

# Mason County Coordinating Council

Tuesday, May 20, 2025, Meeting Minutes

**Meeting Convened:**

9:30 a.m. via hybrid meeting.

**Members Present:**

Derek Brawner, Kalin Cooper, Laura Dick, Felicia Farden, Stephanie Howerter, Grace Irvin, Lisa Latham, Kaitlyn Lehman, Denise Smith, Dominic Valenti, Tyler Wenger

**Purpose of M.C.C.C.**

M.C.C.C. is an inter-agency council made up of concerned citizens and agencies servicing the Mason County residents for the purpose of networking and sharing information and resources.

**Mission of M.C.C.C.**

M.C.C.C. mission is to serve, educate, and elevate the level of awareness of the community of what services are available for them.

## **Old Business**

**Treasurer's Report:**

As of May 20, 2025, the current checking account balance is **\$900**.

**Health Fair:**

The health fair hosted at Illini Central Middle School had a great turnout, but Stephanie stated there was miscommunication with the principal as to when the event was supposed to conclude. The only other note to highlight would be the awkward timing between classes coming to and from the health fair.

## **New Business**

### **Meeting Minutes:**

**Stephanie Howerter** made a motion to accept March's meeting minutes; seconded by **Lisa Latham**.

### **Happy Bucks:**

Stephanie is happy that Denise's daughter is going to state for track and is also glad the weather is holding for softball. Grace is happy that Green Gables Bar and Grill celebrated their one-year reopening anniversary after having fire damage.

### **Schedule:**

Our next meeting will be on **Tuesday, July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025, 9:30 am**, via hybrid. We will have an in-person option at Spoon River College in Havana.

### **Council Updates:**

Members discussed having a resource fair at Havana Junior High School during school registration in August. It was also discussed about having a health fair in the Spring semester at Midwest Central High School. Stephanie talked about partnering the council with Mason District Hospital to host a family resource fair in the near future.

## **Agency Updates**

### **\*Derek Brawner:**

**Position:** Community Liaison

**Agency:** Health Alliance Medical Plans

**Contact Info:** [Derek.Brawner@Healthalliance.org](mailto:Derek.Brawner@Healthalliance.org) ; 217-902-8230

### **Programs provided to Mason County:**

Health insurance (Medicare, private, group)

### **News/Updates:**

No new updates to report currently.

**\*Kalin Cooper:**

**Position:** Employee Health & Education Nurse & Community Outreach

**Agency:** Mason District Hospital

**Contact Info:** [k-cooper@masondistricthospital.org](mailto:k-cooper@masondistricthospital.org)

**News/Updates:**

No news or updates to give at this time.

**\*Laura Dick:**

**Position:** Director

**Agency:** Show Bus

**Contact Info:** (815)-945-8500

**Programs provided to Mason County:**

SHOW BUS has been providing public transportation to residents of rural central Illinois since 1979. Our services are available to all residents of rural DeWitt, Ford, Iroquois, Kankakee, Livingston, Logan, Macon, Mason and McLean counties. People of all ages and income levels may ride. All buses are equipped with lifts for easy wheelchair access.

**News/Updates:**

SHOW BUS is looking to hire more drivers in Mason County.

**\*Felicia Farden:**

**Position:** Regional Council Manager

**Agency:** Birth to Five Illinois

**Contact Info:** [ffarden@birthtofiveil.com](mailto:ffarden@birthtofiveil.com) ; (309)270-5670

**Programs provided to Mason County:**

We are a backbone organization working with community partners and families and caregivers to progress aspects of the Early Childhood Education and Care landscape. We have an Action Council and Family Council that provide feedback and build Action Plans.

**News/Updates:**

Birth to Five is looking for individuals who are interested in joining their Action Council (link to join will be attached in meeting minutes email). Birth to Five is also looking to recruit families for their Action in Family council, where families will be paid a stipend for participating in monthly meetings.

**\*Stephanie Howerter:**

**Position:** Director/Advisor – Havana Center

**Agency:** Spoon River College

**Contact Info:** [stephanie.howerter@src.edu](mailto:stephanie.howerter@src.edu) or (309) 543-4413

**Programs provided to Mason County:** Associate transfer degrees, Associate degree and Certificate programs for transfer and career & technical programs; Free GED courses; Community Education; Workforce Training

**News/ Updates:**

- Registration is still ongoing for Summer 2025 and Fall 2025.
- The 2024 – 2025 FAFSA is still available. Those looking to begin classes in the fall of 2025 will complete the 2025 – 2026 FAFSA..
- The Summer Youth program schedule has been set for the summer semester. The program options can be found here, <https://src.augusoft.net/>. Click on 'Browse' then 'Youth' to see the program locations and options. Registration can be completed online, by phone or in-person for these programs.
- GED program registration will begin in July.

**Important Upcoming Dates/Events:**

The following community education and professional courses will be held in Havana.

- Summer Youth Program; June 24 & June 26
- Enrich Your Medicare Knowledge; June 26; Derek Brawner, Health Alliance

**Additional Info:**

- The Community Education department is able to provide workplace training on a variety of topics (technology to soft skills). Please contact me if you would like to inquire about training for yourself or your staff.

**\*Grace Irvin:**

**Position:** Prevention Coordinator

**Agency:** Chestnut Health Systems

**Contact Info:** [gcirvin@chestnut.org](mailto:gcirvin@chestnut.org) ; (309)-451-7776

**Programs Provided to Mason County:**

Logan-Mason Recovery Oriented Systems of Care, Logan-Mason Substance Use Prevention Grant, and B.A.S.E. Grant

**News/Updates:**

**BASE Grant:** Focus groups will be conducted to help gain feedback on the BASE project's communication campaign before launching it to the public. Those who participate in the focus groups will be awarded a \$50 gift card. Information on where to sign up will be attached in the meeting minutes email.

**Logan/Mason ROSC:** The ROSC will be hosting a Speaker Jam on August 8<sup>th</sup> in Lincoln. This will be hosted in conjunction with the local police department to help create bridges and foster healthy relationships between people with lived experiences and police officers in the community. The ROSC is also looking to get more community members from Mason County involved in TASC's deflection program, which looks to help people experiencing active homelessness or substance use disorders to be given the correct resources and treatment rather than being arrested.

**\*Lisa Latham:**

**Position:** AHEC Coordinator for West Central Illinois

**Agency:** Area Health Education Center

**Contact Info:** [llatham@mhtlc.org](mailto:llatham@mhtlc.org) or (815)-395-5870

**Programs Provided to Mason County:**

AHEC works with students who come through Memorial Hospital in Carthage, Illinois to complete clinical experiences. AHEC also travels to high schools in counties served to help with recruiting and scholarships for eligible healthcare profession students. AHEC provides continuing education for healthcare professionals at the agencies they serve. AHEC collaborates with community partners and local health departments on public health projects.

**News/Updates:**

No news or updates to give at this time.

**\*Kaytlin Lehman:**

**Position:** SNAP-Education Program Coordinator

**Agency:** University of Illinois Extension

**Contact Info:** [klehman@illinois.edu](mailto:klehman@illinois.edu) or 217-333-2372

### **Programs provided to Mason County:**

- SNAP-Ed offers free nutrition education for SNAP-eligible individuals, including adults, youth, and families.
- If you're interested in participating in these free classes, I'd love to hear from you!
- As the program coordinator, I also work closely with a variety of SNAP-eligible organizations to support efforts that improve health outcomes. This includes helping partners develop or enhance policies, systems, and environments where people eat, play, shop, live, and learn.
- Together with our educator, Rebecca, we provide technical assistance to expand food access and support communities in making the healthy choice the easy choice.

### **News/Updates:**

- The Mission of Hope has officially launched its second season at the Havana Community Garden!
- Last year, the garden yielded over 70 pounds of fresh produce, all of which was made available to those in need through the Mission of Hope Food Pantry. This spring, the garden has expanded with three new raised beds and newly added walking paths to improve accessibility.
- However, volunteers are urgently needed. Participation has declined significantly, and without more helping hands, the garden's success is at risk.
- In other exciting news, the University of Illinois Extension has recently joined forces with several local organizations in a collaborative effort to establish a soup kitchen in the Havana area. We're thrilled to be part of turning this vision into a reality and bringing a much-needed resource to our community.

### **Important Upcoming Dates/Events:**

- Our SNAP-Ed Instructor, Skye, is gearing up for an exciting summer of programming!
- She's bringing *Illinois Junior Chef*—a free, hands-on cooking school for kids ages 8–13—to Manito, offering young chefs the chance to learn valuable kitchen skills while having fun. Skye also has several youth-focused programs planned at the Havana Public Library, providing even more opportunities for local children to learn and grow over the summer.
- For adults, she'll be partnering with TANF to deliver the *Healthy Cents* series, which focuses on nutrition, physical activity, and smart money management.
- Stay tuned—dates and times for all summer programs will be announced soon!
- Skye recently wrapped up a successful spring season at New Central Elementary and Illini Central, where she taught *Organ Wise Guys*, a dynamic nutrition and physical education program designed for students in Kindergarten through 3rd grade.

**Additional Info:**

If you would like more information on U of I Extension SNAP-Education programming, please feel free to reach out. I can be reached at [klehman@illinois.edu](mailto:klehman@illinois.edu) or 217-333-2372.

**\*Denise Smith:**

**Position:** Senior Care Director

**Agency:** Mason County Health Department

**Contact Info:** [dsmith@masoncohealth.com](mailto:dsmith@masoncohealth.com) or (309)-210-0110 ext. 224

**Programs provided to Mason County:****Environmental Health**

- Food Safety-licensing and inspection of food establishments and temporary food stands and complaint investigations
- Water Program-issues well construction permits, inspects existing well water supplies, provides water testing kits for non-municipal water testing \$20.
- Sewage Program-issues septic construction permits, inspects new or existing systems, completes environmental compliance surveys and loan reviews.
- Health Nuisance Complaints- public health complaints, West Nile Virus Surveillance

**Senior Care Program**

- In Home Care- We can provide services to clients in Mason, Cass and Menard counties. The state paying residents ages 60 and older. Any age for private pay. We can accept VA, long term care, private pay in addition to state pay. Trained homecare aides will assist with non-medical care.

**Nursing Services**

- Family Planning- Physicians from Carle (formerly Unity Point Methodist) provide care at MCHD by appointment. Confidential abstinence and contraceptive education. Most insurance accepted or sliding scale fee can be used.
- Prenatal Clinic- Physicians from Unity Point Methodist provide care at MCHD by appointment. Confidential pregnancy care and follow-up. Most insurance accepted or sliding scale fee can be used.
- WIC (Women, Infants, Children)- This federally funded program provides nutrition education, assessments, developmental screenings and food vouchers to eligible pregnant and breastfeeding women, infants and children under 5. Certified Lactation Counselors (CLS's) answer questions and assist with breastfeeding.

- Better Birth Outcomes (BBO)-focuses on reducing the frequency of low birth weight and preterm births and the associated consequences. The program partners registered nurses with pregnant women who are at high risk. The RN assesses the client and assists the high-risk woman with early access to prenatal care and services throughout her pregnancy.
- Lead- RN's provided lead screening by fingerstick/venous, education and follow-up by appointment.
- Immunizations/TB testing– immunizations (including COVID) are part of the broader Communicable Disease program which reduces disease through vaccination and investigation on disease outbreaks. By appointment only. Most insurance accepted. Low-cost Vaccine For Children (VFC) available. Call for more information if you are uninsured.
- Wellness Screenings- Adult health screenings. These include: weight, blood pressure, blood sugar screening, Cholesterol and lipid screening. Cost is \$25
- Tobacco- 1-866-QUIT-YES. Nicotine patches may be available based on your insurance and where you reside in Illinois.
- Emergency Preparedness- Staff plans for a broad range of community emergencies such as pandemics or natural disasters. Staff, business and community preparedness and planning are important components of the program.
- Fluoride treatments- for high-risk kids under age 5 with no dental home (billed through Medicaid or \$26)
- Venous Blood draws- patients can get affordable blood work done without driving out of the county. All we need is the order from the doctor (either bring it in or have it faxed to us) then schedule your appointment. Cash pay or most insurances accepted. Call 309-210-0110 for more information.
- COVID testing and COVID immunizations- call 309-210-0110 or check MCHD FB page for updated information.
- Car Seat Checks- We have 1 certified car seat technician on staff. Car seat installations and car seat checks via appointment

### **News/Updates:**

Mason County Health Department is starting to give shots for students for this upcoming school year.

### **\*Tyler Wenger:**

**Position:** Prevention Specialist

**Agency:** Chestnut Health Systems

**Contact Info:** [tdwenger@chestnut.org](mailto:tdwenger@chestnut.org)



**Programs Provided to Mason County:**

Youth Prevention Education - Too Good for Drugs  
Middle School/High School Alcohol Parent Campaign  
Illinois Youth Survey  
National Prevention Week  
Drug Take Back

**News/ Updates:**

Youth Prevention Education has wrapped up for the Spring Semester. The Alcohol Campaign is currently conducting its marketing evaluation survey, where parents/guardians provide feedback on the best ways to receive the campaign's communication materials. The Illinois Youth Survey (IYS) state and rural reports from 2024 are available to view, and schools are gearing up to take the 2026 IYS this coming school year. Both Logan and Mason County resource directories are being updated to have a cleaner look and be easier to navigate.

Following a motion by **Stephanie Howerter**, seconded by **Grace Irvin**, and unanimous approval, the Regular Meeting of the M.C.C.C. Tuesday, May 20, 2025, adjourned at **10:14 am**.