



ONEIDA COUNTY  
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## **Picente Advises of Blood Lead Level Threshold Change** *Oneida County Health Department Services Will Reach More Residents*

Oneida County Executive Anthony J. Picente Jr. announced today that the New York State Department of Health has lowered threshold Blood Lead Levels for home inspections and educational services.

Beginning Oct. 1, NYSDOH will require local health departments to provide home inspections and educational services to families with children who have Blood Lead Levels (BLLs) which are 5 mcg/dL or greater. Previously, these services were provided to families with children who had BLLs which were 15 mcg/dL or higher.

“This change will help to ensure that more lead poisoning reduction activities are performed for children with elevated Blood Lead Levels and that they are receiving the necessary medical care,” Picente said. “This new standard will aid us in the continued fight to make the homes in our community as lead safe as possible.”

Lead is a toxic metal that is harmful to human health when ingested or inhaled. Children under the age of six are more likely to get lead poisoning than any other age group. Children typically become lead poisoned by breathing in or swallowing dust from old lead paint that gets on floors, window sills, hands and toys.

Scientists have linked lead exposure to reduced growth indicators; delayed puberty; lowered IQ; hyperactivity; attention, behavior and learning problems and other adverse health effects.

“Not only will this change lead to increased services provided by the Oneida County Health Department, but it will also require that children’s primary health care providers provide lead risk assessments, education, counseling and follow-up interventions including nutritional and developmental assessments for all children reported to have BLLs 5 mcg/dL or greater,” Oneida County Director of Health Phyllis D. Ellis, BSN, MS, F.A.C.H.E.

Per NYSDOH regulations, all children ages one and two must have BLL testing. In addition, at all well child check-ups, health care providers are required to ask parents a list of lead risk assessment questions related to lead poisoning until children reach 6 years-old.