



TEXAS

Health and Human
Services

Texas Department of State
Health Services

**Task Force of Border Health Officials (TFBHO)
APPROVED Meeting Minutes
1:00 p.m., February 12, 2025**

**Physical Location: Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS)
Robert D. Moreton Building, Room M-100, First Floor
1100 49th Street, Austin, Texas 78756**

TEAMS Virtual/Hybrid Meeting

Table 1: TFBHO attendance at the February 12, 2025, meeting.

MEMBER NAME	YES	NO	MEMBER NAME	YES	NO
Dr. Richard Chamberlain	X		Dr. Arturo Rodriguez (Chair)	X	
Ms. Esmeralda Guajardo		X	Ms. Dairen Sarmiento Rangel	X	
The Honorable State Representative Bobby Guerra (Ex Officio)		X	Dr. Veerinder Taneja (Vice-Chair)	X	
Ms. Shannon Harvill	X		Mr. Niko Tapangan	X	
Mr. Steven M. Kotsatos		X	Ms. Nancy P. Treviño		X
Dr. Emilie Prot	X		VACANT (Ex Officio)		
Dr. Lillian Ringsdorf	X		VACANT		

Agenda Item 1: Call to order, welcome, Chair remarks, meeting logistics, and roll call

Dr. Arturo Rodriguez, Chair, convened the TFBHO meeting at 1:00 p.m., and welcomed attendees. Ms. Francesca Kupper, Program Specialist, Advisory Committee Coordination Office (ACCO), Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), provided logistical announcements, conducted the roll call, and noted a quorum was present.

Agenda Item 2: Consideration of December 11, 2024, draft meeting minutes

Dr. Rodriguez called for any edits or changes to the draft December 11, 2024, meeting minutes. Receiving no edits or changes, Dr. Rodriguez called for a motion to approve the draft.

MOTION:

Dr. Veerinder Taneja moved to approve the December 11, 2024, draft meeting minutes as written. Dr. Richard Chamberlain seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved with no nays nor abstentions.

Agenda Item 3: Update from DSHS Immunizations Section

Ms. Cheryl Garcia, Nurse; Mr. Greg Leos, Director of Assessment, Compliance and Epidemiology Unit; and Ms. Nikki Jackson, Vaccine Data and Finance Group Manager, Vaccine Operations Unit, all from Immunizations Section, DSHS, provided members with an update on vaccinations. Mr. Leos also reviewed the PowerPoint presentation (PPT) titled, "Influenza Immunization Data Update". Key points included:

- Measles is considered the most contagious virus known. The vaccine is the best way to prevent it.
- DSHS has a supply of immunoglobulin component to provide on a case-by-case basis. Local health departments can also reach out to hospitals in their areas to get it.

- 22% of total ordered Flu and COVID vaccines are going to border counties.

Agenda Item 4: Update: Office of Border Public Health (OBPH) data

Ms. Rhae Cisneros, Border Epidemiologist, OBPH, DSHS, reviewed the PPT titled, "Texas Border Health Data Overview". Highlights included:

- 58% of people in the Texas border region speak Spanish at home, compared to 19% in the non-border region.
- The top 10 Texas counties with the highest diabetes prevalence in adults are from the border.
- Rates of congenital syphilis in four of the border counties are among the highest in the state.

Agenda Item 5: 89th Legislative Session

Mr. Daniel Knapp, Government Affairs Specialist, and Ms. Amanda Brant, Legislative and Policy Coordinator, Regional and Local Health Operations (RLHO), DSHS, reviewed the PPT titled, "89th Legislative Session". Highlights included:

- With the election of a new speaker of the House there were some changes to House committees, including creating new committees, and abolishing others.
- Exceptional items requested by DSHS for the state budget included things needed to maintain the existing levels of agency operations, and a new state laboratory space.
- As of the day of the meeting, DSHS is analyzing over 200 proposed bills and monitoring another 200. Some of them are related to imported food labeling and food additives, disaster preparedness and response, and a definition of the Texas-Mexico border.

Agenda Item 6. Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) activities in the border region

Mr. Eddie Moderow, Manager of Border Affairs, TCEQ, reviewed the PPT titled, "TCEQ activities in the border region". Highlights included:

- The Border 2025: U.S.-Mexico Border Environmental Program functions as a platform to collaborate with Mexican states that border Texas.
- TCEQ is working with U.S. federal and Mexican counterparts to create a binational version of the Texas Emissions Reduction Plan to cover border region needs.
- The quality of the water received by the Rio Grande River is being studied binationally for improvement.

Agenda Item 7: Public comment

No public comment was received.

Agenda Item 8: Closing remarks, thank you, and adjourn

Dr. Rodriguez asked Mr. Guillermo Zenizo Lindsey, Binational Communications Coordinator, OBPH, DSHS, to show the revised TFBHO web page. Dr. Rodriguez also asked ACCO and Mr. Zenizo Lindsey to schedule the "New Members' Orientation" seminar for the new TFBHO members.

Dr. Rodriguez adjourned the meeting at 3:28 p.m.

Please click on the link to the archived HHSC video to view, and listen to, the entirety of the February 12, 2025, Task Force of Border Health Officials (TFBHO) meeting; this video will be available for approximately two years from the date the meeting video is posted in accordance with the HHSC records retention schedule:

[Task Force of Border Health Officials \(TFBHO\)](#)