

**LWV-CENTRAL DELAWARE COUNTY CONSENSUS  
REGARDING A  
DELAWARE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

**POSITION IN BRIEF**

Action to support the formation of a Delaware County Department of Public Health.

**POSITION IN DETAIL**

Action to support formation of a county based health department that:

- provides basic public health services,
- monitors, targets and identifies public health and safety issues,
- improves the health of residents,
- promotes public education on these issues,
- coordinates responses to public health and safety emergencies, and
- meets state and federal requirements.

By consolidating public health services in a single governmental entity that meets federal and state requirements, the county will:

- make Delaware County eligible for federal and state funds,
- bring taxpayer dollars back into the county,
- provide additional resources that will improve the quality and scope of public health service to all county residents, and
- ensure better coordination of and timely response to public health emergencies.

**BACKGROUND**

In the 1970's, the League of Women Voters of Delaware County studied and reached agreement that Delaware County needed a Public Health Department. When the League was asked to support a public health department in 2006, the League decided an update of the position was required because the demographics of the county had changed.

In 2007, the LWV Central Delaware County began to study of Public Health Departments in PA and the laws that regulate them. We reviewed the

- PA Act 315,
- PA Act 12,
- PA Act 537,
- 2010 PA Health Report,
- Lancaster County Health Department Study,
- Montgomery County Health Department Program Plans,
- Delaware County Health Profile
- Crozer Keystone Health Systems Annual Report and
- The Working Group for Delaware County Health Department Report.

We gathered further information from the following websites

- PA Department of Health
- Montgomery County Department of Health
- Health Studies of Chester PA Residents
- Delaware County Intercommunity Health Coordination

We visited, interviewed the staff and received detailed information from

- PA Department of Health Southeast District Office in Chester,
- Montgomery Health Department in Norristown,
- Delaware County Department of Intercommunity Health Coordination in Media and
- Delaware County Executive Director.

We sent a survey to the Health Officer, or person responsible for interacting with Delaware County, asking

- What public health services their municipality supplies and who fills in when they don't provide the services?
- Do they have a public health department or office?
- Are public health services lacking in their municipality?
- Do they have concerns about establishing a county public health department?
- Who supplies the public health services that you don't supply?

We distributed three articles to our members on

- Update on the County Health Department Issue
- Economic Arguments for and Against a Public Health Department in Delaware County
- Structure of Public Health in Delaware County

Adopted March 5, 2009