> <li>A clinical director who must be a CNM, CPM, or MD</li> <li>Birth attendants can be CNMs, CPMs, MDs and others</li> <li>No requirement for hospital supervision or other provider</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Progress to date	Complete; Regulations were approved for promulgation as of February 2025 and are available on mass.gov; Distributed \$2.8 million to birth centers in MA in FY25.

# **Pregnancy loss information campaign**

Goal	Develop and disseminate information on pregnancy loss to the public
Objectives	<ul> <li>Disseminate information that includes:         <ul> <li>Awareness of pregnancy loss, including incidence and prevalence among pregnant people</li> <li>Treatment options including mental health supports, necessary procedures and medications, and culturally responsive supports (e.g., pregnancy loss doula care)</li> <li>Ensure information is available in multiple languages</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Progress to date	<ul> <li>Launching pregnancy loss webpage on mass.gov in June 2025</li> <li>Collaborating with Healthy Birth Day Inc., for the third year in a row to promote Count the Kicks stillbirth prevention campaign</li> </ul>

## Count the Kicks stillbirth prevention campaign

#### What is Count the Kicks (CTK)?

 Stillbirth prevention campaign that teaches the method for, and importance of, tracking fetal movement during the 3rd trimester using its app

#### **CTK Campaign highlights:**

- Launched over 200 CTK billboards in MA
- Created Google ads to encourage parents to download CTK app, garnering more than 2 million impressions and over 42,000 clicks
- Disseminated 67,000 free Count the Kicks educational materials in English, Spanish, Portuguese, and Haitian Creole



#### Maternal Mortality & Morbidity Review Committee (MMMRC)

Goal	Expand the authority to receive necessary information and delineate the composition of the members of the MMMRC
Objectives	<ul> <li>MMMRC will be able to request records from any agency, department or office to perform reviews</li> <li>MMMRC will develop a report that includes:         <ul> <li>Description of the incidents of maternal mortality and maternal morbidity reviewed and identified disparities</li> <li>Recommendations to reduce maternal mortality and severe maternal morbidity</li> <li>Recommendations for any legislation or other changes to policy to reduce maternal mortality and severe maternal morbidity</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Progress to date	<ul> <li>Complete; MMMRC has received expansion of authority. Reports are currently in review at EOHHS.</li> </ul>

#### Expansion of statewide universal home visiting program

Goal	Establish and administer a statewide system of programs providing universal access to postpartum home visits through expanding the Welcome Family program across MA
Objectives	<ul> <li>Promote screenings for unmet health needs including reproductive health services, maternal and infant nutritional needs and emotional health supports (e.g., postpartum depression)</li> <li>DPH to monitor and evaluate effectiveness to advance equity</li> <li>DPH to provide reimbursement for home visiting services for costs not covered by third-party payors.</li> </ul>
Progress to da	BFHN coordinating with MassHealth and DOI to align planning and timelines; partnered with consultant to support systems design, including community engagement, technology landscape assessment, and workforce assessment

#### **Welcome Family Universal Postpartum Home Visit**

"It is so hard and lonely those first few weeks with a new baby and [the home visiting nurse] was so supportive, helpful and genuinely cared for how I was doing, not just the baby.

This was exactly what I needed; someone to talk to, with experience who would give me immense amounts of advice and tips to cope with a new baby."

—Participant testimonial

#### **Connect with DPH**



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#### **Massachusetts Department of Public Health**

# Thank you

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