

Where the Work Began

2005

Delaware has the sixth-highest infant mortality rate in the nation, with significant racial and ethnic disparities.

9.3
infant deaths per 1,000 live births.

Source: National Center for Health Statistics; Delaware, Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Public Health, Delaware Health Statistics Center



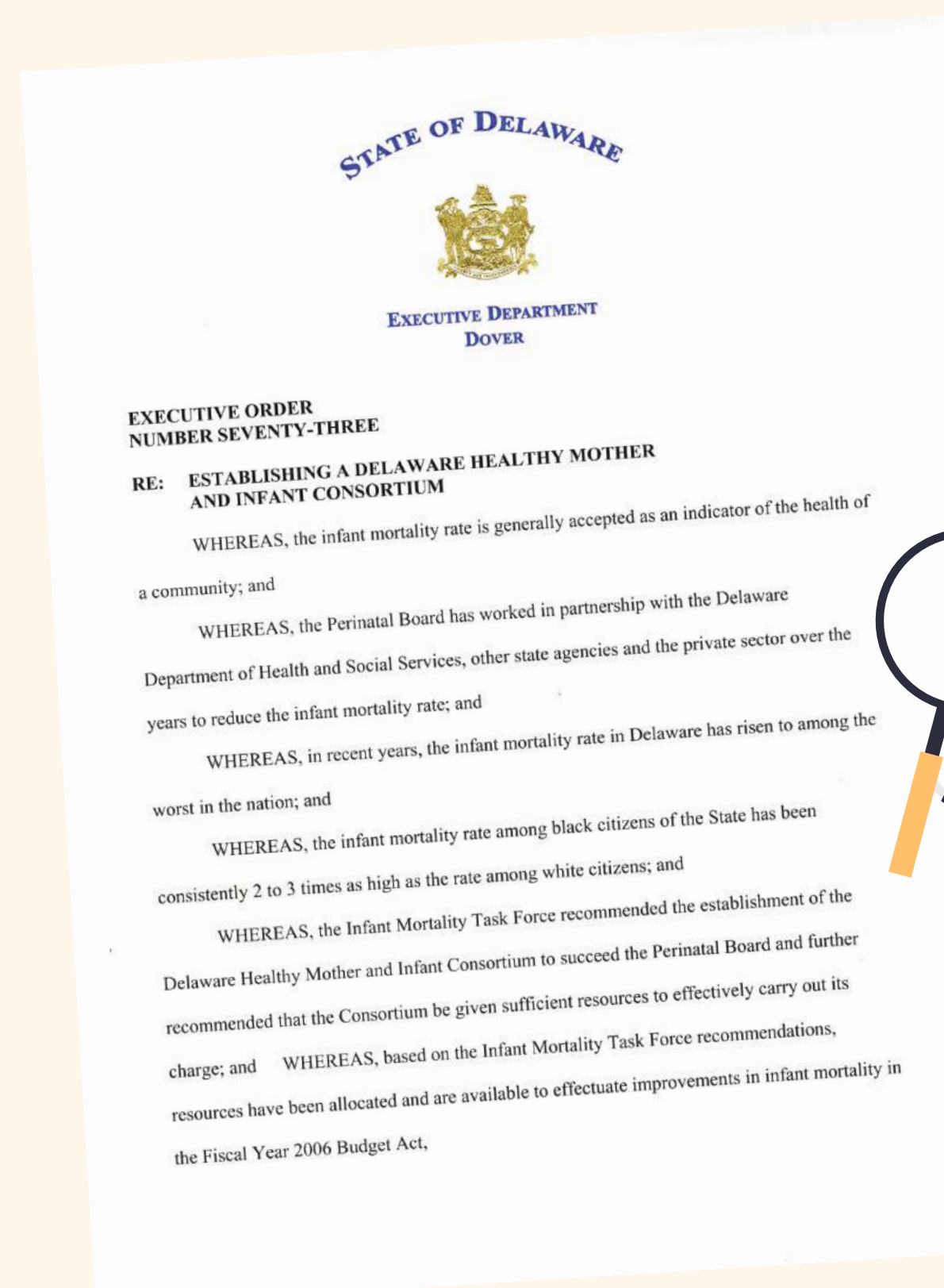
...I'M NOT JUST A STATISTIC

The Infant Mortality Task Force produced a report that led to the creation of the Delaware Healthy Mother & Infant Consortium (DHMIC).

2006

DHMIC Officially Launches

The consortium works to prevent infant mortality, improve the health of women of childbearing age and infants in Delaware, and reduce health disparities.



Implementation of Statewide Strategies Begins

Multisector partnerships are established across health, social services, and community organizations.

From Crisis to Collaboration

2008

Statewide Prevention Efforts Expand Statewide

Committees are established within DHMIC.



DHMIC supports statewide safe-sleep education initiatives.

Preconception health initiatives target **~15,000 women** of reproductive age.

Increased public awareness efforts address prematurity and infant mortality risk factors.

2009

Infant mortality rates start to decline



2011

Improving Hospital Quality

Quality improvement begins statewide.

The Delaware Perinatal Quality Collaborative (DPQC), established as the clinical arm of the DHMIC, leading quality improvement and best practices across birthing hospitals.

Hospitals begin participating in coordinated maternal and infant quality-improvement initiatives.

Statewide collaboration between hospitals, public health agencies, and maternal health experts begins.

The Maternal Mortality Review Committee is established under the Administrative Courts.



2013

Expanding Access to Maternal Health Services

Programs Reach Underserved Communities, and Community and Health Equity Programs Expand

Expansion of the Healthy Women, Healthy Babies (HWHB) program outreach begins



Healthy Women,
Health Babies

9% less likely
to deliver a low birth weight baby

15% less likely
to deliver a preterm baby

Efforts focus on addressing racial and geographic disparities in infant mortality

Source: Healthy Women, Healthy Babies, HWHB Evaluation 2010-2013. Delaware Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Public Health. April 2014

Data and community engagement begin shaping maternal health policy discussions that drive statewide discussions.

The Delaware Thrives website is launched to build awareness for maternal and child health initiatives and provide evidence-based messaging.



Statewide education is offered on safe sleep, reproductive life planning, and the benefits of breastfeeding.

Focus is placed on prevention, education, and access to care.

Expansion of Home Visiting Programs

Increased prenatal care access

Breastfeeding Coalition of Delaware

The Delaware Breastfeeding Coalition, founded in 2002, helps the first hospital achieve Baby-Friendly status in 2013 and implement the 10 Steps to Successful Breastfeeding.



The Long Live Dreams campaign uses a two-pronged educational approach to reach caregivers, new parents, and providers, promoting American Academy of Pediatrics safe-sleep guidelines. Although formal impact data is unavailable, the campaign proved highly successful, with its evidence-based social media messaging and materials remaining the most requested by partners and providers through DEThrives.com.



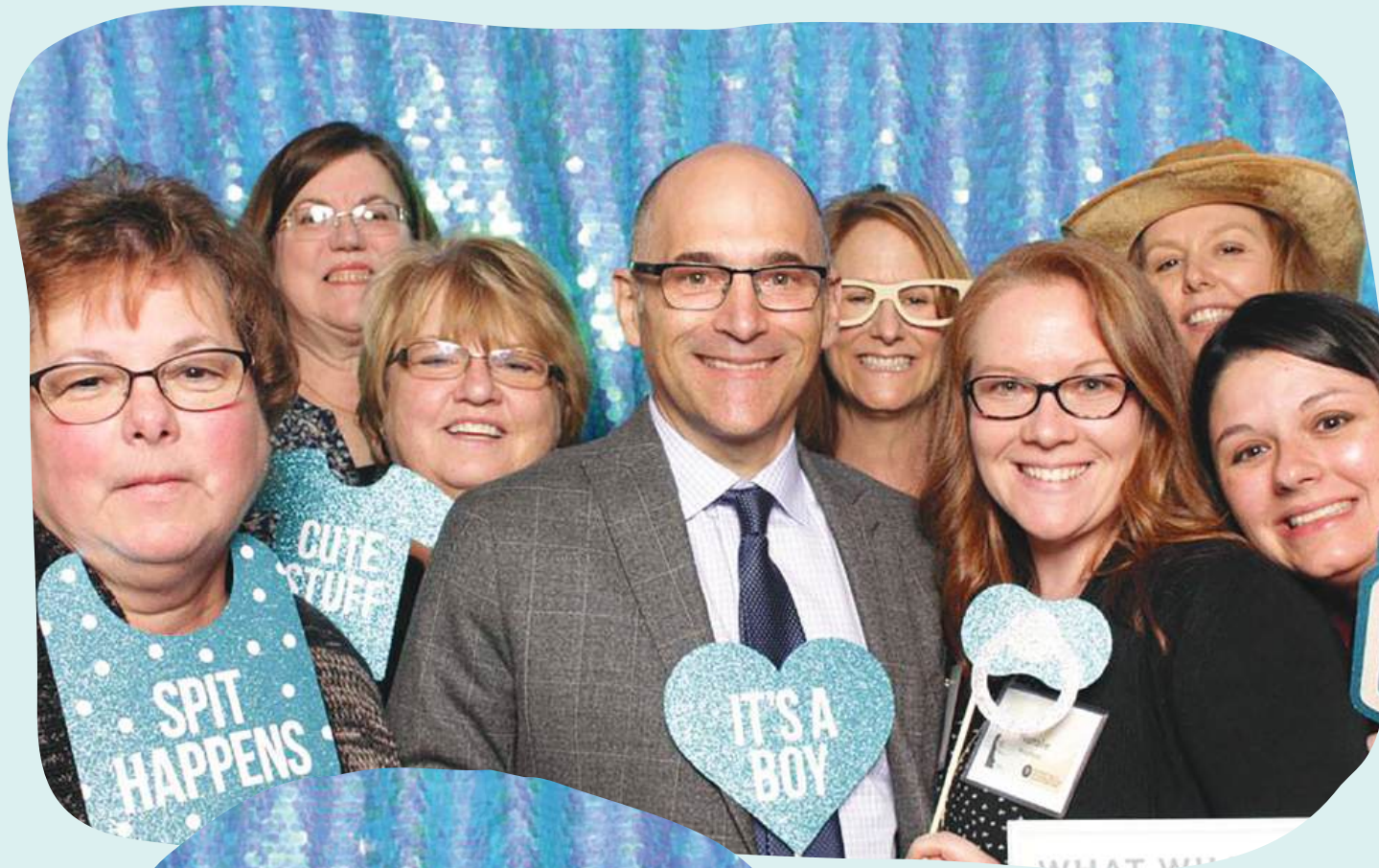
2015

Communities Unite to Reduce Infant Mortality

DHMIC launches the Collective Impact approach to infant mortality reduction.

Cross-sector collaboration expands among health care systems, community organizations, and public health agencies.

Community-level strategies begin targeting high-risk populations.



2017



Prevention Programs Are Strengthened

DHMIC strengthens preconception health and maternal education initiatives.

Coordination expands between public health programs and health care providers.

Efforts continue on reducing racial disparities in maternal and infant outcomes.

Place-Based Initiatives to Reach High-Risk Zones are Implemented Through Mini-Grants



2019

Maternal Health Innovation Becomes Law

The Delaware Perinatal Quality Collaborative (DPQC) is formally codified in state law

Hospitals begin implementing AIM (Alliance for Innovation on Maternal Health) safety bundles

Maternal safety and quality improvement efforts expand statewide



2020

and Beyond



Support and Awareness for Black Maternal Health Week Expand



Nemours Outpatient Lactation Team



Partnerships with Community Organizations Grow

Josie's Grace

Free postpartum stress-relief program



Delaware Thrives

Launched a public-facing DHMIC platform is launched to share initiatives addressing maternal and infant mortality



Westside Family Healthcare

Supports families through outreach events, breastfeeding support, education classes, and connections to resources

Delaware Cribs for Kids Program

Launched in 2009, to address environmental risk factors linked to unsafe infant sleep deaths

Source: Maternal and Child Death Review Commission. (2025, May). 2024 Annual Report

Record-low infant mortality rate in Delaware (2020)



6.5 infant deaths

per 1,000 live births

Source: National Center for Health Statistics; Delaware Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Public Health, Delaware Health Statistics Center

494 cribs

were provided to eligible families

Source: Maternal and Child Death Review Commission. (2025, May). 2024 Annual Report.

Implemented Healthy Women, Healthy Babies 2.0

17% increase in pregnancy intention through Delaware Contraceptive Access Now (DE CAN)

Source: Delaware Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Public Health, Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System. (2012-2020)



2022

Guaranteed Basic-Income Pilot Program

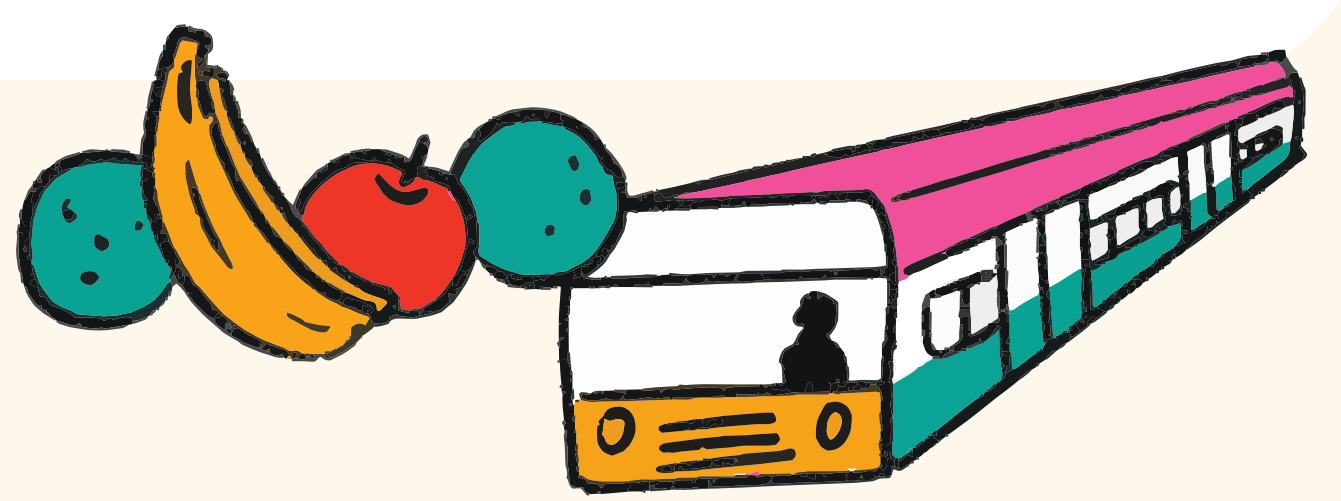
High-risk individuals are provided with a guaranteed income each month.



324%

return on investment.

Funds are used for food, transportation, and basic needs, which leads to reduced hospital stays and higher rates of accessing prenatal care.



Momnibus Legislation is passed by Delaware General Assembly



This landmark piece of legislation combats racial disparities and improves health outcomes for mothers and infants.



2023

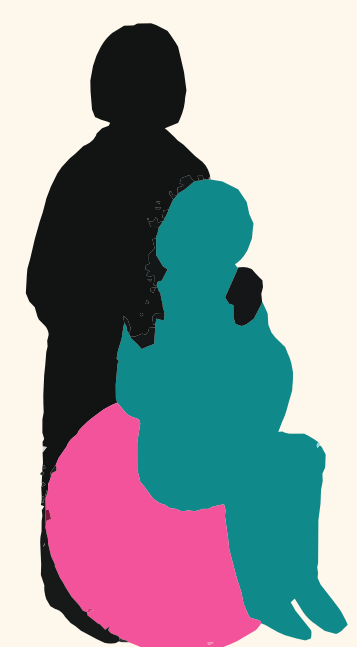


Delaware extends postpartum Medicaid coverage to 12 months after pregnancy, through a state plan amendment.

2024

Medicaid reimbursement for doula care services is introduced.

DOULAS CAN BE VITAL IN THE PROCESS



2025

Continuing to Strengthen the Maternal Health Systems and Workforce



Home Visiting Program Expands

Program coverage grows along with public awareness of the services offered/provided

1,426 DE families served in 2025

1,375 children served in 2025



14,138 Home Visiting visits were provided in 2025



Source: Maternal Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program, Delaware Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Public Health

2026

Advancing Perinatal Mental Health

Delaware Advances Statewide Efforts to Strengthen Perinatal Mental Health Screening and Support

House Concurrent Resolution 82 (HCR 82)

Directs the Delaware Behavioral Health Consortium to produce a comprehensive statewide report on perinatal mental health services, gaps, and workforce needs.



Efforts continue to focus on integrating maternal mental health into perinatal systems of care.

20 Years of Impact



Since DHMIC's inception, the infant mortality rate in Delaware has declined. Across the board, our work has consistently improved the health of women and babies in Delaware.



2004



Delaware has dropped to the 22nd-highest infant mortality rate in the nation, down from the sixth-highest rate

36.2% drop in infant mortality



5.4 infant deaths

per 1,000 live births

Source: National Center for Health Statistics; Delaware Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS), Division of Public Health (DPH), Delaware Health Statistics Center



DHMIC leadership and members (not all present) at the 2025 DHMIC Summit.



Drawings illustrated by artist Yen Azzaro, captured live at past DHMIC Summits.

Community Togetherness and Accomplishments

