



New Jersey One Health Task Force Meeting Minutes

Friday, November 21, 2025

200 Riverview Plaza, Trenton, NJ, 08611 and Microsoft Teams

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Vice-Chair Dr. Gloria Bachmann at 10:04 AM.

Notice of Public Meeting

Public meeting notice was given on November 14, 2025.

Pursuant to the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6, adequate notice of this meeting has been provided by giving written notice of the time, date, location and to the extent known, the agenda of this meeting to Gannett and Advance Media Legal Publications and the Office of the Secretary of State. In addition, at least 48 hours in advance, this notice has been posted in the lobby and on the third floor of the offices of the New Jersey Department of Agriculture, 200 Riverview Plaza, Trenton, New Jersey.

Roll Call

The following members were present: Dr. Amar Patil (arrived late), Dr. Gloria Bachmann, Dr. Darby McDermott, Dr. Matthew Edson, Dr. Heather Fowler, Dr. Michael Zwick, Dr. Vincent Silenzio (on Teams), Dr. Nicole Fahrenfeld (on Teams), and Dr. Michael Taylor (on Teams).

Approval of Minutes

Dr. Edson motioned to approve the Minutes from September 26, 2025 as written. The motion was seconded by Dr. Zwick. The Task Force approved the September 26 minutes.

Invited Guests

Ms. Judith Sheft, Executive Director of the New Jersey Commission of Science, Innovation, and Technology (CSIT), was invited to share background on her organization and potential areas of synergy with the One Health Task Force's Research & Innovation Committee.

- CSIT assists start-up companies at the earliest stages, before they are eligible for other types of funding, e.g. the NJ Economic Development Authority. It was established in 2020 and has awarded 550 grants totaling \$32 million, 40% of which are in the life sciences with the remainder in clean energy and technology.
- They have funded projects including infant and maternal health, PFAS remediation, and clean water, and they collaborate with Elsevier to run ResearchwithNJ.com. ResearchwithNJ.com allows academic and private institutions to share information about grants and publications.
- They currently have a R&D Voucher program open that allows start-up companies to access equipment and datasets available at NJ universities.
- The SBIR-STTR federal grant programs are currently awaiting re-approval, but if they are confirmed, CSIT would like them to come to NJ (like a "road show") to present about NIH grants available for businesses.
- The Task Force asked how they can help support the mission of CSIT, and Ms. Sheft answered they are requesting more funding for seed grant programs.
- They are partnering with NJIT for an economic impact assessment of their grants awarded so far (for example, number of jobs created).
- They are working on an internship program to connect students with smaller companies.

One Health Task Force Chair Dr. Patil arrived around 10:20AM and assumed chair of the meeting at that time.

Committee Reports

Education, Training, & Workforce Development: The following report was prepared by Dr. Michael Taylor, Chair of the Education, Training, & Workforce Development Committee:

Higher Education and Workforce Training

- *Action: One Health Core Competencies across multiple professional fields have been identified and aggregated into a set of seven core domains that will be used to shape recommendations for One Health workforce training through both formal*

(e.g., certified continuing education credits) and informal (e.g., mid-career workshop series).

- **Next Steps:**
 - Determine appropriate professional audiences for workforce training
 - Explore pathways to meet NJ state and national CEU standards across professional fields where they are required
 - Map examples of core competencies across professional fields
 - Meet with Dr. Berrian to discuss what resources NAOHUN may be able to share around continuing education and higher education.

Public Education

- **Action:** Continuing to develop repository of examples (e.g., lesson plans and curriculum) of One Health educational materials targeting youth and general public audiences. Recent additions have attempted to expand examples beyond an agricultural focus.
- **Next Step:** Collection continues. Task Force members are encouraged to share examples of One Health public education materials with the ETWD Committee

K-12 Education

- **Actions:**
 - Reviewing NJ K-12 Climate Science Standards to identify areas where One Health-focused curriculum could be included.
 - Identifying models for immersive K-12 One Health learning days either in-school or through education centers (e.g., Liberty Science Center)
- **Next Step:** Planning follow-up discussions with NJ Science Educators in terms of how best to identify obstacles to adding One Health into existing curriculum.

Communication Plan

- **Action:** At the September Task Force meeting, the body charged the ETWD committee with developing a communications plan. The committee has collected guides and templates but requires further guidance from the body.
- **Next Step:** After receiving clarification on specific communication needs, the committee will prepare a communications plan to be submitted for approval by the Task Force.

In response to the committee's report, Dr. Patil clarified what the Task Force is looking for in the communication plan: identifying stakeholders the Task Force would like to

communicate with. This will allow customization of communication messages to each of them according to the space they are working in and their needs.

The ETW committee will solicit feedback from the other committees including (1) what are the target audiences the committees would like to reach, (2) key messages to share, (3) channels that are most appropriate for these messages.

Research and Innovation: The following report was prepared by Ms. Christine Schell, Chair of the Research and Innovation Committee, and read by Dr. Zwick:

The Research and Innovation Committee of the One Health Task Force continues to pursue its first goal to stimulate New Jersey-based research efforts to address One Health issues. The Committee plans to reach out again to the New Jersey educational institutions that did not complete the One Health research survey sent to various Chief Research Officers over the summer to see if they will complete the survey. The Committee is also reaching out again to those institutions that completed the survey but didn't provide any information on the impacts on research from federal funding changes and cutbacks. The Committee has done preliminary analysis of the data that was submitted (thank you Agatha!) and plans to crosswalk those findings with the ResearchwithNJ.com database to identify commonalities and gaps. Finally, the Committee continues to pursue a dialog with BioNJ on collecting similar information on research data from the NJ life sciences industry.

As part of the Committee's efforts to identify possible funding mechanisms/sources to facilitate needed research, with the hope of eventually establishing a One Health Task Force research grant program, the Committee invited a representative from the NJ Commission on Science, Innovation, and Technology to today's meeting to discuss overlap between the work of the two groups and how that committee provides grants as a possible template for the One Health Task Force.

The Committee's second goal is to improve accessibility of One Health-related data across sectors and disciplines. The Committee has started to put together a list of databases, dashboards and other New Jersey data access portals with shared data related to One Health like the DOH's Vector-Borne Disease Dashboard, DEP's HABS dashboard, and Rutgers' NJ Food Systems Dashboard (again, thank you Agatha!). This Committee still needs to determine the barriers to data sharing/access, both technological and legal/administrative.

In response to this report, Task Force members had a brief discussion about data sharing barriers. A distinction was made between two types of data:

Data collected by academic researchers:

- Dr. Zwick pointed out that One Health research generates large datasets and there may be technological limitations to housing terabytes of data. However, most researchers are required to make their data accessible in order to publish.
- One possible solution may be the ability to post datasets on the ResearchwithNJ.com website in the future.
- There were also concerns expressed about the need to ensure data are appropriately vetted before sharing, and included with interpretation for non-specialists, to ensure data are not misunderstood/misrepresented.
- Dr. Zwick referenced FAIR (Findability, Accessibility, Interoperability, and Reuse) Guiding Principles for Scientific Data.

Actionable data collected by government agencies:

- Dr. Patil shared that some datasets (e.g., rabies) are shared more effectively across New Jersey government agencies than others. Various statutes and rules put limitations on what can be done with data collected by agencies.
- Dr. Zwick suggested that the Task Force could assess what is the current state of intergovernmental data sharing, when do they share well vs. not, and then imagine what the ideal future state would be and how do we get from here to there.
- Dr. Patil pointed out issues with privacy and individuals' information. State agencies don't feel comfortable sharing metadata that identify specific places or people. The task force could help with defining what metadata can be shared and what must be kept private, a sort of best practices for One Health data sharing in NJ.
- Dr. Zwick emphasized the public health impacts if agencies *don't* share data because researchers can't build good predictive models.

Lastly, Dr. Silenzio brought up that the Task Force should evaluate not only sharing of existing data, but where data are nonexistent and how to fill those gaps.

Strategic Planning Committee: The following report was given by Dr. Darby McDermott, Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee:

The Strategic Planning Committee has been continuing to meet biweekly with a large focus on continued coordination for the One Health (OH-SMART) workshop that will be held on December 3rd. The team has been meeting with Dr. Katey Pelican from

University of Hawai'i. There have been 15 stakeholder (virtual) interviews so far. The last day to RSVP for the Stakeholder workshop is today (November 21st). So far, 71 stakeholders have committed to attend.

The workshop will be a full day on Dec 3rd and an opportunity for stakeholders to provide input on our priority issues, gaps and strengths. Huge thanks to Andrea and Agatha for their work in getting the RSVPs in.

Following this report Dr. Patil thanked the other Task Force members for their understanding that not all Task Force members can attend the workshop due to public meeting rules. If more than 5 Task Force members are in one location discussing One Health, it becomes an official meeting that requires public notice. However, the workshop report will be shared with all Task Force members.

Dr. McDermott also acknowledged that not every stakeholder will be at the workshop or even invited, hopefully the workshop will help identify who is missing from the table and how to involve them in future conversations.

Dr. Patil expressed hope that stakeholder groups who are more reluctant to work with government agencies due to their regulatory role, will feel comfortable working with the Task Force since it is non-regulatory. The Task Force can help facilitate a space where agencies trust each other and work together for the same cause.

Old Business

One Health Day Proclamation: Task Force Secretary Dr. Andrea Egizi reported that Governor Murphy declared November 3, 2025 as One Health Day in New Jersey and read the proclamation, [available on the NJDA website](#). The three agencies (NJDA, NJDEP, NJDOH) did a joint press release about the Proclamation and coordinated social media posts about it. Dr. Patil thanked DEP and DOH for their coordination and stated it was a great team effort.

There is a need for more promotion of events like One Health Day. The Communications Plan that the Education committee is working on will help guide the Task Force's efforts to get more engagement from stakeholders.

Communications: At the Sept. 26 meeting the Task Force discussed a resolution to demonstrate support of the NJ One Health Task Force for interagency coordination in communications. The Strategic Planning Committee has revised the resolution to focus on

social media messaging. Task Force members received a draft of Resolution 2025-1 a week prior to the meeting and in their packets today:

Resolution #2025-1 of the New Jersey One Health Task Force, Expressing Support for Interagency Coordination in Social Media Posts Across the Departments of Agriculture, Health, and Environmental Protection

On the motion of Dr. Bachmann, seconded by Dr. Edson, the Task Force voted to approve Resolution 2025-1. The full text of the resolution is [available on the NJDA website](#).

New Business

Funding: Dr. Patil explained that because the Task Force is situated in the NJ Dept. of Ag, any funding that comes to the Task Force will be managed by the NJDA fiscal division. NJDA fiscal will be responsible for compliance and reporting to the funding agencies as well as giving out subcontracts, and they have experience in this area with other types of grants and awards. There is still a need to confirm whether donations to the Task Force would be tax deductible for private foundations.

Members came to a consensus that the Task Force needs to identify funding priorities before pursuing funding opportunities. The upcoming stakeholder workshop will assist with identifying gaps and opportunities, but there are also priorities specified in the Task Force legislation. Because “One Health” can be so broad, organizing around these legislated objectives could help the Task Force to have more fruitful discussions with government funders, foundations, and other agencies.

Report due in February: The Task Force has a report due to the NJ governor and legislature within 1 year of their first meeting, which is February 2026. The Task Force will incorporate findings from the Dec 3 Stakeholder Workshop in the report. As there will not be another full Task Force meeting before the report is due, the Task Force held a discussion to establish a plan and timeline for creation of the report.

NJDA support staff Andrea and Agatha will assist the Strategic Planning committee in creating an outline of the report to share with Task Force members. The outline will include an introduction mentioning the legislation and strategic plan, sections for committee reports, including the workshop report, and a call to action/next steps. The committees will be responsible for filling in their sections with major updates for the year.

The Task Force established January 15th as the deadline for a completed first draft of the report, followed by 2 weeks for all Task Force members to review and submit comments. The comments will then be incorporated enabling adoption of the final report at the next Task Force meeting on February 27th, 2026.

Member Updates Task Force members are given the floor to provide brief updates or raise issues to the attention of the Task Force that are related to One Health.

- Dr. Zwick: Two quick updates. We continue our outreach with other public universities to gather more information about barriers to One Health research, to follow up on the initial data that we've collected, and then we're continuing our outreach to Bio NJ to pharma companies to try to understand what does the Pharma industry see as barriers and challenges so we can bring these two different visions together and gain clarity about research opportunities.
- Dr. Edson: Expressed appreciation for the Task Force's letter of support for SSVM One Health master's degree program. The application has been submitted to the NJ Department of Education, and they are hopeful to start the program in Fall of 2026. This will be the first degree program in NJ with "One Health" in the name although it may not be the first to cover similar curricula.
- Dr. McDermott: Continuing to work with our partners this fall to monitor respiratory disease season which is picking up and to help everyone get the flu vaccine. Also working with agency partners to monitor H5N1 (avian influenza). This week (November 18-24, 2025) is Antibiotic Stewardship Awareness Week and there will be social media posts from NJDOH throughout the week.
- Dr. Patil: NJDA is also working with partner agencies to monitor H5N1. We are also working on a draft plan for New World Screwworm response in New Jersey. Dr. Patil and Dr. Fowler attended the United States Animal Health Association and American Association for Veterinary Laboratory diagnosticians joint meeting (Oct 30-Nov 5). Top priorities discussed at this meeting were avian influenza and New World Screwworm. It was good to hear from states along the US-Mexico border that they are prepared with resources to respond to NWS if needed. Also at the meeting a discussion was held with USDA regarding communication challenges between federal and state agencies.
- Other Task Force members in attendance did not have updates.

Public Comment

- Helena van der Merwe, founder of A-Plus Consulting and subsidiaries and entrepreneurial team lead for the NSF I-Corps NE Region project Immunity Blend for Pets, gave the following comment:
 - Ms. Van der Merwe is working to develop a One Health Insight Platform that integrates microbial, metabolic, physiological, and immunological data into a single smartphone interface. This would provide real-time, non-invasive diagnostics for animal health.
 - The project is collaborating with Dr. Mohamed Abouelkhair at the Shreiber School for Veterinary Medicine at Rowan University for academic advising and with TissUse, a German-based company that pioneered commercialization of organ-on-chip technology. These systems replicate human tissue functions, reducing reliance on animal studies while enabling more predictive safety and efficacy testing, and data from TissUse systems have been recognized by FDA.
 - This technology by design addresses unmet needs across all areas of One Health, including providing a way to centralize lab test results to share across veterinary, human, environmental, and water health systems.
 - Ms. Van der Merwe also described their workforce development initiative, A-Plus Apprentice, which begins with middle school exploration of animal science and progresses through high school coursework, college programs, and professional certification.
 - We welcome the Task Force’s guidance on how best to align our work with ongoing needs assessments and committee initiatives, and we look forward to contributing to New Jersey’s leadership in One Health innovation.

Dr. Patil asked Ms. Van der Merwe to clarify sources of funding for the project. She replied that Phase I of the project was funded through the National Science Foundation. They are planning to apply to NSF to fund Phase II – interviews to validate the technology, although they have not done this yet. Ms. Van der Merwe also indicated that the project with Rowan University is pursuing funding from the NJ Commission on Science Innovation and Technology.

Dr. Zwick applauded projects like this that use “new approach methodologies” as part of a broader trend that universities are very interested in, to reduce the use of animals in research studies.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the NJ One Health Task Force will be held on Friday, February 27, 2026, beginning at 10:00 AM at 200 Riverview Plaza, Trenton and on Microsoft Teams.

Adjournment

On the motion of Dr. McDermott, seconded by Dr. Bachmann, the NJ One Health Task Force voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 11:42 AM.