



**ORANGE COUNTY  
HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

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**Orange County Named One of the Healthiest Counties in North Carolina**

HILLSBOROUGH – Orange County has been named one of the healthiest counties in the state according to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation’s County Health Rankings report. The report, which was released today, ranked Orange County number one for overall health factors and number two (behind Wake County) for health outcomes. Orange County Health Department officials are celebrating this accomplishment.

“This new data is indicative of Orange County’s strong and collaborative public health system,” said Dr. Rosemary Summers, Orange County Health Director. The health department is proud of its contributions to this collaborative spirit. The department’s Healthy Carolinians Partnership, for example, brings together representatives from health and human services; non-profit agencies; the business community; and education. The Partnership works with community members to assess local health needs and respond to community health priorities.

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, in collaboration with the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute, spearheaded the County Health Rankings: Mobilizing Action Toward Community Health (MATCH) project. Counties in every state were ranked. Analysts mainly used public data that included vital statistics, disease rates, and Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System findings to derive scores. Analysts also used Census, Medicare, and American Community Survey data. The complete report allows residents to look at how healthy their county is and compare this to other counties.

According to the report, rankings for health factors were based on the following categories: health behaviors; clinical care; social and economic factors; and physical environment. Orange County ranked first for each health factor category except for physical environment where the county ranked 32. Health outcome rankings were based on mortality (length of life) and morbidity (quality of life and birth outcomes). The county ranked second for mortality and fourth for morbidity.

Physical environment accounted for 10 percent of the total health factor score. According to the report, physical environment was based on unhealthy air quality days along with healthy food outlet and liquor store density within zip codes. While less desirable, lower rankings benefit public health by showing areas needing additional funding and programming. The health department and its partners will look at the factors contributing to a lower physical environment score to see how we can improve.

The mission of the Orange County Health Department is to enhance the quality of life, promote health, and preserve the environment for all people in Orange County. To access the County Health Rankings report, visit [www.countyhealthrankings.org](http://www.countyhealthrankings.org).

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