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MEETING MINUTES

City of Melrose
City Hall
562 Main Street
Melrose, MA 02176

Committee/Board: Board of Health

Meeting Day/Date/Time: Thursday, March 26, 2026

Location: Melrose City Hall, 562 Main St
Cassidy Conference Room

Call to Order: Frank Brincheiro

Time Called: 6:35 PM

Second by: Lillian Kelly

In Attendance/Roll Call

Board Members: Frank Brincheiro, Lillian Kelly, Carol Ann Licitra

Health Department: Director Anthony Chui; Administrative Assistant Christy Bolduc;
Regional Public Health Nurse Melissa Lowry; Regional Tobacco Program Coordinator
Maureen Buzby

Approval of Minutes for February 19, 2026

Frank made a motion to accept the minutes

Carol Ann second the minutes

Further Discussion: None

Frank Brincheiro– Yes

Carol Ann Licitra – Yes

Lillian Kelly – Yes

PASSED 3-0-0

Public Comment

Frank made a motion to open public comment

Carol Ann seconded the motion

Further Discussion: None

Frank Brincheiro– Yes

Carol Ann Licitra – Yes

Lillian Kelly – Yes

PASSED 3-0-0

Joe Vanwart (Vendor, MA resident)

- Has been a vendor for 3 years; sells whole-leaf kratom.
- Stated that whole-leaf kratom is natural and different from synthetic or concentrated forms (e.g., “7-OH”).
- Noted that FDA has not standardized products but believes whole-leaf is safer than synthetic
- Stated he can provide studies and more information at future meetings.

Christine Vanwart (MA resident)

- Shared personal experience and prefers her daughter to use kratom over energy drinks like Red Bull.
- Described kratom as natural, from the coffee family, and helpful for focus.
- Emphasized that she previously drank 5 cups of coffee daily but currently drinks whole-leaf kratom and it makes her feel more present.

Anthony Chui Health Director

- Noted kratom interacts with receptors differently than caffeine.
- FDA has not issued guidance or approved of any kratom products.
- Stated that even with labeling, products have shown heavy metals and inconsistencies.

- Explained that the Board can revisit regulations in the future if new evidence emerges.

Board Discussion

- Board members expressed uncertainty about where to draw regulatory lines due to lack of FDA guidance.
- Concern that allowing whole-leaf kratom may give the perception of safety without evidence.
- Acknowledged that synthetic forms pose clear risks, but whole-leaf safety is also not established.
- Board members emphasized responsibility to protect public health.
- Discussion about enforcement challenges and consistency across products.
- Noted that other municipalities (e.g., Stoneham) have enacted similar bans.
- Board discussed whether to implement an immediate ban or allow a grace period.
- Considered fairness to vendors and clarity of enforcement.
- Discussed the need for proper notification to businesses

Approval of Adopting Regulations and Ban Kratom

Carol Ann made a motion to adopt regulations banning kratom (all forms) in the City of Melrose with a 45-day grace period effective June 1, 2026

Frank Brincheiro– Yes

Carol Ann Licitra – Yes

Lillian Kelly – Yes

PASSED 3-0-0

Public Health Director Report

- Budget is in good shape; there are no major changes.
- Animal control is moving to a regional model.
- Camp season is approaching and Melissa Lowry is working with camps to ensure state compliance before issuing permits.
- Regional public health nurse, Tai Nguyen is leaving for a position in Malden.

Public Health Nurses Report- see attached

Next BOH Meeting in Melrose is April 23, 2026

Carol Ann Licitra made a motion to adjourn the meeting

Lilian Kelly second the motion to adjourn

Further Discussion: None

Vote to adjourn the meeting:

Frank Brincheiro-- Yes

Carol Ann Licitra – Yes

Lillian Kelly – Yes

PASSED 3-0-0

Meeting Adjourned at 7:50 PM



CITY OF MELROSE

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Board of Health

Frank Brincheiro, MD

Lillian Kelly R.N.

Carol Ann Licitra, L.M.H.C.

Health Director

Anthony Chui, MPH

City Hall, 562 Main Street

Melrose, Massachusetts 02176

Telephone - (781) 979-4130

health@cityofmelrose.org

March 24, 2026

Re: Melrose Public Health Nurse's Report - February 17, 2026 – March 23, 2026

Communicable Diseases: Melrose Communicable Diseases (confirmed and probable cases) for the above reporting period are attached. The diseases recorded were flu (32), COVID (15) and Hepatitis B (1). Reported flu and COVID cases have declined significantly since the last reporting period. (Actual case rates may be higher since MDPH only counts lab reported cases with a positive PCR test.) Although the numbers have declined, a number of people have reported symptoms that have been more severe and lasted longer than with prior flu cases.

Vaccine Refrigerators/Freezer: The PHN is working with a Public Health student intern to research MA Vaccine Unit approved refrigerators and a freezer for replacement. Refrigerator information was solicited from other Health Departments and our MMCAP representative has been asked to provide pricing and recommendations. Several pharmaceutical grade under-the-counter refrigerators are available in Wakefield after a biotech firm relocated and donated its furniture and equipment. PHN will ask Melrose DPW to move the free refrigerator unit to the Melrose Health Department. We are looking to fund the new refrigerator through the Public Health Excellence (PHE) grant.

2026-2027 Influenza Vaccine Ordering: Flu vaccine orders for Melrose, Wakefield and Stoneham have been submitted to Sanofi for the upcoming season. The first vaccine order usually arrives at the end of September/early October. Clinic planning begins in August and we run clinics and offer home visits through January.

Harvard Chan Nurse Leadership Program: PHN enrolled in the webinar and on-line based nursing leadership program. The course has been funded by the PHE grant. Modules include leadership, financial management/budgeting, working with AI to improve workplace efficiency, leadership strategies, performance management, communication and negotiation skills, quality improvement and how to build a framework that supports a project.

BP Screenings: Ongoing weekly BP screenings are performed by the PHN and volunteer nurse at the Milano Center BP for approximately 8-10 residents. The Prevention & Wellness Coordinator provides counseling and handouts on diet, exercise, nutrition and other health and wellness related topics.

OPH Retinal disease screenings: Michael Sandberg, retired PhD is offering retinal disease screenings at the Wakefield Senior Center by appointment. The program will initially be offered to Melrose, Wakefield, Stoneham and No. Reading residents. Retinal photos can be sent to the resident to share with their

PCP/ophthalmologist. Dr. Sandberg has also offered to give talks at the senior centers to share information and encourage use of the retinal camera.

TB cases: A mother and son (both TB contacts) have declined to get IGRAs b/c Quest lab schedule is limited and the mother can't take off work. Melrose PHN is working on identifying another health department with evening hours to plant PPDs but still having difficulty with the timing and follow-up PPD reading. A B1 case arrived from Algeria but has not responded to calls/visits from LPHN or state TB caseworker. TB epi contacted. The case will be closed as lost to follow-up if no response is received by month end.

Camps: Regional Camp presentation held for Melrose, Wakefield and Stoneham. The PHNs, local inspector and Wakefield Emergency Management Director spoke. Key focus areas included: safety, staff training, medication administration and management, and documentation.

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa Lowry, MS, RN

LBOH Count - Events Per Disease and Classification in Jurisdiction

Classification: confirmed,probable

Event Dates from 02/17/2026 to 03/23/2026

Jurisdiction(s) selected: MELROSE

Jurisdiction(s) used for report: MELROSE

The data in this report contain confidential information and are for internal use only.
The data are current as of 03/24/2026 and are subject to change.

DISEASE	STATUS	NUM_CASES
Hepatitis B	DISEASE_STATUS_CONFIRMED	1
Influenza	DISEASE_STATUS_CONFIRMED	32
Novel Coronavirus (SARS, MERS, etc)	DISEASE_STATUS_CONFIRMED	15
Novel Coronavirus (SARS, MERS, etc)	DISEASE_STATUS_PROBABLE	1

CITY OF MELROSE

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Board of Health

Frank Brincheiro, M.D.

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Health Director

Anthony Chui, M.P.H.

City Hall, 562 Main Street
Melrose, Massachusetts 02176
Telephone -Melrose (781)979-4130
Email: Health@cityofmelrose.org

Date: Thursday, March 26, 2026

Time: 6:30 pm

Place: Melrose City Hall

Room: Basement Conference Room

ATTENDANCE ROSTER

[illegible]

Person: Any individual, firm, partnership, association, corporation, company, or organization of any kind, including, but not limited to, an owner, operator, manager, proprietor, or person in charge of any establishment, business, cultivation property, or retail store.

Synthetically Derived Cannabinoid: Any cannabinoid that is altered by a chemical reaction that changes the molecular structure of any natural cannabinoid derived from the plant cannabis to another cannabinoid found naturally in the plant cannabis. Synthetically derived cannabinoids include but are not limited to delta-8 and delta-10.

D. Synthetically derived cannabinoids and kratom products:

1. No person shall manufacture, distribute, or sell synthetically derived cannabinoids, including, but not limited to, delta-8 and delta-10 products or Kratom products in the City of Melrose.

E. Enforcement and penalties:

- A. Any person or entity charged with violating this regulation shall receive a notice of violation from the Melrose Board of Health or its designated agent.
- B. It shall be the responsibility of the establishment owner and/or his or her manager or business agent to ensure compliance with this regulation. In the case of a violation, the violator shall receive:
 - (1) In the case of a first violation, a fine of \$1,000;
 - (2) In the case of a second violation within 36 months of a previous violation, a fine of \$2,000 and a suspension of any permit issued by the Board, including but not limited to a permit to sell tobacco products, for seven consecutive business days;
 - (3) In the case of three or more violations within a thirty-six-month period, a fine of \$5,000 and a suspension of any permit issued by the Board, including but not limited to a permit to sell tobacco products, for 30 consecutive business days.
- C. Every day that a violation exists shall be deemed to be a separate offense. Separate but simultaneous violations shall be treated as separate violations. Multiple permit suspensions may not be served concurrently.
- D. Any person who receives notice of a violation of this regulation may request a hearing before the Board. The request must be made in writing and filed within seven days of the date the violation was received.
- E. The authority to inspect establishments for compliance and to enforce this regulation shall be held by the Melrose Board of Health and its designees and the Melrose Police Department.
- F. Any person may register a complaint pursuant to this regulation to initiate an investigation and enforcement with the Melrose Board of Health and its designees.

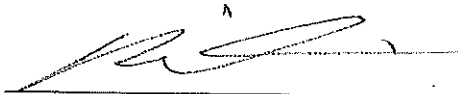
- G. Upon accrual of four violations of this regulation within a thirty-six-month period, or upon the commission of two or more egregious violations of this regulation within 36 months as determined by the Board, the Board may issue a notice of intent to revoke and shall hold a hearing in accordance with this regulation and, after such hearing, may permanently revoke any permits held by the violator, including any permits to sell tobacco products in Melrose.
- H. Before suspending or revoking any permit issued by the Board, including a permit to sell tobacco products, the Board shall provide notice of the intent to suspend or revoke such permit, which notice shall contain the reasons therefor and shall establish a time and date for a hearing, to be held no earlier than seven days from the date of the notice. The permit holder or their designee shall have the opportunity to be heard and shall be notified of the Board's decision and the reasons therefor in writing. If after hearing, the Board finds that a violation of this regulation occurred, the Board shall suspend or revoke the subject permit. For purposes of such suspensions or revocations, the Board shall make the determination notwithstanding any separate criminal or noncriminal proceedings concerning the same offense. Upon suspension or revocation of a permit, all permitted products must be removed from the retail establishment. Failure to remove such products shall constitute a separate violation of this regulation.
- I. Failure to comply with the terms of a permit suspension imposed pursuant to this regulation may subject the permit holder to an additional suspension of all Board-issued permits for 30 consecutive business days.

F. Severability:

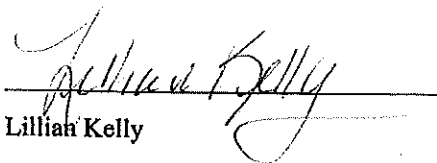
If any provision of this regulation is declared invalid or unenforceable, the other provisions shall not be affected thereby but shall continue in full force and effect.

G. Effective Date:

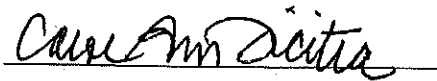
This regulation shall take effect on June 01, 2026.



Frank Brincheiro, Chair



Lillian Kelly



Carol Ann Licitra