

Hep Free NYC Guidance for Building and Re-engaging Viral Hepatitis Coalitions

NASTAD Viral Hepatitis Prevention and Surveillance Virtual Learning Collaborative Meeting

June 24, 2026

Alma R. Chaves, MPH
Communications and Community
Engagement Program Coordinator
Viral Hepatitis Program
Bureau of Hepatitis, HIV, and STIs
NYC Health Department

Ellie Goldfarb, MPH
Program Coordinator, State Advocacy
Housing Works

Meg Chappell, MPH
Program Director
Empire Liver Foundation



Presentation Agenda

- 1 Learning Objectives
- 2 Overview of Hep Free NYC
- 3 Hep Free NYC Engagement Activities
- 4 Lessons Learned

Learning Objectives

By the end of the presentation, participants will:

- Learn about how health department staff and community leaders can partner to build and sustain a viral hepatitis coalition
- Gain familiarity with existing Hep Free NYC guidance and other resources to support building and sustaining a viral hepatitis coalition
- Understand top barriers and facilitators in engaging and re-engaging community members

Hepatitis B and C Prevalence in NYC, 2024

304,821

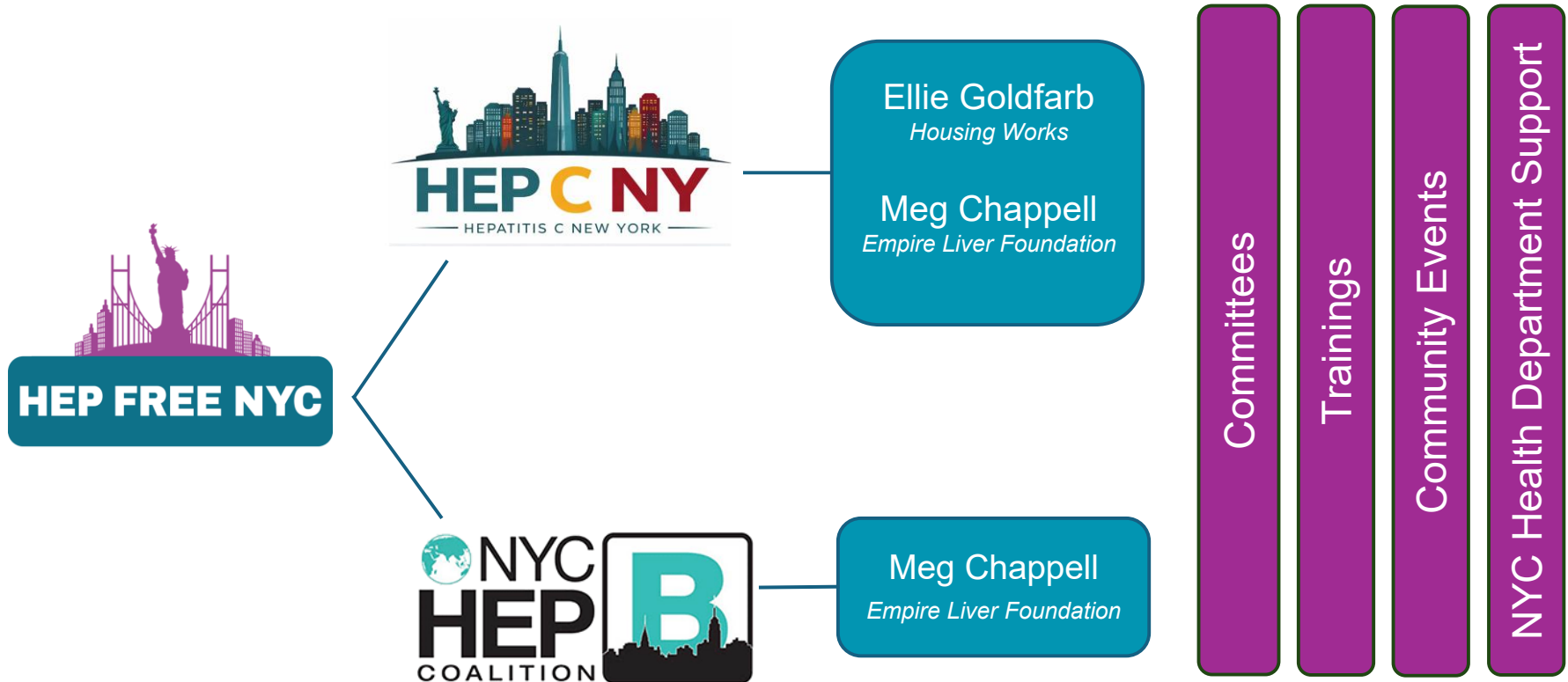
New Yorkers living
with hepatitis B

62,813

New Yorkers living
with hepatitis C

Hep Free NYC

A network building capacity to prevent, manage, and treat hepatitis B and C in NYC



Hep Free NYC Timeline



Advocates found NYC Hep C Task Force in the South Bronx

2004



2009



Advocates create NYC Hep B Coalition

2012



HEP FREE NYC

Stakeholders create Hep Free NYC as an umbrella network for hepatitis B and C community engagement and capacity building in NYC

2014



NYC Council creates Viral Hepatitis Prevention Initiative

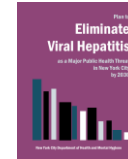


Gov. Andrew Cuomo announces commitment to eliminate hepatitis C and NYS Department of Health (DOH) creates a statewide task force to develop an elimination plan

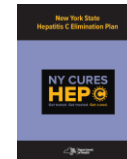
2018



2021



NYC Health Department publishes NYC Viral Hepatitis Elimination Plan and NYS DOH publishes NYS Hepatitis C Elimination Plan



2024



NYC Hep C Task Force and NYS Hep C Elimination Coalition combine to create Hep C NY

2026



Housing Works creates NYS Hepatitis C Elimination Coalition, NYC Chapter

Sources: Hep Free NYC Coalitions, Hep Free NYC (last accessed on Jun. 2, 2026), available [here](#); Hepatitis C Dashboard New York, New York State HCV Timeline (last accessed Jun. 2, 2026), available [here](#).

Hep Free NYC Core Activities



Optimizing existing Check Hep B CHWs is essential to advance health equity and identify key partners and delivery methods to provide flexibility and interoperability to reach Asian Americans in NYC. Read full article [here](#).



Sun River Health Innovative Model of Care Addresses Hep C Barriers

By co-locating Sun River Health services for people who inject drugs in Suffolk County, allowed the organization to normalize Hep C testing, reduce stigma, and improve retention in care. Learn more about Sun River Health practices [here](#).

News



Track & Manage your Hep B with Hep B&Me

HepB&Me offers personalized health tracking, an interactive chatbot and automated follow-up reminders to improve Hep B outcomes. Visit [HepB&Me](#) to explore features and help you get on track to a long healthy life!

Ongoing Activities

- Quarterly Hep Free NYC meetings
- Quarterly Hep Free NYC newsletters
- Hep Free NYC website
- Educational resources

Annual Activities

- Hepatitis B and C surveillance updates
- Hepatitis awareness events
- Advocacy, including trainings, developing legislative and budgetary priorities, and educational briefings for NYC Council Members

Sources: N.Y.C. DEP'T OF HEALTH & MENTAL HYGIENE, 2024 HEPATITIS A, B, AND C SURVEILLANCE ANNUAL REPORT (Mar. 23, 2026), available [here](#); Photo of NYC Council Educational Briefing on Viral Hepatitis in NYC (Feb. 26, 2026); Photo of Hep Free NYC Hepatitis Awareness Event at City Hall (May 19, 2026); Hep Free NYC Newsletter (March 2026).

Hep Free NYC Community Engagement Strategies

Hep Free NYC and NYC Health Department track indicators of community engagement.

575 Number of unique Hep Free NYC meeting attendees in 2024

7,300 Approximate number of Hep Free NYC newsletter subscribers in 2024

137 Number of organizations participating in Hep Free NYC meetings in 2024

Lesson Learned #1: Unify Community Engagement Strategies, When Possible

In February 2026, Hep Free NYC's Hep C Task Force and the NYS Hepatitis C Elimination Coalition's NYC Chapter came together to form Hep C NY.

This collaboration:

- Aligns strategies between NYC and NYS community engagement efforts
- Combines and streamlines meeting schedule to maximize stakeholder involvement
- Leverages NYS funding for enhanced community engagement

Lesson Learned #2: Routinely Assess Community Engagement Strategies

Track Social Media Trends

Learn new techniques, formats, and post scheduling strategies

Evaluate Communications Analytics

Identify areas that need improvement and topics of interest to broaden reach

Tailor Strategies to Specific Groups

Adapt and adjust communications strategies based on committee, group, or community needs

Email performance	
April 6, 2026 - May 26, 2026	
 <u>Open rate</u>	 <u>Click rate</u>
13.4% 971 opened	2.3% 168 clicked
Additional email details	
Deliveries	7,237 (99.4%)
Total opens	1,418
Last opened	5/23/26, 2:00 PM
Forwarded	0

 <u>Bounce rate</u>	 <u>Unsubscribe rate</u>
0.59% 43 bounced	0.06% 4 unsubscribed
^	
Clicks per unique opens	17.3%
Total clicks	1,795
Last clicked	5/11/26, 6:54 PM
Abuse reports	0

Lesson Learned #3: Create Guidance to Simplify Coalition Tasks



Community Engagement Protocols	
Hep Free NYC Meeting Workflow.....	2
Host Stakeholder Meeting.....	2
Meeting Highlights.....	3
Speaker Preparation.....	4
Meeting Agenda.....	5

Hep Free NYC Point of Contact: Meg Chappell, megchappell@empireliverfoundation.org
Hep Free NYC Social Media: Joy Cambe, joycambe@empireliverfoundation.org
Hep Free NYC Website: Graham, amuray@lookitdesign.com & Melissa Ip, melissa.r.ipo@gmail.com

Create Branding Kit

Establish colors, logos, fonts and other designs to help distinguish your coalition

Develop Community Meeting Protocols

Create email templates and timelines for quarterly meetings to streamline tasks and processes

Organize Digital Media and Content Calendar

Organize a calendar to plan, track, and prepare social media content

Questions?

Hep Free NYC Contacts:

Ellie Goldfarb, MPH

Program Coordinator, State Advocacy
Housing Works

e.goldfarb@housingworks.org

Meg Chappell, MPH

Program Director
Empire Liver Foundation

megchappell@empireliverfoundation.org

NYC Health Department Contacts:

Alma R. Chaves, MPH

Communications and Community Engagement
Program Coordinator

Viral Hepatitis Program

Bureau of Hepatitis, HIV, and STIs

NYC Health Department

achaves@health.nyc.gov

Marie Bresnahan, MPH

Director of Training, Policy and Administration

Viral Hepatitis Program

Bureau of Hepatitis, HIV, and STIs

NYC Health Department

mbresnahan@health.nyc.gov