



New Jersey One Health Task Force Meeting Minutes

Friday, February 27, 2026

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

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Amar Patil at 10:07 AM.

Notice of Public Meeting

Public meeting notice was given on February 20, 2026.

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, Dr. Darby McDermott, Ms. Christine Schell, Dr. Gloria Bachmann (on Teams), Dr. Heather Fowler (on Teams), Dr. Vincent Silenzio (on Teams), Dr. Michael Zwick, Dr. Nicole Fahrenfeld (on Teams), Dr. Matthew Edson, and Dr. Michael Taylor.

Approval of the Minutes

Dr. McDermott motioned to approve the Minutes from November 21, 2025 as written. The motion was seconded by Dr. Taylor. The Task Force approved the November 21 minutes.

Invited Guests:

Dr. Nora Jean Nealon, a veterinarian and Assistant Professor in Microbiology from the Shreiber School of Veterinary Medicine of Rowan University, was invited to present her work and ongoing research regarding antimicrobial resistance in understudied animal products and treatments. She also announced that SSVM's Masters in One Health degree program is now accepting applications for Fall 2026.

- Task Force members expressed their appreciation for Dr. Nealon's presentation and recognized her work for addressing an important unmet need.
- Dr. Fahrenfeld is working on similar questions but from an environmental angle and looks forward to connecting with Dr. Nealon to discuss potential areas of overlap and collaboration.

Old Business

NJ One Health Task Force Year 1 Report: Task Force members received a revised draft of the report by email prior to the meeting. Dr. Patil opened the floor for discussion of the report and whether any changes are needed. There were no suggested changes.

As representatives of their respective Commissioners, Ms. Schell, NJDEP designee, and Dr. McDermott, NJDOH designee, explained that the report is still being reviewed by their Acting Commissioners, so they would need to abstain from a vote. The Task Force discussed and decided to proceed with the vote to pass the report.

Dr. Edson motioned to proceed to a vote, seconded by Dr. Bachmann. Eight out of ten Task Force members voted to approve the Report, with abstentions from Ms. Schell and Dr. McDermott. The report was approved by majority vote.

New Business

Election of 2026-2027 Officers: According to the Task Force Bylaws, officers are elected annually. Dr. Patil asked the Task Force to consider nominations and signaled his willingness to continue as Chairperson unless there are other nominations. Dr. Edson nominated Dr. Patil to continue as Chairperson, and Dr. Zwick seconded the nomination. The One Health Task Force voted unanimously to elect Dr. Amar Patil as Chairperson and Dr. Gloria Bachmann as Vice-Chairperson.

Approval of 2026-2027 Meeting Dates: Dr. Patil introduced a list of potential 2026 quarterly meeting dates including the next annual meeting in February 2027. Motion to accept the dates was initiated by Dr. Silenzio and seconded by Ms. Schell. The NJ One Health Task Force voted to approve the following meeting dates:

- Friday, May 29, 2026 at 10:00 AM
- Friday, September 25, 2026 at 10:00 AM
- Friday, November 20, 2026 at 10:00 AM
- Friday, February 26, 2027 at 10:00 AM

Sub-committee structure: There was a discussion of whether the same committees and committee membership should continue or if they should be revised. The Task Force decided to revisit committee structure during the May 2026 meeting.

Task Force Appointment Periods: Dr. Edson asked for clarification on Task Force appointment dates. Dr. Egizi commented as Secretary that they are being tracked, although once their initial term has expired, Task Force members can continue to serve until a replacement is identified.

H5N1 Crisis Funding no-cost extension: The NJDA received CDC grant funds from NJDOH for H5N1 and One Health coordination. The funds were set to expire in January 2026 but a no-cost extension was recently approved so they can continue to be used for One Health outreach including at agricultural fairs this summer.

Task Force Member Updates

Dr. Silenzio: With Dr. Bachmann, writing an Op-Ed to publish concurrently with the Task Force Report's release. Dr. Silenzio offered to collaborate if any other members are interested in joining. Dr. Patil agreed that the Task Force should work on it together. Dr. Egizi will share the draft with the Task Force for edits.

Dr. Bachmann: No updates.

Dr. Fahrenfeld: Environmental Dimensions of Antimicrobial Resistance conference coming up this summer, she may attend and it would be a good venue to raise awareness about New Jersey's One Health efforts. Dr. Patil mentioned it would be good to have a presentation about environmental health at the next Task Force meeting and asked Dr.

Fahrenfeld or Ms. Schell to consider speaking or to recommend a speaker on environmental health.

Dr. Fowler: The One Health Congress will be in Portugal this September. Abstracts are due in about 2 weeks. She is submitting an abstract on her full-time work.

Dr. Edson: Another plug for the One Health Masters program at the Shreiber School of Veterinary Medicine of Rowan University.

Dr. Taylor: The Education, Training, and Workforce Development Committee is still working on a Communication Plan which will be shared with the rest of the Task Force for comment.

Dr. McDermott: No updates.

Ms. Schell: Report is timely given what is occurring in NJ at present, wild bird HPAI and water issues in Trenton.

Dr. Patil: Gave an update on HPAI detections in backyard and 1 commercial flock.

Public Comment

Amy Papi, Advocacy and Outreach Coordinator for Robert Wood Johnson University Medical School - Ms. Papi extended congratulations to the Task Force for their completion of the Year 1 Report. Dr. Bachmann expressed thanks to Ms. Papi for everything she did to advance One Health in New Jersey.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the NJ One Health Task Force will be held on Friday, May 29th, 2026, beginning at 10:00 AM at 200 Riverview Plaza, Trenton and on Microsoft Teams.

Adjournment

On the motion of Dr. Taylor, seconded by Dr. Silenzio, the NJ One Health Task Force voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 11:37 AM.