

Board of Health

Carolyn Riccardi

1. Tell us about yourself & how your experiences will make you a good candidate for this office.

I'm Carolyn Riccardi, and I am honored to be running for re-election to the Norwood Board of Health. As a lifelong resident of Norwood, I take great pride in our community and remain deeply committed to ensuring the health, safety, and well-being of all residents. For the past 15 years, I have served on the Board of Health, working tirelessly to uphold public health standards, implement critical policies, and respond to the evolving needs of our town.

My experience includes:

- **Current Board Member, Massachusetts Association of Health Boards**
- **Member, Medical Reserve Corps (15 years)**
- **Board Member, Circle of Hope (14 years)**
- **Volunteer Food Distributor During the COVID-19 Pandemic**
- **Assisted with COVID-19 Vaccination Clinics & Hazardous Waste Days**
- **Advocate for Stronger Tobacco Regulations**, including raising the legal purchasing age to 21 and banning flavored tobacco products to protect youth.
- **Supporter of Community Health Initiatives**, including vaccine awareness, blood pressure clinics, and mental health education
- **Proponent of Bodyworks Regulations** to prevent illegal activities in wellness centers.
- **Commitment to Public Safety**, ensuring schools, restaurants, and businesses meet strict health standards.

During my tenure, I have worked diligently to strengthen public health policies, respond to community health concerns, and support initiatives that improve the overall quality of life in Norwood. From advocating for tobacco control policies to assisting with public health emergency responses, including working on the Town's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, I have always prioritized the best interests of our residents.

2. What are the main functions of this office?

There are 7 key functions of the Town of Norwood Board of Health. I have held active and supportive roles in each of these functions.

- a) **Public Health Policy & Regulation** – Enforces state and local health regulations while developing policies to safeguard community health and safety.
- b) **Disease Prevention & Health Promotion** – Oversees vaccination programs, health screenings, and mental health initiatives while educating residents on tobacco use, nutrition, and chronic disease prevention.
- c) **Environmental Health & Safety** – Conducts restaurant and food safety inspections, regulates septic systems and public sanitation, and monitors air and water quality.
- d) **Emergency Preparedness & Response** – Coordinates public health responses to disease outbreaks, hazardous waste events, and natural disasters while working with the Medical Reserve Corps.

- e) **Community Health & Wellness Programs** – Supports blood pressure clinics, substance abuse prevention, and senior health programs while advocating for health equity and essential health services.
- f) **Tobacco & Substance Use Regulation** – Implements tobacco control policies, including age restrictions and flavored tobacco bans, while supporting opioid misuse and substance abuse prevention initiatives.
- g) **Licensing & Inspections** – Issues permits and conducts inspections for food establishments, body art studios, wellness centers, and housing while enforcing regulations for safe public spaces and businesses.

3. What community resources or supports for residents do you feel Norwood lacks, and how would you work to make them available?

Norwood could benefit from expanded mental health services, substance abuse prevention programs, and accessible wellness initiatives for all residents. I would advocate for increased funding and partnerships with local healthcare providers to enhance mental health resources and addiction support.

Having dedicated years to advocating for community health in Norwood, I am committed to bridging gaps in services by leveraging my experience and strong local partnerships. I will work closely with community organizations, town officials, and healthcare providers to expand vital programs while actively seeking state and federal grants to fund new initiatives. My goal is to ensure the residents of the Town of Norwood—regardless of age or background—have access to the essential health resources they need to thrive.

4. What are the most pertinent health issues facing residents of Norwood, and what would you do to address them?

Norwood faces growing concerns around mental health, substance abuse, and chronic disease prevention. Perhaps the most pressing concern at the moment is working to reopen Norwood Hospital, which holds a vital place in the health and welfare of our town & many surrounding communities. As a longtime advocate for community health, I will use my experience in leveraging ongoing relationships with community partners, political advocates, and healthcare professionals to create and develop a plan of action to get Norwood Hospital open and delivering key health services to Norwood residents and those in our catchment area. My experience demonstrates my ability to bridge communication with action, and my track record speaks to my commitment to getting the job done.