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**Mahoning County
District Board of Health**

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DISTRICT BOARD OF HEALTH APPOINTS NEW HEALTH COMMISSIONER

The Mahoning County District Board of Health has appointed Patricia M. Sweeney, JD, MPH, RN as the next Health Commissioner of the General Health District in Mahoning County. Ms. Sweeney currently serves as the Associate Director for Law and Policy at the Center for Public Health Practice in the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health. In this role Ms. Sweeney works extensively with local, state and national organizations to enhance the role of law in public health practice. Ms. Sweeney is also an Assistant Professor in the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health. As a faculty member, Ms. Sweeney teaches health and public health law and ethics courses and serves as the director of the School's JD/MPH dual degree program. An active Public Health Systems Researcher, Sweeney is a Lead Investigator in the University of Pittsburgh CDC-funded Preparedness and Emergency Response Research Center, analyzing the impact of law and ethics upon public health systems' capacity to prepare for and respond to emergencies with public health implications. Ms. Sweeney is also currently serving as a Principal Investigator for a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation funded study analyzing the role of law and policy on healthcare personnel influenza immunization rates. In collaboration with the CDC Public Health Law Program and the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials, Ms. Sweeney is also conducting a program that is providing public health science and public health law training for state court judges nationwide.

Ms. Sweeney earned a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Youngstown State University, a Juris Doctorate from the University of Pittsburgh School of Law and a Master of Public Health from the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health. In addition, she holds a certificate in the Advanced Study of Health Law from the University of Pittsburgh School of Law.

As a Registered Nurse, Sweeney has held senior management positions in the home care, hospice, and community health fields. She directed numerous projects working with local public health agencies and the juvenile justice system, conducting community assessments and developing population health based strategic plans.

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In 2009, Ms. Sweeney received the Distinguished Alumna Award from the Bitonte College of Health and Human Services Department of Nursing at Youngstown State University. She received the Ohio State University College of Public Health Champion of Public Health award in 2005, and in 2004 received a National Public Health Leadership Network Balderson Award. She has also received numerous faculty awards for academic excellence from the University of Pittsburgh. Ms. Sweeney's past and present participation in national boards and advisory panels includes the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation sponsored Public Health Practice Based Research Network (PBRN) National Advisory Group, The Pfizer Medical Professional Academic Partnerships National Advisory Board, and the NACCHO 2012 Preparedness Summit planning committee. Locally she serves as a member of the Mahoning County High School Board of Education and as a Trustee of the William Swanston Charitable Fund and the William Swanston Children's Home.

Ms. Sweeney will assume her position on May 1st and will begin serving in March as Deputy Health Commissioner to retiring Health Commissioner Matthew Stefanak. She is the 10th person and the first women to serve as Health Commissioner since the Health District was created in 1919.

Ms. Sweeney, a life-long Mahoning County resident, lives in Poland, Ohio with her husband, Douglas Sweeney. They have three daughters and two grandchildren.

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