



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



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**MAYOR LIGHTFOOT NOMINATES DR. ALLISON ARWADY AS
COMMISSIONER OF CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH**

CHICAGO – Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot today nominated Dr. Allison Arwady as Commissioner of the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) for the City of Chicago and submitted her appointment for City Council approval. Dr. Arwady has served the department for four years, including as Acting Commissioner of CDPH since June 2019. Her nomination follows a national search conducted to identify a leader to oversee the City's public health programming.

“Dr. Arwady is a dedicated and innovative leader in public health, both as a physician and public servant,” said Mayor Lightfoot. “Dr. Arwady has served the residents of our city by pushing the health department to be on the forefront of issues ranging from regulating tobacco sales to tackling opioid addiction in our neighborhoods. I am looking forward to working closely with her to make Chicago a safer, healthier and more equitable city.”

Dr. Allison Arwady, MD, MPH, has previously served in the role of Chief Medical Officer before serving as Acting Commissioner for the past four months. As Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Arwady oversaw the disease control, environmental health, emergency preparedness, and behavioral health divisions. She has also worked on disease outbreaks, immunization promotion, tuberculosis response, substance misuse and more.

During her time as Chief Medical Officer, Chicago's adolescent immunization rates rose to historic highs while teen smoking and teen birth rates dropped to historic lows, with the greatest decreases in teen births among African Americans. Dr. Arwady has overseen CDPH's response to the opioid epidemic, building the city's treatment and response capacity while bringing in new federal funding. She is interested in using data in new ways, working more closely with medical providers, and supporting exciting new initiatives such as Getting to Zero, an ambitious plan to end the HIV epidemic in Illinois by 2030.



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Dr. Arwady also helped oversee Healthy Chicago 2.0, a comprehensive plan that engages partners throughout the city to address health inequities and improve the health of all Chicagoans. An updated version of that plan, Healthy Chicago 2025, is now in development.

“I am honored and humbled by this announcement and look forward to continuing to work with Mayor Lightfoot to make our city a healthy place to live, work and play for all Chicagoans,” said Dr. Arwady. “The Department of Public Health has a strong and talented team that is dedicated to our mission to promote and improve the health of residents, and to working with our community partners to prioritize neighborhoods and people with the greatest need. Promoting health equity drives everything we do at CDPH as we work toward a healthier Chicago.”

Prior to CDPH, Dr. Arwady worked for the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as an Epidemic Intelligence Service Officer. In that role, she focused on outbreak response, including international work on Ebola and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome. While based at the Illinois Department of Public Health, she responded to disease outbreaks across the state.

Dr. Arwady earned her bachelor’s degree from Harvard University and her master’s degree in public health from Columbia University. She completed medical school and clinical training at Yale University. She is a board-certified internal medicine physician and pediatrician, and she continues to see primary care patients weekly as a volunteer at Chicago’s largest free clinic.

The City engaged in a national search interviewing candidates who hailed from cities throughout the United States. The process included two rounds of preliminary interviews with several candidates, followed by interviews with two finalists.

The Chicago Department of Public Health promotes and improves health by engaging residents, communities and partners in establishing and implementing policies and services that prioritize Chicagoans and neighborhoods with the greatest need. The department places a major emphasis on collecting, analyzing and disseminating data, and in collaboration with community partners, using that data to inform program, policy and funding decisions.

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